DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

COUNTRY READER
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WILLIAM BELTON
Third Secretary and Vice Consul
Ciudad Trujillo (1940-1942)

Mr. Belton was born in Portland, Oregon on May 22, 1914. He received his BA from Stanford University and entered the Foreign Service in 1938. His career has included positions in Cuba, the Dominican Republic, Canada, Chile, Australia, and Brazil. Mr. Belton was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy on November 19, 1992.

Q: It could have been either.

BELTON: It was Iceland. I thought that would be a lot of fun, but I don't think I ever submitted any formal document or letter or anything of that kind, but I let it be known somehow or other that I would like to go to Iceland. But when the assignments were announced, and I guess my Latin American experience and interest had something to do with it, I was assigned to the Dominican Republic.

Q: Ciudad Trujillo.

BELTON: Yes, Ciudad Trujillo, as it was then called. Somebody walked into the classroom where we all sat and read off our names and the assignment where we were going-- it was a very dramatic moment. For me he called out "Santo Domingo". Well I knew where Santo Domingo was and went to the telephone immediately and called Judy and said, "We're going to Santo Domingo." She wasn't sure where Santo Domingo was so got hold of an atlas and looked it up. The only one she found was in Costa Rica so she told someone we were going to Costa Rica. That was soon straightened out, and in February we were on our way to the Dominican Republic.

Q: I have you serving in Ciudad Trujillo from 1940 to 1942.

BELTON: That's right.

Q: What was the situation there? I assume that Trujillo was well in power at that time.

BELTON: He was very solidly in power. Trujillo had no moral principles of any kind. He was motivated only by his own personal welfare. He considered the Dominican Republic to be his own ranch, so anything that happened to the Dominican Republic was related to him and his own welfare. He played footsie a little bit with the Germans and the Japanese and was perfectly willing to do so. But when Pearl Harbor occurred, he quickly knew where his bread was buttered. He sent us word that he wanted to know the very minute the United States officially declared war because he wanted the Dominican Republic to be the first country after the United States to declare war on Germany, Italy and Japan. That in effect is what happened, because the Dominican legislature was totally at his command; he had them sitting there waiting for the telephone to ring so that they could declare war.

Q: What were you doing there and what was the situation as far as you saw it in the country?

BELTON: Well the Dominican Republic was kind of a backwater in many respects. It didn't loom very large in the overall picture, but nevertheless we were interested in whatever went on there because the Germans were presumably looking for submarine bases in that part of the world. The Caribbean was important to our overall national security, so our activities were essentially just seeing to it that things did not get out of hand and communicating our approach on things to Trujillo and his government so we could keep it on an even keel. There was always that dichotomy of how do you handle a guy like Trujillo...(noise on tape). You had the problem of how you behave with a guy you have no respect for but who controls a certain amount of geography that is important to you and that could affect your interests adversely if things don't go right.

Q: At later points he had several Congressmen in his hip pocket. He was very kind to them. He had political clout in the United States. Did you feel that at that time--that I have to watch this guy because if worse comes to worse he'll go to his tame Congressman? I don't know if he had one at that time, but he did later on.

BELTON: I think he probably did; I don't recall in detail but I do remember that there were people that were favorable toward him. Among four hundred and thirty-five Congressmen there will always be some who'll ignore or be ignorant of the realities of an individual like Trujillo. But I don't have any recollection of his having a cult of the kind that gave us significant problems. Obviously from the point of view, maybe, of the Department of State and the Democratic Party that was in power at that time they had to give a little attention to this but it wasn't a significant factor.

Q: Who was your ambassador, or was it minister?

BELTON: He was Minister at that time; Robert Scotten was Minister during the time I was there.

Q: What was his background?

BELTON: He was a career Foreign Service Officer.

Q: What were you doing there?

BELTON: I was sent there as Third secretary and Vice-Consul. Both those titles reflected what I did. I was the low ranking man in the political section, but when they needed help in the consular section I went over and worked there. Again, though nothing like Havana, we had a fairly substantial visa load. Trujillo, not out of any particular sympathy for the Jewish problem or people but because he thought it would reflect well upon himself, was admitting a number of German Jews into the Dominican Republic. They had formed a settlement up on the north coast at a place called Sosua. There was a good deal of interest on the part of well placed American Jews to see that this place prospered and that these people got a fair shake. So that was one of our interests; we didn't have any specific responsibilities but we had a general brief to watch over that situation. There was a lot of circulation there, people would come there as a temporary place to stay; not very many of them really had any sincere intention of making that their life home, for they were waiting for visas to go to the US or elsewhere. There were a lot of other Jewish people in the country. Prior to the declaration of war there was an active Nazi German movement in the Dominican Republic which we kept our eye on too, which was part of the job.

Q: I would say that that would be more of your job than the political situation which was what Trujillo wants, Trujillo gets.

BELTON: That was an important aspect of it. We had what we called the "proclaimed list." Certain people were on it, certain firms who dealt with Germany or which were actually in the hands of Germans.

Q: From my interviews it seems that this was essentially a blacklist of Axis dominated firms and was in many ways the principal job of the Department of State in Latin America, wasn't it?

BELTON: Well I think we had other things as well, but it certainly was an important aspect of our work and I think you are right about a place such as the Dominican Republic, it probably was our major war-related activity.

Q: Did the German community as such cause any trouble or were you just keeping an eye on it?

BELTON: They made noise and were considered to be ready to take over when the Germans won the war. No, I think we were more suspicious of them than...I don't know what they were doing; we never found out. I am sure they had some contacts with Germany that were harmful to our interests, but how effective they were and how serious they might have been as a problem if things had turned out differently is something that only can be speculated.

Q: To plow this ground once more--the attitude you got from the Ambassador and all in the legation was that Trujillo was not a very nice man.

BELTON: Yes, there wasn't any question about that. We had personal experience of this when at a party one of his henchmen, many of whom served as government officials and acted as procurers for him on the side, invited my wife and the wife of an American banana export company manager to go with him to meet Trujillo. They left no doubt of their lack of interest in the invitation, but the other lady was quite concerned that her refusal might create difficulties for her husband's business.

The way you handled him on an official level was something else again. Trujillo had an enormous, fancy yacht he would make available to the Minister for weekend fishing trips. The Minister accepted and invited some of us to go along; we had two or three wonderful trips in that connection. I particularly remember because while I wasn't very interested in fishing, my later enthusiasm for ornithology was initially stimulated there. We went down near an island which years later I went to and banded birds on; that was the first experience I had down in that direction. The question is whether the Minister should have accepted. I don't remember it even being raised in those days. I know that under present day attitudes, the way you look at things now, the question would arise whether the Minister should have ever accepted that kind of an offer from Trujillo.

Q: Do you distance yourself, or not? This is a difficult call because it hurts your political effectiveness...

BELTON: If the minister had wanted to refuse the offer he would have had to have a very convincing reason to do so without offending Trujillo.

Q: And does that make sense? Does it hurt your job? You were there until about 1942. What was the situation of Foreign Service officers at that time? By then we had entered the war.

BELTON: Some officers were volunteering for the military service, but there was a general understanding that the Foreign Service was a pretty important career in the war itself; that whatever you did in the Foreign Service was contributing to the war effort. Eventually, so far as I know, all Foreign Service Officers were granted an exemption. That wasn't automatic, it took a while. I remember my own exemption--the issue didn't even come up until I was at my next post. I recall, I don't remember much of the details, I didn't know whether I was going to get it and I began to make inquiries about what service I wanted to go into if I was to go into military service, and at what level. Eventually it did come through, so I never gave what you might call serious consideration to military service. In view of the events of the last few months one looks back and wonders about it.

Q: You left the Dominican Republic in 1942. Where did you go then?

BELTON: We went home on leave. Previous to 1939 the Department of Commerce and the Department of Agriculture had had their own foreign services. In 1939 there was legislation that consolidated those two departments' services into the regular Foreign Service operating under the

State Department. Those departments then had to find within the Foreign Service people who would meet their requirements for reporting and doing all the things that agricultural attachés and commercial attachés were doing. At the Foreign Service school the Department of Commerce and the Department of Agriculture each had people who came over and lectured to the class about the wonders of working on their behalf in the Foreign Service. As I think I mentioned earlier, I had always had an interest in the outdoors, forestry, and that sort of thing. It so happened that Judy's father was a professor of agriculture, which gave agricultural specialization a particular appeal to me.

When we went to the US in 1942 for home leave we went through the department for consultation and in the corridor I passed the same man who had given the lectures in the Foreign Service school, a fellow by the name of Louis Michael, who was the Department of Agriculture's representative to the Department of State and whose job it was to recruit agricultural officers in the Foreign Service. He spotted me, and as I had expressed some vague interest at the time of the Foreign Service school, asked me if I was still interested. I said, "Well, I might be; I was interested in knowing about it." He gave me more of a pitch and I, somewhat innocently as I look back on it, decided it would be interesting to go into the agricultural branch of the Foreign Service. From the point of view of the war, agricultural production was very significant item at that time. He said, "All right, we are going to assign you to the Department of Agriculture for a period of training." So that is what they did. We went home on our leave and then I came back to Washington and went to the Department of Agriculture for a training period.

That was not nearly as productive as it should have been because their idea of training was to sit you down in the middle of a bunch of people in the Division of Foreign Agriculture and let you swim for yourself. I swam for four or five months and I did learn quite a bit about what they did, which essentially turned out to be reporting on the crop situations in foreign countries. There was relatively little negotiating of any kind, at least at that level. Then I was told, I don't remember when, but at some stage of the game I was told that I was to go to Winnipeg as Vice-Consul. My job was to do agricultural reporting for the prairie provinces--Manitoba, Saskatchewan, and Alberta. So I went up there and spent a little less than two years there. Again it was a post where there were not a lot of people and when there was a vacancy in the consular section I issues visas or did other consular work. But essentially I was there to report on the wheat situation, the oat situation, the rye situation, the flax situation, and so forth. Each week I had to send off a report. We had an agricultural attaché in Ottawa to whom I was also responsible and with whom I worked on a close basis. At the end of this period I was assigned to Ottawa as assistant agricultural attaché.

WILLIAM TAPLEY BENNETT
Civil Attaché
Ciudad Trujillo (1941-1944)

Ambassador Bennett was born on April 1, 1917 in Georgia. He received his BA from the University of Georgia in 1937 and his LLB from George Washington University in 1948. His career has included positions in the Dominican Republic,

Austria, Greece, and Portugal. Ambassador Bennett was interviewed by Horace G. Torbert, Jr. on June 16, 1988.

BENNETT: Then the State Department did open up in the spring of 1941. They needed people for Latin America because of the Good Neighbor policy. They were taking in people for what was called an auxiliary foreign service. I was one of the first of those. And we took the full oral exam; the written was waived and we were supposed to take the written that next winter. Well, Pearl Harbor came along and there was never any written exam. I later went into the career service under the Wriston program.

In July 1941, I was assigned to Santo Domingo, the Dominican Republic. It was then called Ciudad Trujillo because that was during the reign of the Trujillo dictatorship. I actually had to go and look in the atlas to see where the Dominican Republic was. I had a vague idea that it might be in Central America. It turned out of course to be in the Caribbean on the Island of Hispaniola, there between Cuba and Puerto Rico. So my rather fancy dreams of Rio or Buenos Aires quickly faded as I went to this small Caribbean port in September 1941.

It was a pleasant place, and the people were hospitable. I had a thoroughly agreeable 2-1/2 years there. We got into the war in December 1941 and there came the German submarine campaign of the winter of '42, when we had sailors from torpedoed ships climbing ashore onto the jagged reefs of the south coast of the Dominican Republic. If you get in contact with a coral reef and cut your skin, it's bound to be infected, and we had some rather unfortunate cases. But the main war effort was pretty far away. I was there in the Dominican Republic when Pearl Harbor came. We were all going down that afternoon to see a French ship which was coming up from Martinique, which had stayed Free French as you'll recall, for some supplies. The Dominican Republic became quite a larder for the Caribbean Islands and our troops who were stationed in Curacao and Aruba to protect the oil fields. A lot of their food came from the fertile Dominican valleys.

Q: What were your specific functions at this time? Were you a Consular Officer or were you an Economics Officer?

BENNETT: I had the title of Agregado Civil, Civil Attaché, which in traditional diplomacy in Europe I believe had been an intelligence title. That I did not do. I was an economics officer, and I was the very lowest man on the totem pole. You'd have had to have everybody in the Embassy swept away with a hurricane before I could have been in charge. But I have friends to this day from those early years. Bill Belton was a third secretary. I used to go and sit with their baby when they were invited out to dinner. So it was a pleasant society. There were a lot of young people and we used to have good times, even though people were suffering mightily in the war elsewhere.

Then in the Spring of '44 it was time to change, and I was assigned to Panama. But I had a very exciting mission in between because the ambassador to Panama, Avra Warren, who had been my chief in the Dominican Republic, was asked by Cordell Hull to lead a mission down to Bolivia to get out some German and Japanese aliens who were causing trouble. You know, the Germans had a geopolitical theory that who controls the highlands controls the region around it. And so they thought if they took over Bolivia that would give -

Q: There was nothing higher.

BENNETT: That would give them a leg up in South America. And they were very influential. I remember Warren and I flew down to Panama - flying was not as swift then as it is today - and joined up there with the General in command in the Panama Canal Zone. We flew with him in his plane down past Peru and up into Bolivia where we spent, I guess, a good two weeks. That was where I first met Bob Woodward, who was acting as Charge in Bolivia at the time. We stayed with the Woodward s. I remember the talks with Bolivian officials, and the wife of the President pleading with Ambassador Warren, please don't send my children's German tutor away.

Well, we did send him away. We had a fleet of ten planes. They were DC-3s but they looked very big as they all landed in tandem at 14,000 feet in the high Andean sun to take away, I believe it was 50 German agents and 25 Japanese.

Then we came back to the States and I went on to Panama in June of '44. I served there for about six months.

JAMES MCCARGAR
Economic/Consular Officer
Ciudad Trujillo (1943-1944)

Mr. McCargar was born in California in 1920. He attended Stanford University. His entered the Foreign Service in 1941 and has served in countries including the Soviet Union, the Dominican Republic, Hungary, Italy, and France. Mr. McCargar was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy on April 18, 1995.

Q: I remember one of my first ones. It was somewhat ingenuous. We remember these things.

McCARGAR: When I got to Santo Domingo, then Ciudad Trujillo, Avra Warren was the Ambassador, as I said above. This was just shortly after they had raised all Latin- American posts to Embassies.

Q: The Good Neighbor Policy.

McCARGAR: So here was Warren as Ambassador. I became very fond of him. He was a hard taskmaster, and a tough cookie. A very capable man. He looked at me the first time I walked into his office, and said, looking over the half-spectacles he enjoyed, "You know why you're here, don't you?" I said, "I think I can guess." He looked me almost encouragingly, and said, "You do it right, and you'll be okay." So I went into the Economic Section. Then I supervised the Consular Section. The Economic Section was far from fascinating, but I did my job. I wrote these flagrantly boring reports which appeared in whatever were the appropriate specialized publications. I did the special report, on my own, on Political Conditions in the

Primorsk Krai, but in consultation with Warren, who, as I told you, said I was sticking my neck out but if I insisted, to go ahead. The resulting commendation from Dean Acheson was very gratifying.

Then Warren was transferred, as I recall, to Panama. He was succeeded by Ellis Briggs. This was Briggs's first Ambassadorial post. I remember the senior staff's astonishment. Bob Newbegin (who died not long ago) was the Counselor of Embassy, and he avoided comment, while looking somewhat baffled. The Political Officer was Harry Reed, and I remember him saying, "Do you realize this man has gone from the bottom of the Service to Ambassador in 19 years? This is unprecedented!" Well, Ellis came along, and he hadn't been in town for more than two weeks before he was being referred to locally by the Dominicans as "El Derocador" -- the destroyer.

This was typical of what was going on in the Latin American area in the State Department at that time. There were the two schools of thought: either you snuggle up to the dictators and go along because we need them, or this is against all of our morals, position, rights, and so forth, and you should indicate your disapproval. Warren was of the first school, Briggs of the second school. Ellis made it very clear that he disapproved of the Benefactor de la Patria.

Q: This was Trujillo?

McCARGAR: Trujillo, with whom I had some occasional connections. He was a man of extraordinary energy. I remember going to an evening's entertainment at his finca just outside of town. At about 3 or 4 in the morning, some of the guests literally sneaked out, past the bushes, in order to be able to go home. The Jefe didn't like people to leave his parties. He insisted we all stay. There I was with my wife, my then-wife. We were stuck. Trujillo danced with my wife. She said he was a superb dancer -- like many men of some bulk. This was in Warren's day, and Warren was used to this. He stayed. We were finally dismissed at about 5:30 in the morning. Warren had to stay with Trujillo until 8 o'clock.

The sons were not very impressive. But the daughter, Flor de Oro, was obviously the one of the children who had inherited her father's sagacity, his cruelty, his energy, and his brilliance. She had nine husbands, and was reported to have murdered the seventh, an American colonel. The story was that he was burned to death in bed. She was an extraordinary woman. She looked a little bit Negroid, and was a very, very attractive creature. Someone one had to be very careful about.

The one aspect of the Dominican Republic which I enjoyed -- otherwise I didn't enjoy it, possibly because I was aware I was being punished -- but the one aspect I did enjoy was that was being in charge of something called the Dominican Resettlement Association, DORSA. Just before the outbreak of war in Europe, there was a conference at Evian, in France, on what to do about the ever-increasing numbers of Jewish refugees from the Nazis. Trujillo stole the day. Everyone else waffled. But Trujillo didn't hesitate. His delegate announced that Trujillo had instructed him that the Dominican Republic "will take all you want to send us." Holding to this, the American-Jewish organizations in New York set up the Dominican Republic Resettlement Association. They managed to get, I believe, 300-500 refugees into the Dominican Republic. Trujillo gave them land on the north coast of the island at Sosua, which has since become one of

the great resort areas of the Caribbean. Since there was American money involved here, one of my jobs was to look after this arrangement.

I spent all the weekends I could at Sosua. It lifted my spirits. The people were absolute delights. Their Saturday night gatherings were joyous and, I confess it, beckoningly European. Here they were, pharmacists, doctors, lawyers, bankers, merchants, professionals of all sorts, from Germany, Czechoslovakia, Poland, Hungary, Austria, Romania -- trying to till the soil on land that was just as bad as Massachusetts must have been when the Pilgrims got there. Boulders every two feet, or less, and they went at it with good will. It was an impressive, and endearing, performance.

The Jewish Home Agency in Palestine at that time had, as their equivalent of Minister of Agriculture, a man named David Stern, not to be confused with the Stern Gang. David Stern was a Russian Jew, and he and I, usually speaking Russian together, became great friends. He gave me a quadrilingual dictionary published in Russia in the middle of the 19th century, dedicated to the Empress Maria Aleksandrovna. He wrote a beautiful dedication to me, in Russian, on the flyleaf, which is still on my desk (though the decay of the paper is beginning to give me worries).

Through Stern I was accepted as a friend by the officers of DORSA and their Jewish-American organization backers in New York. Stern had some pronounced views on Jews in America, one of which I learned while accompanying him in a Manhattan taxi. We got into a cab at Grand Central in New York one day and, as you did in wartime, we shared the cab. A woman got in with us, and in the course of some conversation, something about being Jewish came up. This woman made it perfectly clear that she was not Jewish. After she got out of the cab, Stern said, "If there's one goddam thing I can't stand, it is American-Jewish women who deny that they're Jews." He was infuriated. His friendship meant a lot to me and remains one of my pleasing souvenirs.

Q: By the way, you mentioned you got married -- because you'd been single when you were in the Soviet Union.

McCARGAR: No. I was not single, I was married but my wife of course was in America. I had married very young, just at the end of my university career. A marriage at 20 or 21 is not likely to last. We had a child at one point during the war, but she died ten days after. Doctors told me this was very common during the war. There was quite a loss of newborns. It wasn't that they were premature. They may have gone to term, but they had not developed in the end as they really should have so they didn't survive. My wife was with me in the Dominican Republic, but I think she discovered there that the life of a Foreign Service wife wasn't what she wanted for herself. A few years later, when I was in Budapest (she decided not to accompany me) we parted most amicably, and we remained friends thereafter.

Q: Could we talk about what the Dominican Republic was like under Trujillo as you saw it at that time, in 1943-44?

McCARGAR: To me it was a pitiful sight. (Mind you, it was Sumner Welles's favorite country -- though he despised Trujillo -- and one of my monthly tasks was to see that several cartons of his

preferred Dominican cigarette were in the pouch to the Department.) The population was, I think, roughly a quarter of what it is today. The Dominicans are among the fastest growing people in the world. They simply reproduce. The population of the whole country was, I think, 1 million and something when I was there. It's now 4 and a half to 5 million today. They live very poorly. The bulk of the population was black, although Trujillo had passed a law saying that all Dominicans are of the white race. That was the law. He also passed a law saying that the Dominican Republic was in the temperate zone, which even winter temperatures belied. The windows in Dominican houses (and in the Embassy), for example, had adjustable shutters but no glass. Cross-drafts were essential.

I was in Santo Domingo for few days some twenty years ago, or so, and what had happened there is, of course, happening everywhere today. The American Embassy, which was very well known, in 1944 was pleasantly situated on the western edge of the city. Today, the city has grown well past it, so that it is now near the center of town.

Trujillo ran such a corrupt regime. I remember he had an aide named Mora, whose first name I've forgotten. A tall, very handsome chap, with a great deal of charm. He took a rake-off on everything. On all the sugar that went out, he got so many dollars, or pennies, per bag, whatever it was, and it made him a very wealthy man. The Dominican playboy, Rubirosa, was very much in favor with Trujillo. The economy -- sugar was the principal crop, but they also grew tobacco, coffee, cacao, and bananas, and exported hardwoods. That was about it, although there were hopes for bauxite while I was there, which I don't believe materialized.

Q: I want to keep going back to how we saw it at that time. Was Trujillo's hand heavy? You just came out of the NKVD atmosphere, how did you find it?

McCARGAR: I had to laugh because it was the same thing. I remember sitting next to Trujillo's Beria at dinner one night -

Q: You mean the man in charge of the secret police?

McCARGAR: Yes. We knew this was the man who did the executions when they were necessary. He was impassive -- but observant. Not a conversationalist. There was a more visible sign of Trujillo's domination. Up in the northwestern corner of the country, near the Haitian border, I can't remember the name of the city, there's a big hillside. In huge white cement letters, reminiscent in size of the famous "Hollywood" in southern California, was spelled out, "Dios y Trujillo," God and Trujillo. He had it changed to "Trujillo y Dios," Trujillo and God. As I said, all this produced a certain ironic mirth in me to see the similarities between the tin-horn Caribbean dictator and the great master of the Russian Empire.

Q: It was during wartime. Did the war impact the country? Did we have bases there? Did we look to the Dominicans to support us, or was it just so inconsequential?

McCARGAR: All they were supposed to do was provide the necessary, the sugar and their export crops that we needed. But Trujillo made a big thing of his support of the United States and the Allies in the war, particularly when he saw, during Ellis Briggs's period there, that we

were trying to undercut him -- in a popular sense, obviously not by anything concrete. As a result of that he ordered a parade one day which was to demonstrate their gratitude to the Americans, to the great republic of the north. A big reviewing stand was erected and the entire Embassy, which wasn't that big, was to be there in the reviewing stand with Trujillo.

We had at that time, as everybody knows by now, so-called Legal Attachés, who were FBI. They were J. Edgar Hoover's little victory over General Donovan and the OSS: the latter got the world, except for Latin America; Hoover got Latin America. Our FBI man was a very nice guy. He got information that somebody was going to throw a bomb during the parade, that somebody was going to assassinate Trujillo as the parade went by. The question then became: do members of the American Embassy sit in the reviewing stand or do they not? Well, we fussed and fussed with this. It was only on the morning of the great parade that the decision was made that we would be in the reviewing stand. This was based on some assurance that this FBI man had received that they weren't going to wipe out the American Embassy, that they could wipe out Trujillo without the rest of us. So we went and nothing happened.

In other words, there was, very far down underneath, active opposition to the old man. But they weren't in a position to do anything about it. He had the country in a very firm grip -- thanks to fortunes such as those that Mora made, and thanks to the cold vigilance of his secret police chief.

Q: What was Ellis Briggs doing to get the name of "the destroyer"?

McCARGAR: He made it clear by his attitude and his public statements, without actually insulting Trujillo, that we believed in democracy and we didn't like corruption in governments. It was all very much indirect, but the point was clear. Trujillo was no dummy. He got the point and so did a good deal of the populace.

Q: You left there in 1944?

McCARGAR: I would not ordinarily have left in so short a time, but 1944 was the period when Cissie Patterson's campaign here in Washington against the Foreign Service came to a sort of climax.

G. HARVEY SUMM
Administrative/Political Officer
Ciudad Trujillo (1948-1949)

Mr. Summ was born on November 11, 1919 in New York City. He received his BBA from City College in 1939 and served in the U.S. Navy from 1942 to 1946. He entered the Foreign Service in 1948 and served in countries including the Dominican Republic, Brazil, Ecuador, Cuba, and Angola. Mr. Summ was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy on March 5, 1993.

Q: Where did you go first and what were you doing?

SUMM: The Dominican Republic was my first assignment. I had a combination of jobs. I was supposed to be administrative officer. Only later did I find out that administration was something that they give to counselors and that I, a brand new FSO, was responsible for the administration of an embassy. I didn't do all that well. I discovered I had to be an expert on roofs, gardens, and as a city boy and an intellectual I didn't have much preparation for this. But the Ambassador's wife demanded that her plants grow even in the dry season.

I remember having a run-in with the head of the Marine detachment there. I was surprised when this sergeant began to bargain with me like a union representative. My reaction was, "This is what the Marines are like?" So I don't think I did all that well as an administrative officer.

But I did other things. What I wanted to do was political reporting. I persuaded the DCM to allow me to cover some events going on in town. I remember an American journalist speaking down there.

Q: What was the political situation then? This was at the height of the Trujillo power.

SUMM: That's right. It was very tense. I became friendly with a group of people who were ostensibly favorable to the regime, but in fact, after winning their confidence...what I discovered was that out on the beach they would talk freely in my presence about how much they hated Trujillo. Members of their families had been tortured and killed. That sort of thing.

Q: What was our attitude at the time in the Embassy towards Trujillo and his family?

SUMM: As FDR is reputed to have said, "We knew they were SOBs, but these were people with whom we had to maintain at least some cordiality and went to all the parties." We knew what he was like.

Q: The ambassador then was Ralph Ackerman. Sometimes ambassadors get absorbed into the ruling clique. How did you see it?

SUMM: I can't really tell. I wasn't close enough to Ambassador Ackerman. Just judging from things that he said in staff meetings, I gather that he was somewhat more favorable to the Trujillo outlook then I would have been. But that is merely an impression. Chuck Burrows, who was the DCM there, clearly saw them for what they were.

Q: It wasn't an Embassy that had been absorbed or attracted by the Trujillos?

SUMM: No.

Q: Did you find that you had Congressmen who were sort of tame members of the Trujillo clique?

SUMM: I know what you mean, but not in my case.

Q: I was going to say that at your level you probably wouldn't have been hit with this type of thing.

SUMM: Well, I might have as admin officer. I made CODEL arrangements, etc., but it just never happened during my time.

Q: Then you moved after a year to where?

SUMM: Bahia, Brazil...Salvador, a consulate.

Q: In Brazil.

SUMM: That is right. Northeast Brazil.

WILLIAM BELTON
Deputy Chief of Mission
Ciudad Trujillo (1949-1952)

Mr. Belton was born in Portland, Oregon on May 22, 1914. He received his BA from Stanford University and entered the Foreign Service in 1938. His career has included positions in Cuba, the Dominican Republic, Canada, Chile, Australia, and Brazil. Mr. Belton was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy on November 19, 1992.

Q: Well then they threw you back into the briar patch after that, didn't they--back to Ciudad Trujillo, 1948-1952?

BELTON: 1949-52. My transfer from Porto Alegre provides another illustration of how they solved administrative problems of the department and the service in those days. After we had been in Porto Alegre for a couple of years I got word that my mother was seriously ill with cancer and didn't have long to live. I was very anxious to see her. In those days my economic situation didn't provide me the wherewithal to make a trip to the United States on my own. As I recall I was entitled to home leave by then, but there was no money to pay for it. The department couldn't find any basis to get me home except by transferring me, via Washington for consultation. So they did that with the understanding that when I got to Washington I could take some time to go out to Oregon see my mother. We worked it out so the whole family went out to Portland. To transfer me they just picked the first available job, which was in Panama. So I left Porto Alegre on transfer to the Embassy in Panama.

Q: Oh, you went to Panama?

BELTON: No, I didn't. When I reached Washington I was told that a fellow who was head of the political section in the Embassy in Mexico had suddenly died and they were transferring the DCM from the Dominican Republic to fill that job. Instead of going to Panama, would I like to

go to the Dominican Republic as DCM? I wasn't excited about going back to the Dominican Republic, because I had never had a great deal of enthusiasm for the place, but the position was much better than the one I could foresee in Panama. I had gone north by plane, while Judy was on the high seas with our children, traveling by a slow freighter. I sent her a message via how messages were sent in those days to ships at sea, asking if she was willing to go back to the Dominican Republic. She was, so I said, "Yes". So I went on home and then instead of going to Panama we went to Santo Domingo again.

Q: You were there from 1948 to 1952?

BELTON: February, 1949 to June, 1952.

Q: Who was the ambassador when you first went out?

BELTON: Ralph Ackerman.

Q: What was his interest and style of operation.

BELTON: Ralph Ackerman --this was his first and only assignment as an ambassador-- had been a Department of Commerce officer. He had reached the acme of his ambitions, probably some beyond where he had expected to be. He wasn't particularly perceptive as a political observer; he didn't see Trujillo for what I thought Trujillo was. I didn't agree with him on his attitude toward Trujillo. By that time Trujillo's colors were far more evident than they had been when I had been there before. Ackerman thought that things were okay in the Dominican Republic; it was a country that was on our side of the cold war and why should we examine any further than that. That pretty well reflected in all of the things he did.

While I didn't believe in overt provocation of Trujillo, since under the circumstances then existing it would not only have been unproductive, but probably counter-productive in our over-all relations, I felt we should make it clear now and then that we didn't sympathize with his way of running things. I guess I personally was able to convey that impression, for the government-run newspaper ran an editorial shortly before I left commenting on my lack of understanding. I looked on this as a badge of merit and was further pleased when, about 10 years later, after Trujillo was well gone and opposition forces were in power, I was awarded an official Dominican decoration, which, incidentally, never reached me.

Q: Were you finding the cold war was intruding as it did in so many other places? If you are with us you are really our friends no matter what you do.

BELTON: There was a lot of that attitude and atmosphere, yes. Certainly I think that was an accurate reflection of Ackerman's approach to it and attitude about it. On the other hand it was hard to feel any true communist influence in the Dominican Republic; there wasn't any room. Communists were worse off than democrats in the Dominican Republic so there wasn't any sense that there was anything to worry about there. We always wanted the Dominicans to come along with us on various undertakings in the United Nations; we were always looking for their support there; I think that was the primary thing. We wanted them to be friendly to business interests and

so forth. It was generally a question of keeping them on our side and being sure that they didn't stray, because anyone who knew anything about Trujillo knew he was a total opportunist and would do what was best for Trujillo, whether it was good for anybody else or not.

Q: Was he playing the communist card?

BELTON: I don't recall that he ever did that. There wasn't much of a communist card for him to play. His country was geographically too close to the United States for that.

Q: Did he create a communist party in order to...

BELTON: No, no.

Q: This was not unusual.

BELTON: No, I don't think that he ever created any communist party at all. Let's see, Castro was in by then, wasn't he? No, he came later.

Q: Castro didn't come until about 1958 or 1959. Did you find any political pressures to be nice to the Dominicans? Did you feel any interest from Washington about the Dominican Republic or was there profound silence back in Washington as to what was happening there?

BELTON: Frankly my memories of that time are not very vivid; personal memories are, but memories of our political actions and attitudes to the Dominican Republic are not very vivid. I think the reason they aren't is because there was not very much vivid about our relations at that time. Subsequently, after Trujillo was overthrown and Castro was in Cuba, then we became very active.

Q: This was in the mid-1960's.

BELTON: But that was a totally different picture. In my day we were riding along and letting this guy take care of his ranch as long as he didn't get in our hair. We would now and then go around and talk to him and say we wanted to do this, that, or the other thing. He was a rambunctious kind of a guy and would act up occasionally. I remember once in a while having had occasion--I was in charge a couple of times--to write some rather sharp notes on little things that they had done, or to go to the Foreign Minister to protest. It was interesting because the Foreign Minister was a fellow who was very frank and open. I remember one occasion when I wrote a rather sharp note about the way they had treated an American. I handed him this note, he read it, then looked up me with a smile and said, "Pica, pero me gusta." In other words, "it stings, but I like it". So we did have an opportunity to talk frankly sometimes with these people. The Foreign Minister was totally under Trujillo's control, but personally sympathetic to our attitudes and not afraid to let us know his underlying feelings when he could do so discreetly.

Q: You were there for a period of about four years?

BELTON: Yes, on this second tour, from January or February of 1949 until the middle of 1952. I left there about the first of July.

WENDELL W. WOODBURY
Economic Officer
Ciudad Trujillo (1952-1954)

Mr. Woodbury was born on April 29, 1920 in Crocker, South Dakota. He received his BA from University of Iowa in 1942 and received his MA from Harvard University in 1949. He served in the U.S. Army in World War II from 1943 to 1946 as a captain. As a member of the Foreign Service, he served in countries including the Dominican Republic, Algeria, Japan, and Denmark. Mr. Woodbury was interviewed by Virginia Crawford on June 4, 1993.

Q: (This continues the interview with Wendell Woodbury; the date is June 5, 1993.) To clarify the record--you were in Japan from when to when?

WOODBURY: From November of 1949 until the end of April of 1952. Then after home leave we went to the Dominican Republic.

Q: You went as an economic officer?

WOODBURY: Yes. There were three officers in the economic section and I was the junior officer. I found out, for all my economic training, that I was in charge of routine commercial work, world trade directory reports, trade lists, and that my chief was certifiably mad. It was really the nadir of my experience. The Dominican Republic was a vicious dictatorship. It was less vicious than it had been because, as a Puerto Rican friend told me, all the people with any guts were either dead or in exile. It was a very efficient totalitarian regime, in every sense of the word; probably worse than Nazi Germany except in scale. Germany was a large country and they couldn't keep track of everybody, but the Dominican Republic had only three and a half or four million people at the time of whom only ten to twenty percent were the literate middle class; the rest were campesinos, so everybody who counted knew each other. They were afraid even to think, for fear of letting it show on their faces. Trujillo was a megalomaniac, efficient and with enormous energy. He was not the typical "caudillo," he was much more able. Most military dictators enrich their family and they are satisfied to leave with their loot.

Trujillo put his younger brother Hector in as President while he took the honorary title as Benefactor de la Patria, but he still ran everything. At the inauguration for Hector, there was a five day celebration, but the only head of state that they got to come was Anastasio Somoza of Nicaragua. At one of the ceremonies, I saw a jaunty, middle-aged man surrounded by people and having a good time telling stories.

It seemed so "un Dominican" that I asked my Puerto Rican friend who that was. "Oh, don't you know him? That is Somoza." He was in a business suit, telling jokes and laughing. A few

minutes later Trujillo came in his Admiral's uniform with medals and gold all over and with his fore and aft hat with plumes.

Everyone fell absolutely silent. He was announced and walked in as the band struck up. I tell this story because on the way home Somoza stopped in (pre Castro) Cuba to tell the American Ambassador, "You have got to watch that man, he is a madman." That was the difference between Somoza who was the conventional caudillo, corrupt and authoritarian, but with a sense of reality that Trujillo had completely lost.

Trujillo told one of the American ambassadors there, it may have been Ellis Briggs who loathed him, that, "It was a pity I was born in such a small country, I could have done so much for your country."

Q: Who was the ambassador when you were there?

WOODBURY: We had two. The first a wealthy political appointee from New York named Phelps Phelps (really). When the Eisenhower Administration took over from Truman, William Tecumseh--not Sherman but Pheiffer was named. He came from Oklahoma and was called "Wild Bill," but he was actually a New York corporate lawyer and sometime politician.

Q: How did your political appointee get along with embassy personnel?

WOODBURY: Which one?

Q: Phelps.

WOODBURY: Well, he was basically senile. A strange old bachelor to whom Senator Lehman owed something or other. He was very naive and unknowledgeable. His whole policy was to apologize for the United States being the colossus of the north. He was an absolute zero which made it difficult for us to deal with a dictator who was extremely aggressive, shrewd and energetic. Pheiffer was an intelligent and amiable fellow who knew nothing about diplomacy and cared less. He let the DCM pretty much run the embassy but he backed us up (at least at first). Unfortunately, after I left, he got involved on the wrong side of the Galendez case--the man whom Trujillo had kidnapped from Columbia University and murdered because he wrote an unflattering book about his regime. In covering it up Trujillo's minions also had to murder the kidnappers, two pilots one of whom was American and one Dominican. It was fully reported in Life Magazine and I believe the document published on U.S. foreign affairs for those years. Pheiffer, a former congressman from Manhattan thought himself a man of the world and Dominican politics was like the Republicans and Democrats back home. He could not accept that his friends were murderous thugs.

Q: The state of affairs sounds a bit rough in the Dominican Republic. What were the main issues?

WOODBURY: Outside of the fact that we didn't like to have Americans murdered? There was another American citizen murdered earlier, an Episcopal priest who had reported about the

massacre of the Haitians in 1937; 13,000 sugar cane workers were killed on orders from Trujillo. The priest made the mistake of writing to his sister about it through the open mail. He was buried in front of the alter and on Memorial Day I would have that in mind watching Trujillo's deputy, who is believed to have ordered him murdered sit in full dress uniform between the American and UK ambassadors, in the Anglican church in the capital.

Q: What were the economic interests between the two countries?

WOODBURY: Sugar, sugar, sugar. The Dominican Republic had a very small sugar quota--Cuba pre-Castro had a huge one--and that made an enormous difference in the price they got for their sugar. The other two main exports were cacao and coffee but they were minor compared to sugar. Our main concern was the treatment of American investment; the two largest sugar centrals; United Fruit's northernmost banana plantation; the telephone and power companies, the major petroleum companies were all American owned. Trujillo would harass them all intermittently to shake them down or try to buy them on the cheap. Johnson believed it was a substitute for Haiti. Trujillo was afraid we would not sit still for that.

I started out as the third man in the economic section but with the change of administration and the McCarthy period, nobody could be replaced until they had a full field investigation. They were throwing people out right and left, not for security reasons but to cut down personnel. They decimated the staff corps because they could get rid of them easily but could not fire FSO's without due cause. So I got a rapid series of promotions--my boss was finally selected out, he hadn't been promoted for twenty years--so I went from number three, to number two and agricultural attaché, to number one in the economic section and at the same time I became the junior political officer. At the very end the DCM went off to the War College and he convinced the ambassador that his replacement would be coming from Austria in about two weeks and that I could handle it until then. So I became the acting DCM and chief political officer and the two weeks stretched into three months. It may have been the nadir of my career but I have never been promoted so fast. Promoted only in title and responsibility--as Acting DCM I was the lowest paid officer on the diplomatic list.

The DCM was really my mentor in Latin American affairs and we became very close despite our very different styles.

Q: And what was his name?

WOODBURY: Richard A. Johnson, one of the Galesburg Swedes. He was writing a detailed analysis of the history and political structure of the Trujillo regime: the Trujillo apparatus, the Partido Dominicano, the extended Trujillo family and their interrelationships, how he actually operated, etc. One thing that Trujillo always did was to make sure that nobody was ever sure of their job. Even Paulino who was number two and the only one who could make even a small decision on his own, was suddenly found to be a traitor my last month there. Trujillo didn't kill them off as many dictators do; in almost all cases they were sent into exile, sometimes with jobs, sometimes not. But if they didn't complain, if they didn't try to undermine him or join the opposition, they had a chance to come back again. Johnson was absolutely fascinated by his cold-blooded Machiavellian operations.

Trujillo was, as I said, tremendously aggressive and energetic but he was stuck with this little country, sharing an island with Haiti. Haiti had invaded them twice for long periods. The Dominican Republic is a mulatto nation but they regarded themselves as part of the Spanish heritage, loyal Catholics at the frontier of western civilization against the black pagans of Haiti (who of course are also Roman Catholic). The Catholic bishop of Haiti said that the Haitians were 90% Catholic and 100% voodoo. Well, the Dominicans were voodoo too, but that was never acknowledged. Haiti was the great enemy and that was one reason, probably, that he ordered the massacre of the Haitians. He needed the Haitians to cut the sugar cane but to ease political tensions, he turned on them and drove them out--temporarily. Johnson always felt that if we didn't make our position very clear, that we would never allow it, the Dominicans would march into Haiti some day. He thought that from the political point of view that was the main danger we had to worry about.

The political problems could not be separated from the economic. The Trujillo family dominated the Dominican economy except for the foreign interests, primarily American and Canadian. Aside from the sugar companies, the American owned power company and the telephone company were the big capital investments. Johnson felt that if Trujillo was frustrated in his ambitions to take over Haiti he might turn inward and take measures against American owned companies. I never took this too seriously because Trujillo would know that trying to run Haiti was just asking for more trouble. Johnson thought that Trujillo was acting more and more irrationally, becoming more and more of a megalomaniac. I disagreed after reading Ellis Briggs' reports from years back; Trujillo's personality and actions seemed to have changed little over the years. That was really our only major disagreement: Dick thought the "Jefe" had crossed the borderline of psychosis; I thought he was still as rational as he ever had been.

Johnson asked me if I would try to find out how much of the country Trujillo owned, how much his income might be and how much money he was getting out of the country. I found out that many of the companies that were agents for American imports were owned by the Trujillo family. They controlled one-third of the arable land. Also that the family levied a tax of 10% on all goods coming into the country, over and above the tariff. The army acted as Trujillo's police force and sometimes the work force for his enterprises. That was the atmosphere of the place. I wrote a 70 page report on all aspects. Surprisingly, most of my material came from published documents--reading between the lines of course. Johnson had hoped that our detailed studies would help any successor regime--especially the disposition of the vast properties of the Trujillo family. I have a book "Trujillo--Caribbean Caesar" in Virginia whose author obviously had access to our reports. In the "Plus ca change" department both Johnson and I knew President Balaguer when he was a "respectable" toady for Trujillo.

Q: In 1955 you went on to Algiers?

WOODBURY: Yes. I wanted a European post and they gave me Algiers. That turned out to be interesting because in a sense it was a colonial backwater, the last of the French Empire.

JOSEPH S. FARLAND
Ambassador
Dominican Republic (1957-1960)

Ambassador Farland was born in West Virginia on August 11, 1914. He attended the University of West Virginia, where he received his JD in 1938. He served in the US Army as a Liaison Officer from 1944 to 1947. His career has included positions in the Dominican Republic, Panama, Pakistan, and Iran. Ambassador Farland was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy on January 31, 2000.

Q: Were you able to work with Under Secretary Hoover to get any control over this?

FARLAND: No, my job again was to get the facts and get an understanding of what was going on and get as much information as I could.

Q: How did he receive that?

FARLAND: He was delighted to get it. I did that for the better part of a year. I was in the Department. He called me in one day and said, "Joe, you and one other man came down here out of the 100-some people who approached me and offered to do a [job for me] that was necessary. Now I want you to be an ambassador. I want you to go, if you're interested, to Paraguay." I said, "I will talk to my wife. She is my partner." He called me in about a week later and said, "Joe, I want to be very careful in saying this because there is no hyperbole in it whatsoever. We've assigned you to Paraguay if you want it. We have another post that is exploding on us. It's extremely dangerous. As a matter of fact, it might cost you your life. I want you to know that before you go any further. This is the Dominican Republic and the era of Trujillo. We are terribly concerned about what's been going on. There's been a kidnaping in New York. From the reports we're getting, there is further activity that we should be concerned about. Would you be interested?" I said, "I had better again talk to my wife." She said, "If that's what you want to do, that's what we will do." So, that is what I did.

Q: You were in the Dominican Republic from when to when?

FARLAND: I went there in August of 1957. I left in 1960.

Q: What were you told before you went out to the Dominican Republic?

FARLAND: This was one reason why I stopped that other interview. I didn't want to get into this. I was told "You are to go down to the Dominican Republic. You are to be friendly with Trujillo, outwardly a close associate of Trujillo, as another ambassador has been, but I want you to get into the underground and find out what is going on and what is going to happen at this time and in the future. It's a delicate operation, but your background and training makes you the best possible selection we have in the Department. We do not want to eliminate Trujillo. In other words, assassinate him. But we want him to take his loot and go off to Estoril or some other place and leave those people alone, let them be free." We've been accused of wanting to

assassinate Trujillo. That was not my assignment. That would have been easy. What I had to do was try to convince them to get the hell out of there.

Q: Why were we so concerned in 1957 about the situation?

FARLAND: Well, human rights for one reason, definitely. There was an American citizen, a man by the name of Galinda, kidnaped on the streets of New York, flown to Miami, flown to the Dominican Republic, and killed. Part of my job was to find out the truth of that story. It was true. I found that out definitely. He was murdered in the Dominican Republic.

Q: Who was he?

FARLAND: He was a Spaniard who had been a tutor for Ramphas and Rademus, Trujillo's two sons. He left, went to Columbia University and was teaching at Columbia, was picked up off the street by Arturas Beyat's organization (He was then consul general in New York.) and flown to Miami and subsequently killed. One of the pilots on that plane was a man by the name of Adel Masa, who presumably hanged himself in a jail cell, but the fact was he was murdered by Trujillo.

Q: What was Galinda doing?

FARLAND: He wrote a biography of Trujillo. I've never seen it. There supposedly is a copy. Trujillo did everything in his power to eliminate every copy. I have been told (I can't verify this for a fact, but I have a pretty good idea it's true.) that Ramphas came in the seat of a cabana when Trujillo's mistress in a period of spite departs for Cuba and shacks up with Galinda. If that is in there, he would certainly kill anyone. That is what I heard was in that book.

Q: What was happening in the Dominican Republic when you went out there?

FARLAND: Trujillo was in complete control. He was eliminating his opponents. Murder was in style. It was completely amoral. I want to go back a ways. Before I left Morgantown, I did what I consider my greatest contribution in life. I built a church. I worked terribly hard. I would put on my miner's clothes and go up there in the morning to raise the dickens with the workmen to do a little better, do a little faster. The architect was the architect of the National Cathedral in Washington. He was a great artist and a very poor businessman. We had to fight with him all the time.

Q: This was an Episcopal church?

FARLAND: Yes. We built that church. The architect originally said we could build a church, a rectory, and a hall for $160,000. Remember, this was right after the war. Inflation had not set in. We didn't get plans for about two years. Inflation was going up at about 10% per annum at least. We broke ground with only the floorplan. I was determined to get that church built. I had come back from Korea believing even more fervently in God and I wanted to do that in His great honor and for our people of the town, so I did. I was chairman of the building committee. Everyone had suggestions.

We have to go back. When I got to the Dominican Republic, I found that there was no priest or rector in the Episcopal church in Ciudad Trujillo. He had been killed at the crossing by Trujillo, murdered. I preached for a year and a half along with Ambassador McGinney, the British ambassador. We got that church together. Did the Lord have anything to do with sending me to the Dominican Republic? That's anybody's guess. But I took that church and we finally got a rector and [put it into] operation again. When I got there, it was shut down. But I always add, every time I preached, there were two men in the back of the church wearing [overcoats] and carrying a .38 underneath them, listening to what the ambassador had to say from the pulpit.

Q: Before you went out there, one of the things I've heard is that, like Somoza, Trujillo had his almost pet congressmen. Can you talk about this?

FARLAND: I can talk about it, but I'm not going to name names.

Q: I think the names have been named before.

FARLAND: Mano Namoya was the Dominican ambassador to the United States. He was a very good looking, suave, socially correct individual. He loved all the women in town. Mano had a love nest just outside of the city that you entered by a maze of hedges so no car could be observed. It was totally wired. There were two way mirrors. There was a supply of whatever one wanted in the way of your desire. A number of our congressmen made use of that and were photographed and taped. I had one senator come down and I said, "Senator, I and my country team are prepared to brief you." He said, "I know all I want to know about this damn country. All I want from you is to make diddly darn sure that I'm well supplied with liquor in my hotel room for a week. I don't want to see you during that period of time." Can an ambassador report that at the time? No. That's only one instance. I know of several.

Q: Were you getting from congressmen and senators before you went out "Be extra nice to Trujillo" or anything like that?

FARLAND: No, no. I was being extra nice to Trujillo.

Q: Were you getting warnings from the Department of State, from the desk or something, telling you "We've got to be extra careful because of congressional or senatorial interest in this?"

FARLAND: No, I cant say that I did. I was getting from Trujillo, for instance, his entire take on the intelligence situation in Cuba and I was reporting that. One day, I got a lovely telegram saying "Pay more attention to your client and less to Batista," which I thought was stupid." That was the best source of information we had.

Q: At that point, Batista was giving information to Trujillo?

FARLAND: No, Trujillo was getting information in Cuba from his own sources. No, they weren't the best of friends because Batista owed Trujillo money for some weapons he had supplied. Trujillo had a mine factory at San Cristobal.

Q: Had you been fairly well briefed when you arrived there?

FARLAND: No, I was not. The briefing I got was primarily from... Only three people knew my new assignment. Stuart, this is important. This is why I kept it so tight. John Foster Dulles, Allen Dulles, and Herbert Hoover were the only men who knew my assignment to the Dominican Republic, what I was to do and why I was doing it.

Q: This is normally the job of the CIA station chief in the Dominican Republic. When you arrived there, who was it and how did it work?

FARLAND: I think his name was Reed, but I'm not sure about that. One day, he came to me and said, "Mr. Ambassador, I hate to bother you, but I've locked myself out of my office." I said, "You what?" He said, "I've locked myself out of my office." I took him by the hand and we went back. I picked the lock and opened it up and said, "Please, I have other things to do besides get you in your office. Please be more careful."

Q: This was your old FBI training.

FARLAND: This was my old FBI training, that's right. Secondly, we had a character come down who was a code clerk. After he had been there for about three weeks, he came rushing in and told the political officer that his room at the hotel had been ransacked. Everything had been gone through. His life obviously was in danger. He wanted out of the Dominican Republic. So, I called the CIA and said, "Go question this fellow. See what the heck is going on." They came back in and said, "Well, Mr. Ambassador, the room is really torn up. Do you know what? They even went so far as to take this man's portable radio and carefully unscrew the back and take it off and look inside and see if there was any kind of a transmitter in it." I said, "They did what?" He said, "Just exactly what I said." I said, "You go back and talk to that young man and really talk to him like a Dutch uncle. He's lying." He came back and said, "Yes, he was lying. He had done it." Perfectly obvious. If they had torn up the room, why wouldn't they have been so careful and unscrew the back of his particular piece of property.

Q: So he just wanted out of there.

FARLAND: He wanted out of there. Besides, he had sexual proclivities that are unusual. He felt that he wasn't safe in that place.

Q: So I take it that you didn't feel you were terribly well supported by the CIA.

FARLAND: That fellow was called out of there and another man by the name of Smith came in and was much better and did a competent job. Later, Reed was the last agent there who made some contacts with various sundry people. Stuart, I had to operate on my own. I had a DCM who was definitely in the pocket of Trujillo.

Q: Who was your DCM?

FARLAND: He has a son and he's no longer living. I don't want to...

Q: Okay. But when you came there, did you find an embassy more or less that was sort of in the pocket of Trujillo.

FARLAND: No, the DCM was accepting gifts. The stupid character, he even told me he had spent some time in Mano Demoyo's love house. I had to go back to Washington. Do you realize, for a political appointee to get a Foreign Service officer kicked out is quite an undertaking. I undertook it because I had to. I couldn't carry out my job with him there. Everything I was doing when I would go on leave, he would try to negate. So, out he went.

Q: Who took his place?

FARLAND: One of the best officers I've ever had contact with. You interviewed him. He didn't talk too much about that particular phase of it. He was there afterwards. Henry Dearborn, a great, great man, superb. I couldn't recommend him more. He and John Barfield, who was a political officer. I had one political officer there, Robert Allen. He hated my insides. He thought I was a devotee of Trujillo. John was more perceptive, although I never discussed it with John until towards the end when Dearborn had come in and it was pretty obvious that I was leaving.

Q: The normal embassy goes out and reports on what's happening. Here you were in a country where you had a dictator who was doing nasty things all over the place. Was this a steady source of reporting? Had this been?

FARLAND: It had been reported. John Barfield was a highly competent political reporter and did some beautiful work in reporting. Allen also was a great reporter. Allen was totally on the side of the underground, so he was getting information that was invaluable also, but he [didn't have the opportunity] to report it. The DCM would cut him out.

Q: Let's talk about Trujillo and your overt relations with him.

FARLAND: We were great friends for a while.

Q: Was this his style, to make nice to the American ambassador?

FARLAND: Very much so. We were the virtual country... And, of course, the first Christmas, my wife receives from Tiffany's a beautiful, beautiful tea set, which I returned with deep appreciation and a full explanation that American ambassadors aren't supposed to do this sort of thing and we don't let them do it, but that it was deeply appreciated and the kindness shall long be remembered.

Q: How about dealing with him personally? Did you get together?

FARLAND: I had lunch with him. He spoke a lot of English and my Spanish was not what you would call fluent. But I could speak a little. But the two of us understood what we were saying. He understood English perfectly.

Q: What would you talk about?

FARLAND: For one thing, I told him that the Azamo River was full of mud every day, which meant that the campesinos were cutting down and burning back in the mountains and that that should be stopped. They had to keep the topsoil. Remember, I'm from West Virginia. I said, "That topsoil is the most valuable thing you have here." Then, of course, there was coal. They had an operation there of bauxite. They had a pretty big operation over in Santiago in cigars and the like, a local operation. They made some good cigars over there. I wouldn't smoke them, but they do.

He asked me one time, "How will I protect myself against assassination?" I said, "It's almost impossible." He said, "Well, first, can you tell me how it might be done?" So, with the imagination that my father impressed me with, I said, "Well, it would be very simple and no one would no why. Just get a piece of uranium when you had your shoes made in the States or in England. Have a little piece of it put in your shoe and you put it on every morning and pretty soon you'll be dead." He had a rather dark [expresion]. He turned white. He asked me, "Where do I get those shoes?" Then he said, "You should be the head of the CIA." I said, "I don't think that's the job for me. I'm satisfied where I am."

Q: Were we giving him any help, assistance?

FARLAND: A little, but it was rapidly going downhill. One of the rough things was, we cut off special compensation on sugar. He would buy armament. France was the principal supplier of armament to him. The United States got credit for it, but it was France who was doing it. One of the rough things was we cut off special compensation on sugar. To come up abruptly to this [time] to a period in 1960, I went down to tell him that all military equipment, every ounce of military equipment, was stopped. I went all by myself. He had his ambassador to the United States, the head of the army, the head of the navy, and the head of the air force standing there at attention. He blew up. He turned red. He proceeded then to do the unmentionable. He began a tirade against Eisenhower, my president. He called him "Stupid," said that he didn't understand politics, didn't understand what was going on in the Caribbean, and he called him (I hate to say this on tape.) a "son of a bitch." When he did that, my diplomacy took a flight out and I was a coal miner again. I decided the time had come when I would have to say a few words in support of my country, which I did, ending up by saying "As far as you are concerned, in my estimation, you're nothing but a two bit dictator and your country compared to mine is nothing but a fly speck on a map." He turned redder than anything in this room. I suddenly realized, "Old Joe, if you blink, you're dead. I'm all by myself. He's wearing a gun. He has four million here who will support him. I'm a dead man if I blink." But I didn't blink. He blinked. He came walking around the corner of the desk and said, "Mr. Ambassador, my friend, in moments of stress, we oftentimes make comments that we really don't mean. Let's forgive and forget." I couldn't help myself. I said, "Trujillo, I am a Christian. I will forgive, but I won't forget." I turned on my heel and walked what looked like 24 miles across that office, all the time wondering if I was going to get a .38 in my back.

Q: What had caused this cutting off of everything?

FARLAND: My reporting on what he was doing. I had previously gone to see his older daughter. I drove out there in a Volkswagen that I had. I said, "Flora, I've come to talk to you about your father." She said, "Why talk to me?" I said, "Flora, you're the only one that I can talk to who has the guts to tell him what I'm going to tell you. Your father is going to be assassinated. There is no question in my mind whatsoever about that. It's not the purpose of the United States to have that happen. We want him to retire and leave this country and let it become a normal way of life here in the Dominican Republic, which it can. This is a great country." She said, "I know that." Later in an article, she said I was the only ambassador that the United States ever had there who wouldn't lick Trujillo's boots. Then, at a party about five days later, she arrived at the party and said, "I talked to Daddy." I said, "What did he say?" She said, "The ambassador said that? Yuck!" I said, "That's the end."

Q: He had been killing people and all. Was there an organized group or was it just that you felt that somebody whose son had been killed by Trujillo's people was going to end up by shooting them or something like that?

FARLAND: My difficulty with their apparatus down there was that they had too many people talking. They tried to set up what they called a "triumphal tree." One would know... But they didn't stick to it. They talked. This conversation is all out of whack. I should have told you in the beginning when I got there what-

Q: Let's go back to the beginning.

FARLAND: When I got there, and the DCM had not told me, I didn't have an embassy. I had an embassy residence. The roof was off of it. There was about two inches of water on the parquet floors. We had no place to live. What was available was [a hotel]. So, I had my wife, three kids and a baby, and a nurse who moved in. The first thing I did was, I looked around to see what electric appliances could be operated there. I figured I had better know. In every room, there was a little radio arrangement whereby you could switch between four different stations and then off. That is a direct [connection]. That can be turned into a plug in every room. So, I made use of that. I would come home and tell my wife what a great man Trujillo was, that what he was doing for this country was superb, then go in the bathroom, turn on the water, flush the toilet, and whisper what the truth was. This was an unusual type of operation.

Q: Yes. You say part of your operation was to make contact with the opposition. How did you work that?

FARLAND: The first party we had, I didn't know a soul. I didn't know who I could depend on, the embassy's names. Also, Trujillo was very kind and provided me with an aide de camp in navy uniform because I had been in the navy. He was assigned to me and all I had to do was tell him what we needed or somebody needed and he provided it. A real nice arrangement. I won't say anything more about him, but he was more useful to me than he talked.

Q: Time has gone on. How could you use him?

FARLAND: He is still alive.

Q: But how were you making contact?

FARLAND: At this first party, I didn't know anybody, but through shaking hands, "Nice to see you," and everybody was coming in and smiling... One person didn't seem to be smiling as much as the others. Later on, I told my wife, "I think I've found my contact" and I did. It was awfully hard. No one wanted to trust the American ambassador, even the businessmen didn't.

Q: How could you carry on these cordial relations? I'm talking about at the very beginning in 1957. Cordial relations with Trujillo, which had been more or less the pattern of other American ambassadors, at the same time convince people who were opposed to him that we were not opposed to them...

FARLAND: Very carefully. That was very difficult, believe me. That is why it took so long. I had to do it individually. I couldn't tell anybody else what I was doing. It was too dangerous.

Q: When you're talking about somebody like Trujillo, there are obviously two ways of dealing with it. One, to have him leave, just say, "Okay, I'll take my money and go." The other one was to get killed. I can't think of a single dictator who actually left outside of... Maybe there was a mob outside the place and he goes out the back door.

FARLAND: Batista left.

Q: But he left because he was driven out.

FARLAND: Esponia left Colombia. Peres Jimenez left Venezuela. Peron left... I had met them all. They all came there. [It was a] dictator convention.

Q: In dealing with the underground, what message were we preaching?

FARLAND: The first thing I had to establish was to get somebody to trust me. I did a lot of hunting and fishing. I would get a man out in the field hunting and I could ask him some casual questions that had a double meaning and find out his feelings a little bit. I would indicate also that if the atmosphere was right, mine. It took time. This was 1957 until Henry came in 1959. There was not a great deal of movement except for me trying to sell myself and that was hard to do.

Q: How were your political officers like John Barfield and Robert Allen?

FARLAND: Bob left and I don't remember what the circumstance was. He was very much against me.

Q: Were you concerned that your embassy officers were too close to the Trujillo group?

FARLAND: I had a consul who was very close, but he also served a purpose because I was finding out a lot from him that I couldn't from others. John was not close to Trujillo. Allen most certainly wasn't. So, those two men were not playing footsy with Trujillo. The DCM was.

Q: How about your naval attaché, Edmond Simmons, a Marine officer?

FARLAND: He was a great guy, but he did not play too big a part in this. The head of my military mission, did, however, in the course of events. As a matter of fact, there was a period when in 1959 when they had an invasion from Cuba and one by sea and a slight war broke out, which didn't amount to much, Trujillo's army didn't prove [effective], but it did prove the campesinos would fight for Trujillo. That is one thing it did prove. There is so much to tell. At that point, I was pretty close to the underground. They had four or five of those boys flown in from Cuba in a cellar someplace and they were losing their tan. I flew over to Guantanamo and got a sunlamp. That is not exactly what an ambassador normally does. By doing that, I ingratiated myself.

Q: At the time, obviously, most of the revolutions against dictators usually end of by being taken over by leftists just by the nature of politics. The Eisenhower administration was responsible for the Jacobo Arbens in Guatemala under Ambassador Peurifoy and the thought that he was probably too left wing, which...

FARLAND: That still had nothing to do with it.

Q: But that had been our pattern. I would think that we would be extremely concerned that anybody who would take over the Dominican Republic would come out of the fairly extreme part of the left.

FARLAND: Well, that is interesting. I cannot tell you the parties involved. Some people are still alive and I'm not going to put their life in jeopardy. It may be that Trujillo is someplace and wants to get even. I was asked by Dick Rhubarb to supply him-

Q: He was Assistant Secretary for Latin American Affairs at the time.

FARLAND: That's right. To supply him with a list of the names of the people who were [prepared] to take over the government once Trujillo was assassinated. I'm not exaggerating. I put my life in jeopardy when I tried to get this - and the individuals or individual in jeopardy to get it. But I surprised Dick with a list of who would take over the government.

Q: This was very dangerous to do. The State Department leaks...

FARLAND: This was "eyes only" to them. I hope they didn't, but they didn't know my contact. I never mentioned that contact even today and I don't want to.

Q: Did you have the feeling that the Department of State was at all compromised in the Department with Trujillo?

FARLAND: I felt there was a compromise in ARA. I'll tell you why. Let's just say I like to hunt and fish and travel the interior a lot. It was a good cover for me. During that period, I bumped into what was obviously an invasion fleet being put together by Trujillo against Castro.

Q: Castro was still up in the hills.

FARLAND: No, he was out of the hills by that time. This was right in the beginning of the administration. There had been some diplomatic move by organizations against Trujillo and Trujillo was organizing. He had the largest standing army in the Caribbean, his own gun factory, and a few other things. I see these boats and these men and I get back to the office and I think to myself, "I don't want to report this. [You should] report only what you want the State Department to know." I sat on it for three or four days and thought, "If I don't report this, somebody in this embassy is going to find out about this whether it's through the Navy, the Marines, or whoever," so I reported this. I immediately got a telegram back from the Department: "See Trujillo once and advise him that we look upon this with the greatest disrespect" or words to that effect. I reported that. I went to the foreign office with it on Friday. I"m in my office on Saturday or Sunday. The place was closed. A Marine came in and said, "Sir, the foreign minister is here." "Send him in." His name was Perfurio Herrera Baez. He walked in. I said, "Perfurio, you wanted to see me? I'm supposed to come to see you." He said, "I've just seen Trujillo and he wanted me to stop and see you and tell you that the invasion is off. You can report that to your government." As far as I was concerned, I was very happy that the two of them fought it out. Washington would get involved with that if Trujillo wanted to take on Castro.

Q: What was the role of Ramphas?

FARLAND: That was my first problem of major consequence. Ramphas was invited to attend the General Staff College of Leavenworth and no officer can go to Leavenworth who is above the rank of colonel. So, Ramphas had to take off his general uniform and put on a colonel's uniform and go to the College. He took over a whole floor of the Mulhollend Hotel there. In no time, you find that he puts on his general uniform. In no time, he decided "I don't have to attend these classes. They’re boring." He got Mrs. Merriwether Post's "Seacloud," now called "The Anolita," a beautiful sailing ship that is now being put back in service, and sailed it through the Panama Canal as the warship of the Dominican Republic, pays no toll, goes up to Hollywood and spends many a happy hour with the starlets. He comes back eventually and graduation day comes and he leaves and goes to the Republic. Now the question is, "Does he graduate?" This was the son of Trujillo, the favorite son, the apple of his eye, Daddy's boy. I know this went clear to Eisenhower. No graduation certificate. A certificate of attendance. I take that down to the foreign office. I handed it to Perfurio. He touches it with two fingers, scared to death. I said, "It's a great honor. You know he's been ill and so forth." Then, I got a call and talked to Trujillo. The foreign office will send a car. I didn't like that. I'm traveling in a Dominican car with a Dominican driver. We drove out to San Cristobal. There was Trujillo with campesinos scraping and crawling around before him. He was there with his campaign hat on. He's got on his holsters. I had to tell him that Ramphas did not graduate, that he got a certificate of attendance. He said in English, "You mean to tell me that my son did not graduate from the staff school at Leavenworth?" So, I had to say, "Mr. Trujillo, you of all people understand that when a man is ill, as your son has been, if the climate didn't agree with him, he couldn't attend class. If he didn't

attend class, there is a standard that has to be maintained. You maintain the highest standard for your troops. The United States does likewise. The fact that he couldn't attend, failed to attend because of some illness, it did get him a certificate of attendance." I thought I was going to get shot. I really did. He was violently mad. Ramphas would hardly speak to me.

Q: This "illness" was just your word for...

FARLAND: That was a euphemism. He wasn't ill. I made up something.

Q: What was Ramphas' role?

FARLAND: He was a general and he was in charge of the air force, but there was another man who did the actual work. Ramphas was pretty much of a playboy. He enjoyed that very much. Even after the assassination, he didn't take over really the control of it. He didn't go to Johnny Abbis or to Espeyel and say "Kill them all." He wasn't a hands on operation.

Q: Who was seen as the successor to Trujillo?

FARLAND: There was no one.

Q: Were you able to raise the subject with Trujillo, saying "Why don't you go and take your ill gotten gains (in a polite way) and live it out in Spain or something?"

FARLAND: Mark Clark came down there, which made me a little angry.

Q: This was General Clark, now retired.

FARLAND: Yes. He talked to Trujillo along that line. Trujillo submitted to him in Spanish, so he had to send his paper over to him to be written in Spanish. It was late in the evening and I carried it over to next door to the station there before he got into his property. I stopped, at which point I had two submachine guns stuck in my car. They didn't know who I was or what was going on. They hadn't been forewarned. So, I made some general remarks about that at the time. I gave them the paper and went over to the embassy and took off my shoes and said, "I'm not going out again tonight." The phone rang. A man called and said, "Trujillo, here is what happened at the gate." He said, "Oh, come on over and have a drink." "No thanks, I'm in for the night. I've had enough for one day. Thank you very much. No thanks." That was Mark Clark's end of that effort.

Q: I take it nothing happened.

FARLAND: Nothing happened. [A family member' went] over and talked to him, which I thought was the best possible... To have a member of his family tell him... Nothing happened. I knew it was all over.

Q: By this time, in your opinion, Trujillo was going to be carried out feet first.

FARLAND: Absolutely. I wrote to Dick Rubaum a letter. I spelled out 10 things that I thought were going to happen. I would like to get a copy of that letter if it's available. Those things happen. They happen by chance and sequence and they ended up with the assassination of Trujillo within a year.

Q: Were you seeing at the time, in this 1957-1960 period, a steady decline in the control situation by Trujillo? Here is an absolute dictator. Were you expecting that he would have to take even more extreme measures in order to keep control or would an assassination just be a bolt out of the blue with no lead-up to it? Did you see the situation of Trujillo's rule beginning to get tighter or more difficult because of internal composition?

FARLAND: It was tighter because of the economics, the shutdown of this tax that favored him (the sugar crop). He had been buying copiously anything he could get from France, Czechoslovakia, wherever he could get it. Also, the day I left, at the airport my last handshake with Henry Dearborn, he palmed a note to me which indicated that Trujillo had told his officers to stay out of the Roman Catholic Church. So, there was a break with the Church and that was one of his main supporters. So, he was losing money and church. The United States had obviously given up on him.

Q: Were we concerned at that time with communist influence?

FARLAND: There were surprisingly few communist- (end of tape)

Q: We had already seen what happened with Cuba. Was there a concern about the aftermath of Trujillo?

FARLAND: According to Henry Dearborn, who had a conversation with Kennedy...

Q: In a way, his power was really threatened by this point?

FARLAND: He was. I told you before that I had a little bit of interest there in communism. I saw no evidence of it there of any consequence.

Q: Where was the opposition coming from? The better educated?

FARLAND: The opposition came from those who were educated. These were lawyers, doctors, engineers, top-flight merchants, people generally who had been trained in the United States. Most of them spoke English.

Q: Were these people particularly persecuted by Trujillo?

FARLAND: Trujillo had a very interesting habit of saying that he liked sending one of his minions to see Senor Gomez or Senor Jimenez and say, "Generalissimo Trujillo thinks your daughter is very nice and would like for her to be out at San Cristobal for the night," at which point the recipient of that conversation would say, "My house and home is greatly honored by the Generalissimo's interest in my daughter." Would you believe that?

Q: God! I would think in any society, but particularly in a Spanish...

FARLAND: That's what happened. I can't verify this, but I understood there was a 12 year old girl out at San Cristobal the night that he was going out there when he was killed.

Q: He must have had a tremendous number of bitter enemies then among the people who-

FARLAND: He did, but what he had done was, it locked that population to the top of the mountain and showed them all the glories that lay beyond. He said, "All this is yours and all you have to do is give me your morals." Many of them did.

Q: So, it wasn't just a matter of military dictatorship. It was also a matter of corruption of the upper class.

FARLAND: When he took over originally, he was doing fine for the first few years. He was doing some excellent things. He got roads back into shape. He got businesses restarted. They had a hell of a hurricane down there. But he got surrounded by a bunch of sycophants, who wanted to feather their own nests. They would tell him that if he burped, it was the greatest burp in history. Whatever he did was the greatest that had ever been done. He could do no wrong. It was laughable to an outsider, but he believed his own press agents.

Q: You mentioned the times you had to confront him, but in normal conversation, did you find him rational?

FARLAND: Oh, yes, he was rational. I had lunch with him a number of times. We didn't do any heavy thinking during that conversation, but rational, yes, he was. A man cannot live in that kind of a climate for 30-some years without having something on the ball.

Q: Did you have many congressional visitors? You mentioned a senator, but did you have others of the same type?

FARLAND: And we had some American businessmen who came there. Bell Polly was one. This was a man who had an interest in Cuba at one time. He had his brother signed over there to the Dominican Republic to look after his interests. There were plenty of opportunities to make money there. I was offered one night, "Mr. Ambassador, we've just issued some new stock at the abattoir. It costs very little and I think there will be a lot of profit. Would you be interested in having a few shares of that?" "No, Manuel, I've had to put my stocks all in trust. That would just complicate things mightily if I got any other stock. I would have to put that in trust and that would be too much of a complication. Thank you very much though." The cement plant was another. He had a lock on a cement business. He had been locked on the abattoir. He also took 10% of all profits. You give a man, for instance, the Jeep Agency. You have exclusive. I want 10% minimum.

Q: What was he doing with his personal money that he was making?

FARLAND: He was sending it abroad for one thing. I don't know what he did with it all. Ramphas got a lot of it.

Q: What about his other children?

FARLAND: Rademus, a couple of years ago, was saying that he was going to kill me. I was the one that caused his father's death. There was enough substance to it to justify me carrying a gun, which I did for another year. Rademus was not a very bright boy. He got mixed up with the Medellin cartel in Colombia. He got a nice shipment of cocaine and sells it and forgot to return the money to the cartel. So, Rademus is no longer among the living. When I got there, he was about 11 or 12 years old and he had a bevy of whores in one of the hotels for the use of his friends and himself. It was amoral. It was unbelievable! As John Barfield said to me one time, "If we write a book, people won't believe this. It us so utterly amoral."

Q: I recall one time in prep school in the 1940s during the war, there was one young man from the Dominican Republic at this school (I was not a fancy guy, but there were some fancy people there.) who said he was a captain in the Dominican army. This guy was about 14 years old. What the hell was this?

FARLAND: Ramphas was a colonel at 11. It was a different world.

Q: Back to this contact with the underground. What were we doing except talking to people? Were we saying "Go to it" or was it just for information?

FARLAND: My first effort was to try to get into the underground. My wife also moved into the area. Towards the end, she was going to a book meeting every week and exchanging books and brought back a book, in which there would immediately be a message. They never did find that one out.

Q: But what was our purpose?

FARLAND: Our purpose was to ascertain exactly what was going to happen, when it was going to happen, and who was going to take over.

Q: What was your analysis of... You've got, if nothing else, an awful lot of fathers and brothers getting a little tired of their sisters and daughters being despoiled. This was a very likely source of assassins. If it happened, what did we see moving in at that time?

FARLAND: I didn’t see it happening that way. I saw the establishment of a democratic government. I had the list of those who were going to be in it. As I say, that almost cost me my life to get it. I had to go through a lot of subterfuge and covers in order to make the contact and the contact had to become somewhat obvious.

Q: What were we doing? Were we talking to people who might supplant Trujillo after his removal from the scene and saying "We will support a democratic regime, but we will not support another dictatorship?" Was that our message?

FARLAND: No, our message was that we would support the underground as we knew them. Johnny Puccini, who was one of the wealthiest young men in town, asked me one day, "We need 12 Enfield rifles." I said, "Why in the hell do you want an Enfield rifle?"

Q: A British army rifle, a rather elderly one.

FARLAND: That's right. He said, "Well, we hear that they're the best." I said, "Well, I'll take it up, but I'm not going to guarantee it." I mentioned it to Dick. The Church committee asked me and I mentioned it to the Church committee. I didn't expect him to get them. But if I didn't at least go back and say I asked for them, how much confidence would the underground have in me? So, I had to make some kind of a visual effort, so I did. But I didn't get them. They arrived later. One boy said to me, "You know, you are right here. You look right into Trujillo's bedroom. Why don't you shoot him?" I said, "Johnny, why don't you shoot him? You went to military school in the United States. You know how to shoot a rifle. Why do you want me to shoot him?" He said, "I want to go to the funeral."

Q: With this effort, what support did we give while you were there to the underground?

FARLAND: The support that I gave to the underground was the fact that they knew that the United States would back a democratic government. I didn't give them a diddly darn thing as far as weaponry is concerned or any kind of apparatus of any kind. But they knew that I was on their side.

Q: When you left there in 1960, how much longer was Trujillo in power?

FARLAND: It was a little less than a year before he was killed.

Q: Was this in the air? Had there been other attempts on him?

FARLAND: There had been a couple. The day I left, Trujillo tried to do me in. This is a complicated situation. John Barfield had a call from his counterpart in another embassy saying "My ambassador is all upset. He wants to go with the American ambassador to the airport, along with other members of the corps, and he received an invitation from the Papal Nuncio that there would be a meeting at the exact time that the ambassador is leaving to go to the airport, so he's got to go to that meeting." A few months later, someone came to the embassy with a little present to me from a local organization. It was a little silver tray. This individual was frightened to death and said to me, "Do you know who I am?" The question was "Do you know I'm in the underground?" I said, "Yes, I know who you are." The individual said, "I've been told to tell you to be extremely careful on the way to the airport." And out the person went. I told Dearborn what the situation was. I knew it couldn't be true because the night before, the Papal Nuncio, not being able to come to a party that I was attending, sent me a little painting of the Crucifixion, along with a note of his high regards. He wasn't supporting Trujillo and we knew that. I knew this was a fake, but John went up and was told there was no meeting, that that was not our invitation. It was all printed with a seal and everything else. It looked official. So, what actually happened, the whole corps said, "The hell with that" and they all went with me to the airport.

Q: When you got to Washington, I assume you were debriefed and you were seeing people. What were you saying?

FARLAND: Most of what I've told you. But I was basically talking to Dick Rubottom. They were working on my next post, which was Panama.

Q: Before we leave the Dominican Republic, during 1957-1960, what were relations with Haiti like? This was the time of Papa Doc Duvalier. Were there much relations there?

FARLAND: The Haitians sent a couple of delegations over to the Dominican Republic and they were frightened to death. Papa Doc was scared to death of Trujillo and justifiably so. I told you at another time before we started recording that one day Trujillo killed between 30 and 40,000 Haitians and the Zone Sanitaire, which was the borderline between Haiti and the Dominican Republic. He let them come over to harvest his sugarcane, paid them 50 cents and as much sugar as they could eat from the cane, really slave labor. So he made use of them when he wanted to.

Q: What about the Dominican army? How did we see that back at this time?

FARLAND: As far as the numbers were concerned, that was the largest standing army in the Caribbean. They were well-equipped with everything that Trujillo could buy. They had some tanks, though not many. They had a fairly good rifle that was made near San Cristobal. They made pistols there also. As far as their fighting ability, when that so-called invasion came from Cuba, they didn't purport themselves too well, but the boys were all...

Q: Usually, there are two sources. The enlisted men in these armies come from the campesinos and the officer corps can either come from the upper class or from the campesino class, but the brighter ones move up through this and therefore owe their allegiance more to both the army and to the dictator.

FARLAND: That was Trujillo's case. He rose through the ranks when we sent Marines in down there. He got his training from the United States Marine Corps. He was very proud of that.

HENRY DEARBORN
Deputy Chief of Mission
Ciudad Trujillo (1959-1961)

As a member of the Foreign Service, Mr. Dearborn served in countries including the Dominican Republic, Colombia, and Mexico. Mr. Dearborn was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy on May 8, 1991.

Q: How did your assignment to the Dominican Republic come about and what were you doing?

DEARBORN: I suppose from the spectacular point of view it was probably the most, because relations were fast deteriorating with the Trujillo dictatorship with which we had been playing along for about 30 years. Things had more or less suddenly started to go into a tail spin. I was sent there as Deputy Chief of Mission. The Ambassador had had my predecessor recalled.

Q: Who was the ambassador?

DEARBORN: Joseph Farland. He didn't get along with his DCM so he had him recalled. That was just about the time I was coming out of the War College and they sent me there. I always remember Bill Snow was Deputy Assistant Secretary for Latin America and he called me over to tell me where I was going when I came out of the War College. He told me about this difficulty that had largely been caused by my predecessor talking out of turn and saying things outside the Embassy that the Ambassador didn't approve of. Bill said they had picked me for several reasons, and one was that I "didn't talk much". I always thought that was very funny.

Q: I am right now reading a book by a man who came a little after you, Martin, called "Overtaken By Events." I never focused much on the Dominican Republic, but apparently the Trujillo regime was about as odious a regime as you can have, and yet we were unhappy with a person like Peron who was practically snow white when compared to Trujillo.

DEARBORN: Peron was in exile in the Dominican Republic, but he left just before I got there.

Q: Could you explain our relationship at the time you were there in 1959, and what the situation was there?

DEARBORN: The situation over many years had been that the United States didn't exactly approve of him, but he kept law and order, cleaned the place up, made it sanitary, built public works and he didn't bother the United States. So that was fine with us. About the time I got there his iniquities had gotten so bad that there was a lot of pressure from various political groups, civil rights groups and others, not only in the US but throughout the hemisphere, that something just had to be done about this man. He had his torture chambers, he had his political assassinations and he forced people to do things they didn't want to do. He would take a business leader and say, "I want you to give a speech praising me on such and such an occasion." He would see a successful business and demand a big cut out of it.

All these things were mounting up and opposition to him was growing. There had been a few attempts to assassinate him in the past, but they hadn't been successful, obviously. There were three main props that held Trujillo in power: one was the US, because we were semi-friendly and didn't do anything to get him out; one was the Catholic church which took the long view and all he had to do was build a few churches and be nice to the Church and they were willing to tolerate him; and the other was the business community because he had always kept law and order and cleaned up the country when it was previously a mess.

But just before I got there, when Joe Farland got there, the business community was fed up with the way they were treated. The Catholic Church felt that they couldn't go along with this pariah

any longer because it was giving them a bad name. And the United States was feeling all this pressure from various sectors at home and abroad to do something about the monster.

His personal relations with the US became worse. He sent his son, Ramfis, up to Leavenworth to the Army Staff College and he didn't take it too seriously. He spent a good deal of his time off the West Coast with his yacht dating Kim Novak and other actresses, etc. So when it came time for graduation they refused to give him any kind of recognition. Ramfis had never been told no in his whole life and was furious. Trujillo was furious and considered it a slight.

Some of our ambassadors felt they had to get along with Trujillo. Joe Farland took a different view. He started reporting all his iniquities--the torture chamber, who had been killed and under what circumstances. Trujillo would take a perfectly honorable person and write anonymous letters to the press questioning his or her character. I remember one case of a lady doctor who he said was a lesbian. Things like that...just mean. People were disappearing. People were afraid to talk anywhere where people could listen to them. I remember one reporter for US News and World Report came to town. He had been there a few days and had a few unsavory experiences. He said to me one day, "You know, I spent two years in Moscow, but I never really felt afraid 'til I got here." He was sitting in his hotel room one night with the door locked. The door opened and a great monstrous man came in, stood there and looked at him and then without saying a word turned around and walked out. They were trying to scare him into not saying anything against the government.

Trujillo also had a few angels in the United States. There were southern Senators who thought he was great. Some public figures went down there...

Q: Who were some of these?

DEARBORN: Senator Eastland was one.

Q: Oh, yes from Mississippi.

DEARBORN: He wasn't the only one. Not only Senators, but also business people who he wanted to butter up. They would come back after being given the red carpet treatment and say good things.

Q: How did we act at the Embassy? When these people came and received the red carpet treatment, would we try to give them an accurate picture of what was happening?

DEARBORN: Sometimes they bypassed the Embassy and sometimes the favors done for them were in the United States.

Q: Did you have the feeling when you were there that the Embassy was turning around and really trying to tell it the way it was?

DEARBORN: Yes, by the time I got there yes. Not while I was there, but just before I got there. Farland was doing it.

Q: How did Farland and Trujillo get along?

DEARBORN: They got along progressively worse the longer he stayed there. I have forgotten when Farland arrived, but he had been there over a year, certainly, when I got there. Trujillo had already begun to sense that Farland was talking to the opposition, which, of course, was a no, no. There wasn't supposed to be any opposition, but every once in awhile you could be caught talking to somebody he didn't want you to talk to and you would hear about it. So relations were not too good.

I arrived there the first of July, 1959, and that Fourth of July party...(Trujillo had always been invited and when he came, for security reasons, he would always require a separate room with one special person waiting on him and him alone)...was the last time he was ever in the Embassy.

The reporting to the Department became more and more oriented towards saying what was wrong with things.

Q: Were you given any feedback from the Department saying Senator Eastland doesn't like this or something like that?

DEARBORN: No, we didn't have any pressure to moderate our reporting. But the pressures from human rights and other groups on the Department and our government had been such that the US government attitude was turning around by that time. While Farland was still Ambassador there was a plan drawn up for cooperation with the opposition and letting them know that if they succeeded in overthrowing Trujillo, we would favor them. We called them the pro-US opposition. Some of the opposition was living outside the country, the exiles. Some of these were quite leftist and led by Juan Bosch and the Department wasn't too happy about them taking power. This was a plan drawn up and approved back in Washington.

Farland was there until May 1960 when I became Chargé. In August we severed diplomatic relations with the Dominican Republic as a result of a meeting of Foreign Ministers in San Jose, Costa Rica. All the American Republics voted to sever diplomatic relations with Trujillo because of the pressure put on them by Venezuela because Trujillo was caught red-handed trying to assassinate President Betancourt of Venezuela. It was indisputable. His agents were caught. The Venezuelans insisted that solidarity be shown on this. We were not averse to that because we were pretty much put out by him ourselves by that time.

Then, I think it was August 21, when diplomatic relations were broken, we continued consular relations. So I switched to being Consul General. Three weeks before the break I didn't even have an exequatur, but obtained one just in time.

Q: Which is the permission to perform consular duties in a country.

DEARBORN: Knowing that we were going to break, but they didn't know, I sent over asking for an exequatur for myself and the chief of the political section of the Embassy and maybe one or two others.

Once we broke there wouldn't have been anybody to run the office. I wouldn't be there, the chief of the political section wouldn't be there, the agencies would be gone. In two or three weeks I received the exequaturs and within a couple of weeks we broke relations.

I always said this was the only time that I chose my own ambassador. There weren't many left once all the Republics of the hemisphere broke relations. But there were the British, Canadian, Chinese, Japanese, French, Italians--I think only about ten embassies left. I recommended to the Department that they ask London if the British Ambassador could represent us. He was one of the no-nonsense about it types. My judgment at that time was proved correct because he was great. The day...I told him we were going to break relations on such and such a day...and on the day of the break he came over to the office, brought a stack of British stationery and said, "All you have to do is write notes to the Foreign Office just as you always do and send them over to me. I will sign them." He said, "Of course, you are going to have to learn to write in English."

We didn't have many communications with the Foreign Office, but I did have a few times when I needed to get something across, problems we had, etc. So he proved to be great.

A couple of weeks later a CIA message came from Washington (the CIA types had to leave with all the rest) asking me if I would be willing to carry on the CIA station chief job. Ambassador Farland had had contacts with the opposition and had brought me in on them. Even the station chief did not deal with them. I was the only one who could really carry on with them, because they were very skittish having had bad experiences with American Embassy people in the past. Things had gotten back to Trujillo, so they really didn't trust anybody. But they had gotten to trust Farland and me. So I carried on the contacts with the opposition reporting to CIA. We were using all these weird means of communication because we didn't want to be seen with each other. Things like notes in the bottom of the grocery bag, rolled up in cigars, etc.

Q: What were you doing with the opposition?

DEARBORN: They were asking us for advice at times. They were asking us for help at times. We didn't always give them what they wanted, but they knew that if they got into power that we would be supporting them. They also kept being hopeful that we might help them in more ways than we might be willing to. For instance, they told us that they wanted to do this by themselves, but they wanted our help.

As time went on and Trujillo didn't collapse, they began to have more violent ideas as to what they might do to him. Eventually they developed an assassination plot which because of my close relationship with them I was fully aware of. He was assassinated on May 30, 1961. I knew they were planning to do it, I knew how they were planning to do it, I knew, more or less, who was involved. Although I was always able to say that I personally did not know any of the assassins, I knew those who were pulling the strings. I knew everything except when. The only reason I didn't know when was because they didn't know either.

There had to be a certain set of circumstances when they could put their plan into action. The last few days were rather hairy because I had told the Department via CIA communications (I had a

different typewriter on which I typed out my messages to the opposition so that it wouldn't be traced to Embassy typewriters) all about the plan. I recall a frantic message from the Department, I guess signed off on by President Kennedy, saying, in effect, "Look, we have all this trouble with Castro; we don't want any more trouble in the Caribbean. Tell these people to knock it off." So I communicated to the opposition people that Washington was very much against any attempt at assassination. The answer I got back from them was, "Just tell Washington it is none of their business. This is our business. We have planned it and we are going to do it and there is nothing you can do about it." I relayed this to Washington. I am sure there were some in Washington who were skeptical; that there was an alarmist down there in the consulate.

The night of May 30, 1961, the Chinese Ambassador was giving some kind of a money raising thing at the country club for charity to which I went. We started back around 11:00 and ran into a roadblock along the ocean highway. They were stopping all cars and making everybody get out. They looked in trunks, pulled up rugs, etc. I had a CIA fellow in the car (along about January the CIA had sent a couple of people in to the consulate) and I said, "Bob, this is it. I am sure this is it." They wouldn't let us continue on that road, they sent us back along another road into town. We got to the Embassy, where I had been living for about a year, and the telephone rang and one of my main contacts of the opposition said, "It is over, he is dead." I knew immediately what happened and went down to the office and sent off a message to Washington.

A little later, maybe an hour or so, I had gone to bed, the phone rang and it was a call from a girls school there run by American nuns. An American bishop (there were six bishops in the Dominican Republic and one was an American), had gotten in trouble with Trujillo who had threatened him in his bishopric up in San Juan de la Haguana and for safety sake he was living in the girls school for a time.

Well the nuns called and said, "You know, Bishop Reilly has been kidnapped from the school and we don't know where he is. We want you to come over right away." So I called the British Ambassador. I couldn't get through to him but got his number two man, Bill Harding, and said, "Bill, will you please meet me over at the school for girls."

I got over to the girls school and it was a mess. The nuns wore white cassocks and there were little blood specks on them. I said, "What happen?" They said, "About 15 of these thugs came in and started firing guns. We didn't get hit but little specks of brick came off the wall and nicked our faces." Then they took us to the Bishop's room where the pet dog that the invaders had killed was lying across the threshold. They had kidnapped the Bishop and taken him off to who knows where.

Then Bill Harding arrived and shortly after him British Ambassador McVittie. Then one of the Dominican generals came. I described what had happened and explained we didn't know where the Bishop was and we were concerned for his safety since he was an American citizen. The General said he would go back and talk to the President. We decided to look for further assistance.

There wasn't a Papal Nuncio at the time, but there was a chargé d'affaires. I said, "Let's go over to the Nuncioatura. Bishop Reilly is an American citizen, but the Vatican should have an interest

in this." We roused the chargé Monsenor del Guidici. He was no help. He was obviously scared. He was afraid of doing anything that might get him in wrong with his bosses. The British Ambassador wanted him to go over with him to the Foreign Minister--get him out of bed and raise a ruckus. But Monsenor del Guidici said, "I don't think they will hurt the Bishop, do you?" I said, "I think they would hurt the Bishop.

They threw rocks at him and threw him out of his rectory. It was just luck that one of those rocks didn't kill him. I don't agree with you." The British Ambassador rose to the occasion and said , "If you don't want to go I will go by myself."

He went off to see the Foreign Minister. Bill Harding and I, probably about 4:00 by now, went back to the girls school and who should be sitting on the sofa in the front hall but Bishop Reilly. He was the first one to tell me, after I had gotten my initial message, that Trujillo had been assassinated. What had happened to him was that his captors took him to the air force base outside the city, San Isidro.

Somehow President Balaguer, who was Trujillo's figurehead president, heard about it and sent word out to the base to bring the Bishop to see him. When he arrived, Balaguer said, "I'm terribly sorry about what happened to you but you know the Generalissimo has been assassinated tonight and these fellows through an excess of zeal thought that you might be involved in it because the relations between you had been bad." So I sent out a message about Bishop Reilly. It was a wild night.

It wasn't for another day or two that the general public knew that Trujillo had been assassinated. They didn't give out the information right away.

Q: Well the aftermath of the thing was terribly disorganized wasn't it? In other words the opposition group didn't take advantage of this.

DEARBORN: What happened was; Ramfis was in Europe. The minute he heard about it he chartered a plane and flew back to the Dominican Republic. Balaguer was the civil leader, but Ramfis was still head of the air force. The family was definitely a group to be reckoned with. Balaguer wasn't completely independent even now that Trujillo was dead.

The assassins picked the time they did it because the circumstances were right. They knew on some nights he went to visit his mother and after visiting her he would get into a nondescript car and drive along the coastal highway to see his mistress. He would do that completely unscheduled and didn't worry too much about it because nobody knew in advance. But the opposition had a spy in the garage who reported to them that this was the night. So they had two cars mobilized. One got in front of his car and one got in back and they forced him off the road. He had a gun but they overpowered him and killed him. That is how it happened.

Then they didn't know if at the time of the funeral whether the family or the opposition might cause some problems. So I didn't dare go to the funeral because I was afraid I would have to call in the Navy which was just over the horizon--the biggest naval force since World War II was sitting just over the horizon-- and didn't want to go away from my communications. I sent the

number two man to the funeral. So there were all sorts of speculation as to why I hadn't gone to the funeral.

About a week later, I received a phone call one morning at 7:00 a.m. from Ted Achilles who was with the Task Force in the Department. He said, "Henry, we want you, your wife, and the children out of there on the noon plane. We think you are in danger," the concern being that Ramfis and his group had killed all the assassins except for two and was unpredictable. So I said, "There is no noon plane but there is a plane to Puerto Rico at 2:00 and I could get on that, I guess." We were living in the Embassy and our pictures were on the wall and our clothes were in the closets and drawers. I said to my wife, "Look, you take the house and I will take the office and we will do the best we can." So my wife went through the house with another wife who was still at the post. She went from room to room and put everything that belonged to us in the middle of the floor. I went to the office where we were pretty streamlined by that time. We even had our secret files in a burn barrel ready to burn up because we didn't know what was going to happen. About a month before that we had gone through everything and shipped back to Washington everything that we didn't absolutely need, because we just didn't know what might happen--we didn't have diplomatic immunity anymore. Trujillo was good at staging things and could have staged a raid on the Consulate General and disclaimed any knowledge of it.

I called the British Ambassador and said, "You know I wouldn't ask you to do this unless it was extremely urgent, but could you come over to the house." He came over and I told him everything that was happening and that I was leaving at 2:00.

The Admin officer, who was still there was going...(we had already loose packed most of our furniture when we moved into the Embassy because we didn't need it and stored it in the garage)...to pack up the other things lying in the middle of the floors and send them to Bogota, our next post. It was the best move we ever had. We didn't miss a single thing. The only mistake was that I got an Embassy lamp.

A funny incident, Evelyn Cotterman who was the Admin. Officer's wife, was helping us around the bedrooms. I had my shirt, tie, shoes and socks on but couldn't find my pants. I said, "Evelyn where are my pants?" She said, "Oh, my god, I packed them." They had to go back down to the car outside and unpack my pants so that I could leave the country with dignity.

Q: When Ramfis took over...?

DEARBORN: He didn't really take over. Let me clear up the relationship there. The day before I got this phone call to leave, I went over to the Palace to talk with President Balaguer on instructions from the Department. I said, "I am sure you know, because of your air force observers, that we have a very large naval force just over the horizon and we want you to know that if you feel you need help we will give it to you." His answer, in effect was, "I have had a talk with Ramfis and he has agreed to respect the civilian authority and as long as I don't have any reason to think he won't, I don't think I ought to do anything like you are suggesting." I also took the occasion to tell him that the way that some respectable citizens of his Dominican Republic were being treated was not making a very good impression abroad and was hurting his government. That was the last time that I saw him.

Q: While you were there Ramfis ran wild didn't he?

DEARBORN: That is true but I never saw anything of Ramfis. He was a playboy. He was out of the country a lot.

Q: I am talking about after his father's death, but you weren't there very long were you?

DEARBORN: A week. Trujillo was killed the 30th of May and I left the 5th of June.

Q: Were you replaced by the next ranking officer?

DEARBORN: No, they took a fellow out of the War College, named John Calvin Hill, and sent him down as Consul General, until Ambassador Martin came. I think they didn't get along too well, and Hill went as DCM to Venezuela. Hill had a very interesting time of it before Martin arrived.

Q: How did you and the Embassy and later on you and the Consulate General view Castro? He was just coming to power at this time and this was sort of a cataclysmic event and it was your next door neighbor. If we were getting nervous, what was happening in the Dominican Republic?

DEARBORN: Trujillo used this. He was getting angry with us and in order to bother us and maybe change our minds about him, he was threatening to be chummy with the communists, which was ridiculous. But he sort of waved this in our faces--if you don't like me I will go over to Castro. Of course Castro had no desire to get in with Trujillo, so from that side there wasn't anything. But Trujillo was making all these motions to join hostile forces against us with anyone he could find. And with some success. It did bother Washington. It also added fuel to the degeneration of relations.

Q: Kennedy came in January, 1961. Joseph Kennedy had connections everywhere, did you have the feeling that he had connections with the Trujillo government?

DEARBORN: No, I didn't. Joseph Kennedy's name didn't crop up in the Embassy. The one that did crop up was a fellow who had been a trouble shooting ambassador of ours--I think he had been with the Flying Tigers--William Pawley. He was a nuisance. He had a brother who was in charge of their family interests in the Dominican Republic and they had been cozy with Trujillo. One thing that happened was that I had a message (Feb, '61) that Senator Smathers (Florida) was coming to the Dominican Republic and wanted to talk with Generalissimo Trujillo about our relationship, etc. He wanted me to go with him to see Trujillo-- the last thing I had any desire to do.

Anyway, he came and just as he came Bill Pawley arrived. Of course, Bill had every interest in seeing that things went well with Trujillo. Smathers took me aside and said, "You know, Bill Pawley is arriving too, but when I see Trujillo I do not want him with us." So then Bill Pawley joined the group and said, calling Smathers by his first name, "Now, when you go to see Trujillo

I want to go with you." Smathers couldn't get out of it by that time. He didn't want to say no to Pawley I guess because Pawley had influence in Florida.

In addition, Pawley had Bebe Rebozo, a friend of Nixon's in Florida, with him. So Senator Smathers, Bill Pawley and Beebe Rebozo and I all went to see Trujillo. Smathers gave him this talk. He said, "Generalissimo you have the opportunity to be a great hero in this hemisphere. You have the opportunity to be one of the few dictators, one of the only dictators, who was ever able to turn his country into a democracy during his lifetime. If you would do that you would really be a hero to your people and to the hemisphere." I sat there thinking, "Oh lord, you don't know who you are talking to." Trujillo said just what I could have written as his script, "Senator, I don't know what you are talking about. I am just a citizen in this country. I don't have any public office. We have a president, an executive, a legislature, a supreme court just like your country. I really don't know what you are talking about." So Smathers didn't get anywhere with it. That was one of my more interesting moments. Hector Trujillo, a brother, was figurehead President and was present at the interview.

Then Trujillo did a funny thing. He had a custom that every once in a while he would have a mass baptism. He was about to have one and he wanted the Senator to come and see it. Trujillo would be godfather to all these little kids. So we went into the Palace chapel. Of course, pictures were everything. What Trujillo wanted was a picture of himself and the babies and Senator Smathers. I was standing next to the Senator and just when he was to snap the picture I would step back and get behind the Senator so I wouldn't get myself in it. The Senator would pull my arm and say, "Come on, get in the picture." So I would step back next to him and just as the picture was to be taken again I would step back behind the Senator again. When the picture came out, I think it was in the New York Times or local paper, I was not in evidence. Thirty years later I saw that one of the pictures not earlier published did have a piece of my head.

Q: One last thing about the Dominican Republic, you were mentioning about the Bishop and the Papal Nuncio and about some papers?

DEARBORN: Yes, that was very important. Before I moved into the Embassy and Ambassador Farland was still there, a new Papal Nuncio arrived. He was a commanding figure. He was regal-- tall, a man about 50 years old. The previous Nuncio had been a little old, nondescript man who never caused any problems. This Nuncio got off on the wrong foot. He hadn't been there long and they were about to inaugurate a new international airport. So the Foreign Office sent a message over to the Nuncio that they would like to have him give an address at the inauguration. He said, "I don't think that is exactly the proper job for a Papal Nuncio." However they put some pressure on him and he said, "Well, all right I will say something." They said, "Well, please submit what you are going to say before you do it." Well he didn't like that very much either, but finally he did. They came back saying they wanted him to put in something about the glories of the Generalissimo, etc. The Nuncio refused saying that was not his role. So he didn't get off on the right foot.

As time went on the bishops (I really don't know how much the Papal Nuncio inspired it and how much the horrors of the Generalissimo's activities alone inspired it), a critical pastoral letter which they all signed. Not the Nuncio but the six bishops. Trujillo blamed the Nuncio whether he

was at fault or not. One of the bishops, as I said, was an American, and one was a Spaniard; the other four were Dominicans. This was anathema to Trujillo. No one had ever done this before. The pastoral letter was criticizing him and was read in churches all over the country. He was livid. This was another indication that relations with the Church were on the decline.

I became very friendly with the Papal Nuncio and I used to stop on the way to the office after lunch and visit him almost every day. We would swap information. He was a great source of information and I guess, for him, I was also. This was noticed by Trujillo's all seeing secret service and radio news programs noted that the Consul General and the Nuncio were becoming very friendly and that this was a suspicious development.

To show you what little tricks Trujillo used to do--I guess he wanted to scare the Nuncio out of the country, or something. One day I received an invitation to a reception at the Papal Nunciatura at noon on such and such a day. It was the day Ambassador Farland was leaving, so I hadn't quite taken over. I was surprised because I had seen the Nuncio the day before and he hadn't said anything to me about a reception so I sent John Barfield over to find out what it was all about. He came back and said, "There isn't any reception. These are fakes. The Nuncio has never seen these invitations."

At the appointed hour the Generalissimo appeared at the Nunciatura gate and told the gate person that he had come to the Nuncio's reception. The boy went back in and told the Nuncio that the Generalissimo and several cabinet members were at the gate and had come to the reception. The Nuncio said, "You go back and tell the Generalissimo that if he wants to come in by himself I will be very glad to talk to him but there is no reception here." So the boy went back to the gate and there was nobody there. This was the Generalissimo's way of harassing the Nuncio.

Q: This regime was obviously an odious one. How about the officers, you were DCM and responsible for running the Embassy and later on the Consulate General, was it difficult working with your officers? Were some of them taken in by the Trujillo largess?

DEARBORN: By the time I was there the Ambassador had set the tone for the relationship. There was one officer who had been there five years and he was on quite good terms, which was good in a way because he was the Consul. Harry Lofton was his name. Harry had a good working relationship with the police. Harry was far right in his thinking and I would suppose Jesse Helms would be a hero for him.

Q: We are talking about what we would call today a right wing conservative, a law and order person.

DEARBORN: Yes, that would have been Harry. On the whole he didn't cause problems, but in the last days of the regime he did. He was making it difficult in staff meetings. So when we were changing from Embassy to Consulate General I sent an eyes only message to the Department recommending that in the shuffle, Harry, having been there five years and not being in accord with the polices that were being followed, should be moved to another post. Harry never forgave me for that, but I thought five years was long enough.

Q: That is a long time, particularly in a situation where one can get too close, because this can also reflect...

DEARBORN: We had a very good group. John Barfield was chief of the political section and he was excellent. Then we had Charlie Hodge as economic counselor and he had a couple under him. Then we had a naval mission that was very good. Then we had an attaché who represented the Defense Department, Ed Simmons, a Marine Colonel who later became a General and is now in charge of the Marine Library here in Washington. A very nice fellow. We had a very small AID program. I think there was only one person, maybe two. There was an American school. We had, of course, USIA. One of our USIA officers was declared persona non grata because they said he was going around saying things against the Generalissimo. In fact, I, myself, almost got caught because I was talking at the hotel to a newspaperman whose name you would recognize if I could say it, who came through...

Q: Was it Tad Schultz by any chance?

DEARBORN: No, he was more in the ownership class. Tad Schultz is another story. I kept him out of jail. (The man was Roy Howard, now I remember.)

Anyway, they saw me talking to this newspaperman in the hotel and then they said I had been telling him bad things about the Dominican Republic. I could see what was coming and went right to the British Ambassador. I said, "Look this is what they are saying and I don't know what game they are playing, but I absolutely deny the whole thing. It is not true. It is true that I was talking with him, but I didn't say anything to cause the Dominicans any embarrassment." The Ambassador picked up the ball right away and went over to the Foreign Office and told them this. With the British Ambassador having taken this position they decided not to follow through on it. I think by that time maybe they thought they would like to get rid of me and were looking for a way to do it. I don't know.

I would like to mention one more thing on the Dominican Republic. One day a student came into my office scared to death. He said they were after him, they were going to kill him, they were going to torture him. A great big fellow who belonged to one of the best families. He was just scared out of his wits. I knew what was going to happen. There was a secret movement among the students and Trujillo was dying to get the names of all these people. If he could catch one of them he could torture him and make him give the names of the others.

So when I heard this, what I saw happening was this kid being taken out to the torture chambers, being abused and maybe even killed and a whole bunch of kids having the same thing happening to them. All I could think of was that this just cannot happen. So I said, "Well, you can stay here." I had a little bathroom off the office and stuck him in there. It was terribly cramped and it was a hot box; there was no air conditioning in the whole Embassy at that time. I said, "You just stay in there until I think of what to do." I think he was in there two days. Nobody in the rest of the Embassy knew this, except John Barfield whose office was on the other side of the bathroom from mine.

For a couple of days I kept the boy in there, I brought him food down from the house, still trying to think of what to do. Finally a fellow came in, Dan Kirtley, who was the pilot of the naval mission plane. He was the last person of what had been the Embassy to leave the country. He came in to say goodbye. I suddenly had a bright thought and said, "Dan, would you be willing to undertake a little skullduggery for your old friend here?" He said, "What would you want?" Dan was always a man of action. I told him I had this fellow and described the whole situation to him. I said, "He is either going to get tortured or killed and a lot of other people too, and I just wonder if you on your last takeoff from the Dominican Republic would take him with you." He said, "You have him at my plane at 2:00 and I will take him."

Well, there were nearly insurmountable obstacles between the office and the airport: how to get him out of the office, for example. First I had to get him up to the Residence. The office and the Residence were in the same block and there was a long lawn and swimming pool between them. John Barfield said, "I can back up the car to your office door and we can put him in the trunk." I said, "That is too obvious.

Let's just walk up to the Embassy as though nothing is wrong and maybe nobody will notice. If anyone does notice I will say it is Bill Raft." Bill was a Marine Guard who was the most like the young man in physical appearance. So we did that.

The garage of the Embassy was in the back. We took him out to the garage and then I drove the car out. We got halfway down the driveway to the street and I said to the boy, "I am going to open the trunk and you crawl in." I was just opening the trunk when the servants in the Embassy came out of the kitchen and saw us.

So I said, "No, don't get in the trunk," and I pulled down the lid. I said, "You get in the front seat between John and me. Just sit there." Of course I didn't want them seeing me putting someone in the trunk. I said, "If they say anything later I will tell them that we had a bet on to see if you could fit in the trunk, or something."

At the end of the driveway there was the street and up on a hill looking over all this was the national police station. Of course they weren't all up there looking at us, but it was just another thing to think about it. So we got in and started for the airport and this fellow grabbed a newspaper trying to hide behind it. I told him to put it down and act natural. So we drove through town, took the airport highway and about three quarters of the way to the airport on a stretch where we could see both ways and nobody was coming I said, "Now you get in the trunk." So I put him in the trunk and we drove the rest of the way to the airport.

We drove over to where Dan Kirtley's plane was, which was apart from the other planes. Dan said, "Is he there?" And I said, "Yes, he is in the trunk." There was a very low entrance to the plane so he said, "You back the car up to the door." Just as I was doing this, a Dominican who was hanging around the airport and used to help Dan out with things appeared. I said, "Now what do we do?" Dan began looking around the car and said to the Dominican, "Hey go back there and get a pump, the Consul's car has a low tire and he can't drive around like that." So, with the Dominican sent back for a pump, I backed the car up to the plane and the fellow crawled into the plane.

There was a tower with air controllers there and I didn't know what they were seeing or what they weren't seeing. But fortunately something happened that hardly ever happened: three international flights, I think one taking off and two coming in, were active all at the same time; and it started to rain. It was just plain luck. I nervously watched while Dan took off for Puerto Rico with his passenger.

I went back to the office and sent off a message through my CIA channel which started something like: I have probably broken every rule in the book, but...one thing I knew was that I couldn't let them catch this fellow. I often wonder where he is now.

Q: This is the second interview with Henry Dearborn. Today is May 8, 1991. You were mentioning that there were a couple of things that happened concerning your time in the Dominican Republic that we might add on now before we move on.

DEARBORN: Yes, one thing that occurred to me was when President Kennedy sent his own emissary down to talk to Trujillo to try to persuade him to leave his dictatorship, whether to leave the country or just leave power I am not sure. Of course, I was in close contact with what we called the pro-US opposition and they were very good sources for me. One day I had a message from them outraged because they said they understood that Ambassador Robert Murphy had appeared in the Dominican Republic secretly and had talked to Trujillo. How could it be that I did not inform them of this? I went back and said that I very much doubted that. I didn't believe that Robert Murphy had come officially without my knowing it. They came back and said, "You are absolutely wrong, our sources tell us that he is indeed here."

Of course, Robert Murphy was a retired Foreign Service officer of great distinction. I was very indignant and sent off a pretty strong message to the Department, the burden of which was that I couldn't doubt much longer that this was true. A sort of "How could you do this to me?" message and "How could I be expected to retain the confidence of these people, if I didn't let them in on something of that sort." I never heard boo from the Department on my message. I thought at least I should have been castigated for being obstreperous. The next time I went back to the State Department I was on consultation and was talking to the head of intelligence for the Department, I think his name was Hughes at the time. I told him that I had been very curious about the telegram having never heard from the Department. He said, "Well, no wonder, you know when that telegram came into the State Department it was the first time that anybody in the State Department, myself, the Secretary or anyone else, had ever heard of it. It was something that Kennedy did on his own with Murphy." I might say with equal lack of results as Senator Smathers which I have referred to earlier. But I thought that was interesting with Kennedy acting on his own and not confiding in the Department.

My last connection with President Kennedy with regard to the Dominican Republic occurred on June 7, 1961. When Trujillo was killed, the President was in Paris. My nighttime message (May 31AM) reporting the event was promptly relayed to him--so promptly that there were hostile allegations that he knew about the assassination before it happened. Absolute nonsense, of course. I left the country on June 5.

On June 7 I attended a meeting in the White House with the President and the main subject was the DR. This was as high level a meeting as one could assemble--certainly the most imposing that I ever attended. In addition to the President there were Vice President Johnson, Secretary of State Dean Rusk, Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara, Attorney General Robert Kennedy, CIA Director Allen Dulles, J.C. King (also of CIA), and Acting Assistant Secretary of State of Inter-American Affairs Wymberley Coerr. The President asked to be informed on what was transpiring in the DR and then he asked for suggestions as to what was likely to happen next and what our position should be. His questions were directed to Dean Rusk, but Rusk deferred to me for response. I have no record of this meeting unfortunately, but there must be one in the Kennedy files. I reported on my meeting with President Balaguer of June 4 in which he said that he did not require our assistance for the time being as Ramfis had agreed to respect the civilian authority. As I recall, I said that I did not believe there would be a bloodbath though there might be isolated vengeance killings. I also said I thought that we should continue to support the pro-US dissidents since as long as the Trujillo family was in the DR they would try to control the country and the reprehensible conduct for which they were noted would be perpetuated. I remember Kennedy saying that he wanted to be sure that whatever replaced the present government was acceptable to us. He did not want the government overthrown until he knew what would replace it.

One enlightening part of the discussion occurred when I interrupted and said: "I think that....." The President interrupted me and said, "We already know what you think." That showed clearly enough that he had been reading my cables. After the discussion on the DR, the President went on to talk about situations in Angola and other places and about getting some businessmen into the AID program. The latter subject was mostly between him and Secretary McNamara. When the meeting broke up, he shook hands with me and said, "You did a good job down there, but I don't suppose you should go back, do you?" I told him that I would rather have heard him say that than any one and that I agreed it was best not to go back. I told him that I had already been assigned to Bogota and was very happy with that assignment. I did not see him again until he came on a state visit to Colombia. This conversation with the President I remember practically verbatim--I guess because it was personal.

The other thing I thought I should mention is that some years later, 1975, so that is a long time later, I was called to testify, if that is the right word, at least talk to a committee that Nelson Rockefeller set up to investigate CIA activities, especially in relation to assassinations. I went and talked to them on April 22, 1975.

Q: Let me put into the record right now that Mr. Dearborn has given me a tape which he taped in April, 1975 regarding his talk with the Rockefeller commission concerning US actions against Trujillo in the 1960-61 period. We will put this in this transcript at this point.

Taped by Henry Dearborn in April 1975:

My relationship to CIA, June 1960 - May 30, 1961

I arrived in the Dominican Republic as DCM in July 1959. Ambassador Farland departed permanently in May, 1960 and I became Chargé d'Affaires a.i. On June 16, 1960 I was requested

by CIA to be its link with certain opposition leadership. This request had the approval of the Assistant Secretary for Inter-American Affairs. My written understanding with CIA was that the US was not prepared to undertake any overt action against Trujillo while he was in control of the Dominican Republic. That CIA was prepared to assist the opposition clandestinely to develop effective force to accomplish Trujillo's overthrow and that prior to such time as dissident groups had established a provisional government which would control a substantial sector of the Dominican Republic, CIA assistance would be channeled covertly. (I would say that it was not long afterward that the US did take overt action against Trujillo in several ways.)

I was authorized to convey this understanding to my Dominican contact from June 1960. For the duration of my time in the Dominican Republic I was in continuous touch on a clandestine basis with a limited number of pro-US dissidents. They gave me information about Trujillo's activities, both national and international and about their own aspirations and plans. On my side I communicated to them such information and advice as I was requested to communicate by the CIA.

The US broke diplomatic relations with the Dominican Republic on August 28, 1960, but we continued consular relations. I stayed on as Consul General. Almost all non-State Department personnel departed, including the CIA station chief. There were two exceptions. One was the secretary in the CIA office and the other was the Air Force Colonel in charge of the missile tracking station at Samana Bay.

After the departure of Station Chief Reed I was in effect the station chief until the arrival of a CIA chief, I think in January, 1961. Even after his arrival I continued to be the principal contact with my dissident sources. My dual role presented problems for me as I had to remember when I was acting with my CIA hat and when with my State Department hat. My CIA messages went through those channels and the CIA secretary would deliver incoming messages to me. The CIA station chief, who had arrived in
January left immediately following the assassination of Trujillo. I left about a week afterwards, also.

I believe that the reasoning in Washington was that I should depart promptly since the Trujillo family continued to be powerful and since I was known to have been in touch with the dissidents there was no knowing what conclusion the Trujillo intelligence apparatus might come to.

There were three officers in the Bureau of Inter-American Affairs in the State Department who knew about my CIA work. The Assistant Secretary, his deputy and his special assistant. Last named was the Bureau's liaison with CIA.

That is the end of my memo on my relationship with CIA during my time in the Dominican Republic.

Now a memorandum on the United States and the Overthrow of Trujillo.

In 1959 there were two attempts from outside the Dominican Republic to overthrow Trujillo and there was growing dissatisfaction with him inside the country, especially among certain military,

professional and business people and clergy. By January, 1960, our assessment was that Trujillo was likely to be overthrown and we were concerned lest a power vacuum would result into which communist elements supported by Castro would rush. By that time we had drawn up contingency plans as to what action we would take in such an eventuality.

By July 1960, our dissident contacts were telling us that they had drawn up a list of seven possible ways by which Trujillo might be ousted. All ways except the seventh they believed to be beyond their capabilities. The seventh was assassination. It appeared, however, at that time they had no specific plot and that they were talking in generalities. Neither then nor later did they seek to involve us in an assassination. What they wanted from the US was moral support and, later, material and token weapon support.

The following are some of the ways in which we gave moral support to the dissidents:

1. We established our clandestine contact with them.
2. We made several attempts through prestigious persons to persuade Trujillo to give up his dictatorship, preferably by leaving the country. One attempt was made through General Mark Clark. Another through Senator Smathers, another through Ambassador Robert Murphy. Clark was acting for President Eisenhower and Murphy for President Kennedy. None of these approaches shook the Generalissimo's resolve to remain in power. These were all secret missions when they were undertaken. I was with Senator Smathers when he made his pitch.
3. We issued official public statements critical of Trujillo, and
4. In August, 1960 we broke diplomatic relations.

After the break in relations we took steps to offer material support to Trujillo's opposition.

1. We levied economic sanctions against the Dominican Republic, and
2. In January, 1961 I was authorized to tell the dissident contacts that we would make certain military items available to them.

The memo following this one will deal with the arms question.

After August, 1960 we developed more detailed plans for dealing with a provisional government in case Trujillo fell from power. We knew who of our contacts wished to head such a government, but we did not know whether these elements would be capable of gaining a foothold. The situation was going from bad to worse. As the result of the economic sanctions imposed by the US and the OAS, Trujillo was threatening US businesses resident in the country and was also threatening the pro-US Dominicans. His media were carrying on a steady press and radio war against the US

In this atmosphere by the spring of 1961, those who favored assassination in concept began to develop concrete plans. Considering the opposition of the business community, the clergy, the US, and the OAS it was believed that those who assassinated Trujillo would be regarded by heroes both at home and abroad. Also since no pressure that had been tried, i.e., persuasion, sanctions, diplomatic ruptures, statements of censor, had induced Trujillo to give up, these dissenters saw assassination as their only hope of ridding the Dominican Republic of the dictatorship.

It is my firmly held view that those who killed Trujillo and those who backed them up would have acted if there had never been a CIA. They were only waiting for as favorable domestic and international atmosphere to give them the required courage. The concept and details of the plot were theirs, and theirs alone. It is true that the US helped create this atmosphere more through public than covert action. Being convinced that Trujillo was on the skids it was our purpose to cultivate the pro-US dissidents so that the future government of the Dominican Republic would be pro-US rather than anti. Such help as we gave them was to help them come out on top of any rival groups. We never favored assassination, in fact, we opposed it to no avail.

When in April, or May, 1961, I received detailed assassination plans from my contacts, I advised Washington that what had been a possibility now had become a probability. I was convinced of this because of the detailed nature of the plans and the electric tension in the Dominican air. This information caused consternation and I was instructed to urge that any such plot be abandoned immediately. My contacts responded that this was a Dominican affair and there was nothing we could do to stop it. This message I transmitted to Washington.

Not long afterward the plot was carried out.

This next memorandum is on the question of arms.

I do not recall exactly when the pro-US dissidents first urged us to supply them with certain military equipment. However, I know for certain that in January, 1961, I was instructed to tell them that delivery of such equipment outside of the Dominican Republic had been authorized. I do not know what, if anything, was delivered to them. Perhaps nothing, because my contacts continued pressure on us to offer at least a token. They argued that there were members of their group, especially younger ones, who were demanding that the US show our support in this tangible way. My contact said that it was important to them not to lose the support of this younger element as there were many able people among them.

Perhaps CIA records will show, I do not remember just when I was authorized in a CIA memo to turn over to the CIA station chief several, I think four, perhaps two, rifles that were left with the Consulate General on the departure of the Naval Attaché in 1960. This must have been in April or May, 1961. I turned over the rifles and I do not know to whom they were ultimately delivered. So, I do not know whether any of them were used to kill Trujillo. Since a number of high military personnel were in on the plot, the obtaining of a small number of arms sufficient to kill a man did not seem to be a problem for the plotters. Consequently the dissident request for arms from us seemed symbolic rather than anything else--a move to help our pro dissident contacts to hold doubting Thomases among them.

I discovered after returning to the United States that no one in the Bureau of Inter-American Affairs in State had known of the CIA message authorizing me to turn over the rifles. This came as a shock to me as there had always been a very close and harmonious relationship in the Office of the Assistant Secretary and CIA regarding my activities and instructions that were sent to me. This was the only lack of coordination that I recall. Since the authorization was rather an important one I have always wondered if it may have been cleared in the White House as there were officers there who were closely following Dominican developments.

This is the end of the three memoranda on the Dominican Republic.

Tomorrow, April 22, 1975, I am going to appear before Vice President Rockefeller's committee which is investigating CIA activities abroad. In this case they want to talk to me, I suppose, about CIA involvement, if such there was, in the assassination of Trujillo.

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This is Tuesday, April 22, and at 9:30 this morning I went to 712 Jackson Place and called on Mr. Monty Grey of the Rockefeller Commission. I spent two hours and a half discussing with him CIA activities in the Dominican Republic, particularly from January 1, 1960 up through the assassination. He was, of course, particularly interested in any arms that the CIA might have brought into the Dominican Republic or might have authorized to be delivered.

Mr. Grey had done a great deal of research in both State and CIA files prior to my arrival and he had many pages of notes on the basis of which he asked questions of me.

This was a fascinating exercise for me because I had, of course, forgotten quite a number of communications and actions to which he had reference. Particularly, and to my surprise, I had forgotten that I had delivered a revolver to a Dominican doctor. The reason that I had done this was not in the CIA files and so I was able to recall after having my memory jogged that this doctor had asked me if I could obtain a revolver for him in as much as he greatly feared some sort of attack on his family by one of Trujillo's agents and he, the doctor, had no means of defending himself or his family. I thereupon asked the CIA station chief if he could obtain a revolver for me for the doctor, inasmuch as the doctor was a principal source of information for us. The station chief, thereupon did obtain the revolver and I gave it to the doctor.

I made it clear to Mr. Grey that the doctor's request for this revolver had no revolutionary purpose whatever, but was entirely for his personal use.

DEARBORN: In the same year, the Senate set up what was called the Senate Select Committee to Study Governmental Operations With Respect to Intelligence Activities. It was to study alleged assassination plots involving foreign leaders. The reference is 94th Congress, First Session, Report 94-465, issued November 20, 1975.

I spent about six hours talking to this committee's lawyers under heavy questioning. They told me that they didn't think the Senators would want to talk to me, but four days later I had a telephone call telling me that Senator Church and his group did want to talk to me. So I went up and spent several hours alone with about six of the Senators--the ones I remember are Senators Church, Mathias, Tower, and Hart. Hart was a hero to me. The questions became quite detailed. Each Senator had a lawyer sitting next to him reminding him of different things. One of the lawyers, a woman probably in her mid '30s, spoke up and said, "Wasn't this one of the most dramatic assignments of your career?" I said, "Yes, of course it was." She said, "Well, doesn't it seem strange to you that you don't remember more of the details?" I said, "I hope there is someone in this room who is over 65 years old who finds it difficult to remember who said what

to whom 15 or 20 years after it has happened." Senator Hart spoke up and said, "I certainly can testify to that. It happens to me all the time." He was the only Senator there who was over 65.

The main questioning was by Senator Church and the lawyer who sat next to him. It went on for a very long time. That whole testimony appears in this Senate Report.

Q: Good and it has been published...

DEARBORN: Yes, anyone can get it from the library. There is a lot in it on the Trujillo assassination and various other assassinations.

GERALD J. MONROE
Visa Officer
Santo Domingo (1961-1962)

Gerald J. Monroe was born on October 13, 1933 in New York State. He attended City College in New York where he received his BA in 1955. Mr. Monroe served in the US Army as a 2nd lieutenant from 1955-1956. His career has included positions in Venezuela, the Dominican Republic, Germany, China, Switzerland, and Italy. Mr. Monroe was interviewed by Raymond Ewing on March 22, 1999.

Q: After the marriage.

MONROE: After the marriage, because at that point, I didn't know much about it but Trujillo was about to be assassinated. We had just about closed our embassy. We had about seven people in the Dominican Republic. It was almost like a Huxley novel. He had tried to have Ramel Avetricor, the first democratic president of Venezuela assassinated. This caused the OAS to invoke sanctions against the Dominican Republic as long as Trujillo was there. Therefore, we had a scaled down embassy and there were no dependents because of the sanctions and because as I later learned, that dictatorship was beginning to crumble. In any case, I was sent there, peremptorily without much notice.

Q: In 1961?

MONROE: In 1961. I called to say that I had acquired a wife. They said, "Well, it doesn't show on your papers." The usual bureaucratic foul-up, but they didn't seem to care. Wife or no wife, I was just sent off there.

Q: On a transfer.

MONROE: Yes.

Q: What did she do?

MONROE: Well, it was a direct transfer. I hadn't quite finished my 24 months. They were being very bureaucratic about it. I wasn't eligible for home leave yet. Although the administrator and everyone else assured me that her allowances would continue, they stopped as soon as I left. It took me several days to get to the Dominican Republic. Because of the sanctions, I had to go through Puerto Rico, Haiti, and Lord knows. For a two hour flight, I was three days in the traveling. By the time I got there, there was a telegram from Evangeline saying she wasn't being supported. We had been married three months, mind you. She, being native in Spanish because of her background in Santa Fe, just got on a plane, came to the Dominican Republic and talked her way in. Went to the embassy and told her story. There was a labor attaché who was a Cuban American, a very nice man who said, "Well, I'll hire you as a secretary. I can argue that I need a bilingual secretary." So, Evangeline became myself and my old college friend who showed up from Mexico City became the eighth, ninth, and tenth personnel at the mission. The three of us shared a house that someone had, a large house behind a coffee [plantation] I think it was called. A coffee ranch, I guess. They grew coffee and they raised cattle. We were on the edge of the city. Now I am sure it is almost dead center, but in those days it was the country and had all of the charms thereof.

Q: What was your job in the embassy?

MONROE: Both Roger and myself, My school friend and I were issuing visas once again. Then as I mentioned earlier, Trujillo had just been murdered as we arrived, just a few days before. There was great uncertainty, a great rush and struggle for power. Indeed a little known... I am going to presume that what follows now is declassified and part of the public record. As time passed it became very apparent that the right wing was going to make another grasp at power, overthrow a centrist junta that had taken control. Actually it was the Land Rover agent with the unusual name for a Dominican of Donald Reed. Donald Reed, however, unfortunately did not last long. There was an attempt, a bloody attempt actually at a counter revolution as one would call it. There was much bloodshed, a considerable amount of bloodshed. I have a vivid recollection, probably the only thing I remember clearly that [image] of a body being strapped to a white sports car of some sort, a white European sports car, tied across it spread eagle as this car sped through the streets. This body bled all over the white, there was blood all over the white front of the car. I remember it very vividly. We were cowering in our, cowering may be the wrong word. We were seeking cover in our offices, our visa offices which were away from what had been the embassy, and were right downtown. They were often mobbed as people became more frantic to get visas to leave the country, particularly people who had been associated with the old regime. Increasingly disagreeable things were happening in the streets. One of their favorite devices, those who wanted to make trouble were to since it was a city that rose no more than two stories, would be to climb onto roofs and drop manhole covers. If they missed people as they often did, they would shatter like glass on the streets below. People would pick up these shards and throw them at cars and at passers-by and whatever, people who were suspected of being revolutionaries or counter revolutionaries or whatever.

Q: On the other side.

MONROE: On the other side, that is exactly right. Well, we all had quite a collection of these things as desk weights.

Q: That had come through the window?

MONROE: That had come through the window, or picked up on the ground or in one or two cases had been thrown at us as we were driving along. We took ourselves and we took our local hires to and from work. We had a van until the van was torched one morning. So we were there without much, trying to figure out how we could close the building to some degree of dignity.

Q: Were you getting any protection.

MONROE: Very little. We had police who were doing next to nothing. Occasional firing into the crowd which we thought might not be a good idea, and we tried to dissuade them with little or no success. At one point we were literally under siege. We had an old consular officer type who had been in Latin America for years an agent who had a low whiskey voice and a pet lizard and was I suspect inebriated most of the time. He opened the door to confront this crowd. He was going to convince them that he was an American soldier. He immediately pulled by the necktie and slammed the door, and brought this American soldier in who was almost drunker than he was. This soldier had apparently been leading the mob at least as far as he was concerned. In any case, given the amount of noise, having seen this scene of this car and the body and so forth, that dramatic and frightening scene, we withdrew to the vault in the visa mill. We had a little vault to hold our seal, seal or no seal, we just got in in time when they broke the door down. They went along and they took our office away. We came out terribly indignant that at this point we no longer had partitions. We had plywood partitions between the visa officers where the three visa officers sat. We called the major building and explained that we had no way of leaving. The offices had been looted. One of the senior officers left at the embassy got into his station wagon and came down, very courageously. We were all stuffed into this station wagon. There must have been about ten of us including locals. One policeman sitting on top of us all firing through the window against everyone's wishes. Away we went. I mean there was a bit of humor to it as we rode, I suppose. Of course, I was three people down; I really didn't get much of a view. But in due course when it became clear that my wife was there, the department became indignant and evacuated both of us.

Q: Took you out.

MONROE: Took us out of the Dominican Republic.

Q: How long were you actually there?

MONROE: We were there about five months. It never showed up on my card again although...

Q: That assignment?

MONROE: That assignment, although we were told when we arrived, when I say we because there were several other people with me, in the contingent, that we could go anywhere we wanted. Just ask, and they would send us where ever we wanted. We had gotten some award or something or other. Foolishness I think.

Q: Did we have an ambassador in...

MONROE: No we did not have an ambassador again.

Q: Because of the sanctions.

MONROE: Because of the sanctions. We weren't at all sure who was the government either at that point. That playboy, Trujillo De La rosa came in. It looked for a short time like he might declare himself leader, El Caudillo. That didn't bear any fruit. Ultimately centrist forces prevailed and elections were held, but this was long after I had left.

Q: The United States did intervene.

MONROE: Dramatically a few years later, but that was after there had been an election And yet another election that turned out badly. I must say, many years later I was amazed to find that one of the parties, and I can't think of his name offhand at the moment, Baliare. He was Trujillo's last puppet president and was elected president periodically off and on for the next 35 years. I think he has just died at the age of 98.

Q: That was fairly recently, probably within the last ten years.

MONROE: Yes. He was quite blind among his many other attributes.

Q: The five months that you were there, you must have been concerned about the American citizens as a consular officer in the country with this chaos.

MONROE: We were very concerned; however, most of them were Puerto Ricans and Dominicans almost entirely. In other words the island societies are very close. Indeed they spoke the same dialect. Their Spanish had the same curiosities. You could almost always recognize them by the way they spoke. Santo Domingo had a large population of English speaking West Indians, people who had immigrated there from the smaller Caribbean islands.

Q: But not American citizens.

MONROE: No these were just curiosities in a way because they didn't speak good Spanish. You saw them all over. They were an active part of the community. Because of what had happened to Haitians there in the ‘30s, there were no Haitians there from the other part of the island. Indeed it seems ironic now, but we had a free ticket to Port au Prince for weekends. We could fly to Port au Prince and recreate or rest.

Q: What do you mean free ticket?

MONROE: Well by and large they were trying excuses for getting us to Port au Prince once a month, pouch or some such thing. Everyone was encouraged to go to Port au Prince to cool

down and relax and so forth and so on. Just curiously at that point in history, Haiti was the quiet place, and a very interesting place. We spent a weekend there.

Q: And very different. Same island but very different.

MONROE: Same island but very different. Much poorer in some respects, and very much more tropical because of the prevailing winds. Haiti facing the Caribbean and the Dominican Republic open to the ocean wind created a totally different topography and growth of flora and fauna.

Q: You mentioned that there was an incident involving the United States when you were there.

MONROE: Yes. Again, I am assuming this is totally unclassified by this juncture. In fact our chief of mission was in touch with the president it would appear. As a matter of fact, I was present at one discussion with the White House.

Q: The President of the United States.

MONROE: The President of the United States who was Kennedy at the time. The gentleman's name was Carolton Hill if I recall correctly. Yes, Carolton Hill. He died. I think he died relatively young. But, in any case, he was very much a take charge sort of person. He decided that a show of U.S. forces was necessary to discourage the right wing from reasserting itself, or re-inserting itself into Dominican politics. We were staying in a hotel at that particular juncture since our house had been looted. Fortunately we had nothing but our luggage with us. We were in the swimming pool, my wife myself and several friends when we were strafed, which was sort of interesting. In fact, I don't think we were strafed, but others felt that we were being strafed. The thing that was happening was there was a firefight out at the fortress; this plane was strafing the fortress perhaps a mile away, and the empty cartridges were falling into the pool. But they were hot if someone got hit with them. So we dove to the bottom of this pool, but soon discovered that that was not a solution, got out and since I suspected that we weren't being strafed, we were able to go back to our respective rooms. It was really a vulnerable feeling looking up at this aircraft which was almost at rooftop height.

Q: This was a Dominican...

MONROE: This was a Dominican aircraft. A little later on as we were having our Cuba libre or whatever outside, American aircraft arrived and moved across the island doing we knew not what. So we decided that if we were going to get a good look at this, we were going to have to go out to a point right outside the city where there was one of the few restaurants left open. There we were with the entire diplomatic corps, and a good part of the press corps which was growing by leaps and bounds, all with binoculars trained on the U.S. fleet which was right there with an aircraft carrier close beyond. These aircraft that were taking off were obviously running sorties from the carrier into the island. Whether there was, whether they were engaged in strafing activities, there was a lot of gunfire at this point toward the middle of the day. We don't know; I don't know. Perhaps the political officers as usual sat there very knowledgeable. I suspect they didn't know much more than we did. The whole thing reached a crescendo in the next night. The next night we had our [earthquake] whereupon our offices collapsed or at leased were so badly

damaged that they weren't deemed safe to enter. The Department reassessed the whole situation and decided that three consular officers should be withdrawn. The first one to go was myself. They discovered contrary to all regulations that they could find at least, I had my wife there.

Q: Even though she had gotten there at her own expense.

MONROE: Even though she had gotten there at her own expense. I'll say they were nice enough to bring her back. They did pay. The only tragic part of that whole episode, I think in the long run, was her boss was later shot in the end game of whatever political interruption was occurring, and killed. We had learned to really like this man. We were really fond of him and his family. In many respects they made the whole thing possible for us, so we were very sad about that. That happened after we left.

Q: But you were not hit other than...

MONROE: We were not hit, but we were quite poor at that time because we had lost just about everything we had which wasn't much fortunately. We had lived in French quarters in Caracas. Of course things were furnished in the Dominican Republic in the sense that we were in someone else's house. We did leave all of our shoes which was unfortunate because we had to wait for the UN to bring in shoes. My wife rather liked it because we got to Mexico City on the way home and she went to the shop to get a new wardrobe. In those days prices were not all that high.

Q: So after your five months there, they gave you home leave.

MONROE: They gave us home leave. They, no it wasn't that job then. I sort of lost track. They gave us home leave. We had a little vacation in Mexico City where my wife had run a school briefly. We looked up old friends and truly enjoyed ourselves, arrived in her home town, Santa Fe, very relaxed, and were told that I had to report to the Department immediately. I had a very important job which actually turned out to be my first exposure to computers, dealing with early computers. We were attempting to take the reporting output of one post for two years, code it, reduce it to a very short summaries, and put it into a computer. Thereupon we would be able to query this computer asking substantial questions. It was a project, and of course we were told after that was finished, we could go on to where we wanted to go because of our experiences in the Dominican Republic and the fact that we didn't go totally to pieces and continued to issue as many visas as we possibly could under the circumstances. One amusing sidelight was that a woman looked me up at my office in what was then called automated data processing and read me out. She was very indignant at the visas that I had signed. She had turned out to have been a consular officer in Montreal, and she was very indignant at the visas that had been issued at the Dominican Republic because many of these people had turned out not to be bona fide tourists but as we expected seeking asylum. I think I told her that if I had been in Montreal, I would have had the same perspective she had, but there was a different perspective from the Dominican Republic.

Q: Were some of these people, people that she had turned down?

MONROE: No these were people who ended up to change status in Montreal. I think under the old McCarran Act, they had to leave the country to change status, and a favorite spot was Montreal.

Q: She felt they shouldn't have been in the United States in the first place.

MONROE: She felt that they shouldn't have been in the United States in the first place. Well, our turn down rate could have been 110% or so. You know, we had to issue some visas we felt, and of course, to this day, I don't regret any of those. I think the people were genuinely in danger. People were being ripped apart even as usual in this kind of setting. Even if people had not been involved with the previous administration, they were still subject to persecution and even death from enemies, personal enemies that simply wanted to get even with them. It was get even time as so often happens in that kind of setting.

Q: Opportunities for retribution.

MONROE: And so forth, yes.

Q: Did you feel that things stabilized at all while you were there or the earthquake was kind of the last.

MONROE: No, I thought, I have always been amused at the earthquake, although I tell you at the time it was not amusing. It was a major earthquake and the Dominican Republic, had Santo Domingo been the city it is today, it would have done grave damage. As it turned out, there was nothing higher than the church steeple which did fall down. Our offices and newer buildings fared badly. There is an old quarter of the Dominican Republic which dates back almost to Christopher Columbus' time. People may or may not know there is a, it is the only place in the New World where Christopher Columbus left his mark. There is a capsule there that belonged to the Colombo family. The old quarter of the city fortunately survived and as far as I know, is still there as a tourist attraction. It is quite impressive, and in the days that we were there was a major part of the city. In many ways it was a very quaint place, not unattractive, and while poor, not nearly as poor as Haiti was.

Q: But it certainly was a difficult time, the period that you were there.

MONROE: Yes, it was very difficult. I think again it was something that in your 20s you could deal with; you could see the humor in it. At least you wouldn't think you were being killed. And there were many interesting and quasi amusing events, most of which occurred when my colleague and I, Roger and I were trying to get lifts to various to and from work and so forth. This was after we lost our government van.

Q: Anything else we should say about the time in the Dominican Republic?

MONROE: No, I think I said more than I intended to.

HARRY W. SHLAUDEMAN
Envoy
Dominican Republic (1962-1963)

Mr. Shlaudeman was born on May 17, 1926 in California. He received his BA from Stanford University in 1952 and served in the USMC from 1944 to 1946. As a member of the Foreign Service, Ambassador Shlaudeman served in countries including Colombia, Bulgaria, Chile, Venezuela, Peru, Argentina, Brazil, Nicaragua, and the Dominican Republic. He was interviewed by William E. Knight on May 24 and June 1, 1993.

Q: Let's start there -- this is on negotiating techniques and I wanted to get some word of Bunker. I had wondered how Bunker handled the Panamanian thing and I was glad to know you were involved in the Dominican Republic.

SHLAUDEMAN: Well, I was also involved peripherally in part of the Panamanian issue.

Q: Let me just interject that this is a sort of parenthesis on negotiating tactics, when the United States is trying to mediate or encourage a contentious overseas dispute.

SHLAUDEMAN: What Bill Bowler and I tried to do was describe as clearly as possible the scene on the ground, the actual situation as it existed, in a paper which we gave Bunker the day he arrived. We said, in this paper, that there was a possibility for a political arrangement, but the underlying problem was between factions of the armed forces, the military, which had really created this issue, and that we did not think that this was negotiable. We thought, he and I had pressed for elections for a way out, as a way to get our troops out of the Dominican Republic and resolve this issue. We had had a lot of trouble with Tom Mann, who thought that elections would favor Juan Bosch and the left, but Bunker bought off entirely on the election scenario.

So the first thing he did was make it clear to the President and the White House that he was not going to be rushed. He always told this story about how, when he negotiated -- the Dutch and the Indonesians had this problem in Irian -- how he had taken the parties out to negotiate at Airlie House. He said, about 10 minutes after he arrived, George Ball called him and asked how it was going. And he said, Don't you call me again, I'll call you. He made that clear in the Dominican Republic.

So what he did, basically, was take his time. We helped him identify -- which is very necessary in Latin America -- the person who could be a provisional President, be acceptable to both sides. That was very difficult to do, as you can imagine. But he insisted on doing that as the first step, not trying to negotiate the issues, but to get the fellow who could be the figurehead.

Q: Are you saying that at that point, he was getting the approval of the various sides, to that person?

SHLAUDEMAN: First he selected the person, and then he went to the two sides. But we helped him get the person that we thought, and we turned out to be right, more or less, would be acceptable.

Q: This was before that person knew you were thinking of this?

SHLAUDEMAN: Yes. Although I suspect that he suspected. One thing you have to remember about this negotiation is that we had the 82nd Airborne on the ground. We had overwhelming force, so the question really was the best way to use that leverage, which he was very good at. He actually took several months to work this out. He used to go down to see -- the rebels, as they were called, the Constitutionalists, had taken a section of the downtown and they were ensconced in there and they were surrounded by the 82nd Airborne.

Q: They had their own armed forces?

SHLAUDEMAN: Oh, yes. So he would go down there, usually almost every day, and he would sit there very patiently. His basic technique, I always thought, was to listen very patiently and then insist on whatever it was he wanted. He was very good at being very gracious and very patient, but he more or less, I thought, followed what Henry Kissinger has always said about negotiations. Which is that you ought, instead of moving back and forth, to select your position with care -- one that's realistic, the outcome that you feel is the best that can be obtained in realistic terms -- and then stick with it. I think that's really what Ellsworth did. He insisted that there had to be these elections, that in the meantime there would be a provisional president who would not favor one side over the other, and that the armed forces would pursue some kind of process of reconciliation -- which never happened, which I think he knew was not going to happen.

Q: Alexis Johnson said once, in talking to the Senior Seminar when I was there, that his trick was to draft the final communiqué before the negotiations began.

SHLAUDEMAN: Yes, that's more or less the same idea. In any case, these negotiations were successful in producing a provisional government which had a terrible time. I remember Ellsworth and I came back here in July or August, and we thought we were going to stay until the following year. The government almost fell again and we had to go back and hold their hand. But the elections turned out -- Bosch did not win, and Balaguer, who is still President of the Dominican Republic, won and we actually got the troops out in September 1966. That is, only about 17 months after they had arrived, which -- I remember Bruce Palmer who was the commanding general telling me that he regarded that as a miracle.

Q: You thought it would be much longer?

SHLAUDEMAN: Oh, yes. The first time we went into the Dominican Republic, the Marines were there for 7 years.

Q: 1914?

SHLAUDEMAN: 1918 - 1925.

Q: Harry, was there a tremendous emotional response, a resentment of the fact that the Marines had come in the first place?

SHLAUDEMAN: I think you have to keep in mind that this had happened before. Juan Bosch once told me, you know, if I had my dearest wish, I would cut this island across the border with Haiti and I would float us out several thousand miles from you. To some extent, this is all a self-fulfilling prophecy. These Dominicans were always talking about how the Marines were going to come back. You see, when Trujillo was killed -- before that, beginning in 1960, the Kennedy Administration was very anxious to balance what they were doing against the Cubans -- Fidel, the Castro problem -- with equally hard policy against a right-wing dictator. Trujillo was the obvious choice, and at least twice we actually had a fleet go down there as a threatening gesture. So I think people were thinking of intervention, and were not at all surprised when we did it. I don't think that they thought anything of it -- it was just the way things were -- except for a small political class.

Q: Now, as the negotiations went on, did Bunker really have the power to make most of the decisions, or did he have to be referring back to the White House or State?

SHLAUDEMAN: The first place, to go back on that, there was great confusion at the beginning about who was in command of what, because Palmer, the general, had his own orders from Johnson, and they had nothing to do with Bennett and the Embassy. And then Bennett and his group were there -- and then there were all of these initial negotiators sent down. I also participated with Mac Bundy in two weeks of very intensive negotiations in which we tried to set up a provisional government.

Q: Before Bunker arrived?

SHLAUDEMAN: Before he arrived. Johnson sent Bundy, Cy Vance, Mann, Jack Vaughn and Abe Fortas.

Q: All at once or seriatim?

SHLAUDEMAN: These are all anecdotes: One morning, very early, I got a call from the White House saying that they wanted me alone to take an Army plane and fly over to Puerto Rico and meet the flight from Baltimore at 2 o'clock, and there would be a Mr. Davidson aboard and I was to give him every assistance. I said, how do I know who Mr. Davidson is? They said, he will be the first one down the ladder from First Class. Well, he came down, and I saw right away that it was Abe Fortas. So Fortas started the negotiations with Bosch in Puerto Rico, and about three days later, Johnson sent everybody else -- Cy Vance, Mac Bundy, Jack Vaughn and Tom Mann -- all arrived -- the whole thing was a mess. So all of this created enormous confusion. We had over 130 newsmen. The press conferences were turning into zoos. Finally, after Bunday had gone back, this telegram came from the President saying that he was sending Ellsworth and he would be in charge. After that, Ellsworth was the supreme authority. He did not refer things --

we reported -- I wrote a telegram every night summarizing everything we had done that day. We never...

Q: ...asked for approval in advance.

SHLAUDEMAN: What happened was that controversy came over the initial plan for elections, and Tom Mann was very skittish about this. After we won that argument, the rest of it Ellsworth just handled.

Q: Anything fruitful actually come out of this mass of high-level people that arrived?

SHLAUDEMAN: I think, like all negotiations, you have to go through these initial periods where expectations have perhaps been too high. They basically, the Constitutionalists, thought that we were, in effect, going to adopt their position -- at least that's what happened. Bundy and I -- we had sort of an agreement, but it was torpedoed in Washington. It was torpedoed because there wasn't really enough in it that showed we were doing anything about the Communists. My judgment on this, and I was present during the first meeting when the subject of intervention came up in the Department -- my judgment is that the driving force behind all of this was Vietnam. The President was simply not in a position -- Bennett was sending these telegrams saying there was a danger of a Communist takeover in the Dominican Republic, and in the meantime, the President was preparing this massive increase in Vietnam, and he just couldn't -- the idea of accepting a Communist takeover a couple hundred miles away when we were doing all this in Vietnam -- I just think that's what drove him.

Q: You already had Cuba on the books.

SHLAUDEMAN: So, we went on from there and we finally succeeded. There were other aspects to it, but Bunker took with him the ad hoc committee of the OAS which consisted of two other Ambassadors, the Salvadoran and the Brazilian, and the OAS formed the Inter-American Peace Force which is the first, last and only time in which you had a multi-lateral hemispheric military force.

Q: Contingents from other militaries joined ours?

SHLAUDEMAN: Exactly. In fact, the force came under the command of a Brazilian general. In a sense, it boomeranged. The Brazilians I know never got over the fact that the other major countries in Latin America -- the Mexicans, Argentines, Venezuelan -- denigrated this whole operation -- you know, nothing but doing our bidding. This, I think, had a profound effect on the Brazilian military -- in the 70s, became quite hostile to us.

Q: Did that mean those countries were actually at the table with Bunker?

SHLAUDEMAN: No, no. What happened: he had these two other ambassadors, and when they were there--which wasn't terribly often--they would go with him, but when they weren't, he just went ahead.

Q: When they weren't there, was there any provision for those other countries to be kept informed in detail?

SHLAUDEMAN: They were, they were informed.

Q: Fully, frankly -- no secrets on the table?

SHLAUDEMAN: Oh, yes.

Q: That would have been risky, I should think. You might have thought that people would have used this information to push their own agendas.

SHLAUDEMAN: I think in the case of the ad hoc committee, the problems came here in Washington, particularly with the Colombians and the Mexicans, who objected very strenuously to this whole exercise, and to the involvement of the OAS, and what an effect this American military intervention in a sovereign state--but on the ground, the Salvadoran and the Brazilians were very anxious for a solution as quickly as possible. The Brazilians, of course, were intensely anti-Communist at this particular juncture, and were strongly supportive of anything we would do. They at times presented some difficulties in negotiations because of their very hard stance.

Q: In the negotiations, did Bunker or any of the others of you try in any way to affect the Constitution that was going to be...

SHLAUDEMAN: Oh, yes. What happened there was that to govern -- the provisional government -- there was issued what was called an Institutional Act, and the reason it was called an Institutional Act was because the Brazilian Ambassador insisted that it be called an Institutional Act, since in Brazil, their own instrument was also called -- as you know, at that time, there was a military government -- and their own Constitution at the time was called an Institutional Act. I have to tell you quite frankly, I can't remember who drafted this thing. We drafted part of it, I know, but I can't remember how it was finally approved. I think maybe by the Provisional Governor and his cabinet.

Q: Did that then become a final Constitution.

SHLAUDEMAN: Oh, no. It only lasted until the elected government took office, and the elected government immediately wrote a new constitution.

Q: Is that still in effect?

SHLAUDEMAN: Yes. I think it's been changed over time. I can't remember whether there have been any Constitutional Conventions. Constitutions, as you know, come and go in Latin America.

Q: Was there much of an outcry in Latin America in general about this whole exercise?

SHLAUDEMAN: Yes, but the more important outcry was here. Again, I think at the root of all this was Vietnam. If you go back to that period and look at what was published and what the media was saying and what the Left generally was saying, it was a forewarning of what was going to happen in Vietnam. In fact, Mac Bundy, the day he came -- the first day I saw him in Puerto Rico -- he had just come from one of the teach-ins on Vietnam, where he had appeared and argued with students about Vietnam.

Q: Have you written or published on this at all, that a researcher might want to trace down?

SHLAUDEMAN: No. I should say that there are any number of doctoral theses written about the Dominican Republic. In fact, I've just given two interviews to both students at the University of Texas who are doing doctoral theses on the Dominican Republic. But most of these have focused on the decision to intervene.

Q: I might just say that if there is any material you are handling that might still be classified, we have to specify that on the tape. Does that finish us with the Dominican Republic?

SHLAUDEMAN: Yes, but I will just tell one anecdote, which is not generally known. When Juan Bosch was elected president in the fall of 1962 -- he was inaugurated in February 1963 -- twenty-four hours before the inauguration, Kennedy called Lyndon Johnson and asked him to go to the Inauguration. Johnson was furious, because of the short notice in part, and because this occasion was really not important. So, Kennedy sent -- it's important to realize that the Dominican Republic was very important to the Kennedy Administration because of Cuba, and Bobby Kennedy in particular focused on what happened there. So when Johnson was going, Kennedy told Ed Martin and Ted Moscoso who went with him, not to let him talk alone with Juan Bosch. So Johnson arrived and he was his usual charming self.

I was, however, unaware of these instructions, and it was very much in our interests that the two did have a private interview. So I arranged it behind the scenes, and so when Johnson was leaving with all his entourage, they went to the palace. They were all sitting there, and all of a sudden Bosch got up and asked the Vice President if he would accompany him out of the room. You can imagine that Martin and Moscoso were not very happy about this. That's about all of the Dominican Republic. In any case, as I said, it was a very important part of my career.

Q: Next subject?

SHLAUDEMAN: I guess next would be Chile.

LEWIS M. (JACK) WHITE
Economic Officer
Santo Dominigo (1962-1964)

Mr. White was born on August 22, 1921 in Virginia. He attended Hampton-Sydney College and then Georgetown University until 1942. He served in the US

Army as Tech Sergeant from 1942 to 1945. His career included positions in Colombia, New Caledonia, the Dominican Republic, Nicaragua, and Morocco. Mr. White was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy on June 19, 2001.

Q: How did you find the usefulness of the academic training that you got at Harvard?

WHITE: Theoretically, it has always enabled me to understand the macroeconomics of almost any situation. But I thought that from a practical matter there ought to have been some course on the tools of aid, for example.

You go into a country like the Dominican Republic, where we just got rid of Trujillo, what kind of loans can you give, what kinds of technical assistance can you give, what are the conditions for it? Can you get a 2% loan? Just what are the possibilities?

You don't get any of that at Harvard. And I didn't get any of it before going to the Dominican Republic. That's something I would have thought would have been as useful as the theoretical training I got. With the experience I developed later I would have gotten it through briefings in Washington.

Q: Then, in '62 you were off to the Dominican Republic?

WHITE: '62, yes. We went down there about six months after Trujillo had been assassinated in May 1961.

Q: I thought I would stop at this point. So in 1962 we have you going off to the Dominican Republic, and we haven't talked about that at all.

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Today is July 17, 2001. Jack, do you know how your assignment to the Dominican Republic came about? And then could you tell me a bit about what the Republic-?

WHITE: I think they probably sent me to the Dominican Republic because I spoke very good Spanish, I was rated as fluent, and I had had economic training at Harvard University. But the kind of work I had been doing in Washington when I was working on the communist bloc wasn't exactly the sort of work that was required in the Dominican Republic.

It really should have been somebody who was very familiar with the instruments of AID, how we could help a new country that was recovering from 30 years of dictatorship. I had to learn on the spot by actually doing it.

I think the first question the consul general - we didn't have diplomatic relations at first, we were just establishing diplomatic relations, because there were sanctions by the OAS because of Trujillos's interference in Venezuela. So he asked me what was the cheapest interest we could give on loans. I did a little research and I said 2%, but I don't think I was very well qualified to

say what kind of loans we could give at that time. Later we gave them a loan at zero percent. Now I would of course be a lot more competent.

Q: You were in the Dominican Republic from '62 to when?

WHITE: '64. Two years there.

Q: Who was the consul general when you arrived?

WHITE: Calvin Hill. He made a good impression on Kennedy because of the way he handled things after Trujillo's assassination., Some brothers of Trujillo tried to return and take control of the country. We sent some naval forces off the coast there and when the brothers saw these forces they knew we opposed their return and they left quickly. I think Calvin Hill was in charge of all that period there. They asked him how he could be rewarded, and he wanted a promotion, from FSO-3 to FSO-2. He got the promotion but died soon afterwards. I recently read an excellent novel, *The Feast of the Goat,* by the Peruvian writer Mario Vargas Llosa about the last days of Trujillo and the aftermath of the assassination. He spoke highly of Calvin Hill in the novel.

Q: What was the political and economic situation in the Dominican Republic when you got there in '62?

WHITE: It was actually in turmoil. Under Trujillo it had a fairly stable government; he had done some things like building infrastructure, promoting exports; the economy was based on sugar and bauxite at that time. Trujillo in the 31 years of dictatorship had not allowed any opposition. There wasn't much in the way of foreign investment. The climate wasn't particularly good at that period, but we agreed to establish diplomatic relations when Organization of American States (OAS) sanctions were lifted.

Q: What was your position?

WHITE: I was economic officer. I was the second in command. Harlan Bramble came down as economic counselor. He had been in the Economic Bureau of the Department working on commodities. He himself had to familiarize himself with getting aid to a country like the Dominican Republic - what we could do to help them. Eventually Newell Williams, a former oil company executive, was assigned as AID director.

Q: Had the Trujillo government pretty well run the economic side down?

WHITE: I think it was probably a dictatorship that was efficient in some respects. He didn't permit any opposition. But he wasn't president all the time. He had somebody else as president about half of the time. The OAS imposed economic sanctions on the Dominican Republic in 1960 and all of the OAS members broke off diplomatic relations and imposed economic sanctions. This had a negative impact on the Dominican economy.

In ’61 Joaquin Balaguer was president and he was right of center. But he was efficient, and later he was elected president for about 22 years, of and on. So he competed in political campaigns later, and he was found to be the person who could run the country most efficiently. They had elections and occasionally he was replaced. The house we rented in Santo Domingo was next door to Balaguer’s home on Avenida Maximo Gomez. He was in exile in New York at the time, but his sister used to play a cassette with his speeches loud enough for us to hear them. Mario Vargas Llosa in his novel seemed to have a good opinion of Balaguer as an astute and calm politician, who knew how to get things done.

Q: Was there a ruling class, or were there various centers of power, or what were you dealing with?

WHITE: We were dealing with the business class that were trying to do business; they did business under Trujillo. None of the Trujillistas were in charge of government. The Bonnelly government tried to purge the government and military forces of Trujillistas. Some 1,300 officers and men and about 7,000 civil servants with links to Trujillo were forced into retirement. In the government departments; there were rather young people, rather inexperienced. The ministers were frequently young people. It was hard to get statistics, and hard to get people who were really too well informed. They were finding their way.

Q: Were there American businesses that had been doing business there that were continuing to do business?

WHITE: There were. There was investment in sugar, in bauxite, different industries. I always tried to have good relations with the American business community. I always felt that ultimately the private sector had to be strong. In every country I went.

Q: The bauxite and sugar people, the Americans - were they having to deal in a new situation? Had there been the equivalent of cozy deals with the Trujillo regime that they had to have work at a different level with the new regime?

WHITE: I think they probably prospered under Trujillo more than they did in the transition period because of the instability. I know they sometimes had trouble getting money that was owed to them by the government. The oil companies in particular were trying to collect money owed to them. But I always looked on them as people who performed a service there in the Dominican Republic. I did a report on all the Trujillo business enterprises that had to be sold off, and the government was willing to sell them to people that would invest. Eventually a government department was organized to manage all of these firms.

Calvin Hill was replaced by a political appointee as ambassador. This was John Bartlow Martin. He was particularly interested in the Dominican Republic for some reason and had asked for the assignment. He was President Kennedy’s speechwriter. He was very liberal; I think he was a member of Americans for Democratic Action. He was suspicious of the business community.

I always thought we should get the business community to be on our side, be progressive and do various things that would benefit the country. We had some problems there with the business community, some antagonism toward the embassy.

Q: I think you referred to this before as a period of transition. Was this_?

WHITE: They had gotten a group together, right of center called the Union Civica National. This was Rafael Bonnelly's party. Balaguer stayed on until the OAS sanctions were lifted in January 1962; after that the opposition to Balaguer selected Rafael Bonnelly to serve as a provisional president until democratic elections could be held in September. Bonnelly would not be a candidate.

In '63 they did have elections, and they elected Juan Bosch, who had been an expatriate. His party was the Partido Revolucionario Dominicano, a left of center party. I don't recall how he made a living in exile, but I do have a book of short stories he wrote. So he may have been a writer. I did not think that Juan Bosch was a communist because he made a number of anti-communist statements. He described Communism as "death, war, destruction, and the loss of all we own." The right-wing opposition thought he was too far left.

I thought he was on the left but non-communist. And I think the embassy agreed on that. Eventually the military and some of the business groups decided that they were going to have a coup after he was only president about six months.

So they had a coup to remove Juan Bosch. And they put in a triumvirate to rule. And then they had a revolt later – this was after I left - by the ones that supported Juan Bosch. This developed into a civil war in which we had to intervene to protect American interests and property.

Eventually that intervention broadened into an OAS intervention. The occupation lasted until they finally had elections, and they elected Hector Garcia Godoy as president. He was the foreign minister under Juan Bosch, so he was in the Partido Revolucionario Dominicano (Dominican Revolutionary Party). That was after I left, though.

Q: How were relations with the political and the business groups there - did people get together all the time for social and business occasions, was it easy for the embassy to_?

WHITE: It was easy enough once you identified the people who were not tainted by being Trujillistas. We got along rather well with the people in the junta once it was clear that they would prepare the way for elections. I got along well with the business community. We had our contacts in the political parties. But we tried to avoid contacts with anyone who had a Trujillo connection. Ambassador Martin didn't want us to rent any housing that had a Trujillo connection. The director of the Peace Corps had rented a house with a swimming pool owned by one of Trujillo's mistresses, but had to give it up. Before the ambassador arrived I had rented a house owned by Trujillo's doctor, who was in Miami.

Q: Looking at it, do you feel the embassy could have done more, or was there a sort of anti-American feeling that was set up - going to be insulted or put out no matter what happened?

WHITE: No, I think actually the feeling toward the U.S. was rather positive by the Dominicans who were looking to us for help. Many, many Dominicans wanted to go to the United States; we had long lines waiting for visas. There was some anti-Americanism, of course. I remember one occasion when my wife and I visited our USIS office in Santiago, one of the other Dominican cities, a young man offered to go with us in the car to show us where the office was located. We were told that a short time before he had gone with a mob to demonstrate against the office. Later someone saw him in line to get a visit for the United States. He explained that, if you couldn't beat them the best thing to do was join them.

They wanted us to do things, but they wanted it done right away. But we couldn't administer aid right away without making some kind of feasibility studies We had to study the situation and find out what the needs were and how we could help them. We did intend to help them as long as they were democratic, and headed in a democratic direction.

Q: Were there pockets of Trujilloists, or were they pretty well gone by that time?

WHITE: They were always there, of course. They were there, and they profited under Trujillo and they didn't think the country was going in the right direction. Some of the business people were behind the coup against Juan Bosch.

But I think when Balaguer came in again as president and was right of center, they were satisfied with the government. Though occasionally Balaguer was replaced by somebody who was in the Partido Revolucionario Dominicano, which is on the left, there were no coups after the one that occurred right after I left the Dominican Republic. There appears to have been orderly elections.

Balaguer was president from 66 to 78 and again from 86 to 96. He was in his nineties when he finally agreed to step down. They have had regular elections since then.

Q: Who was the president when you were there?

WHITE: Rafael Bonnelly; he was just an interim president. He was somewhat right of center. The business people were satisfied with Rafael Bonnelly. He was fair. I was also there when Juan Bosch was inaugurated. I remember going to his inauguration and my wife's chamber music group in which she sang, provided a concert.

Q: What about aid programs; what sort of things were you doing?

WHITE: We were giving them some loans at the lowest interest rate we could possibly give, so that they could finance their imports. We were providing technical assistance for agriculture. We started a Peace Corps program. We saw the possibilities for developing tourism and were considering loans for this purpose. Ambassador Martin took personal interest in a clinic in Higuey.

During the two years I was there, I did work closely with the people who gave them aid; and we were giving them aid, as long as they were headed in a democratic direction. We curtailed it, I think, when the coup happened, until they agreed to have elections.

Q: But the coup happened after you left, is that right?

WHITE: No, the coup happened while I was there. The civil war happened after I left.

Q: Where were you and how did the embassy respond when the coup came about?

WHITE: We cut off relations, at first. But then we talked to the coup leaders, the triumvirate, and they agreed to prepare for elections. When they agreed to set up elections, we restored our aid program and we started to work with them.

We knew the people in the coup pretty well. They had some fairly good - I mean in the *junta* - we knew them very well. I think some of them were pretty good people; Donald Reid Cabral was the leader.

They did have elections eventually, and they did elect somebody who was on the left. But not far on the left. He was just left of center, I would think.

Q: Were you finding Bosch a problem?

WHITE: I think the ambassador may have found Bosch a problem; he had a lot of discussions with him. In fact, Ambassador Martin wrote a book about his experience, in which he detailed his discussions with Bosch._

Q: <u>Overtaken by Events</u>, I think it was.

WHITE: Is that it? I believe it was. I read the whole book. I think he used to get frustrated with Juan Bosch; but after all, Juan Bosch was elected democratically, and it was better than having a coup. We should have had more patience with him. We were always concerned about any sympathy for Castro, of course.

Q: Did you have a feeling that our help and our attitude set up the coup?

WHITE: I don't think so. We actually were very cool to the coup; we didn't like it.

Q: Did you get to travel much in the Dominican Republic?

WHITE: Yes, I did. I went all over the place. They were trying to promote tourism. They were trying to develop the northern part of the country; they had a Jewish settlement up in the northern part of the country. Trujillo wanted a humanitarian image and he allowed some Jewish people to settle up in the north. They had some dairy businesses up there. Also I visited the eastern beaches of the Dominican Republic with some Dominicans and I could see the possibilities for tourism.

Q: What was your impression - was money trickling down to the farming community, or was it pretty poor?

WHITE: No, I don't think so; not at that period; it was too early, after the Trujillo period. During the period there was a tremendous amount of poverty and a lot of unemployment. Since I was there, a great many Dominicans have emigrated to the United States. And I am sure that their remittances home have helped the Dominican economy. The tourist business has grown a great deal since I left.

I've always thought that globalization was the answer to economic development in many countries of the world. The countries that wanted foreign investment would have to improve their investment climate. And the ones that didn't want it would have to learn by observing its contribution in other countries.

Q: What were relations like in this period with the Haitians?

WHITE: The Dominicans never trusted the Haitians, because the Haitians took over the Dominican Republic for twenty years, from about 1820 to 1840. Trujillo made some border adjustments with the Haitians, killing a number of Haitians who had come into the country illegally. There was always a certain amount of pressure because of the overpopulation in Haiti. I don't think the relationship with Haiti was ever comfortable.

Q: Was Castro messing around in there?

WHITE: Yes, he was. He came in in '59; he was trying to expand his influence any place he could in Latin America. He was successful in some places.

Q: I assume we were on the watch for it very closely in the Dominican Republic?

WHITE: Oh, we didn't want any Castro influence there. If we thought Bosch was under Castro's thumb, we certainly wouldn't have supported him. But he professed to be anti-communist; he cracked down on the communists. This is as I remember it. Maybe those who were in the political section would have a different version. I always had a high opinion of Harry Shlaudeman, the political officer, who became a career ambassador.

Somebody on the political side would know more about it than I do, but I had the impression that Juan Bosch was not really a communist or pro-communist, even though he was on the left. The very fact that his party has had people become president since he left - the first democratically elected one was Hector Garcia Godoy - indicates that it really wasn't a communist party.

Q: You were there during the Cuban missile crisis?

WHITE: Yes.

Q: How did that_?

WHITE: They were very pro-Kennedy, the people in the *junta*, the people that took over the government. I think practically everyone was pro-Kennedy, except the communists. They were just waiting for us to recognize them and continue with the aid and do what we could. We were helping in clinics and things like that, some social projects of all sorts.

Q: Did you feel that the aid effort was pretty effective?

WHITE: It might have been effective had I stayed there longer, but they would have had to have a longer period. They were just getting started when I was there the first year, and it didn't get very far the second year. But I think it was beginning to be effective.

I think the most effective aid program we've ever given them is just allowing thousands of Dominicans to come to the U.S. and send their money back. And they're all over the U.S. now; there's a huge population of Dominicans in New York.

Q: Did that cause any problems for you all, political pressure or anything like that?

WHITE: We had the problem with the visas. We didn't have the personnel to handle the huge mobs of visa applicants; they used to have riots in the lines for visas at the consulate. Once they almost even attacked the consul because they thought we were giving visas to Trujillo supporters, and they all hated each other. That was a real problem, to be in the visa section. They all wanted to get out because Trujillo didn't allow them to travel.

Q: You left there in '64?

WHITE: That's right. The end of '64.

Q: What happened when all of you heard about the assassination of President Kennedy?

WHITE: The transitional government had some sort of a ceremony there, with even a coffin in memory of President Kennedy. That was the *junta*; they all favored Kennedy and really admired Kennedy. The ones that we were dealing with in the government were all opposed to Castro and any Cuban influence. I am sure they had Cuban sympathizers in the country, but I don't think they were very effective at that time. Those of us in the Embassy were very much in favor of Kennedy's Latin American policy; the Alliance for Progress.

SERBAN VALLIMARESCU
Public Affairs Officer, USIS
Santo Dominigo (1962-1964)

Mr. Vallimarescu was born in Romania on May 17, 1922. He received his BA from Harvard University in 1942 and served in the U.S. Army from 1942 to 1945 and again from 1950 to 1952 as a lieutenant. As a member of the Foreign Service, he has served in countries including Mexico, the Dominican Republic, and

France. Mr. Vallimarescu was interviewed on May 25, 1989 and May 9, 1991 by Cliff Groce.

Q: So you went from...

VALLIMARESCU: From Mexico to the Dominican Republic. We had three weeks in Mexico City of despedidas...farewells...breakfasts, luncheons, cocktails and dinners. Breakfasts were usually stag and so were luncheons. One thing I don't particularly like -- I admit it publicly now -- is hot Mexican food. I was not a great fan of hot Mexican food. And of course at all these breakfasts they would give me these heuvos rancheros, which are eggs with a lot of chili, and I had to eat every bit of it. And during the speeches, they'd say, "Valli likes Mexico and everything Mexican." Well, we arrived in the Dominican Republic...it was a direct transfer...and I was sick for a week. (Laughter)

Now, in the Dominican Republic it was a very interesting period because we had broken relations with the Dominican Republic during the last year of Trujillo who had been assassinated a year before I arrived. The country was being run by a civilian junta headed up by a very distinguished elderly gentleman, a lawyer, Bonelli, and they were getting ready, presumably, to have elections. Our ambassador, John Bartlow Martin, was a writer and journalist of sorts from Chicago, a political appointee and a decent gentleman, but he didn't know much about the outside world, really. The principal issue during my first few months there was the election issue because the ambassador and Washington wanted to have free, democratic, US-style elections in the Dominican Republic immediately, if not sooner. I took a different position in writing and orally. I said, "These people are 75 percent illiterate. They've had 40 years of brutal dictatorship. They don't know what it means to have a free election. Why don't we let this junta, which is a decent, civilized junta, stay in power for a while and we help build up the institutions, help them economically, educate them a bit? You're going to have an election overnight? They don't know what it means. They'll vote for anybody." But I did not prevail.

So we put out comic books about how to vote, pamphlets on voting procedures, etc. We had an election and Mr. Juan Bosch was elected president of the Dominican Republic -- someone I never trusted. Mr. Bosch, after he had been elected, left the country for awhile. He took office about two months later.

He went on a trip and came back two days before his inauguration. He was supposed to be met triumphantly at the airport, but there was such a mob scene they decided to take him by helicopter to the headquarters of the Dominican radio and television studios where he would make a speech to the people.

Alice and I had in our house three American journalists from the 50 or so who had come for the inauguration. One was Phil Geyelin, who was then with the Wall Street Journal, and who later became head of the editorial page of the Washington Post. Another was Bob Novak and the third I don't remember. None of them spoke Spanish. We decided to sit down by the pool in front of the television set and hear Juan Bosch's speech. I didn't interpret as it went along, I told them I'd give them a summary at the end.

After the speech Bob Novak asked me, "All right now, Val, what did he say?" I said, "Before I tell you in detail what he said, I want to tell you that he just committed political suicide." "Why do you say this?"
"Because he has denounced, in the most outrageously violent terms, three sectors of Dominican society without which he will not be able to govern: the church, the armed forces, and what he called the oligarchy.

He has committed political suicide." Phil Geyelin asked me, "Do you mean you don't think he's going to serve out his four-year term?" I said, "No way!" "Well, how much time would you guess?" "I'd say maybe eight months or so." Well, after nine months he was overthrown. To this day, Bob Novak and Phil Geyelin remember that I gave them a scoop. Obviously they didn't quote me, but they wrote that well-informed observers felt that Mr. Bosch was not going to last out his term of office or maybe not even one year.

Well, this was the principal issue then. During my one and a half years in the Dominican Republic it was basically Juan Bosch and the political instability in the Dominican Republic. It just so happened that the ambassador and the political section of the embassy hitched their star, our star, totally to Juan Bosch, ignoring even the political opposition...the people who were, shall we say, a little more conservative. The ambassador was sort of a pet of Bosch. He followed Bosch, he went everywhere Bosch went. Whatever Bosch wanted, Bosch got. I issued warnings -- again, in writing and orally -- saying, "This man cannot be trusted." "Oh, no, he's very democratic, very pro-American." I said, "No, sir, he's not. I know him better than you do." The ambassador used to send me on missions to Bosch and I knew from friends that he made fun of the ambassador and of the United States in his intimate circle.

Well, Juan Bosch was a catastrophe. He was overthrown. He was overthrown by the military, and they set up a three-man civilian junta. Our reaction was to suspend diplomatic relations, withdraw the ambassador and leave a skeleton staff. I was part of the skeleton. We had a chargé d'affaires whom you knew, Spencer King. All right, we suspend relations. The ambassador, at the airport, when we said goodbye to him, said to me, "Val, you'll see, the people of the Dominican Republic will rise up in arms, outraged by this military coup." I said, "Mr. Ambassador, haven't you learned anything in the year and a half you've been here? They're not going to rise up in arms. They didn't know what they were voting for. Bosch made a lot of promises. They see that he hasn't really delivered, so they'll say, 'Well, good riddance, maybe the next ones will do better.'"

Well, obviously they didn't rise up in arms. The worse part was that we suspended aid and withdrew our massive AID mission that we had there. Again this was a tragic mistake and I fought against it because once you withdraw these 50, 60 people and destroy the infrastructure, to start up any aid program again would take months and months. So we really had no diplomatic relations with them.

When Kennedy was assassinated we were in Santo Domingo and the embassy organized a service at the cathedral. The entire three-man junta, all of whom were personal friends of mine and very decent people -- one of whom was foreign minister again until recently -- were all there at the church. They paid their respects to the chargé and to all of us. After the service one of

them, Donald Reed Cabral, who at the time was chairman of the junta, asked to come to our house for a drink. After we talked about the tragedy he said, "Val, if you have any influence can you see if relations can be renewed? Now there is a chance, because there will be a new president, Johnson, for you to renew relations with us. Our economic, financial situation is terrible now and if something isn't done there will be total chaos and the real gorillas will take over." Well, I reported on this to Spencer King. Johnson did decide. It was one of his first moves to renew relations with the Dominican Republic and to resume aid. Well, obviously the aid program was taking a long time to make its effect. By 1965, I wasn't there any more, the situation had deteriorated to such a point that you had the Camaño revolt, and we had to send in the Marines...

Q: And the ambassador was calling Washington from under his desk.

VALLIMARESCU: That's right. But I -- Monday morning quarter- back -- think it could have been avoided. The whole issue was Bosch and the whole question of support for Bosch or a more even-handed approach to the situation. The price of sugar and the sugar quota was always a problem, but the big issue was Bosch.

Q: It's pure speculation, of course, but do you think a career man would have made the same mistakes that Martin made, being sort of a puppy dog for Bosch?

VALLIMARESCU: I don't think so. Although his principal adviser was a man who has since become a very close friend, Harry Shlaudeman -- who later on was my ambassador in Buenos Aires. We are very close friends now. But Harry Shlaudeman -- you know, errare humanum est -- he pushed the ambassador in that direction. We had such terrible disagreements that our two wives once almost had to separate us because we almost came to blows over this issue, the support for Bosch. Support for Bosch, fine, but don't act as if the ambassador were a puppy dog.

I'll make a parenthesis here. We were very, very antagonistic, Harry and I, on this issue. Years later, when I was in Paris, in 1967 or '68, Harry Shlaudeman comes to Paris on his way to Sofia where he was opening the embassy there. He stayed with us. We take him out to dinner in Les Halles, in a wonderful little restaurant that specializes in wild boar. I invited colleagues from the political section so the dinner was...well, they were almost all State Department, about six of them and their wives. Harry was enjoying himself, feeling no pain. We all had drunk a lot of good wine. He gets up to make a toast. His toast was, "To Val, who was right in the Dominican Republic when most of us were wrong." Mind you, he was talking to his peers. We were good friends but not just because of that.

So Johnson becomes president and one of his first appointments was Tom Mann as assistant secretary for Inter-American Affairs. I had been in the Dominican Republic for a year and a half when I got a phone call from Tom Mann, saying, "Val, I want you back here in Washington to be public affairs adviser in ARA." "All right, you're the boss." So we left the Dominican Republic a year and a half before we should have and I was back in Washington as public affairs adviser to Tom Mann, on loan from USIA. We are talking '63 to '66.

When all hell broke loose in the Dominican Republic, I participated once in a meeting, 24 hours after this happened, with Tom Mann, President Johnson and a few other people. Tom Mann turned to me and said, "Val, would you send the Marines if you were President of the United States?" I said, "Yes, Mr. Secretary, by all means I would. But we should have OAS participation." Well, this was the consensus.

Then there was a nightmarish week when I was sent down to the Dominican Republic to be the spokesman. It couldn't have come at a worse time for me because Alice's mother was dying of cancer, and she had just been called to leave for Romania the day before I was called to go off to the DR, so the children were alone. I'm called in the morning of the day after Alice left by the deputy USIA director. Carl Rowan was director, but I don't remember who was deputy at the time. He said, "Val, we want you to leave for the Dominican Republic today." "But I can't, my children are in school..."

Q: But how could the USIA deputy director order you out when you were working for Tom Mann?

VALLIMARESCU: Well, I guess they had consulted. Anyway he said that they wanted me down there and to leave that afternoon. I said, "Well, I have to find a baby sitter." "We'll do anything necessary. Do you know anyone who could take care of your kids?" I said, "Well, there's Mrs. Visoianu who was working at the Voice." "Well, we'll get the Voice to release her for as long as necessary." Well, Mrs. Visoianu didn't feel she could do it. But there was another Romanian lady who was contacted. I didn't see my boys that day. I left at 4 o'clock before they came back from school. I left them a note.

We took off at 5 o'clock in the afternoon and arrived in Santo Domingo. I remember we were in a helicopter with door open and Marines with submachine guns pointed at the ground. We heard shooting all over the place. We landed on the embassy residence grounds. I found total mayhem and chaos. The Marines had established a security perimeter around Santo Domingo and the commander in chief of the combined forces was General Palmer. Our ambassador was Tap Bennett. My job, of course, was to brief the press every day--the 4 o'clock follies. The whole situation was so nightmarish and I didn't do very well. I was greatly pre-occupied about Alice, whose mother had died in the meantime. She never made it in time to see her. The children were alone. My main problem was that I couldn't get information. I couldn't get General Palmer or Tap Bennett to tell me what they were up to. My first two briefings were very successful. I remember once I referred to the Camaño forces as "the enemy," and one wise guy said, "Oh, an enemy. You call Camaño an enemy?" I said, "Well, people who shoot at you are generally not your friends." They liked that.

Anyway, the first two briefings were all right, pretty good. But then they started expanding the security perimeter without telling me, the press spokesman. Then statements were made in Washington by President Johnson that the Camaño people were murdering civilians right and left, and the streets of Santo Domingo, or the sector controlled by them, were littered with corpses. They gave out, in Washington, lists of names of people who had been killed, executed. They gave out, without my knowing, lists of Cuban agents who had been identified and who were with Camaño. I remember I was faced by questions: Is it true that the streets of Santo

Domingo are littered with corpses? Is it true that the Cuban agents -- and so on. This was the first I had heard that this statement had been made by the White House. Nobody would tell me. You can imagine what it is to brief journalists who are more informed about what's going on than you are.

The third day, at the request of one or two foreign embassies which had not been included in the security perimeter, General Palmer decided to enlarge the security perimeter, which involved some clashes with the Camaño forces. So I'm faced by Bob Berrelez of the AP. He says, "Hey, Val, why did they enlarge the perimeter?" "Wha, wha, what? What perimeter?" I had been in the residence with General Palmer and at General Palmer's head- quarters, and they never told me. I told Washington to tell them to keep me informed or I would give up.

So about the fourth day I was a nervous wreck and had a briefing session. I am informed that, in order to help me, John King would come from the State Department. John King was then working for the Assistant Secretary for Public Affairs, and he came down to help me. I remember I was in a building where I had temporary offices, and John arrived looking perfectly neat with tie and coat, very distinguished looking. He sat down at a desk before an open window. I was a nervous wreck.

I had started a new technique. I tried not to have regular 4 o'clock briefings but to brief as many individual journalists whom I knew, individually, and that was working out pretty well. But I had scheduled for that day a 4 or 5 o'clock press briefing, and John King was going to be there to help me. He said, "You know, Val, it is very important that this come out well because my boss's career is at stake. If it doesn't come out well he may lose his job." I said, "Fella, do you realize what's going on here?" And all of a sudden they're shooting. I said, "Duck, John, duck!" He did duck. Two bullets came in through the window - bullets which I presented to Carl Rowan when I came back. (Laughter) John says, "Oh, my God, this is really serious!" And I said, "You'd better believe it's serious!"

We get down to the briefing, and I must say I couldn't cope with it -- although people who saw it on television said I did well. I couldn't cope with it. John King was sitting there and I said, "I'm sorry ladies and gentlemen, but Mr. King is going to take over." I had no more briefings after that and I went back. Hew Ryan came down. He was then the USIA area director of Latin America. It was not one of my better moments. Although Bruce Van Voorst in Newsweek had some words of praise for me -- but that was in the very beginning -- but said, in effect, that it was quite obvious that Val, who is a good professional and a man who is respected by all the press, really was not informed as to what was going on.

Q: Why didn't they inform you? Why didn't they keep you up to date?

VALLIMARESCU: I don't know. I really don't know. Looking back on it, Palmer, as a military man, considered all these movements military movements, not to be known to the press. And Tap Bennett, largely because he had lost control of the situation was scared, panicked and couldn't focus on this very important priority. And also the problem was that things were being done in Washington. Johnson wanted to prove something -- wanted to prove that this was Cuban-originated, wanted to prove that Camaño was a real s.o.b. and was murdering people -- and they

released things that could not be checked on. Some of the supposed Cuban agents were non-existent or were dead.

Q: Where was the White House getting its information?

VALLIMARESCU: From the other agency, I guess. I don't know. It was a mess. It was a mess. But I do remember there was one positive thing to it; it was not all negative. There was a man named Hector Garcia Godoy. The important thing was that once the Camaño thing was almost finished -- the military operation was fairly successful -- we and others were looking for someone to become president of the Dominican Republic. Someone with good credentials, someone honest, a man of integrity. The one man whose name came up most often was Hector Garcia Godoy, whom we had known very, very well. He had been ambassador to London and came back to the Dominican Republic to have a big job in the foreign office when we were there in our previous incarnation.

Hector lived across the street from what had been my residence when I was PAO and which was my residence this time. After I gave up on the press briefings, after five days, I stayed on for another four or five days. Hew Ryan was there and he gave me some assignments, writing stuff.

So, Hector Garcia Godoy lived across the street. One night I went over there, dropped in uninvited. He gave me a big abrazo and we spoke for three or four hours. I said, "Hector, you are the only one who is respected enough by all sides, who can take over as president. Accept the presidency and save the Dominican Republic." He was very reluctant. He didn't know if he could carry it off. I think I helped there because he did accept the presidency. He was ambassador to Washington after that and later he died of cancer. As a matter of fact, I saw his widow when I got married to Barbara in the Dominican Republic; I saw his widow and his brother-in-law. So, anyway, that was one positive aspect of my rather nightmarish visit during that period: I think I helped convince Hector Garcia Godoy to become president of the Dominican Republic.

ALEXANDER F. WATSON
Consular/Political Officer
Santo Domingo (1962-1964)

Ambassador Alexander Watson was born and raised in Massachusetts and was educated at Harvard and Wisconsin Universities. In 1962 he joined the Foreign Service and was posted to the Dominican Republic, the beginning of an impressive career specializing in Latin American Affairs. His other overseas posts include Spain, Brazil, Bolivia and Colombia, serving as Deputy Chief of Mission in the latter three countries. He had several Washington assignments, the last being Assistant Secretary of State for Inter-American Affairs. From 1986 to 1989 he served as United States Ambassador to Peru. Ambassador Watson was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy in 1997.

Q: You were in the Dominican Republic from '62 to?

WATSON: To ‘64.

Q: ‘64.

WATSON: September ‘62 to September ‘64.

Q: What was the political situation there at that time when you arrived?

WATSON: Formally, what you had was a council of state headed by a guy named Rafael Bonnelly, which was a group, and I don’t remember all the members of this council. It was a group of people, businessmen and others, who were sort of a de facto city council or country council. Bonnelly was the president of that and therefore he was the president of the country. They had no democratic political legitimacy. They emerged from the actions of the Trujillo regime. Underlying that, you still had all of the three decades of the residue of the dictatorship; the prisons. You had fear such that you would be sitting with somebody on their front porch in these Dominican rocking chairs like Kennedy had one of and you would hear without even consciously hearing, you would become aware of the sound of a Volkswagen engine. Now the Volkswagen engine had a unique sound. The reason they detected it is because the SIM, which was the secret police, drove around in black Volkswagens. People believed that they had microphones in those Volkswagens and they could hear everything you said on your porch. Those microphones probably didn’t even exist then. They now do; they sell them on the side of the football field and you can hear what people are saying in the middle of the field. That’s what people feared, so they would stop talking. It wouldn’t even be a conscious intellectual process, just detect that sound and stop. You had that kind of stuff.

You had the country preparing for elections. The elections took place. Maybe we got there in August rather than September. I thought it was September, but I think the elections took place, if I remember correctly, in October of ‘62. You had a furious campaign. Two leading candidates: Juan Bosch, who, if I recall correctly, was a physician and a businessman who stayed in the Dominican Republic throughout the Trujillo time, but who led opposition to him. He had been there opposed to [inaudible] too much; he didn’t last. Trujillo was assassinated and [inaudible] had been murdered. I remember walking through. Viriato Fiallo was the opposition, and a pretty good guy. Then you had the other candidate who was [inaudible], who was a social democrat from the growing and quite strong social democratic movement in Latin America. [inaudible], Venezuela was a [inaudible] figure of this. [inaudible] in Costa Rica, etc., a whole bunch of people. There was a guy named [inaudible] who was an Eastern European extraction who ran a kind of institute in Costa Rica whose name now slips my mind now, but you could ask Harry Shlaudeman here and a guy who was a brilliant young political section chief at the time. He knows all this much better than any vice consul or [inaudible] would know. [inaudible] had [inaudible] on its faculty there. The whole thing was supported by the CIA, we all discovered afterwards. We didn’t know that at the time. Juan Bosch came in there as a social democrat, left democrat candidate. He won the election and had strong support from the United States. I don’t know whether we, in those days, I don’t think we were supporting him over [inaudible]. I think his win was acceptable, but once again I don’t know all that; at that point I was a vice consul. There are other stories there. We’ll get into it at some point, maybe not today, but later on. That

was another formative experience. It was almost as powerful as working in the mental hospital. Bosch won the election. There was great euphoria. There was this democratic guy, but he was of the left, so he couldn't be accused of being a right wing military goon or anything like that. There was a huge inauguration. All sorts of people came from all over the hemisphere. Anyhow, all these democratic elected types were coming in: Lyndon Johnson, who was the Vice President of our delegation, and Hubert Humphrey and Jacob Javits, and the head of the Democratic Party in Dade County, Florida. You had a congressman, the head of the Democratic Party in I think it was Iowa. Remember this was not long after, this was February of '63. February of '63. I remember all those people. The president of Morgan State University; It was my job to take care of him. He had a large entourage for the inauguration in 1963. I don't know how much longer we can go, but it was quite an inauguration. Lyndon Johnson took over the whole hotel, a good portion of it; he lived there for a long time when we first got there. That's another story I haven't really talked about— our acclimatization to the Dominion Republic. You asked about the political context and that was what it was. The most important person as far as anybody was concerned there was not Lyndon Johnson, but was from Venezuela. I remember that there was a reception… I think there was a reception the first evening by the outgoing government of Bonnelly and the council of state, if I remember this correctly. I think it got postponed for an hour or two. No one told Lyndon Johnson, so the American entourage went to the palace and was told to go home, back to the hotel and wait. This did not sit well with the Vice President of the United States. He then decided, well, we'll show them. We'll arrive late. By the time we actually did arrive, Bosch had come, the whole receiving line had broken up and there was really no one there to greet the Vice President of the United States.

I remember Ladybird Johnson making the best of it. She was always very charming, very astute, very charming, going around and ooing and ahhing the rather repulsive statuary, as she called it, these naked carativs on the top of the columns in the various rooms in the outlandish baroque that Dominicans seemed to think was elegant. I remember Lyndon Johnson; my, what an impressive guy. When he talked to you, you knew you were being talked to and you had the feeling that you were the only person on earth for him and he remembered your name right away. I mean, very, I'd never been around major political figures before and I'll never forget. I was around Javits and Humphrey, also very impressive.

Q: During the election, did they use you as a vice consul or were you just busy issuing visas?

WATSON: I was busy issuing visas. My sort of information as to what was going on was sort of my visa line take. I was the only married one of these. We had John Spillane, Hannah Woods, who unfortunately passed away.

Q: Yes, she was killed.

WATSON: She was killed in an automobile accident.

Q: She was in Belgrade just before that.

WATSON: That's where she died. She was from Arkansas and her family owned a newspaper there.

Joe Fandino had become the personal aid to John Bartlow Martin. Joe was fluent in Spanish. The ambassador didn't speak any Spanish at all. So, Joe became his sidekick, but also his interpreter. I would learn sort of what was going on from Ralph and John, who was living with Joe because in the visa line we talked. That's all I knew, and a little bit from people like Harry Shlaudeman and Carol Shlaudeman, his wife, who was always really wonderful to us and still our good friends. They were remote because the consular section was a mile or a mile and a half away from the embassy. We didn't have that much contact. We made a lot of friends with non-embassy people— much more so than most of the other juniors. People at Chase Manhattan Bank that we met in the hotel. The cost of the hotel and the room itself was more than the allowance I got. People forget what the Foreign Service was like. There was no one to help you find a house. You were given an allowance and you had to go out and find something and that was it. There were no CLOs (community liaison officers). There was no office that had housing listings. There was no one who took you around to houses. You just did this on your own and you had to figure out how to survive. So, we could not even really, and I had no money at all. Whatever I had I borrowed from the credit union twice to go to Mexico and then to go to Santa Domingo? We couldn't really afford breakfast, but the Chase people, Jim and his wife, got three full breakfasts every day paid for by Chase, who had plenty of money. One of them was a baby in your arms, months old, so Judy and I would share their third breakfast. That's how it was in those days. We left the hotel and we owed the hotel money. The government was not paying for the place where they put us. In any case, we made friends with them and remain friends with them. These were all people who were older than we were, but we became good friends with them and with friends of the Dominicans as well. So, in a way we were fortunate because if someone else was married they were doing different things than we were doing. We were sort of forced in a way to have other sets of friends, which was helpful. Not that I wasn't friends with all the vice consuls, just that they were leading a different lifestyle. I mean, they would go out and target shoot in the backyard and they were sort of living as wild vicariously thrilling of sort of being people who – not Bob Montgomery so much, but the others were sort of caught up in this wildness of the adventure of the chaotic country. Guns going off and stuff like that. We were not particularly attracted to that. The first time, we had never done any hunting. If a handgun went off – it was an incredibly chaotic place where a bottle of ketchup costs $7.00 – it was like all of the vultures of the world were descending on this place. Bobby Baker, who was the sidekick of Lyndon Johnson, was down there cutting deals. The Cincinnati branch of the mafia was down there. A guy who used to be an all American hockey player at Michigan Tech was running guns in the [inaudible] Bay for God knows who, running around in his sneakers drunk all the time. I can't remember his name. AID (Agency for International Development) was coming in there with chicken farmers from Arkansas and Iowa in their big Stetson hats and their cowboy boots, wandering around this hotel surrounded by these mafia guys and Bobby Baker. It was unbelievable, like out of a Fellini movie. The bar scene in Star Wars was probably modeled on the bar of this hotel. It was that kind of a variety and species there. The casinos there were playing. I remember a woman, as part of a tour group from Cincinnati, tore off her clothes and dove into the water at the Vesuvius Restaurant. It was all very dramatic. This was really something else.

Q: This is normal diplomatic life.

WATSON: Very exciting. Of course, we vice consuls were extraordinarily important. Most popular song for a year in that country was called "Dame la visa," which means give me the visa. The words go dame la visa, dame la visa, mire senior consul, andale, and it goes on like that. It means give me the visa, look Mr. Consul, hurry up, give me the visa. I've got my little black girl in New York, I've got to get up there to see her, come on move it. That was a song by Jose Mateo. It was the most popular song, and I'm not kidding, for a year in that country. Anywhere we went and I, being very tall, was immediately recognized. We'd get out of the car at a drive-in movie theater, which existed in those days, to get popcorn. I'd be surrounded by people saying oh, Mr. Consul, please! I have to go to New York. My aunt's there and she's very sick— that kind of whiny way that people sometimes adopt when they want a visa. That was also kind of a celebrity for us and we were not used to anything like that. It was kind of interesting. Just the simple chore of issuing visas, there were lines and lines, endless lines every single day. It's quite common now at some of the bigger visa mills or consulates, but in those days we probably issued more visas there than anyplace in the world. Everybody was there and everybody was lying and gave false documents, all sorts of scams.

One of the scams, the most common, was that someone would represent himself as someone who could get a visa for somebody else. So, this thug would convince you that if you gave him 500 bucks, he would get you a visa because he had a relationship with the vice consul. He would accompany you in the line and then when you get in the line, you got up to the desk where we sat behind counters like bank tellers to deal with these people. He would make some kind of a sign so you, as a visa applicant, would think that that was the sign that you're $500 paid for to get the vice consul and get the visa. You got the visa, the $500 worked beautifully and you told all your friends about it. If you didn't get the visa, the guy who gave the sign would say, that fucking vice consul. He's upped his price without telling me; "you've got to give me more money." So, everybody thought that we were crooked. So Rigby was this wild man, Errol Flynn motorcycle riding, assured consul. Whenever he would see one of these he would come out of his office, he would grab the guy and slam him against the wall and smash him into the wall and throw him out into the streets. Call the guard, arrest this man. The atmosphere we were in was total chaos; total chaos all the time, but it was a great adventure. You sure as hell learned Spanish quickly, and learned a lot about Dominican life in that kind of a circumstance.

One of the problems I had in the Foreign Service now is that while this kind of a job was okay for me and maybe Bob Montgomery maybe, less so for him because he was older. He had already been in the navy and he had been a newspaper reporter. I had never done anything, so this was an adventure for me and for Ralph Walsh too, who had come out of Yale and was a couple years older than I was. Putting older people who have more experiences into this kind of visa situation is pretty difficult.

Q: Did you find that you were… did you develop friends within the Dominican Republic or was this a problem because of your visa connection?

WATSON: Yes. No, I mean everybody knew – you see this in other countries – that every relationship you have with a citizen of that country will eventually turn to a visa. So, you know that. We had to be strictly by the book. After I left, I gather there was a problem with the immigrant visa section with some of our local employees. I don't know too much about that. We

were a tight group. They gave me, of all of us, the crew in 1963 or '64, all the young women who were there, the clerks and all of us vice consuls, it was really interesting. We were a tight group. We were sort of a little bit under siege, but we had a good time, went to parties together. We met the other families and mostly young women who worked as clerks with us. In those days you signed every visa by hand in India ink with your signature. So, everyone knew who gave them their visa. Nowadays, they just stamp it with the head of the consular section signature.

I remember once when we went to Puerto Rico from the Dominican Republic, the immigration said, you're Watson, huh? I was considered one of the more lenient. I'm not sure I was much more lenient than the others, but that was the reputation I had. What a job. We all circulated through. We did non-immigrant visa work. We'd move up to sort of the head of the non-immigrant section, then over to the immigrant visa work and up to the head of the immigrant visa section. We got a lot of visa experience, as I say, because American visas were so central to everyone's life in the Dominican Republic. I think we probably had a greater exposure to the society than you might have in other circumstances. It was useful, very useful. Then the last six months I was in there we were supposed to rotate. Six months in consular, political, economic, administrative sections. Bob Montgomery and I arrived there the same time; we spent a year and a half issuing visas of one sort or another and then he was six months the general services officer and I was six months as a political officer.

Q: Well, we'll pick that up the political officer the next time. On the consular officer side, did you find there was any particular use of whatever you were picking up on the Dominican society at all, you or the other consular officers by the political section, or were you pretty much working in a vacuum?

WATSON: Pretty much working in a vacuum. Sometimes the political section would call down and ask us to issue a visa to somebody and we would get quite offended in our little way. Who do you think you are? We're down here. This is an incorruptible system. We propagated the line more so than they do today about the total power of the vice consul to make these decisions. The visa officer, no one can tell the vice consul what to do ever under what circumstances. After you finish with that sometimes you would issue the visa requested by Harry Shlaudeman or someone in the political section, or Dave Shaw or one of the other guys in there, or the economic counselor, the DCM, but sometimes you wouldn't. We had a kind of primitive file system. There were all these little slips with all these little notes on them. We made sort of secret marks on the passport so that we'd know when a person came in that we already refused before. We were not, I mean, we were not very well integrated into the embassy as a whole, if I recall correctly. We had our own life. On occasion we would report something to the political section. We would say so and so for some reason if we thought it would be of interest to the political section to know that so and so was planning to travel or something like that, but usually our response was the other way; they ask us when they are coming back. We used to get the weeka.

Q: The weekly roundup.

WATSON: The weekly roundup, all done in air gram. None of this exists anymore. We did telegrams by and large. Weeka would come down to the consular section and you could read it if

you had time, but we almost never had time to read the whole. Weeka wasn't very long; I mean, the little short paragraphs on the main events. That was the way to keep informed.

Q: Well, I thought what we might do is stop at this point here and pick this up the next time around when you go up to the political section, but also the style of Ambassador Martin, how he worked and any developments while you were there that would, political developments. We've talked already about the visa, but also anything else about adjusting to life in the Foreign Service and all. So, we'll pick that up the next time at that point.

WATSON: All right.

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Q: Today is the 13th of February 1998. Alex, you've now moved up to the economic section.

WATSON: Political section.

Q: Political section of the Dominican Republic. What was your, what were the main developments that you were, what were you doing in that?

WATSON: I moved up to the political section in something like, I would guess, early 1964. I was really only there for about six months because I departed in September of '64. We had a change of ambassador. Ambassador John Bartlow Martin left and was replaced in, I believe something like February of '64, by Ambassador W. Tapley Bennett, a career Foreign Service Officer of great distinction. I gather from where we left it off last time you wanted to talk about a couple of things. One would be what I was doing in the political section. Well, there were really only three, four people in the political section. The political section chief had been Harry Shlaudeman, who went on to great distinction in the Foreign Service. He had been replaced by the fellow named Ben Rule, who was the section chief when I arrived there. Art Briskey was the number two. Fred Summerfield was the labor attaché. Unfortunately, he's passed away and I was the bottom man on the totem pole, writing what we call the Weeka and things like that and doing the routine things of the political section. It was a very interesting time because a short time after, about six months after I left, maybe seven months after I left the Dominican Republic in April of '65 was when the outburst occurred, which resulted in the civil war and the intervention of U.S. troops and troops under the leadership of the Brazilian General of the OAS, etc. My brother, as a matter of fact, was a helicopter pilot fresh out of Cornell ROTC, who was with the marines steaming past the Dominican Republic on the Boxer at the time the outbreak occurred, and he was summoned into the polo fields of the Embajador Hotel to evacuate the American citizens and other foreigners at the request of the U.S. government. It was kind of dramatic.

Q: How did Tapley Bennett, this was prior to the outbreak of the war, what would you call it?

WATSON: I call it a civil war. Some people call it a revolution. It really wasn't a revolution, it was a combination of elements involving parts of the PRD party of Bosch who of course was very upset for having been thrown out of power after winning a democratic election in late '62 and taking office in February of '63, and being thrown out in September of '63 by the military,

and who then set up a three person presidency called the triumvirate which, after a while, only had two. Those people assorted leftists, Hector Garcia Godoy and a bunch of others were out there among the various leftist parties, including some disgruntled people in the military, and Colonel Francisco Caamano became the head of this operation and the particular head and, really, the leader in many ways of the rebel forces, which controlled at least half of Santo Domingo. The OAS troops, when they came in had to sort of guard a line between the rebel forces and the others. I shouldn't really get too much into that because I really wasn't there at that time. The only, perhaps, coherent, serious thought that I had that I can recall was that if the PRD, in its efforts to undo the coup that toppled it in September of '63, could ever make sufficient inroads into the military, then we would have a real problem. When I was there they were trying to do that, but without apparent success, at least as far as I could see at that point, and obviously they did have some success later on.

Q: While you were there, did this… had the first coup that upset Bosch, had unseated him, that had already happened?

WATSON: Oh, yes. When I arrived in September of '62, the election took place and the government, the council of state headed by Rafael Bonnelly, which was a de facto government following the assassination of the dictator Trujillo. Then Bonnelly and company held an election that was won by Juan Bosch, a democratic left social democratic person who had spent a lot of time in exile, including in Costa Rica, and was part of the social democratic movement that was important throughout the hemisphere. He won the election. We can talk about that if you wish. Then for a variety of reasons, chiefly his own inability, it seems to me to understand that a dictatorship does not leave a clean slate, it leaves a political culture which is deeply embedded in everybody. If he was to survive, he was going to have to come to terms with the powers that still remained powerful, the military, certain elements of the business class and others, despite the elimination of Trujillo. He failed to do that and in fact antagonized these groups. He ended up creating a coalition against himself which was far more powerful than his fragile democratic mandate which was delivered to a large extent by rural voters who when it comes down to the brutal politics in the capital city didn't have much involvement. He was pretty alone there without much support and did not manage very well his relationships with these other powerful factors and they overthrew him. This is not to justify their coup of course, that's just in that way of explanation of why in six months he collapsed.

During this time, John Bartlow Martin, who had been a speechwriter for Adlai Stevenson and then for John Kennedy in the campaign, was our ambassador. You asked about his style. Martin did not speak any Spanish and was helped out by a guy named Joe Fandino, who unfortunately has passed away. I think he passed away in Vietnam; a young Foreign Service Officer who was fluent in Spanish and went everywhere with John Bartlow Martin. He and his wife had kind of a relaxed, energetic, yet relaxed style, as was sort of the Kennedy administration theme in those days. A lot of stuff around the swimming pool. My wife went to pay a call on Mrs. Martin, a first call ever as a Foreign Service wife, all dressed up in the right way.

Q: Gloves, hat.

WATSON: I don't think she had a hat. I think she might have had gloves, but she certainly had her cards, all with the covers folded, and went into the house only to find Mrs. Martin swimming around in the swimming pool with a gin and tonic at the table. It was a different kind of reception than Judy had expected, but turned out to be fine, but it was kind of a surprise. It was maybe indicative of the kind of style the Martins had. Martin was a very strong supporter of President Bosch and you need to, I think, understand that this was not long after the Cuban revolution. The administration was determined to make the Dominican Republic a showcase for democracy, I think perhaps failing to grasp the profundity of the legacy of 30 years of dictatorship and the importance of that legacy in terms of attenuating democratic institutions and procedures, at least in those early years. The Dominican Republic has come a long way since then. Martin and his superb political section chief Harry Shlaudeman and DCM Spencer [inaudible] ran a pretty good embassy I think, through some very difficult times. When Bosch was overthrown, then Martin left and Tapley Bennett came in; as I said, in early '64, you had a much more formal old school Foreign Service style in this embassy.

Q: Could you talk about how the overthrow, how you experienced it in the political section, and what was the response?

WATSON: When the overthrow took place I was still a vice consul I think, in the immigrant visa section, probably the head of the immigrant visa section at the time, and in my naiveté we had quite some exciting adventures. We diplomats had safe conduct passes and so during the heated times of the coup, I got out in my car with my wife and with a journalist from the New Republic named Normal Gaul, who probably shouldn't have been out there. We drove all over town, running around and, by accident, we drove down onto the dock where they were putting Mr. Bosch aboard a navy ship to take him away from the Dominican Republic and ,only with people brandishing guns around, I thought we should get the hell out of there. Only then did we realize that we probably were being rather foolish, certainly doing this with a journalist in the back of our car. We didn't know any better and I went back from there, I dropped the journalist off and we went back to our home. Norman Gaul now lives in Sao Paulo, Brazil and we see him from time to time and recall this adventure with him. That's my recollection of exactly what we were doing during that coup. It was bloodless and Bosch was removed quickly and the council of state, I mean the junta, took over rather quickly, led by a fellow named Donald Reid and a couple of other members, but no need to go into all that. They established a certain kind of order, if you will, but certainly, as the outbreak in '65 demonstrated, they didn't manage to get the political situation completely managed.

Q: When you arrived early in the political section, the triumvirates were in power?

WATSON: That's right. It was a triumvirate and shortly afterwards, if I remember correctly, Ramon [inaudible], who was one of the three triumvirate members and was having some problems with alcohol at the time, left the triumvirate and there were only two of them.

Q: What were our relations? I mean, we were delighted to see [inaudible] out at that point, but then again with the Kennedy administration and all of a sudden you have this coup. Were you in the political section, were we under restraints as far as dealing with this new government, or how did we work it?

WATSON: It's hard for me to recall too clearly this stuff because when the coup actually took place I was still in the consular section. I did not go up to the political section for probably five months after that. I think that the mood was a great disappointment that the showcase for democracy, if you will, had been shattered in a certain way, but also there was concern, as there always was. You can never forget the theme of this period— that communists were seen under every bed and that's what led to the intervention of American and OAS troops in April of '65 in response to this revolt which broke out. I think that there was, my recollection was that we had a very cordial relationship, with Reid particularly, the head of the triumvirate. He was an English speaking fellow and owned a couple of car dealerships and had been educated, I think in the States, and was a nice guy basically. I think that, although there were elements in the embassy and certainly among my friends in the Dominican Republic who felt that we should have a more hands-off relationship with these guys who represented the violation of the democratic process, but I think probably overriding that and this is just supposition on my part. You'd have to ask other people who were involved, like Harry Shlaudeman, who came back down during the '65 coup period, exactly what was going on. My supposition is that the overriding concern was to make sure that the Dominican Republic didn't become another Cuba as they used to say all the time. The triumvirate may have been an evil of some sorts, but it was a far lesser evil than some sort of left wing takeover in that country.

Q: Well, in the political section, were you looking for sort of Castroites all over the island who were...

WATSON: Well, in the political section, of course. We were always; I mean, it was a very complicated political situation with lots of different political parties. Many of those parties were personalistic vehicles. Everybody was intriguing against everyone else. It's a country that, for 30 years, nothing had been out in the open under Trujillo, so everything was done behind the scenes and, even if things weren't being done behind the scenes, people thought they were being done behind the scenes. There was an enormous amount of political reporting and rumors and they were working with the station and others in trying to sort out what was going on and the roiling waters of this political situation. Sure, people were very concerned about a whole variety of leftist parties and real communist parties. Remember, in those days there were communist parties who were groups or individuals who were more or less befriended by the Russians and associated with them as Soviets, as they were called, more or less befriended and associated with the Cubans and even the Chinese. Any analysts of the communist movements in Latin America in those days always looked for at least those three factions, and they were there. I mean, if you look hard, they're there. Now, how important they are, how powerful they were, you know, is another question. In a society where the politics is very weak and highly disaggregated, if you will, then a handful of people in the right spot in the right time can really make a difference. I think that's what people were afraid of. Really, I can't spend too much more time discussing this particular issue because it is a long, long time ago. I think there are other people who would be much more authoritative on this than I would.

Q: Yes, but I'm trying to capture the viewpoint of the young political officer. I mean, were we more or less, what were we looking for, when the outbreak came, was this sort of an expected thing?

WATSON: No, I don't think so. I left six months before the civil war broke out in April of '65. I think we were concerned about the disintegration of the political situation there, as I mentioned, and about who might take advantage of it. I can remember a whole series of names, some of them who are now prominent respectable people now, but they were radical leftists at the time or at least perceived by us to be that. I personally, myself, was sort of on the left end of the legitimate American political spectrum, so I remember. A lot of my friends were out there. I was personally uncomfortable with the triumvirate government. I remember sort of hoping that there would be some way that democracy could be restored and that more progressive elements of society could come back into power, but I think we're all aware of and conscious of the dangers of some kind of radical leftist seizure of power in some fashion. The Cuban experience was there, not that these two places were similar, but there was a kind of a metaphor for what might happen in the Dominican Republic. As I said, in these kinds of chaotic circumstances a very small number of people – which is the size of the group which threw out Bosch – a very small number of people on the left appropriately situated could have done some real damage. There was a lot of concern about that and even for somebody like myself, who was on sort of the left end, right out of college, left end of the sort of legitimate American political spectrum. I certainly didn't have any sympathy for these guys coming to power and had no expectation that if they did so it would be a good thing for the Dominican people. The PRD was, and remember we had had the Kennedy administration with Ambassador John Bartlow Martin had strongly supported the PRD and Juan Bosch. At least after they were elected; I cannot say whether we had a favorite in any way. Those were different times than today, but who knows. During the electoral period, but we were strongly supportive of the PRD and there were many people in the United States, especially businessmen and others who were highly suspicious of the PRD and were never comfortable for the administration's support of Juan Bosch, as opposed to the opposing candidate who came from the business class, but to his credit it was a business class that remained inside the Dominican Republic and was opposed to Trujillo to the extent that it was possible to do that for many years. So, you had a lot of I think a lot of strong views, a lot of anxiety about what was the situation in the Dominican Republic and it was a very important place, one of the most important places in Latin America for Kennedy. Then subsequently of course the Johnson administration because of its proximity to the United States and its proximity to Cuba and the apparent progress, and then failure, of the democratic experiment there.

Q: Well, then you left the Dominican Republic when?

WATSON: September. I think it was, no… I think it was September of '64.

JOHN HUGH CRIMMINS
Director, Dominican Republic Affairs
Washington, DC (1963-1966)

Ambassador Crimmins was born on November 26, 1919 in Massachusetts. He received his BA from Harvard University in 1941. He served in the U.S. Army as a 2nd lieutenant of artillery from 1941 to 1946. Upon joining the Foreign Service

in 1955, he served in many countries throughout his career including Mexico, Cuba, the Dominican Republic, and Brazil. Ambassador Crimmins was interviewed by Ashley Hewitt, Jr. on May 10, 1989.

Q: [Kennedy] was the president who had a lot of mettle and was not afraid to show it.

CRIMMINS: That's right. He was quite low key. He was very, very sensible, I thought. I used to see Kennedy at meetings often when I came back in '61 and was handling the Dominican Republic. We used to have a meeting at the White House about every ten days on the Dominican Republic. Kennedy was a very hands-on kind of person, as you know

Q: Yes.

CRIMMINS: You probably remember Phil Torre. Phil was my Dominican desk officer, and he used to come to meetings, too. We'd been all the way down. LBJ was the same way, in the sense that he asked very sensible questions, as had Kennedy. I thought Kennedy was terrific. I just thought Kennedy was just magnificent.

Q: What about Bobby?

CRIMMINS: I didn't like Bobby.

Q: Was he untrustworthy, in your view?

CRIMMINS: I thought he was arrogant. He was simplistic. I guess we started off wrong, in the sense that he made a bad impression on me. One of the meetings on the Dominican Republic was held. I had done the briefing paper for the meeting. We were all there, [Robert] McNamara and everybody. Robert Murphy was Special Assistant to the President for the Dominican Republic at that time, very close to [Rafael] Trujillo and a very negative force, so far as I was concerned, but he was there. Everybody was there. Bob Woodward had just come back from Punta de l'Este and had a terrible cold. George Ball was the acting secretary, he was there. We were going along. This was a six months' action paper. The idea was, this was all key to moving the Trujillo out and moving what we called the moderate opposition into a position where they could come to power. Everything was going well. It was very animated, and Bob Murphy was saying, "No, no, no, you can't do this. You've got to stick with the Trujillo."

Q: Was this after the Trujillo assassination?

CRIMMINS: Yes. I took over in July of '61, but the assassination took place in May of '61. This was when Ramfis was running things, and Radames and the uncles were still there. This would have been August into September.

Well, anyway, things were going well. Then this guy came through the door of the Cabinet room, and he looked so young, and it was Bobby. He said to the whole group, "My God!" "Jesus Christ!" or something like that. "I just had lunch with the Secretary General of the Union Civica," which was the lead party in the moderate opposition. He said, "If we have to depend on

people like that, we're in real trouble." And from that moment, the thing went downhill, let's say, in the "Let's try to live with the Trujillo," or, "Shouldn't we make some offers to the Trujillo?" kind of thing. It was a very instinctive unthought-out kind of reaction, it seemed to me. I think I said--I would like to think I said, anyway, "They haven't had experience for 31 years in political preparation and organization."

But anyway, then his role in the Cuban thing, I always thought was negative and, from my point of view, extremely secretive and, in many respects, unknowable. He was sort of a wild card, I thought, in the whole picture.

Q: Do you think that this was, relatively speaking, youth and inexperience? Or was it really his nature to do things that way?

CRIMMINS: I think it's probably both. I guess the current wisdom is that after the assassination, Bobby grew up and became much more, let's say, tolerant, compassionate, understanding. Whatever you want to call it. I found him to be none of those things in the brief encounters that I had with him. He was abrasive, unpleasant, arbitrary, and I was aware of his McCarthy ties and that kind of thing, so I didn't have a beginning favorable impression of him. I like to think that he did change before he died. I don't know. But I think that it was probably both. I think it was the arrogance of power, for one thing, and I think it was his personality, his persona, if you want to put it that way.

You seem to be interested in this question of the Kennedys. As I said, I was a great fan of the President. I thought the President was great. He was dynamic. I just felt that we were doing all the right things in those days.

Q: Do you think, John, that he went ahead with the Bay of Pigs thing kind of against his will or against his better judgment, or had he been convinced that that might work and this was the thing to do to solve the problem?

CRIMMINS: I was in Brazil at the time of the Bay of Pigs. I thought it was disastrous when I heard about it the first time in Brazil. But this is before it failed. I just thought it was a very bad mistake.

But anyway, my own belief--and this is colored by the regard I had for the President--I think he did it against his better judgment. I just wonder sometimes whether he was reluctant to take on all the vested interest that had been developed around this effort, whether he wasn't a little timid about challenging something that was well entrained.

Q: Meaning the agency, the Defense Department?

CRIMMINS: The Defense Department and the soft-on-Cuba, no-guts kind of atmosphere that becomes established, which certainly, I think, in recent years has been resurrected, you know, that you're not tough enough.

So I think that it was against his better judgment. My reading of the history supports this, but it's a debatable question, I can see, I can recognize.

Q: When did the intense involvement of yourself and the US really begin? With the assassination or before the assassination of Trujillo did it became tense?

CRIMMINS: As I said, I didn't come back from Brazil until July of '61, so that was two months after the assassination. I wasn't involved in the antecedents to the assassination, but I read the accounts. Henry Dearborn probably could tell you enough, more about the degree of involvement than I could.

I think the US involvement goes back to the 1959-60 period, when Trujillo was becoming more and more--what shall I say?--irrational, the attacks on Betancourt and the consequent sanctions that were levied by the OAS against him. We were very actively involved in that. In other words, there was a shift in the late "50s, so far as I could determine, from policy by passivity, to toleration of Trujillo. But the 1959-60 period marked a change.

Q: What was the situation you found when you walked into that office? What faced you?

CRIMMINS: What faced me was the continued presence of the Trujillo family in power, the rising sentiment in the Dominican Republic against the Trujillo as a consequence of the assassination, and a desire for a return to the establishment of an open society. The question was: how do you do this without running the risk of what was considered to be the threat of another Cuba in the Dominican Republic?

Another Cuba then--and even now--is a part of a constant thread in US-Latin American policy. The idea was, from my point of view and, I guess, from the Department's point of view, that you work toward easing the Trujillo out. This effort revolved around Ramfis, who was considered to be the most powerful and the most dangerous member of the family. There were two sort of clownish uncles who were pretty sinister, but were limited in their authority and in their abilities. Radínas was too much of a playboy to be significant.

So I came in. Ed Valen, who was director of the office, said, "I'm all involved in the Cuban question. You're just going to have to take over the Dominican thing." He said this the first day I arrived. So I plunged into that and spent a good deal of the next two months concentrating on the Dominican Republic, trying to determine how we could move toward the removal of the Trujillo and the installation of a center force. That was sort of the task, and how to protect against the downside risk of a serious extreme leftist takeover.

At that time, there were two small parties--well, one fairly large party, the 14th of June Party that was to the left, and the PCD, the Communist Party of the Dominican Republic, which was a nonentity, but was a formal party with ties to Moscow. It was decided early on that we wanted to move toward a center solution so long as we avoided the downside problem. That took us until November to work out. There were various proposals made. George McGhee, who was running the Policy Planning Council at that time, was sort of heavily involved. I thought he was a nuisance, but he had clout and was imaginative and thoughtful. He was, in part, responsible for

the idea of trying to get Ramfis out by guaranteeing him, in effect, some of his wealth, by setting up a foundation. I mean, there was some idea of setting up a foundation and sugar monies would go into this kind of thing. I've forgotten the details, but it was hotly debated and discussed. It was going to be proposed to Ramfis, but I think we drew back from that before it was every launched.

In any event, as is always the case, immediate events shaped the way the policy came to fruition, namely Ramfis' summoning of two uncles, who had been, in effect, sent out as a gesture of good will, let's say, in July or August, by Ramfis. They'd been sent into golden exile. He called them back, and they came back. That was considered to be almost--not a provocation, but a readiness to have a confrontation. That's what it was.

John Hill was the consul general there. We had no diplomatic relations because of the sanctions levied in '60 by the OAS. John Hill was the consul general and did a fabulous job on the spot. He and I were in constant touch. We used the phone, which we had a daily changing code that we dreamed up, which we changed.

Q: Which would have horrified Security.

CRIMMINS: Yes. We did it. We had to do it, because in those days, communications were very slow.
They were even a lot slower than they are now.

Q: And no secure phones.

CRIMMINS: No secure phones. So every day we'd send down a top secret telegram with a key and we would operate out of that.

So when things started to become tense in the middle of November and we thought there was going to be a showdown, the uncles were there, Ramfis was there, and the Trujillo, we deduced, were digging in their heels. John was putting pressure on [Joaquín] Balaguer, who was the president at the time, to speak up against the Trujillo and that kind of thing, as I remember.

Q: Balaguer was president at the time.

CRIMMINS: For four years. Well, about six or eight years, all told.

To cut through all of this and the details, you know, the hour-to-hour development isn't clear to me, but on a Friday, I guess it was the 17th of November, it became clear to me that we needed some demonstration, and I thought we should move the Ready PhibRon up.

Q: This is a military force?

CRIMMINS: The Ready Amphibious Squadron, it was called. It had a small aircraft carrier and a couple of destroyers, maybe a cruiser.

Q: Based in Puerto Rico?

CRIMMINS: Right. Based in Puerto Rico. It was called the Ready PhibRon.

So I went up to talk to Bob Woodward. This is important, because you asked for comments about how policy is made now and how it was made earlier. Bob was going out to lunch, and I said, "Bob, I think we should move the Ready PhibRon within steaming distance of Santa Domingo, because things are getting tense. We don't know what's going to happen and how much of a blood bath it's going to be if the Trujillo really dig in."

So he talked and asked me a lot of good questions and said, "Okay, this is just going to move it up within steaming. They're not going to be visible?"

I said, "No, they're not going to be visible."

So I picked up the phone and called OP-61 or 61A, or something like that, in the Navy, and said, in effect, "Move the PhibRon." And they said, "Fine." (Laughter) Cross my heart, this is the way it was done! The PhibRon started to move within an hour.

Then Saturday, the next day, things were getting tenser. John was reporting that there were all sorts of rumors about arrests and executions about to take place, and all the horror stories were beginning to surface. So he recommended, and I set up, two operations. The preliminary was that the Ready PhibRon would appear on the horizon off Santa Domingo in international waters. Then the two courses were (A) I think this is called Grasshopper. There would be a fly-by still over international waters of jets from Vieques, in Puerto Rico. The carrier had no aircraft. Well, I guess they had helicopters. The second operation was a flyover of San Isidro, which was the center of power of the Dominican armed forces. It was the Air Force base, but the Air Force then was like the Luftwaffe, had infantry and artillery and everything else. We set this up on a contingency basis, John and I.

On Saturday morning, I went up to talk to Bob about this, and said, "I think the time is coming to do this, but we need authority to do it." Ted Achilles, who was director of the operations center, which at that time was in its infancy, but it was supposed to be a very powerful element in the policy apparatus, was there. He was strongly opposed to these proposals. Bob said, "Let's go up and talk to the Secretary." So Bob Woodward, Ted Achilles, an Air Force lieutenant colonel named Manny Chavez, who had just come from the Dominican Republic, had been down there with John Hill as a military associate or something, couldn't be military attaché, but anyway, he had come back, and I went up to see the Secretary.

Q: Who was [Dean] Rusk.

CRIMMINS: Rusk. This is about 11:00 or 12:00, something like that. The Secretary listened to us and said, "Okay, I think this sounds reasonable. I'm going to have to talk to the President." We, of course, trooped out. The word came back that the President was at Bonham, Texas, for Sam Rayburn's funeral. He said he'd call as soon as he could. Then we went in, and the Secretary was looking at a Texaco road map of the Dominican Republic. (Laughter) Manny Chavez was talking and showing him where it would be necessary to land, things like that. The Secretary was

an old infantry officer originally, you know, and wanted to know about beaches and that sort of thing.

The call came through from the President and we trooped out again. The Secretary called us back and said, "The President said okay. You can run Grasshopper, the fly-by over international waters, without further reference. But under no circumstances do you penetrate air space without specific further authorization from him."

So that was Saturday. I guess we sent a telegram to John saying this. Phil Torre and I came into the office at, I guess, 7:30 or 8:00 in the morning, set up in the front office of ARA--that was our headquarters--because they had more telephones than anybody else. About 11:00, I guess, John Hill came and said, "I'm going to see the President." We had made the PhibRon visible, and there were people cheering in Momalicon like crazy, and John was reporting. This was in all great jubilation in the city. John called about 11:00 on Sunday morning and said, "I think you should do Grasshopper." So 24 minutes later, the planes were flying back and forth out to sea.

Then about 2:00, Bob Woodward came in. I was on the phone to him all the time at home. Bob Woodward came in, and we had to get a plane to get the Trujillo out. They said they would come out.

Q: They had told Hill that they were willing to go?

CRIMMINS: Yes, and we found out by that time that Ramfis had already bugged out three or four days earlier. We didn't know. We did not know it.

So Bob called Wilbur Morrison, the Vice President for Latin American Pan American, and said, "We need a plane." Wilbur said, "Who's going to pay for it?" Bob said, "I don't know, but we need it." So he got a plane and they flew it to Fort Lauderdale, landed in Fort Lauderdale about midnight of that night.

Q: Who did pay for it?

CRIMMINS: I don't think it ever was paid for, because it was a terrible thing. The Department had no funds for this kind of thing, and Defense wouldn't do it, and the White House, you know, the military aides over there would never pay for anything like this. Bob wrestled with it for a while, and I think it just went away and Pan American gave up. Because Pan American was flush in those days.

So that was a great day in my Foreign Service career. But the point I want to make here is that the strategy was developed in the meetings in the White House, and everybody was aboard in that. The tactics, the execution of the policy and the tactics, devolved to a very low level, really. I mean, I was an office director and I had lots of leeway. I think all the bases were touched. But the stress I want to place is on the informality of the decision-making chain. It went up the chain perfectly sensibly. I think all the basic justifications for the policy were made in the course of going up through the chain.

Q: It sounds as though there wasn't a whole lot that was getting committed to paper in all of this. Is that right or not?

CRIMMINS: Well, there were telegrams to John Hill.

Q: But I mean staff studies or memos to the Secretary.

CRIMMINS: None of that. Exactly. That's my point. That's my point. Certainly no options papers.

Now, on the broad policy, there was certainly lots of papers, most of which were done in my office, subject to Bob Woodward's approval. Bob and Wym Coerr vetted them very, very carefully.

So it was this very simple, I think, clean operation. Historically, I don't know how much of this is written down, but enough of it to prevent distortion of what was going on. So that was November 1961.

After that, we had the big problem of transition to elections, and the provisional government was set up, the Junta. What was it called? Junta National--I've forgotten. This was the one that Donnie Reed was on. The Monsignor. Anyway, I've forgotten what it was called. The Council of State, that's what it was called. That was the provisional government which prepared for the elections in December of 1962. The Council was established in January of '62, and took office right after a sort of half-baked attempt by an Air Force chief of staff to pull a coup with, we suspected, Balaguer's acquiescence, if not encouragement. We were very negative toward Balaguer in those days.

So then the elections came. [Juan] Bosch was elected in the end of '62, took office in February of '63, at which time I was in Miami, so I was out of the picture.

Q: Let's move ahead a little bit to when you became ambassador to the Dominican Republic. Clearly there has to be some background on how we got into the intervention and whether you think that was well advised and necessary. Or was that an example of excessive reaction to the threat of another Cuba in the hemisphere and all that kind of thing? In retrospect, what is your opinion?

CRIMMINS: I was the Coordinator of Cuban Affairs at the time. My own view at that time is that this was unnecessary. The following developments in Cuba and Cuban activities, I found no evidence that the Cubans were involved in any way with the revolution of April of '65. So I was skeptical of the charges of 92 known communists in the group, in the constitutionalist camp, a figure which was later exploded, as far as I could tell. I thought it was just unnecessary.

I did not participate in the back and forth at all, and, in fact, became involved only when I was asked to head a task force in the operations center, to leave my job as coordinator and, along with Bob Sayer, run the task force. We had 12 hours on, 12 hours off. We swapped. We alternated. I was asked to do that the day the decision was taken to send the 82nd Airborne in. On that point, I

was in the operations center at the time, got a call from Tom Mann, from the White House, telling me it had been decided at the big meeting that they had, that the 82nd Airborne would go to Puerto Rico. It would be at Rame Air Force base in a standby position. So as head of the task force, I made note of that and informed people.

Twenty minutes to half an hour later, I got a call from the NMCC, National Military Command Center, saying that the 82nd Airborne, the first brigade or whatever it was, would be airborne out of Fort Bragg for San Isidro in half an hour, or something like that. I said, "San Isidro?" I thought I was in the presence of a colossal error, you know, that they were supposed to go to Puerto Rico and here they were going to San Isidro.

Q: By mistake.

CRIMMINS: By mistake! By mistake! So I started making all these frantic telephone calls, and everybody was coming back from the meeting and they weren't available. Oh, it was terrible! I finally got hold of something, maybe Tom Mann again, maybe the Secretary himself, and said, "What about this? They say they're going to San Isidro."

He said, "Oh, yeah. After Tom called you, some of us went back to talk to the President, and then it was decided they would go to San Isidro."

But that whole operation was really weird. In my days in the operations center, I was convinced that the policy-making and policy execution apparatus of the US Government was stretched to the absolute maximum, really. It was just madness. It was just chaos.

Q: Because we didn't have the mechanisms to deal with this?

CRIMMINS: And there were so many actors and there were so many crossed wires and signals, volume of traffic. We used to have the traffic pile along the thing, and the military traffic would be about that deep in folded-up teletype paper. Oh, it was crazy! I had nothing to do with running the task force. I was just sort of a facilitator and switchboard, nothing to do with the policy thing, which was a whole other dimension. But I was concerned at that time that if there were ever another crisis in another part of the world, we wouldn't have been able to handle it.

Q: You couldn't handle more than one crisis at once.

CRIMMINS: That's right, of these dimensions, with military operations being conducted and the U.N. being involved and the OAS. LBJ was furious at Bobby Kennedy, because Bobby Kennedy said that, "In the missile crisis, we did it better. We consulted the OAS, and they didn't do this."

So I got a call from probably Walt Rostow in the White House, I guess, saying, "Get the records on the decision to go to the OAS in the middle crisis." In forty-five minutes they wanted it, because the President wanted to make a statement for television or something. So I got hold of a very efficient woman, blonde, on the seventh floor, who ran the special archives. I got hold of her and we went through the thing. Of course, 45 minutes went and we finally found it. Of course, the decision, as I remembered it, the decision was that, "We'll go to the OAS, and if they

agree, fine. If they don't agree, we're going to do it anyway." (Laughter) A quarantine and that sort of thing.

So it was a little disingenuous. But by that time, the President turned to something else and had forgotten--or decided that he didn't want to do it. I guess he decided better about getting into a contest with Bobby Kennedy. He was furious about it, really furious, and it was a cheap shot, because maybe Bobby remembered it wrong. That would be the only positive explanation of that. I suspect it was disingenuous.

Then Ellsworth Bunker got involved and did his wonderful job down there. I was on the task force for about a week, I guess, a week, maybe ten days, and came back to finish out in Cuban affairs. This was '65. We had the big camadioca refugee movement, which was a big crisis, but it worked all right. You don't want to go into that, but it was the forerunner of the Mariel thing.

DOROTHY JESTER
Economic Officer
Santo Domingo (1964-1965)

Ms. Jester was born on July 4, 1914 in Arizona. She received her BA and her MA from Stanford University in 1936 and 1940 respectively. Her career has included positions in Germany, Mexico, Nicaragua, Chile, and the Dominican Republic. Ms. Jester was interviewed by Laurin Askew on July 21, 1998.

Q: And when would that have been?

JESTER: In 1956. I stayed in Bonn, as assistant commercial attache, until 1958, when I was transferred to the Department of State for a four-year tour. In 1962, I went to Santiago, Chile, to do economic reporting. On the way to Santiago, by ship, I learned I had been promoted to FSO-2, which was the reason I was only there for a year and a half. The inspectors recommended that I be transferred to a smaller post where I would be head of an economic section. This meant the embassy in Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic.

Q: And how did it work out?

JESTER: It was fine for about a year and a half. Then, you may recall, there was a rebellion on the island, resulting in American troops being sent in by President Johnson in 1965. All economic work stopped, and the ambassador put me in charge of evacuating American civilians. I remember being on duty at the embassy for 36 hours straight to get the evacuation underway. As things were brought under control, the decision was made to expand the contingent of the Agency for Economic Development, whose local director would also head the embassy's economic section. Ergo, I was surplus. But I was delighted to learn that I was transferred back to Mexico City.

WILLIAM TAPLEY BENNETT
Ambassador
Dominican Republic (1964-1966)

Ambassador Bennett was born on April 1, 1917 in Georgia. He received his BA from the University of Georgia in 1937 and his LLB from George Washington University in 1948. His career has included positions in the Dominican Republic, Austria, Greece, and Portugal. Ambassador Bennett was interviewed by Horace G. Torbert, Jr. on June 16, 1988.

BENNETT: Lyndon Johnson was now President. Tom Mann was Assistant Secretary of State for Latin America, soon to move up to be Under Secretary for Economic Affairs then the number three post in the Department. In January 1964 I suddenly got a call that the President wanted me to go as Ambassador to the Dominican Republic. In fact, I got a personal telegram from the President. That was very exciting. I left Athens in a hurry and stopped in Spain on the way home for a quick visit with Bob and Ginny Woodward. Bob was then Ambassador in Madrid. Margaret said, as she always does, she pays, packs and follows. She'd rather get me out of the house before she packs up because I like to keep things. And she knows what to throw away.

At any rate, the children were in school. You always have to take that into account on these transfers as best you can. So she followed. And then in March of 1964 we went down to the Dominican Republic to my first Embassy. As you remember, that had been my first post. And so I went back 20 years to the month from leaving the place. That's an interesting Rip Van Winkle experience. Because some people are exactly the same, you might have seen them last week. Others you wouldn't recognize they've changed so. There are both pluses and minuses to going back. You have friends from another period who are no longer appropriate to the new situation and vice versa. People you didn't know are suddenly very important.

Anyway, that was a stormy country. It always has been since it was first discovered by Columbus in 1492. It has varied between strongman government and literal chaos for all those centuries. The Dominican Republic is a country that has natural resources, particularly in the agricultural field, although there were some minerals as well. It has got a sturdy peasantry that works hard by tropical standards. But it has always had an incestuous political elite. And that was still the problem in 1964.

There had been the assassination of the long time dictator after 31 years, in 1961. The Kennedy administration, mistakenly in my opinion, had decided to make the Dominican Republic the showcase for democracy. The elements just weren't there to produce a functioning democracy overnight. The man who was sent as ambassador was a journalist who had no experience whatever with diplomacy. He was a good, decent personal man but, as someone said to me after I arrived, why, this is the first time we've ever had a staff meeting. But he was well known in democratic circles. He later wrote the most devastating book about the failures of the man elected Dominican president, Juan Bosch, who was overthrown in September, 1963. After the overthrow, Martin, our Ambassador, had been brought home to show out disapproval. The post was not filled for six months.

When I arrived in Santo Domingo in March, 1964, as the new Ambassador, the country was in economic shambles. The military establishment was overwhelmingly corrupt. And there was no viable political structure. When a three-legged stool like that is missing all three legs, the seat falls down.

That winter of '64-'65, when I'd been there just nine months, when sugar went below three cents a pound between Christmas day and New Years' I knew we were in for trouble. That spring things got worse and worse.

To add to the political, economic, and military problems, the country suffered one of the worst droughts in its history. The capital city was just wearing down. Outbreaks of disorder and riots were breaking out in the crowded poor section of the town. And finally, Bosch instigated the revolution which broke out in late April, 1965 and convulsed the place, leading to our great concern, after four or five days, for the safety of American citizens. So we landed the Marines to help in the evacuation, to organize it. And we did bring out some 4,500 people from more than 40 different countries.

Now, that's an enormous number of people to leave a small place. I remember, some months later, there was trouble out in Bangladesh and 700 people were taken off by the Navy. Well, that was headline news in the New York Times. But somehow 4,500 out of a small place in the Caribbean didn't get the same attention. By then the place had deteriorated into chaos. We finally brought in the airborne troops from Fort Bragg in North Carolina and stabilized the situation.

By this time there was a great deal of criticism in the press over American intervention once again in Latin America. We thought we were saving lives when we landed the Marines. And we broadened it by bringing in airborne troops to stabilize the situation while a diplomatic solution was sought. The Organization of American States sent a committee down under the leadership of Ellsworth Bunker, with a Brazilian and a Salvadoran member accompanying him. They labored for months to find some non-partisan people, Dominicans, who could form a provisional government and lead the country back to elections. That was accomplished finally. Bunker did his usual very outstanding work. And he was enormously respected by all sides. We got the right man in Hector Garcia Godoy as the provisional President. And I presented my credentials a second time in September 1965. For the next nine, ten months I ran the normal functions of the Embassy.

We resumed our aid program. In fact, we very much enlarged it. We had a very large program going there. At one time we had more people in that Embassy than any other in the hemisphere, including Brazil and Mexico. In fact, I thought at times Washington was sending too many. But it was a major program.

The place did stabilize. There were free and orderly elections the following April. I had departed just before that. Balaguer was elected. The country settled down. And we got the troops out ahead of schedule. In essence, it was a case of trying to help a neighbor who'd fallen off the road of democracy back onto the road. And it has worked. The country has now had the longest period of political stability in its history. Before that time they'd only had one period of about

five years of constitutional government in all of that long history since 1492. Then the man had been assassinated, the elected President. Now today we've had in the Dominican Republic more than 20 years of constitutional government and changes of leadership through free elections. Considering what's happened elsewhere in the Central American and Caribbean area it's been an island of stability.

Q: Pretty good. Balaguer was originally a Trujillo man, wasn't he?

BENNETT: He had been, he'd been a puppet president under Trujillo. But he had never been associated either with the corruption - because he was a frugal man, he was a bachelor, he lived very simply - he had never been associated either with the corruption or with the brutalities, the police and army brutalities.

He was the man to bring the country back together - all the Dominicans respected him. All through the months of crisis Dominicans kept saying, Balaguer is the man who understands us, we need him back. He was then elected and served two terms as President, which was enough. Then, I'm not sure, he went on to do a third term. That's the trouble in Latin America. Once they're in office, they don't know how to give it up. Now he has recently been elected again after two or three other presidents have held office. The poor man now is blind and ailing, and it's obviously too late in time for him to be there. But that's the way of it. But he served a very worthwhile purpose for democracy and for constitutional stability when he came in 1966.

I had left because I wrote the Secretary of State, who was then Dean Rusk, some months before and said, now, I've been a controversial figure here. Now we've put things together, and we're clearly on the road to elections. I'm ready to go any time you think I should go. Well, the Secretary apparently appreciated that letter, and after a while I got back an answer. In the spring of 1966 I was named Ambassador to Portugal. I left the Dominican Republic about two weeks before the election so as not to be a factor because Bosch was already making great noises about this Ambassador who brought the troops in is still here to control the election, etcetera. So I think my instinct was right in getting out ahead of time.

It was rough going for a while and there were a lot of ad hominem attacks which weren't very pleasant. But that's the way the game is played. I think to be in American diplomacy you've got to have a thick hide. And today it helps if you have a bullet proof vest. And you've certainly got to have a sense of humor.

Q: As I remember Senator Fulbright gave you a rough time on your confirmation hearings.

BENNETT: Yes, and for years after he tried to hold up every future appointment and with some pretty shabby work at times, I say frankly. Happily, all my appointments went through the Senate despite his opposition. As it turned out, I remained in government service than did Fulbright, since he was defeated for re-election.

No, he really didn't play fair. Senator Russell, who was my senator from Georgia and who was, of course, the highly respected ranking member of the Senate at the time, never forgave Fulbright over the way he played the Dominican case. I remember his saying to me, he said, I

went over to Bill Fulbright the other day and I said, Bill, I understand you're going to make a speech on the Dominican Republic. And Fulbright said yes, but don't worry I'm not going to jump on your man. Then he did, of course, and with both feet. And Russell never forgave him for the way he had acted. This is personal, and I probably shouldn't mention it.

Q: No, this is what this all about.

BENNETT: It was too bad because I think Fulbright contributed some of the best legislation we ever had just after World War II. I'm aware that some of our scholarship people don't give him much credit - he was reportedly an unpleasant prima donna throughout the legislative process - but I consider the exchange fellowship and scholarship programs one of the best foreign policy instruments we have. But later on somehow - Fulbright talked about the arrogance of power in the executive branch but I think he became very arrogant after he became chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee. Of course, he wanted to be Secretary of State and was embittered when Kennedy didn't appoint him. And that seemed to have corroded his soul somehow.

Q: And he was also aided and abetted about it by his chief of staff among other things.

BENNETT: Oh, there were some bad people on his staff. Really there were.

JOHN A. BUSHNELL
Economic & AID Officer
Santo Domingo (1964-1967)

Mr. Bushnell was born in New York State and educated at Yale University and McMurray College. An Economic Specialist, he served primarily in senior level positions at Latin American posts, including Bogota, Santo Domingo, San Jose and Buenos Aires, dealing primarily with Economic and International Trade issues. An assignment to the Staff of the National Security Council was followed by tours as Deputy Chief of Mission at Buenos Aires, Chargé d'Affaires at Panama City, and subsequently as Assistant Secretary of State for Inter-American Affairs. Mr. Bushnell was the recipient of several awards for outstanding service. Mr. Bushnell was interviewed by John Harter in 1997

Q: Who was Don Palmer?

BUSHNELL: Don Palmer was the senior economic officer in the Bureau of Latin American Affairs. He soon became Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Latin American Economic Affairs. He was one of the leading proponents of promoting changes in macro policy instead of just rearranging deck chairs on the SS TITANIC through project loans for roads, schools and other social infrastructure. Working with Palmer was a Deputy Assistant Administrator of AID for Latin America named Ray Sternfeld. There was a small group - a half dozen officials - who were focused on the concept of program lending, with special reference to Colombia and Brazil. To keep in touch with the field, one or more of them would come to Colombia frequently, or I

would go to Washington for consultations. After the 1962 elections and the events of 1963 in the Dominican Republic [an military uprising against the government] …

Q: After the Trujillo assassination in May 1961, there was a period of chaos when the people in power decided to hold on to their positions. Then Bosch was elected President of the Dominican Republic in 1963.

BUSHNELL: He was elected in a landslide in December 1962. Then he was thrown out of office in a bloodless military coup in September 1963. The military set up a civilian triumvirate to run the country, and the situation was rather chaotic. The U.S. withheld aid and deployed the overthrow of democratically-elected Bosch for a few months. As the situation stabilized, the U.S. resumed aid and began working toward new elections and economic progress. Economic policies were a big problem. Priority attention in Washington was focused on getting a handle on the economic situation in the Dominican Republic. State and AID wanted to use program lending in close coordination with the IMF and World Bank in the Dominican Republic. Don Palmer and others wanted to do in the Dominican Republic a version of what we were doing in Colombia.

I was asked if I would accept an immediate direct transfer from the Economic Section at the Embassy in Colombia to the Economic Section of the Embassy in the Dominican Republic. My tour of duty in Bogota was coming to an end in four or five months, anyway. I was still a junior officer in Bogota so I had a two-year tour of duty. I left Bogota in July, 1964. I had been thinking of extending in Bogota to make my tour two and one-half years to May or June 1965 and get back on the summer cycle. I was excited about the program lending, the land reform loan, and other projects, and these programs were really just getting up to full speed. However, when the Department pressed me to go to the Dominican Republic in the summer of 1964, I said that would be fine. I thought that I would take some leave in the U.S. and then go to Santo Domingo, but the Department said there was no time for leave. We went directly from Bogota to Santo Domingo with only a weekend in Caracas where we had to change planes. It was a pretty miserable weekend as our son who had been born in Bogota was quite sick. We got off the plane in Santo Domingo in late morning, and the Embassy there had already scheduled for me to meet that same afternoon with the IMF mission.

Q: Was this meeting with the IMF mission for lunch with your wife Ann also invited? So you didn't have time to go to the hotel? You went straight to a luncheon?

BUSHNELL: I guess we had time to go to the hotel to drop off the family and change clothes. Then I went straight to this IMF meeting, even before setting foot in the Embassy. For a few weeks after my transfer had been decided, the Embassy in Santo Domingo had been sending me in Bogota information copies of its reporting cables on economic matters, and Washington had been sending me copies of its guidance, so I had some preparation. The transfer was raised with me and then, within a period of three weeks, we were in Santo Domingo.

Q: This was a meeting with whom and for what purpose?

BUSHNELL: There was a meeting scheduled with an IMF Mission visiting Santo Domingo to work out conditions for IMF loans [technically drawings]. The purpose of this meeting was to

coordinate with the US program, to go over the details of our support for a program which I found, after I arrived in Santo Domingo, involved AID program loans as well as loans from the World Bank and the IMF [International Monetary Fund]. It was a similar, multilateral approach to the one I had worked on in Bogota. However, the problems in the Dominican Republic were quite different from those in Colombia; the issue was more how to get any government functions working than how to make basic structural changes.

Q: Was anybody from the Embassy in Santo Domingo at this meeting with the IMF Mission? Who set this up?

BUSHNELL: The Economic Counselor in Santo Domingo, Dorothy Jester, was there. We also had another officer in the Economic Section in the Embassy in Santo Domingo who, I think, handled transportation and other regulatory matters. Our Commercial Attaché was also present at this meeting as well as the AID director. I don't think that my position in the Embassy was new. But there had not been an economic policy person in the Embassy in Santo Domingo for some time, if ever.

Q: Basically, was this the same kind of job that you had in Bogota?

BUSHNELL: It was much the same kind of job. For all intents and purposes I was really more in the AID Mission than in the Embassy. This involved a distinction without a difference because in Washington the Latin American offices of AID and the State Department were located in the same suite of offices, although in Santo Domingo the AID Mission had its offices in a building a couple of miles from the Embassy . All of us were supposed to work together. This was all a part of that so-called integrated setup. I did the financial reporting and related matters in the Embassy. The same data was used to support AID loans and to negotiate about policies with the Dominican government. We had different elements involved, but the same approach in the Dominican Republic as in Colombia.

However, the situation in the two countries was very different. In Colombia there were entrenched elements which were very resistant to change. In the Dominican Republic not only was there an oligarchy, the people with money and land and in many respects the military, but there were people who had lifetime employment, although at low salaries, in the government ministries who were even more resistant to change. They had allegiances to the oligarchy, but they were also unskilled and attached to traditional ways. There was the greatest difficulty in implementing any change because the bureaucrats constituted a kind of vacuum. There was an unelected triumvirate, with only two members when I got there; both Donald Reid, who had been a successful car dealer and earlier a foreign minister, and Ramon Caceres, a lawyer, wanted to create a functioning government and move to free elections, but they were virtually overcome by the extent of the problems they faced, and they had little help as what few capable people there were in the wake of Trujillo wanted nothing to do with a military-supported government. I met frequently with them to discuss economic problems. At first I would accompany Ambassador Bennett or the AID director, but soon it evolved that an aide would call and ask me to come see him; then he would take me to see Caceres or sometimes Reid or both without giving me time to call the Embassy [the Ambassador quite properly wanted himself or a senior officer to attend any meetings with the Triumvirate members].

Q: Was Bosch still in office?

BUSHNELL: Bosch was gone, living in exile in Puerto Rico. He was forced out by the Dominican military the year before. Then the military set up a civilian structure to govern, the Triumvirate, but the Triumvirate had very limited control over the military. Some 30 years of dictatorship under General Rafael Trujillo left the Dominican Republic with immense problems.

Q: Wasn't he in power from 1930 to 1961?

BUSHNELL: It was a long time, and Trujillo had really impoverished the country in basic ways.

Q: He was in charge of everything. He ran the Church, the government, and the military.

BUSHNELL: Unlike Colombia, in the Dominican Republic democracy hadn't had a chance to take root. There really wasn't much of a government, and bureaucrats were afraid and unaccustomed to taking any decisions or making any recommendations. Trujillo had been unwilling to expand the school system although the population was growing very rapidly; thus the population was almost all uneducated.

Q: But the assumption was that he had established stability.

BUSHNELL: Well, yes. Anybody who got out of line was promptly squelched, so that much of the middle class, which in 1930 wasn't large, had no opportunities except those given personally by the dictator. Much of the small, middle class had emigrated elsewhere, mainly to the United States. Most of the population performed manual labor and lived at the bottom of society. The biggest source of employment was growing and harvesting sugar cane. There were a few people at the top of society, the multitude of rural workers, and not much in between. There was no middle class to carry out a putsch. Thus General Trujillo was able to last so long in power. He probably would still be in power if he had not been assassinated by a small group of dissatisfied ex-military. The economic problem when I arrived was not so much to get agreement on sensible policies but to find policies that would virtually implement themselves.

I remember talking about things like increasing the tax on beer. That was a tax which should be easy to collect, since this excise tax was handled by the customs service and there were only a couple of breweries. There was a strong legal basis for this tax. But it was obvious, when we looked at the data, that most of the beer was not even paying the fairly low tax on the books because, between the Customs Service and the military, the tax was avoided. I found that there were a few good people in the Central Bank, and I worked as much as possible with them. In Washington the Dominican Republic was perceived to be in danger because it was located next door to Cuba and there were many Cuban/communist sympathizers among the young and on the university faculty. There was great concern in Washington about achieving some sort of economic and political stability, but there was also much concern about what the entire effort would cost.

Q: Was Ed Martin still Assistant Secretary for American Republic Affairs?

BUSHNELL: Tom Mann had replaced Martin who had gone to Argentina as Ambassador in January 1964.

Q: Was there anyone who served as Assistant Secretary between Ed Martin and Tony Soloman?

BUSHNELL: Mann brought Tony Solomon, an American businessman and economist in Mexico, in to be Deputy Assistant Secretary for Latin American economic affairs and Deputy Administrator of AID in 1964. Solomon was never Assistant Secretary for Latin America, but in 1965 he became Assistant Secretary for Economic Affairs. Then Don Palmer moved up and took Tony's job. Both Mann and Solomon were close to President Johnson.

Q: Charles P. Torrey was the Dominican desk officer from 1961 to 1963.

BUSHNELL: I don't remember that name. Ken Crockett was the Caribbean office director; perhaps Torrey worked for him. When I went to Washington, I worked with the economic team. Solomon, Palmer, and Bill Stedman in State and Dave Bronheim, Sternfeld, and a couple of other people from AID were members of the team that handled the Dominican Republic. I arrived in the Dominican Republic in July, 1964. The revolt against the Triumvirate took place in April 1965. I was there only nine months before those traumatic events.

Q: And you didn't achieve stability there.

BUSHNELL: We did not achieve even economic stability, let alone political stability.

Q: Let's take a quick look at the Embassy itself. Tapley Bennett was your Ambassador. How was he as an Ambassador?

BUSHNELL: He was great; of course my criteria may be different from that of many others. Whatever Bennett had been told about me by people in Washington, from the day I arrived in the Dominican Republic, he treated me as one of his senior economic advisers and also an adviser to the government as well. He gave me full support, but he didn't pretend to be an economist.

Q: And George Kuchesky was the Economic Counselor?

BUSHNELL: I don't know that name. Dorothy Jester was the Economic Counselor. She is a nice person and easy to work for. However, she never really adjusted to the chaotic situation in the Dominican Republic. She was not operationally oriented. She was used to economic reporting and formal negotiations, but not one who really tried to see how the Dominican Government worked. She found her position rather awkward because I, her junior officer, was being taken by the Ambassador to meet with the presidents. She also supervised the commercial officer, John Perkey.

Q: Who was the DCM [Deputy Chief of Mission]?

BUSHNELL: The DCM was Bill Connett. I didn't have a lot of contact with him. I had the feeling he was more like Dorothy Jester, a traditional or old-school FSO. He seemed to feel it wasn't the job of the Embassy to make the country work. He thought it was our job to observe and report. Ambassador Bennett felt it was in the interest of the U.S. to do what was necessary to see that the situation, economic and political, did not deteriorate. He felt we should work with the Dominican triumvirate to stabilize the situation and organize an election. He hoped that some Dominican political faction would emerge from the election able to govern. He meant someone other than General Wessin y Wessin.

Q: And the Political Section? Bob Heightston was Political Counselor of the Embassy during the summer of 1965. Who was there before him?

BUSHNELL: Ben Ruyle was the Political Counselor through the events of April to June and perhaps longer. Also in the political section were Art Breisky and Alfonso Arenales; I think there was one other Political Officer. Ed Terrell was an experienced officer. I spent most of my time working with the Dominican government and with AID. I often went to the National Palace and the Finance Ministry and to the Central Bank almost every day. Often, I went to all three places in a single day. I seldom went to internal Embassy meetings; Jester did that for the Economic Section. I tried to attend AID's weekly meetings as they was more relevant to what I was doing and I was supposed to wear both an Embassy and an AID hat. I suppose CIA personnel were out and about, doing their thing, but I did not come across them. There were a couple of private Americans working to help the Triumvirate on economic matters whom I felt might have some relationship to US intelligence. We were mutually helpful as we had the same objective -- strengthening the Triumvirate.

AID officers were having a great struggle because they were trying to get things to work without having much Dominican talent to work with. Their approach was to bring in US contractors. If they were trying to build schools and didn't have any Dominicans available who could design schools and contract for their construction, they brought in US contractors to design and contract schools. They were building up a substantial US involvement, but the AID Mission was mainly focused on these specific projects, not on general economic policy. The AID Director was William Ide, and his deputy was John Nepple. I had long discussions with AID about getting Dominican technical people to return to the Dominican Republic, since there were a lot of middle-class Dominicans living in the U.S. who had left their country over the years. My thought was that, rather than bringing in expensive American contractors, we should encourage Dominican technicians to return home.

Q: Did you have an office in the AID Mission?

BUSHNELL: I didn't have any particular office or desk in the AID Mission which had a major space problem because it was growing fast, and I had a comfortable office in an Embassy annex across the street from the Embassy.

Q: Were there AID Program Officers?

BUSHNELL: There were AID Program Officers. However, I was in the Embassy; I was paid by the Embassy, and I had an Embassy job. My AID job was never clearly defined, but I did almost all the work on AID program lending and Dominican macro policy matters. I don't think that I had any formal AID position. However, I attended AID general staff meetings. I knew what was going on in AID. Because I regularly worked with officials of the Central Bank and the Finance Ministry, I found it possible to resolve quite a few problems AID officers were having with their projects. They were always frustrated trying to get Dominican money released to get things done. Often I could and did resolve these problems. My relations with most officers in AID were good.

Another big AID problem was to identify Dominicans who could do the technical work. Of course, local people were the preferred option, but AID was not good at finding local technicians. My contacts in the Central Bank often came up with qualified Dominicans.

One of the things we were able to do through AID was to bring in experts from the US IRS [Internal Revenue Service], as we had in Colombia. I worked with them to encourage and help the Dominican tax authorities so that the system actually collected taxes. The April coup events began on a Saturday. I was at the home of the head of the IRS group, who was hosting a luncheon which I had helped to set up. Present at the luncheon were the head of the Dominican tax department and the deputy finance minister. We had invited them to talk about getting this tax collection program moving. The problem was that AID/IRS didn't seem to be able to get long appointments with the head of the tax department. I said: "Let's see if we can have a lunch to take care of this. We'll have it on a Saturday when they will not be rushed." That's where I was when the maid came in to say she had just heard on the radio that there had been a coup at the National Palace. We all finished our lunch as quickly as possible and left.

Q: Can you explain what the background of the coup was?

BUSHNELL: There was a lot of dissatisfaction in the military. A few military officers supported a return of Bosch from Puerto Rico; some thought Reid was too soft on the communists, who were allowed to be politically active; many wanted a return of Balaguer who had been President under Trujillo; many military did not like Reid's efforts to cut back on their budget and corruption. One of the touchiest problems that I was directly involved with was an effort of the government to bring its income and expenditures into closer balance, so that they wouldn't continue just to print money and generate inflation. The IMF and World Bank as well as AID, as a precondition to program lending, insisted on substantially reducing the deficit. The Dominican Government thought it would be a political disaster if it devalued the currency. However, when I arrived in Santo Domingo, the growing budget deficit was causing inflation and making it harder for the Dominicans to export while making imports seem cheaper. The biggest item on the expenditure side was the Dominican military establishment. It cost far more than education and all other social services combined. On the civilian side the Triumverate said that it was not so much that they wanted to cut military expenditure as that they wanted it to be more efficient and productive. The portion of the budget spent on the military was very high; the figure of 40 percent of the total budget comes to mind.

Q: We were giving the Dominican Republic military assistance.

BUSHNELL: We were giving some military assistance, but I don't think that it amounted to much. We gave them some military equipment, generally outdated used equipment, and some training, but it wasn't a big money program. Dominican military expenditures covered a lot of people, a lot of overhead, and a lot of corruption. Many of the soldiers supposedly on the roles and actually being paid were ghosts, i.e. they did not exist and the commanders pocketed their pay. I learned a lot about the real nature of military expenditures from my Central Bank friends.

This situation between the civilian government and the military was very difficult. The Triumverate had been appointed by the military. Reid and Caceres had only the power of persuasion over the military, trying to get them to reduce their expenditures. They would arrange lunches at the National Palace and bring in senior generals and admirals from the Dominican Army, Air Force and Navy. They would invite me to explain to the military why the country had to cut back its military expenditures. Cabinet members said that everybody had to try to cut back, but the military didn't do much cutting and what little it did was reluctant. Trying to convince the military of the need to cut military expenditures didn't work well. I thought that, if the Triumverate had insisted on major military expenditure cuts, more than a few percent, Reid and Caceres would have been out of office, and somebody else would be in. Thus we fell back to cutting the import privileges of the military commissaries and the free port. The situation had reached the point where almost all luxury goods came into the Dominican Republic, not through customs where they would have paid high duties, but through the military commissaries and free port which were duty free. The goods then were sold in the black market with large profits, primarily for military officers. Cutting this source of profit turned many military against the Triumverate.

Q: What do you recall about the coup itself? Who were the leaders?

BUSHNELL: Coup d'etat is probably not the word to use.

Q: Should it have been called "revolution?"

BUSHNELL: Revolt is probably a better word. Events moved quickly from what was a nearly textbook coup to revolt and chaos. The precipitating event on the Saturday was that Rivera Cuesta, the Army Chief of Staff, told Reid that three Lt. Colonels, two of whom commanded Army camps, were plotting a coup. Reid, as Secretary of the Armed Services [an additional duty to being the senior Triumverate member], ordered Rivera Cuesta to cancel the three officers' commissions. Rivera proceeded to do so without arranging for armed backup, and the Lt. Colonels arrested him. They had been planning a coup, and it was then launched immediately with their camps declaring themselves in rebellion. With the military publicly divided, the Left, both communist and non communist, took to the streets. Radio stations were taken over by the Left, primarily the PRD, the social democratic party of Bosch; some broadcast in favor of the return of Bosch; others controlled by those further left encouraged people to loot stores, kill police, and go to the camps in rebellion where arms were being passed out to everyone, including machine guns and rockets. Most of the military did not participate in the revolt, but the other military units did not obey Reid's orders to move against the two camps in revolt. In particular the Air Force refused to bomb the Rebel camps on Saturday, and Wessin and Wessin said he could not move his armored forces without air support. Over Saturday night and on Sunday and

Monday the Leftists and thugs getting arms from the camps in revolt killed many policemen and drove the rest from the streets, leaving the streets to the armed thugs with some organization from communist groups, which seemed to be the only group with decent communications. Most military camps not in rebellion could not talk to each other regularly until we supplied radios a couple of days later.

During the first three days the leadership among the military in revolt shifted frequently. Those favoring a return of Bosch or Balaguer were replaced with a few Lt. Colonels and Majors who had links with the far left in the street. Officers would come to the Embassy to discuss ending the revolt. But the next thing we knew they had gone into some Latin Embassy for safety, and someone else was in charge. The three that started the thing were quickly gone from the scene. By Monday night Colonel Caamano seemed to emerge as the leader of the rebellion, although I believe he had been in an Embassy earlier that day.

Q: There was some presumption in Washington that there were communist elements in this group.

BUSHNELL: I am not sure any of the military officers in rebellion were communists. A few were admirers of Fidel Castro. However, much of the leadership in the street, which was civilian as the military generally did not leave their camps, was not only communist but trained by Castro and other communist states in street fighting and propaganda. I do not know just what role was played by these trained revolutionaries and what role by the several military officers friendly with them who controlled most of the reserve munitions available to the Army. However, the civilian revolutionaries managed to take over the military warehouse. They then handed out guns and ammunition to everybody who showed up, mainly kids under18. Sympathizers with the Leftish movements and thugs were issued M-16 rifles and up to 500 bullets each.

These armed civilians then went into the city of Santo Domingo, shooting at policemen or anybody they wanted to shoot at, and took it over. By Saturday evening the downtown area was in the hands of these people. The best way I can describe them is that they were basically kids with rifles. The city appeared to be controlled by gangs. A gang might be just five guys who hung around together. They got rifles and now had taken the block where they lived or some other block. They didn't really seem to have known what they would do with it or what they wanted to happen. I talked with some of these boys on Sunday and Monday. They couldn't articulate any objective other than they wanted change and the oppressors out or dead. There certainly wasn't much organization in the street, and some gangs would shoot at each other. Some of them went to the area around the National Palace where known communists were seen organizing an attack.

I'm not the best person to give the history of this uprising or revolt. I only saw bits and pieces of it. I was a junior officer, and I was running around most of the time those days. At least the picture I have is that on the second day, Sunday, the poorer areas of the city were in the hands of these roughnecks. In the upper middle class areas where the Embassy was and where we lived, there was no sign of any kids with guns, nor any police or military for that matter.

Q: The question is how this set off such a "firestorm" in Washington. Did the media cover all of this in a panicky way?

BUSHNELL: Initially, there was not a single expatriate foreign media representative in Santo Domingo. I have no idea how the media in the U.S. played it or what their sources were, although the telephones generally operated the first days of the crisis.

To continue the story, the Dominican military was divided into five forces: the Army, the Navy, the Air Force, the Police, who were really a military service, and the military training school which General Wessin y Wessin commanded. Wessin had all the armored forces which were technically part of the Army, but General Wessin y Wessin considered himself a separate force. Just before he was deposed on Sunday morning Reid named Wessin Secretary of the Armed Forces. On Sunday after the loyal military refused to fight the military in rebellion, Reid allowed much of the forces protecting the National Palace to leave. The crowd attacked. But it was a group of Rebel officers who actually came to Reid's office and took him and Caceres prisoner. Apparently this group favored the return of Bosch because they made the Bosch associate who had been President of the Chamber of Deputies under Bosch the Provisional President some time on Sunday.

Sunday afternoon I was in the Embassy and heard from our attachés that the Air Force had finally decided to act and would bomb the Rebel military camps and the National Palace. The Palace was some 15 blocks from were we lived, but I did not have much confidence in the accuracy of the Dominican Air Force with their World War II planes. I called my wife and told her keep our young son inside the house. We had a sandbox in the backyard he loved. When I finally got home that night, there was a pile of sand on the tile breakfast room floor. Our son had been reluctant to come in, and, when my wife heard the planes, she had scooped up some sand and made an inside place for him to play. The sand was still there several days later when I brought Tony Solomon, Dick Goodwin and two others back to the house to stay with me.

The F-51 dive bombers did attack the Palace and, I believe, the Rebel camps. The Dominican Navy came in close to shore and also fired a few rounds at the Palace, which the military believed was now the site of a Bosch-friendly government I did not think this stand-off fire would have much effect. It did not even do much physical damage in the city, although the F-51s were pretty accurate. But I learned later that it did demoralize many of the Rebel officers who fled to Latin Embassies to seek asylum. However, the fighting among the military only encouraged the crowds in the streets; as time passed including Monday and Tuesday the communist cadres were actually able to organize defensive positions while taking over the banks, telephone exchange, and government buildings in the downtown area.

I remember watching the local TV on Monday. The civilian insurgents had taken over all the TV stations. I thought I was watching a tape of a Castro TV broadcast. I had watched several tapes from Cuban TV during my time in INR. The several men broadcasting were all dressed in military fatigues of the same sort used by Castro; some carried M-16s and wore belts of bullets. They were announcing all the great things they would do for the people. Then they began reporting and celebrating the killing of policemen, stating how this hero by name, or perhaps it was a gang, killed three policemen at such and such a location. The listing of police killed was

long. Then they began urging the audience or whoever to kill the families of the Air Force pilots who were bombing. They even read off names and addresses. It was quite chilling.

Some of the officers in the Political Section identified a couple of the announcers as communists who they thought were in Cuba. Although I was told some of the Rebel military spoke on radio and TV during this period, none of the broadcasters I saw was a Dominican officer. Remember that this was 1965, only five years after Castro had taken control of Cuban. These revolutionaries said that they would adopt policies in favor of the people as Fidel had in Cuba. They said over TV that the people were taking over the country and that this was the revolution which everyone wanted. When we saw this on TV, we said: "Goodness! This is no dry run but a Castro style takeover of the country." However, the TV broadcasts were not what directly raised the concerns of Washington because none of the several Washington officers with whom I later talked were aware of them. There was similar rhetoric on the radio which of course was picked up, translated, and sent around Washington. I have never reviewed what was on the radio, but what little I heard on the radio was not nearly as chilling as actually seeing the fatigues, rifles and the enthusiasm for the killing and for Cuba on TV. Later, when there were questions in the U.S. about whether there were really communists leading the revolutionaries, I tried to find a recording of some of this TV, but there were no VCRs in those days and I never found such a tape.

Thousands of people gathered in downtown Santo Domingo to see what was going on, to defend the revolution, or to loot.. They wanted change, food, and jobs. There was much looting. The Dominican Republic is a poor country. The dictator, General Trujillo, had been killed and his son, Ramfis Trujillo, had been thrown out of office. However, not much had really changed, and the economic situation had not improved. Poor people did not have enough to eat, and unemployment was high.

Q: What was the Embassy reporting to Washington on this?

BUSHNELL: Ambassador W. Tapley Bennett was in the U.S. on consultations, so William B. Connett, the DCM [Deputy Chief of Mission], was Chargé d'Affaires. I was able to move around the city of Santo Domingo a bit to get an impression of how things were. I did this everyday. My impression from these trips was that the political situation in Santo Domingo was totally out of control. One literally had to negotiate one's way around the city, block by block. I would come up to the armed kids and say: "I'm just trying to go to some embassy or facility. I'm with the American Embassy. I would like to move along here if I could." Most armed men I encountered were very young. Some of them would say: "Don't go that way, because there are people along that street who are shooting at everybody. You'd better go this way. I'll go with you this way and tell them you're alright."

At first these gangs were in the poorer and commercial areas, but by Wednesday they had moved into the richer residential areas. I could go to the Embassy fairly easily; it was a few blocks from my house. But to go to other Embassies or to talk with some of my Dominican contacts who were holed up in their homes one had to cross much more difficult parts of the city. It was just as if there were local gangs in charge. They had no plan for future action, but they were in charge.

They had guns. I wasn't racing through any area. If I had not shown them respect , they would probably have shot me. However, with some difficulty I was able to negotiate my way around.

We continued to see TV broadcasts. As far as I know, nobody really knew what was going on, because there was no Dominican government. I don't think the Rebels, either the military or the civilians, had a plan on how to take over the country. There were reports that they did and even that Castro had planned all this. But there was no evidence of a plan. It was all just chaotic. None of the parties had a complete picture of the situation and neither did the Embassy. However, we did know that it was getting damn dangerous. We were concerned for our families. On Monday about midday I wrote some paragraphs for a cable on what I had seen in various parts of the city and some of the reports of killings and looting given me by contacts I considered reliable. Most of my draft was edited out as too alarming. But by Monday evening I found someone had used almost all my paragraphs in a subsequent cable leading up to a recommendation for evacuation of dependents and non-essential personnel.

At one point, when I was in the Embassy probably on Sunday evening, I thought the appearance of an American Navy ship or two on the horizon might calm the situation, i.e. if the Rebel military thought the U.S. might join in the bombardment by the loyal Dominican Navy and Air Force, they might make a deal to end the fighting. Various officers were coming to the Embassy or calling about making a deal. I did some drafting on a cable recommending such an appearance by US Navy ships, but someone checked and said the closest Navy ship was two days away; I later learned this was not true. At this point Chargé Connett seemed unwilling to take any steps that might affect events; he saw the Embassy role as just reporting on the situation. I do not know what guidance he had received by telephone from Washington, if any.

Q: Over how long a period of time did this situation continue?

BUSHNELL: What I have described was from Saturday noon to Monday night, but the chaotic situation in the city was worse on Tuesday and Wednesday and continued until at least Friday when American forces began taking up positions in many parts of the city. Of course, there was occasional fighting for some time, and Rebels occupied the downtown part of the city for months. We have only begun this story.

The Dominican Air Force had some old P-51 fighter-bombers we had provided them years earlier, basically fighter aircraft which they were using as dive bombers. Early in the week these planes began bombing the Palace, which was only five or six blocks from the Embassy, attacking from the direction of the Embassy. I knew, because I had served in the US Air Force, that planes don't dive straight down on the target which they want to bomb. When a bomb drops from a plane, the bomb as well as the plane is moving forward. The pilot has to dive at a point which is substantially behind the target. Then, when he releases the bomb, it continues forward as well as down to hit a target substantial forward from the point of the dive. The P-51's would dive right at the Embassy and then release their bombs, which were supposed to hit the palace, right over the Embassy. Of course no bomb ever hit the Embassy, even close. However, this was a terrifying moment for most of the people in the Embassy, who didn't realize that a good place to be was at the point which the aircraft were diving at. They were scampering around, literally diving for

some kind of cover. At first they thought I was totally crazy for staying outside to watch while most were trying to get inside and under furniture.

The Rebel kids had managed to capture some tanks, probably when they stormed the Palace. I was in the Embassy one evening just after dark. It was probably on Tuesday night after my family left and before Ambassador Bennett returned. Some young men with a tank parked in the street right in front of the Embassy drive. My office was in an annex just across the street from the end of the drive, so the tank was between the Embassy and my office, although I had no need to go to my office during the crisis as I drafted cables in the political section. They pointed the tank's gun in the general direction of the Embassy, perhaps for no particular purpose. There were quite a few of us in the Embassy at the time. I said: "You know, it's kind of uncomfortable to have that tank out there. They're might shoot at us. But more likely some of the Air Force pilots who were bombing might decided to finish off the tank and miss just a little in our direction (or hit my office if they were a little the other side)." I encouraged our military officers to go out and and see if they could get that tank to move. They said they weren't going to go because the tank was not in the control of military personnel but of civilians who might do anything on purpose or by accident. They said moving the tank was a job for civilians. After an hour or so when the tank seemed to be settled down for the long haul, I finally said: "I'll see if I can't get them to move the tank."

I walked out slowly toward the group of teenagers on and around the tank. I don't think there was anyone there who was more than 22 years old as far as I could tell in the dark. I asked them what they were doing. They said: "We're defending this position, and this is a good spot because we are hidden by the trees so the planes cannot see us". The trees did not seem to me to give very good cover, and I suspected they thought the Air Force would not chance hitting the American Embassy. However, after some general talking about how chaotic the situation was I said: "Well, I'll tell you something. You're in a very dangerous spot. If you look either way up or down the street it is perfectly straight; the buildings around here are well known to everyone; if someone tells the Air Force you are here -- I won't but some of the neighbors here probably have relatives who are pilots -- any pilot can line up on the street and hit the cross street where you are without ever even seeing you." I mentioned that a few blocks away there were places where the streets had many twists and big buildings were right next to the street making it hard for a plane to hit a street target in that area. As I turned to walk back to the Embassy, the young man who had done most of the talking actually thanked me. About 15 or 20 minutes later, apparently after they had scouted an alternative location, the tank departed. One of the American secretaries was so relieved she gave me a big hug. The military attachés who had been watching carefully asked me what the hell I told those kids. I said I gave them some civilian advise. I don't recall ever thinking about this incident until many months after I left the Dominican Republic. Events just began happening so fast that one had to give all one's attention to the three things that had to be done next.

Q*: How did news of the fighting get to Washington? Press or telephone reports?*

BUSHNELL: I wasn't on the phone myself at this stage. Nor did I notice the Chargé or anyone else talking much to Washington. The CIA [Central Intelligence Agency] Station was getting reports from its people and I supposed sending them to Washington. I don't recall what the

Station was hearing. I suspect that the Dominican intelligence apparatus was having as much trouble finding out what was happening as anybody else. Our attachés were in contact with some of their Dominican military colleagues, when they could reach them. There were a lot of communications to Washington reporting on what was happening, but I don't really know. I wasn't much of a part of the reporting, drafting only a few paragraphs here and there. I also reported orally to other Embassy people what I saw and heard from my contacts. I didn't draft any report about the tank, for example, because everyone in the Embassy had seen it. There may have been somebody reporting on this tank, but I don't know.

Q: Was there any danger of that happening?

BUSHNELL: It's hard to say for sure. As the saying goes: "Nature abhors a vacuum." Essentially, what we were faced with in the Dominican Republic was a power vacuum. The Dominican military was divided and couldn't control the country, and the Army was apparently unwilling to fire on crowds who wanted change. The Army had lost some of its tanks and was losing a lot of soldiers, who were simply running away . The police force had been nearly wiped out with hundreds of police killed. The situation was chaotic. The people who had some sort of control of downtown Santo Domingo were diverse and not integrated. They had little command and control structure. But those people who were rapidly organizing the masses in the street were communists and others from the far Left.

Certainly, there was growing concern about this situation. I don't know how much intelligence there had been in the preceding few months, for example, on what the communists were planning and which communists were infiltrating back from exile. There was always a justified concern that the far Left taking over the country would present a serious problem for the United States. There were many military people who were despotic and corrupt – the remains of the half century of dictatorship. Who could know what would happen? The only thing that provided any effective counter to the communists was the Dominican military, whose officers were showing a great propensity to take asylum in Latin Embassies. The social democrats were much more numerous than the communists, but they were generally peaceful. Social democratic leaders were middle class. They had not encouraged the killing of the police; by Tuesday some of them were already becoming targets of the communists. After the fact it seemed to me that many of the critics of Johnson saw the probable outcome as a return to a Bosch government which the U.S. could support. Such an outcome looked possible on Sunday, but by Tuesday the Bosch supporters were themselves on the run.

The situation developed incredibly fast. I had been in an extreme minority in the Embassy when I suggested we should request that US Navy ships appear off shore to show some American interest in the situation and improve our own security. In fact, unrelated to what I had said, within a few days we had over 20,000 US troops on the ground.

Q: How many other Americans needed to be evacuated?

BUSHNELL: There were other American citizens who wanted to get out, as well as many third country nationals. The situation wasn't like it is now with a great many retired people and tourists in the DR. But there were many Dominicans who had migrated to the States and

obtained citizenship but then had come back for extended visits or even to live but now wanted to escape the violence. There were also quiet a few American businessmen and their families, as well as the British, French, Canadian, Dutch and others.

Ambassador Bennett came back from the U.S. on the day when we began to evacuate Embassy dependents. He told me to set up the evacuation program and to get the word out to other Embassies and the business community that people should come to the Embajador Hotel and we would take them from the hotel by helicopter to the ships lying off the coast. I think that it was on the same afternoon that the telephones stopped working.

Q: Were people getting paid anything?

BUSHNELL: The economy was completely stopped. In Santo Domingo anyway there was no economic activity. Almost all businesses were closed. People who were not active in the struggle stayed hidden in their homes. The situation was increasingly dangerous. A lot of people were killed.

Q: I expect that they would be concerned, don't you think?

BUSHNELL: I wouldn't say that most people were getting panicky. I was busy doing my job, but I didn't really observe anything like panic. Some people coming to the hotel on Wednesday for evacuation were very scared. Some had witnessed killing at their homes or businesses. I had to figure out how I was going to notify other Embassies of the evacuation arrangements because the telephones weren't working. I set up a kind of chain so that one person would get in touch with another. I was negotiating my way around Santo Domingo to get to the other Embassies and tell them about the evacuation program. They were asked to contact their citizens. I spent the whole afternoon getting around to as many Embassies as I could. In retrospect, I suppose this movement may have been foolish because the Department of State could have informed the various Embassies in Washington a lot quicker than I could negotiate my way around Santo Domingo and most major embassies were in contact with their capitals by radio or other means.

On the Wednesday we evacuated hundreds of people from the polo field next door to the Embajador Hotel. We processed people in the lobby with the help of personnel from friendly embassies. I organized some Peace Corp volunteers and later some younger businessmen, after their families departed, to run a motor pool ferrying people out to the polo field where the helicopters picked them up to take them to the carrier. We had some Embassy and AID vehicles and cars and pickups left by departing businessmen who gave us the keys. We really had a lot of people to move in the morning, so we decided the evacuees couldn't take any large bags with them. We limited them to one small bag each. The helicopters could take out more evacuees this way. I was at the evacuation point all day. I don't recall how many people we evacuated in this way, but we probably moved far more than 1000. This was a considerable logistics operation. By about 3:30 PM most of the foreign community had been moved out; at least few people were arriving at the hotel.

We were mainly taking out the baggage which had been left behind. I said to the Navy guys who had come in from the ships to coordinate the flights: "Why don't we cut down on the flights?

Instead of having eight helicopters in each flight, let's cut down to four helicopters, because we don't have all that many people to evacuate and not even many more bags." They passed this recommendation by radio to the US Navy carrier off the coast. The next flight to come into our emergency landing zone was another eight helicopters. I figured that it was the usual thing with the US military; it takes forever to get things moving or stopped, and I shouldn't have expected the Navy would cut down on the flights right away.

Q: Did you get to know him?

BUSHNELL: Oh, yes, I was assigned to him. There was an area, mainly the center of the city, which was held by the Rebels. They had an area covering a couple hundred blocks where they had many supporters. They limited access to that area, so moving from one side of the city to the other was difficult.. The American forces surrounded this area and protected a corridor across that key bridge to the main airport. Eventually, the Dominican Army was able to control the areas around the city.

Before I ran into Solomon in the hotel we shared one other Dominican experience. Before the troops arrived, soon after families departed, Solomon reached me on the phone. He said he was at the White House. President Johnson was looking at all of these reports about fighting and unrest in the northern and western parts of the Dominican Republic. He said: "What do you make of all that?" I said: "I don't know anything about it. I haven't heard such reports. Nobody's moving around. Everybody's staying at home. These reports sound exaggerated, but I can't say they're not true." He said: "We've got to find out. The President wants to know what is going on and not just stories from overheard phone calls. Why don't you send some people out into the countryside to find out?" I said: "What people are you talking about? I don't have any people with the experience and guts to wander around the countryside which is certainly not secure." He said: "We will send you people to do this." I said: "It's a very uncertain situation. It requires people who are fluent in Spanish and self-starters who can take care of themselves and are experienced in Latin rural areas and imaginative." He agreed. I thought to myself that it would be a few weeks before we saw many people meeting these requirements.

Q: Was it in American dollars?

BUSHNELL: No, in Dominican pesos, which at that time exchanged for US dollars on a one for one basis. Many merchants had sold their stocks in the preceding days. Given the lawlessness and insecurity people with cash were eager to put it in the bank as soon as the bank opened. People were coming in with these gigantic cash deposits. The banks couldn't find enough tellers to count the money. One bank manager told me he was going to operate 24 hours a day. I said: "That's unheard of." He said: "I never had business like this and a guarantee like this!"

With the OAS forces providing security, produce began coming in from the countryside. In some cases the Mother Hubbard teams were able to encourage such shipments. There were still major food problems for people in the downtown area of Santo Domingo which the Rebels continued to hold. Otherwise things quickly began to get back toward normal. At least food was available; power was restored, and water was never cut off.

One of the problem areas on which I spent the most time was getting the Central Bank of the Dominican Republic functioning and keeping it from being misused by the Dominican military . I had a couple of good US educated friends, who although young had senior positions at the Central Bank. I would stop by to see them almost every day at some point, at first at their apartments which were not too far from the Embassy and later also at the Central Bank once they returned to work. They had sources all over the city and gave me a great deal of information on what was going on, both economically and politically.

In the first days of the uprising the Central Bank, which was just a couple of blocks up the street from the American Embassy, had come under fire, and the telephone system had been knocked out. There were many divisions among the senior staff of the Bank with some officials supporting one or another side. Coupled with general fear and the physical destruction, the Bank staff was simply not operating. My friends said Bank President Fernandez, who was in Washington at the annual Inter-American Development Bank meeting, was needed to bring the staff together. We wanted to get the Central Bank operating so the National City Bank and Chase would have some place to put all the cash being deposited in their new branches. I called the Department of State, and officers there arranged to get Fernandez back to Santo Domingo.

Q: Whom did you call in Washington?

BUSHNELL: I don't remember. It might have been Ken Crockett on the Dominican desk in the Department of State or someone on the Dominican Task Force; I don't recall.

Q: Was Crockett the Director of ECP [economic affairs] on the Dominican desk?

BUSHNELL: Crockett was head of the Dominican desk. I might have talked to Don Palmer of ECP. I think I also put the gist of what I had learned in a cable to the Department; during that period I was preparing a wrap-up cable every evening, largely covering economic matters. Anyway, within hours someone called me to say the President of the Dominican Central Bank would return to Santo Domingo the next day at a certain hour and I should meet him at the airport. I went out to the airport with my trusty Humvee with the machine gun behind me.

The US Air Force plane landed with the President of the Central Bank. Both the Dominican and US military officials at the airport were sort of nonplused. He was the only passenger on the Air Force jet direct from Washington. I was driving myself. He got in my car planeside where we had been directed by the troops guarding the airport. I was using a car left behind by some businessman because my personal car was out of gas. We drove into Santo Domingo. We didn't go in the most direct way through the city because of the Rebel strong points. Instead we followed the corridor controlled by the OAS forces. All of a sudden the machine gun on the Humvee behind us opened up [began firing]. I'll tell you, an experience like that, particularly when you're not expecting it, is a big shock. It was all I could do to avoid crashing the car. I saw nothing to provoke the firing. If I had seen somebody pointing a gun at us, I might have expected this gunfire. However, I was engaged in conversation with Fernandez, the President of the Central Bank, explaining what was going on in the economy. All of a sudden this machine gun right behind us opened up. Fortunately, I didn't lose control of the car, and I wasn't going very fast. We didn't stop but went on to Fernandez's house. We went into his house where his family

was delighted to see him. When I came out, I asked our military: "What caused all of this firing?" They said: "It looked as if some guy was pointing a gun at us on the roof overlooking us." It really was a scary episode. It was more of a problem for Fernandez than for me. I was at least aware of the general situation. Fernandez was not fully aware of it, at least until that point. Even several years later, when I saw Fernandez, he said he still hadn't fully recovered from that shock. He said that he would wake up in the middle of the night and think that he was hearing shooting.

About a week after the OAS Forces landed I began hearing that the Dominican military and the so-called government they had then organized, which largely controlled the country outside the city of Santo Domingo, wanted access to the funds in the Central Bank. The Dominican Army was planning to strengthen itself politically by taking out a big loan, obtaining the money from the Central Bank and distributing it to its various units. They were pressuring the members of the Board of Directors of the Central Bank to vote to give the Army this loan. When some directors refused, the de facto government replaced them on the Board. No newspapers were publishing so there was no public source for what was going on. However, notes would be placed on my car letting me know that someone was replaced or some action taken; also my Central Bank friends worked hard to keep me informed.

One evening I was told by my Dominican friends that the Army only needed one more vote on the Board of Directors of the Central Bank for authority to take out this big loan. Therefore, since I was then Economic Adviser to the OAS Mission in the Dominican Republic, I reported to Ambassador Bunker and to the other two members of the OAS Ad Hoc Committee that placing such a large amount of money in circulation would cause serious inflation and force an eventual devaluation of the Dominican peso, which had been at par with the dollar for a century. The OAS Committee decided the Central Bank, which was in the zone controlled by OAS forces, should not extend the loan to the Dominican Army. To implement this decision Ambassador Bunker and I met that night with Lt. General Bruce Palmer Jr., who commanded the US forces and was Deputy Commander of the Inter-American Peace Force. General Palmer assigned an 82nd Airborne unit to me. The officers of that unit worked with me to develop a plan to prevent this Dominican Army raid on the Central Bank.

The following morning, I went to the Central Bank with about half the couple hundred troops assigned. The troops deployed in small groups all around the outside of the Central Bank which occupied a full city block. The other troops were nearby in reserve. I went into the building and told the senior officials of the bank about the OAS decision. They had already observed the American troops all around the bank. I told the bank officers, most of whom I had worked with before, that we didn't want to handle this matter in a confrontational way and that I hoped we could work out procedures such that the Bank could keep working and our troop presence would be as inconspicuous as possible. The Bank managers were cooperative. They arranged to have all the weapons in the Bank turned over to some of the American troops whom I brought in to occupy the garage under the building. The troop presence outside the building was reduced to a minimum. Procedures were established such that the only Bank entry and exit was through the garage. The American troops would search any containers leaving the building, and cash could leave only with written permission from me. Of course if someone had a little money in a hand bag or wallet, that was alright. There was no restriction on money coming into the Bank. At this

point few Bank employees were coming to work, so the troops gained experience with monitoring the flow of people before the volume was great. The Bank gave me an office and a secretary, and for the next weeks I spent a few hours most days in the Central Bank.

The first day the American troops worked hard to get their positions well established. They set up a recoilless rifle just inside the garage aimed at the driveway down to the basement. The next day a truckload of Dominican Army soldiers pulled up at the Bank. Some American soldiers told me it was two truckloads of soldiers. The Dominican soldiers had their weapons at the ready. The officer in command of the American Army detachment ordered the garage door raised which revealed the recoilless rifle pointed more or less at the Dominican Army truck with the crew aiming the gun. The Dominicans saw this impending confrontation, and two of the Dominican soldiers literally ran away. They just took off. The American troops thought that was a terrible example of discipline. The rest of the Dominicans got back into their truck and drove off, and that was the last we saw of them. One of my Dominican friends told me he had heard that the military sent this unit to challenge the Americans and get money from the Central Bank.

The operation at the Central Bank ran smoothly. But there were problems at the Finance Ministry, which was located a block and a half down the street from the Central Bank. After the military situation was more or less stabilized for a couple of weeks the so-called loyal Dominican military was attempting to establish a civilian government the OAS mission could work with. At one point I was sent by Ambassador Bunker to deal with some of the Dominican military and politicians who were selecting cabinet officers for this new government. Ambassador Bunker told me the Dominicans had agreed to appoint a Minister of Finance, a Minister of Agriculture, and perhaps other cabinet officers who, in Bunker's words, "Would be acceptable to me." The three or four Dominican Army officers and civilians had a short list of about four names, and those on the list were among the biggest crooks in the country. It was as though they were making a list of the most corrupt. [Laughter]

It was disconcerting to me, because it seemed awkward for me to reject everyone they were suggesting. Thus I went into a long explanation of how whoever was selected would have to make a lot of unpopular decisions to get the economy working. Thus, I said, it would be a disaster for the long-term political career of those selected. The Dominicans said they had not thought of that aspect and their candidates might not like that aspect. I also mentioned in passing the need for honesty. They asked me for suggestions. I said: "Why don't you pick some career person who has had much experience in the Ministry of Finance to run it?" They ultimately picked a man who had worked in the Ministry of Finance for some 30 years, including under the Trujillo dictatorship. This man was a good, solid technician, so he became the Minister of Finance.

I would call on this newly-appointed Minister of Finance every day and see how things were going. He was having lots of problems because he wouldn't give the Dominican military much money. When I went into his office one day, probably not more than a week after he was appointed, he said: "John, I can't do this job." I said: "Why not?" He said: "Just look at the ceiling". Sure enough the ceiling was full of bullet holes. He continued: "I have a lot of problems with the Dominican military. When I tell them I wouldn't give them money, they threaten me and start shooting." He said: "I can't stand up to them. They've got all of the guns." I said: "The

thing to do is to have a rule that no guns can be brought into the Ministry of Finance." He said: "That would be a great idea, but how will you do it."

I discussed the situation with Ambassador Bunker and General Palmer. Then with their authorization I took some American troops from the 82nd Airborne Division and stationed them around the Ministry of Finance. I gave them the order that no guns could be admitted to the Ministry of Finance. Seldom in diplomatic life are you ever able to do anything where you can see an early direct result of what you do. But the next day, or maybe it was two days later, I was walking from the Central Bank the block and a half to the Ministry of Finance. When I saw a couple of cars halt in front of the Ministry of Finance. A bunch of Dominican military officers got out of these cars. I could see that they were armed, mainly with side arms, although some of them had rifles. I quickened my pace to get to the Ministry of Finance and see what was going to happen. A big soldier from the 82nd Airborne, I think he was a Private, although I don't remember what his rank was, and it isn't important anyway, was the only American soldier visible on the scene. He was standing guard at the main entrance. There was also a big guard post inside the building, and another post in the back. He was faced with about 10 Dominican soldiers.

One of these Dominican soldiers, an officer, probably a Colonel, started to march up to this American soldier and appeared about to walk right past him into the building. The Colonel may have said something to him, although the American soldier probably didn't understand what the Colonel said. Then the American soldier executed what I consider a perfect maneuver. As the Colonel approached him, he brought up his M-16 rifle, which had a bayonet fixed to it, and placed the blade of his bayonet right up against the Colonel's neck. That Colonel stopped short because he was right up against the bayonet. There was a very noticeable pause. Everybody held their breath. Then the Dominican Colonel turned around, waved his hand, and all of the Dominican troops got back into the cars and drove off, burning rubber.

As usual, there were a lot of people standing around on the street, vendors, the unemployed, and others walking by, who, the minute the Dominican troops left, all broke out in cheers. They applauded the American soldier. They were yelling in approval that this one American soldier had turned back this Dominican Colonel from the Ministry of Finance. I walked over to the American soldier to congratulate him. After that, there were no more such incidents in front of the Ministry of Finance. I put the soldier in for a commendation.

Q: You were reporting directly to Ambassador Bunker. What was Ambassador Bunker's role during that period?

BUSHNELL: Ambassador Bunker was the US member of the three person OAS Ad Hoc Committee supervising the maintenance of peace and the return to normalcy in the Dominican Republic. I wore my OAS armband. The things I was doing, and we were doing, were in the name and under the aegis of the OAS. The couple of hundred US troops deployed in and around the Dominican Central Bank also had OAS armbands as did those deployed at the Ministry of Finance. However, my OAS role was not a formal assignment; I continued to operate as a part of the Embassy staff and to report to the Economic Counselor and Ambassador Bennett.

Gradually, the situation calmed down after the widespread fighting and looting during the first week of the rebellion. Troops from other, Latin American, countries arrived in the Dominican Republic. These troops contributed to a strange and an amusing situation for me. My main job was trying to get economic activity restored in the face of the political stalemate with the Rebels holding the downtown area of the city, surrounded by the OAS military, and the Dominican military, what was left, controlling the rest of the country. The political stalemate wasn't my problem, but my concern was to take steps such that this political stalemate would not continue virtually to stop the Dominican economy for an indefinite period of time.

We were trying to get the Dominican economy going. One problem was that a lot of people were Dominican Government employees, and government employees had not been paid. In the private sector many employers found ways to give their people at least some money. We decided Dominican Government employees would be paid with USAID [Agency for International Development] funds. We would extend loans and use the money derived to pay all of the Dominican Government employees. These generally quite poor employees would, of course, spend their wages quickly, generating a surge in demand and economic activity.

Paying the civilian employees of the Dominican Government wasn't difficult. I worked with the Ministry of Finance people. The Dominicans designated various sites where salaries would be paid. They had the payrolls on hand for the previous month and used them to pay Dominican Government employees. However, it was not so easy to pay the Dominican military. In my view, it was important to pay the Dominican military. We couldn't afford to let them go hungry. At the same time, I knew there were a lot of ghosts in the Dominican military [phantom soldiers who really didn't exist]. This had also been the case in the Congo and in South Vietnam. The Dominican commanders were paid for the number of troops on their rosters. If they had a roster of 100 troops, they would pay those, say 50, actually present, and the commander would pocket the salaries of the other troops listed but not actually present for duty. Sometimes these extra funds would be used for food or other supplies, but usually they went into the officers' pockets. I didn't see any way that we could pay ghosts and give that windfall to a bunch of Dominican officers who where doing very little to overcome the major problems of the country. The proportion of ghosts would now be even larger because quite a few actual soldiers had simply gone home during the fighting.

When I reviewed this issue with Ambassador Bunker, he saw a great opportunity to use some of the Latin American officers. American officers, because of the language problem, would not be able to tell if Dominican officers were paying only those physically present. But officers from other Latin countries, who had had far more experience with ghosts and also had the language, could do so. We told the Dominican military we would send Latin American officers with the payroll list which they had used the previous month and the cash to pay the troops to each unit. Copies of these payrolls were on file in the Ministry of Finance. I was fascinated with the process they worked out. The Dominican commanding officers would call the roll. The soldiers would come forward and, after identifying themselves, the Latin America OAS officers would pay them, either counting out the money themselves of watching as a Dominican finance officer did so. If a person was not there, he was not paid. The Dominican Army saw this as a terrible invasion of its rights and thought we should just give them the money. Finally, I told the

American officers making the arrangements with the Dominican officers just to tell the Dominicans that there were a lot of ghosts on the payroll whom we weren't going to pay.

The various Latin American military contingents sent groups of officers to be briefed on the operation by American and OAS officers. Each paying officer was assigned a particular unit, or two or three, to pay. Then they came to me to get the cash funds. It was not simple to provide the cash because it had to be in the right combination of small bills so that each soldier could be paid the same amount he had received the previous month. It was quite a big group of Hondurans, Brazilians, a couple of Uruguayans, and other Latin military needing to pick up cash. I actually filled out a receipt and had each of them sign it as they got the money.

By the time we got all the arrangement made, the earliest we could pay was a Monday. The helicopters and vehicles would leave early Monday morning so I needed to place the cash with the paying officers no later than Sunday night. On Friday I went to the Central Bank before its vaults were all locked up for the weekend. I took out the equivalent of about $500,000 in small bills. With the help of the American soldiers guarding the Central Bank I loaded this money into my Volkswagen and drove the two blocks to the American Embassy. We still had a lot of American soldiers stationed around the Embassy. I said to them: "Will somebody help me bring these boxes into the Embassy?" As one of these soldiers lifted a cardboard box, the top opened, and he shouted: "My God, it's money! I have never seen so much money in my whole life." I put the money into a large Embassy safe for safekeeping. Then I locked it up, because it was going to be sitting there until Sunday afternoon.

When he heard of this arrangement, the DCM in the Embassy, Bill Connett, said: "John, I know you do a lot of strange things, but something tells me that you've got a safe in there that's absolutely full of money!" I said: "Yes, I do." He said: "What?" I told him about our role in paying the Dominican forces using officers assigned to the OAS Mission in the Dominican Republic with American troops providing helicopter and vehicle support to take these OAS troops out to the various locations where they were going to pay the troops. The DCM was somewhat nonplused to learn that the Embassy was being used to store this money, but he limited himself to suggesting that I do not do that again.

Of course, most of the officers from these other countries assigned to make the payments were not finance officers. They were usually combat soldiers. They had never dealt with payroll or any other financial matters in their own forces. It was all strange to them. Many had never handled so much cash, especially the Honduras officers. I told them they would have to sign for the money. Either they could use their own people and count the money or leave the counting to me. They naturally preferred to count the money and, fortunately, they counted it right. The Hondurans felt they should personally count the money bill by bill, even the money in packages prepared by the Central Bank and labeled so many bills of a certain denomination.

Q: Were you keeping all of the records?

BUSHNELL: In a time of crisis, you have to be less bureaucratic than at other times. I signed a receipt to take this money out of the Central Bank, so that OAS emergency funds would reimburse the Bank for it. I had had the Central Bank divide the money into pay packets, so

handling it was relatively easy. Each paying officer received an amount based on the previous month payroll for the units he would pay. An officer had a payroll, say of $20,000, which he had to count out. We noted on an inventory of the payrolls what OAS officer got how much. When he returned whatever remained at the end of his mission, that amount was also noted. I don't know how much they might have taken, but, as far as I know, the OAS officers didn't rip off anything. Most brought back large amounts, in some cases over half the funds they had taken. We took everybody at their word. I was assisted by a junior FSO on his second assignment overseas.

As we began to get the economic situation normalized, Ambassador Bunker began to use me on some military/security matters. Bunker's principal role was to act as a middleman between the Dominican military and its new government and the Rebels in trying to maintain a cease-fire and work out a compromise settlement. He invited me to participate in some of these negotiations, as one of his associates. We had an unstable military situation. The Rebel area essentially had a river on one side, the sea on another side, the 82nd Division on a third side, and the US Marines on the fourth side. The most unstable place was the corner where the US Marines and the 82nd Airborne intersected. The Dominican insurgents took advantage of the limited coordination between our Army and Marine forces. They would go down into that corner of the city in the middle of the night and send dogs and cats running out. Either the Marines or the Airborne would see the movement and would start shooting. Of course many of the bullets would cross the corner into the lines of the other US military organization, which would then start firing back. It was a dangerous and deadly game. I found a Dominican who knew that area of the city well, and he worked with our military to improve our lines so there were fewer friendly fire incidents.

At one point, the shooting started, as it did most nights, in the corner of the city between the Marines and the Airborne Division. But then it spread, and there was a lot of shooting into the downtown area as our military saw mortars and other weapons being used against them from that area. Heavy weapons were used causing a lot of damage and casualties in the downtown Rebel area. On the next morning we had a negotiating session with the Rebels. I went with Ambassador Bunker, the Salvadorian Ambassador, and a couple of others. Perhaps the third member of the OAS Commission wasn't there that day. Shop windows had been shot out all around the government building where we met. There were shards of glass all over the city. There was more damage than I had thought. We were told that several people were killed, although I don't know whether this was true or not. The Rebel leaders were very angry, and the large crowd outside even more angry. The session did not go well despite Ambassador Bunker's efforts to advance an agreement on a cease-fire and negotiate some access for the OAS to government offices in the downtown area. When we departed, there was an even bigger crowd than usual standing around in the street and the steps of the building. It was angry and yelling at us. I got into the second car, an Embassy car and driver, together with Bunker's State Department interpreter; I believe his name was Barnes. The rest of the delegation was in the first car.

The driver tried to start our car. However, it wouldn't start. The first car started to pull out, with the military escort following. The crowd began rocking our car, back and forth from side to side, yelling at us and calling us murders.. I was afraid that the car might turn over, but fortunately it didn't. Just as some of the crowd seemed to be gathering metal beams to attack our car, it finally started, and we pressed through the crowd to join the convoy.

These were interesting times because one had to become operational in a way which was unusual in the Foreign Service. My days, and evenings, were filled in order to keep up with the operations at the Central Bank, the Finance Ministry, the Agricultural Bank, and the reporting at Mother Hubbard. I also tried to visit contacts to find out what was happening or about to happen. There was a great deal of coordination with the military, Bunker's office, AID, and the Embassy. This was an interesting and exciting time.

There were funny things that happened. As I said, we had all these senior US officers out and around the country - the seven cupboards. I had a little list in my pocket which identified where each team was so, when I got a report that team three reported something, I could remind myself where team three was. The insurgents controlled the main telephone exchange which was downtown, so they controlled the phones. Most of the people I knew said their phones didn't work. However, my phone at home worked most of the time, although I assumed that the insurgents were listening.

One night after midnight the Navy communicators in my Embassy office (Mother Hubbard) phoned me at home and reported that they had just had a message from one of the teams that there was a little shooting in its town. It didn't sound as if this incident amounted to much, so I hung up the phone and went back toward my bed. Before I reached the bed, the phone rang again. I picked it up, and a male voice said in Spanish: "This Number 3 is such and such town?" I said: "Who are you?" The man at the other end said: "You know, I get paid to listen to the phones." I said: "Oh, you control my phone." He said: "Oh, yes, but where is Number 3?" I said: "I've been wanting to call my wife in the United States, but I don't know how to get through to her." He said: "Oh, I could take care of that. What's her number?" I gave it to him and, sure enough, he got her on the phone. During most of my career abroad I was used to the idea that most of the time my phones were monitored. However, this was one of the only times when it was directly confirmed..

Q: And the listener turned out to be helpful.

BUSHNELL: I just took advantage of him. Why not?

Q: There was a lot of criticism of the United States, in Latin America and elsewhere. People recalled the US "invasion" and occupation of the Dominican Republic of 1916 to 1924.

BUSHNELL: However, this time we were converting the chaos into something like stability. Ultimately, an OAS-supervised election was negotiated and held peacefully. In the normal course of diplomacy you continue talks until people finally reached agreement. I won't go into the details of this process. Some of the Dominican insurgent leaders, Caamano and some of the others, were allowed to go to Cuba. The insurgent leaders were supposed to give up their guns. The Dominican military was supposed to back off, and free elections were to be held. That was basically what was involved in the negotiations.

Q: Ambassador Bunker was the main US negotiator.

BUSHNELL: He was the main negotiator.

Q: I think that he was more or less totally involved in this for a couple of years.

BUSHNELL: A couple of years? I don't think that it took that long. The Dominican presidential elections took place the next year, in 1966.

Q: So what did you think of this experience?

BUSHNELL: I left Santo Domingo at the end of August, 1965. By that time things had calmed down although the negotiations were still going on. As I recall, peace talks continued for a couple of months after I left but were concluded by the end of 1965. By the time I departed the number of foreign troops in the Dominican Republic had been reduced. As things were getting back to normal, my wife was able to return in July, 1965.

Q: She had been in the United States?

BUSHNELL: She had been with her family in New Jersey after a few days in Puerto Rico where the Navy ship took her. She and other dependents were allowed to come back because there really was no longer a major security threat. The only problem was getting around because of the OAS lines and the control of downtown by the Rebels. It was of course disconcerting to have so many soldiers around. But even before the uprising it was not unusual to have the men at the next table in a restaurant with side arms and even rifles leaning against their table. By July, 1965, things had not completely returned to normal, but I had moved out of the OAS offices in the Central Bank, and a lot of things were as they had previously been. The Mother Hubbard operation was closed down before the end of May. By August most of my reporting was back to normal. I had resumed drafting the quarterly and semi-annual economic reports under the CERP [Combined Economic Reporting Program]. I also worked on an UNCLASSIFIED version of a history of our economic involvement in the Dominican Republic in 1965, although it was hard for me to get time to do it. I continued to work on this until I left the Dominican Republic. I wore the OAS armband some of the time until I left.

Q: How expensive do you think these programs were? How effective do you think they were, aside from the immediate crisis? Obviously, you couldn't do much more than provide relief to needy families.

BUSHNELL: I don't know details of how things worked out after the initial crisis and then the Dominican presidential election in 1966, but partly as a result of greatly increased assistance as well as foreign investment the Dominican Republic soon entered a period of rapid economic growth, about 10 percent a year for nearly a decade. It took a long time to reestablish a broad AID program, but AID then made a tremendous record of providing assistance. However, I don't have first hand knowledge or experience with the AID program in the Dominican Republic after 1965. During the year I was there, we had to struggle to keep people from starving. Traditionally, AID programs have suffered from a great deal of bureaucracy and silly rules for which they have been publicly criticized.

For some years I was criticized publicly, for example by Jack Anderson [a newspaper columnist who specialized in muck racking articles], because of the detailed and silly rules of AID. I had found that there was a great need for economic policy change in the Dominican Republic. With our program lending negotiations we tried to improve the economic policies so that market forces could allocate resources in ways which would speed development. Our financial support for these policy changes was then balance of payments support providing financing for imports and the government budget. Among the requirements on the expenditure of AID money was a provision that AID had to show precisely what each dollar was spent on. For example, AID liked to be able to say that AID spent so much in North Carolina and so much in South Dakota, etc., to buy goods for AID programs. To meet this AID and legislative requirement for our program lending I set up a program with the Dominican Central Bank. The Central Bank and the Ministry of Finance provided AID with copies of the import documents for goods the country imported from the United States. We then could file these documents to show from the bureaucratic point-of-view what our AID dollars had purchased.. Meanwhile, the AID dollars were deposited into the Central Bank account and were indistinguishable from any other dollars the Central Bank held. Then we and the Dominican officials agreed on how they would use the local currency received from selling these dollars, i.e. local currency could be used for schools or road repair or covering government salaries. The AID records showed that AID paid for US goods imported into the Dominican Republic, and the requirements of the law were met although no additional US goods were purchased outside normal commercial trade channels.

The AID legislation and internal regulations provided that AID could not finance a few types of goods, for example military equipment or jewelry; the list of specific prohibited goods satisfied one special interest or another. We had provided the officials at the Dominican Central Bank the full long list of AID prohibited imports so they would not send us documentation for any of these imports to support the AID financing. I sometimes signed to certify the documents from the Central Bank. I seldom looked at them, partly because I was busy and partly because I thought someone in the AID Controller Office would review them in detail and make sure the numbers added up, but mainly because I considered this documentation a make-work exercise. On a couple of occasions AID officers gave me documents which should not have been included, and I traded them with the Central Bank for other documents covering eligible imports.

Q: Did you involve any USIS [United States Information Service] people in what you were doing? Did you feel that their activities were worthwhile during this time?

BUSHNELL: Despite Trujillo's brutal tactics there were two newspapers which maintained a considerable independence of the dictatorship. They generally expressed an upper middle class point of view, reflecting their readership. We were able to work constructively with these newspapers to help move toward democracy. There was a Dominican radio station which had a similar point of view, although I don't know as much about it. The most direct contact I had with USIS was through the press releases which they issued on the AID program. I often worked with USIS in drafting these and tried to broaden them to explain the big picture of what we were doing.

During the crisis, the OAS sent to Santo Domingo a lot of their public affairs people. We had good, public affairs civilians, many, if not most, of them from Latin American. They were good

in positioning the OAS [Organization of American States] in a middle role and in trying to work out compromises. These people were not yet there when we took over the Central Bank; fortunately, newspapers were not being published and there was little news on the radio; thus word of our protecting the Central Bank from the Dominican military was spread largely by word-of-mouth. My friends in the Central Bank were very successful in spinning this story in a way which favored the Bank and the OAS. As things happened later on, these OAS public affairs people were very helpful in explaining how the Dominican Republic was operating. I think they even operated a Spanish language radio station,

Q: Was the Peace Corps involved in what you were doing?

BUSHNELL: Yes, the Peace Corps had a large contingent in the Dominican Republic. Here as in Colombia, I met with arriving groups of Peace Corps personnel and talked to them about the Dominican economy. They were mainly stationed outside the city of Santo Domingo, but some or all were asked to come to the city during the initial days of the crisis. During the crisis, most of the Peace Corps volunteers were evacuated. Several young Peace Corps men volunteered to assisted me with the evacuation and they were allowed to stay.

Q: Before this crisis you were only a little bit involved in reporting on the Dominican economy?

BUSHNELL: No, I did a lot of reporting during my first months in the country. More than half the required CERP reports were assigned to me. I covered the government budget, the balance of payments, and monetary policy, but I tried to do some reporting placing the technical stuff in a broader context. Even before the crisis the Dominican economy was in quite a mess. The Dominican Republic under the Trujillo dictatorship had an economy based on producing a lot of sugar. The sugar plantations were owned either by the Dominican Government or individuals closely associated with the Government. The living

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Q: Was this the only time in your career that you were threatened?

BUSHNELL: I was shot at in the Dominican Republic, Vietnam, and Panama. Later in my career I received letters threatening death from disgruntled Panama Canal employees. In 1980 an armed right-wing group in Guatemala told an Embassy source the group would kill me if I ever came to Guatemala. I have never since set foot in Guatemala.

Q: Are there others in this same category of special assistant?

BUSHNELL: No, when I agreed to work for Morgenthau, he looked to see what position he could put me in; his office has its bureaucratic organization and public sector rules like the Foreign Service. He has what we would call a Schedule C position, exempt from many civil service rules, as Special Assistant, the purpose of which is to deal with his reelection. The District Attorney of New York County is an elected position. Since for the last three elections he's been on both the Republican and Democratic tickets, there's not much to do to get him reelected, so the job had not been filled for years. He put me into that job, but that is not what I do.

At first all my time was devoted to BCCI as I took the lead in developing charges against the Saudi backers of BCCI and others and then negotiating settlements and restitution. I still work on major white collar cases. I also work on what I call strategic planning, trying to find ways we can discourage crime or punish the criminals with less effort and cost. For example, I found we were

prosecuting literally hundreds of young Dominican men who were caught on the streets of New York selling drugs. We would prosecute them, and the second time they were caught they'd be sent to jail for eight to ten years. We were filling up the NY jails, but additional young men from the Dominican Republic would immediately appear on the street selling drugs. We were spending a lot of law enforcement and prison money without accomplishing any reduction in crime. I said we needed to go up the chain and start prosecuting those in the organization that's putting these kids on the streets.

I arranged to talk with a few of these Dominican drug sellers. Some would not say much, but one told me his story. He came from a big family in a poor rural area. The family desperately needed money so he went to the factory in Santo Domingo. I did not understand what this "factory" was so I asked what he did there. He explained. First they talked with him and asked if he could carefully follow directions. Then they cut his hair; they gave him pants and a shirt and told him to grow a bigger mustache. After a few days they gave him an American passport with a picture that looked pretty much like him – the clothes, haircut and mustache matched. They put him on a plane to New York. He was told to look for a man in a yellow hat after he got through the customs and immigration using the US citizens line. The yellow-hatted man took the passport and sent him to an apartment in town, where he was instructed on selling drugs. We worked hard to break up this business. Despite my many hours with Immigration and other Justice officials, we got little cooperation from the Federal authorities who have the responsibility of controlling immigration. Eventually we indicted several of those running the New York operation and even a few of the bosses in the Dominican Republic, a couple of whom unwisely made a visit to New York which turned into a one-way trip to a New York jail. We are still prosecuting Dominican drug peddlers, but not nearly so many.

Often I am surprised at how things work out. Mayor Giuliani was and is gung-ho on reducing crime, and he has made great progress in reducing crime in New York City. His theory is that efforts should be made to enforce laws against minor crimes because breaking the criminal habit is the best way to reduce all crime. At one point he wanted the police to pick up and he wanted us to prosecute people who went into the subway without paying – the turnstile jumpers. Well, our young lawyers were in a great uproar because they would have to go into court with these turnstile jumpers and spend a couple of hours. Then, if the arresting officer came to court, the person would be found guilty and fined maybe $35.

CYRUS R. VANCE
Envoy
Dominican Republic (1965)

Mr. Vance served as Secretary of the Army and then Deputy Secretary of Defense during the 1950s and 1960s. His has had roles in events in the Dominican Republic, Cyprus, and Korea. Mr. Vance was interviewed by Paige E. Mulhollan on November 3, 1969.

Q: The next crisis then would be the Dominican one, I suppose, the following yes, which is a good deal more substantial one than the Panama one?

VANCE: Yes.

Q: How much were you involved in the early events of our involvement there--the meetings and so on during the week prior to the actual sending of troops?

VANCE: I don't recall attending any meetings at the White House prior to the sending of troops. I do recall discussing the building tensions with Mr. McNamara and with members of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. I do recall discussing the contingency plans which existed and the need to re-look at the contingency plans to see whether or not the forces provided by the contingency plans were sufficient in case it was necessary to move.

On the day that the decision to go into the Dominican Republic was made, I was not at the meeting at which the decision was made. I was back at the Department of Defense. t received a call from the White House, I believe it was Mr. McNamara, telling me that the decision had been made and that we should take the necessary steps to get the wheels moving. Thereafter I did attend a meeting--I believe it was the next morning although it may have been later that day. I believe it was the next morning--at which the situation was reviewed. It was determined that it would be advisable to send a team who would act as emissaries of the President to the Dominican Republic. At that meeting it was decided that there should be three of us--Mac Bundy, Tom Mann, and myself. As a matter of fact, there were four--

Q: Tony Solomon?

VANCE: No. [Jack] Vaughn, who was Assistant Secretary of Latin American Affairs. Tony Solomon didn't come down until later on.

Once the decision was made, the team was put together very rapidly, and we flew immediately to Puerto Rico where we split up with Mac Bundy and I talking with Juan Bosch in Puerto Rico, and Tom Mann and Vaughn going over to Santo Domingo to view the situation there.

Coming back again, I do recall participating in the carrying out of the contingency plans after the decision was made. I remember going to the State Department and sitting there with George Ball as the decisions were being implemented to land troops in Santo Domingo. I remember we were in constant touch with the Department of Defense. Decisions had to be made continually with respect to a number of matters such as whether we should try and air-drop troops in during the night, or whether we should wait and bring them in the morning. Fortunately, we decided to do the latter, after full consultation with the Department of Defense, because it turned out that our maps were faulty and that if our troops had jumped in there in the darkness, there would have been a substantial number of casualties. We learned some lessons from that about updating all the maps which were to be used in connection with contingency operations.

Q: One of the criticisms, before you leave that subject, of the whole operation by the critics of it, was that the force used was far more numerous than would have been required to do the job. Whose decision would that have been?

VANCE: That was a decision which was reached by the President on the recommendation of Mr. McNamara and myself. Both of us felt that one of the lessons that history teaches is that if you are going to use military force you should use sufficient force to accomplish your task; and that if you put in sufficient force, you may be able to cut down the bloodshed. One of the difficulties that you find is that an inadequate force almost invariably tends to find itself being overrun, which leads to more fighting and more bloodshed on both sides.

Q: And ultimately more force.

VANCE: That's right, so that we made the determination, or advised, that if we were going to go in, we ought to put in enough troops and you ought to err on the side of having put in too many rather than putting in too few. So it was on our advice that a force of some twenty-odd thousand was put in rather than a smaller force.

Q: You had contingency plans, I suppose, that would have put in smaller numbers or even larger numbers.

VANCE: Of course, this took place over a period of time, and the numbers were changed as you went on. Originally the force that was put ashore was a battalion-landing team, as I recall it, of the Marines, which was put in to remove the civilians--both American and other foreign nationals--who were being threatened at that point by the violence which was taking place. As the conflict escalated and other factors began to emerge, the situation was looked at again and it was determined then that we should put in a larger force and it was at this point that that we recommended that if we were going to put in this large force, that it should be sufficient. Therefore we ought to put in a force of some fifteen to twenty thousand which eventually we increased to about twenty-two thousand, as I recall it.

Q: The President didn't hesitate to accept the advice of his senior advisers on this instance.

VANCE: He listened to the arguments pro and con and made his decision.

Q: Was there an argument "con" from other agencies or other levels?

VANCE: I think that there were some questions raised as to whether or not we needed that much force. I don't recall the argument being made strongly, but I think the question was raised. I can't recall who made it.

Q: Was there a strong argument that we shouldn't have been there at all that was surfacing?

VANCE: Nobody raised that--

Q: Nobody thought that at that time?

VANCE: No. There was a real question raised as to whether or not we should have put any troops ashore prior to a meeting of the Organization of American States, but that was a different issue from the issue of whether or not it was proper to put American troops ashore, at least initially to protect the withdrawal of American nationals and other foreign nationals. I don't think there was any dispute on the desirability of that action initially, but there was considerable dispute both within and without the government on the question of acting before the OAS met.

Q: Why was the decision made to act before it met?

VANCE: I wasn't present at that meeting itself, but I understand that the decision was made because of the recommendation of the Ambassador and those on the ground were such that--

Q: The Ambassador to the Dominican Republic?

VANCE: That's right. That unless this were done immediately the result would be the loss of American lives and the lives of other foreign nationals, and he recommended that steps be taken immediately. On that basis the decision was taken to put troops in immediately.

Q: Was there a clear understanding and agreement as to what troops were supposed to do, that is, what their mission was?

VANCE: I think there was no question about what their mission was when this first group went ashore.

Q: That is, merely to save lives. Was there a consideration of the fact that the very intervention itself might prejudice one side or the other, that it might, in fact, act to prevent the success of the revolution?

VANCE: I wasn't present at that meeting, so I don't know whether that was discussed at that meeting or not.

Q: You started into your episode of going down there. Was the only instruction that you got the one that you received at the meeting where it was decided for the three of you to go?

VANCE: I can't recall what the specific instructions were. I know that the first task we were assigned was to talk to Juan Bosch and to see whether or not there was a basis for finding a new government which would be acceptable to a majority of the Dominicans and form a basis on which the fighting could be stopped. This was the thrust of our activities during the first long day and night that we spent in Puerto Rico. We met for six or eight hours, as I recall it, with Juan Bosch and discussed with him the situation. Mac Bundy took the lead in these discussions with Bosch.

Q: Was Bosch saying different things to you and Mac Bundy than he was saying publicly during this period? Was he really in touch with the situation closely enough to know what was going on?

VANCE: He was in touch. He told us, and I have no reason to doubt it [that he talked] on a frequent basis, namely several times a day, with people in Santo Domingo, so that I think that he had fairly current information as to what was going on in the country.

Q: Did he think that he had control of the rebel situation still, at that point?

VANCE: Yes, I think that he felt that he did have control of the rebel situation. He also felt that the only way of finding a solution to the problem was to put in a provisional chief executive who would be someone affiliated with him and with his party, namely Bosch's party, and he specifically suggested an individual whose name I simply cannot remember now. The discussion really centered around whether or not this man had sufficient stature to become a chief executive officer, or the President--or at least the provisional President--of the Dominican Republic, and whether or not he could gather around him a government of national reconciliation which would provide a basis for ending the fighting and some hope of stability pending new elections. One of the basic issues, of course, was the issue of the Constitution, and whether or not the old Constitution would obtain or whether the new Constitution would obtain. This was one of the fundamental theological issues that permeated the whole period and the dialogue during that period.

Q: Latin American issues get theological pretty quick sometimes.

VANCE: They do, indeed.

Q: There's a widely written-about rift, at least, between Mr. Bundy's view that the provisional government ought to include some of the rebel elements, and Mr. Mann's belief that perhaps it shouldn't. Does that mean that the three-man mission worked at cross purposes?

VANCE: No, I just think that we had different views. Mac and I believed that it was essential that you have people from the Constitutionalist Bosch group in the government and, perhaps, even as the provisional President. Tom simply did not share that view and didn't hesitate to express his views and his reasons for those views to the President and others in Washington. We discussed our differences with each other, and eventually Tom went back to Washington where he presented his views firsthand. Mac and I remained on in Santo Domingo. Finally Mac returned, and I stayed on to the bitter end until the group--of which Ellsworth Bunker was one--of the OAS came down to take over from us.

Q: Did, at one point, Fir. Bundy have what he thought was an arrangement which Washington didn't buy because perhaps Mr. Mann disagreed?

VANCE: My recollection was that he thought we were pretty close to an arrangement. The man's name whom I was trying to think of is Guzman. Antonio Guzman. We thought at one point that we had a government built around Guzman that would be acceptable. We found however that, as in all these things, there are many sticking points. One of the main sticking points was the question of who would be the respective senior military officers under any such government. I

played a role in that aspect of our discussions and acted as the contact with the Dominican Chiefs of Staff.

Once we left Puerto Rico and came to the Dominican Republic we split our work so that Mac and, for awhile, Tom dealt with the civilians and I dealt with the military, trying to put together this package which would provide an acceptable solution. I urged upon the Chiefs of Staff that they all tender their resignations on the basis that the only way to find national reconciliation was to find a new group which would be acceptable to both sides, because it was quite obvious that the current Chiefs of Staff were unacceptable to the Constitutionalists. At one point they had all agreed to tender their resignations. However in a period of an hour-and-a-half after we had reached that understanding, they all went and talked to Tony Imbert, and somehow in the process of that conversation it became unstuck. So that that part of the proposed package fell apart.

Q: Imbert was John Barnlow Martin's man, was he not?

VANCE: Yes. He had acted earlier in the crisis as the de facto leader of the so-called Loyalists, or government group. He moved into a vacuum which existed and because of his strong and tough personality, and I believe with some urging from the United States, took over the de facto leadership of the government. He was one with whom we also had to deal because he felt quite strongly that he was being dumped, which he didn't like, when the suggestion was made that he should step aside for Guzman or anyone else. So that our conversations went primarily along the following lines: conversations with Guzman and the Constitutionalists on the one hand: with the Chiefs on another hand: and thirdly, with Imbert and the people who rallied around Imbert. So it was a pretty complicated puzzle that we were trying to assemble.

Q: Are you saying that essentially the agreement that you and McGeorge Bundy thought you had fell apart more from Dominican reasons than from anything that Washington did?

VANCE: Yes, I think that's fair.

Q: But Washington was not very happy with the agreement, apparently?

VANCE: As I recall it, they weren't very happy with the agreement. They had some real questions as to whether this was a viable alternative and weren't really too enthusiastic about it.

Q: But you're not saying that they shot down an agreement that was firm? That's the implication of some of the stories that have been--

VANCE: No, they did not.

Q: That's not what you thought at all. What was your impression of the situation in the Dominican Republic as compared to the information that the mission was giving Washington at the time you left? Did it prove to be accurate, or do you think that they were perhaps over-reacting in the Dominican Republic?

VANCE: Again, it's hard to recall precisely what we knew before and what we found after, because these things tend to run together. It became very clear, however, once we were there that the country was in a mood for a bloodbath; that the passions were deep and inflamed; that the first thing that had to be done was to try and get a cease fire, otherwise the bloodshed was going to be unbelievable. It was to that end that the decision was made to interpose our troops between the two contending forces along that central line running from the Ambassador Hotel to the west all the way through the town, across the bridge, and out to the airport on the east. I think that the decision to do that was a sound decision. Without the interposition of the American and, later, other OAS forces, I think that the bloodshed would have been vastly greater. Indeed, [Colonel Francisco] Caamano [Deno] told me privately in one of my conversations with him that if the United States had not interposed itself between the contending forces that thousands and perhaps scores of thousands of Dominicans would have been killed.

Q: The rebels, then, were agreeing to that position too, as well as the government forces?

VANCE: He wasn't saying that he agreed to it. He was stating it as a fact that it did save thousands and perhaps scores of thousands of Dominican lives. He said that this was something that he would never admit publicly but that it was a fact.

Q: Did you agree that by the end of that week that there were Communist elements or Cuban elements that had gained substantial control of the rebel forces, or substantial influences in the rebel forces?

VANCE: There were Communist elements in the forces. I think there is a question as to how strong these elements were. There was a good deal of straight nationalist and anti-government sentiment in the group, but it's also clear that there were some Communist elements. It was awfully hard to measure or weigh the influence of any single group at a given point of time.

Q: Was there an agreement among the observers in the Dominican Republic as to the nature of the Communist involvement?

VANCE: No.

Q: Some thought it was more than you did, apparently?

VANCE: Although I think it was quite clear that there were a substantial number, and one of the elements of the package which was discussed was what was going to be done with the ones who everybody knew were Communists. The question was how should they be treated, how were you going to isolate them, should they be expelled from the country, or should they be arrested and put together in a particular location within the country. This was one of the big debates and one of the sticking points again with Guzman. Guzman, originally, as I recall it, indicated he thought that this problem could be handled, and that they could expel the known Communists from the country. As time wore on however, this apparently became more and more difficult for him to produce, am this was one of the reasons that he eventually was unable to produce a proposal along those lines that was satisfactory to the United States.

Q: It is not as simple as just another Cuba though?

VANCE: No.

Q: Washington understood that?

VANCE: It understood it. I think at different time it was clear that different weights were placed by different individuals on the nature and extent of the Communist threat, I think thinking changed in Washington over a period of time. In the early stages I think there was a general feeling in Washington that there was a substantial Communist presence and that they were in fact taking over, and that this did have the seeds of another Cuba. But I think as time went on and more information became available, people realized that this perhaps was not the fact.

Q: Does this mean that when the OAS goes in they will be able to conclude agreements in the Dominican Republic that would not have been acceptable to Washington earlier, because of better understanding as to what the situation really is?

VANCE: Yes, I think that's a fair statement.

Q: The OAS then came in, and you were still there. You were the only remaining American envoy of the President at that time?

VANCE: Yes.

Q: Everybody else had come and gone.

VANCE: I think some of the OAS forces were coming in while I was still there. I'm quite sure they were.

Q: Did you remain for Mr. Bunker's negotiations?

VANCE: No, I was there I guess all-told about three weeks, and I came on back. Then Mr. Bunker came in and did a superb job of guiding, with his colleagues from the OAS, the country up to a point where they selected a provisional President--[Hector Garcia] Godoy, and then put together a provisional government which acted pending elections, which as you know resulted in the election of [Joaquin] Balaguer. But Bunker did a superb job in a very trying period in advising Godoy, in holding the situation together as the inevitable strains came during the months that followed the taking over of power as a provisional president by Godoy and his colleagues.

Q: Were you advising closely with Mr. Johnson in Washington during that period?

VANCE: Yes. During that period I participated in many of the discussions that would go on with Mr.
McNamara and the people in the State Department--Mr. Rusk, Mr. Ball, Mr. Mann, Mr. Vaughn, and others.

Q: Mr. Johnson is supposed to have maintained such close contact with that crisis during its hottest period. That's the one where they count the phone calls to Bundy and things like that. Did he stay that interested in it and close to making the decisions personally in the period where it was finally settled?

VANCE: He followed it very closely, of course, not so closely as when it was at its height. But he followed it very closely and was extremely careful in evaluating and finally making the decisions with respect to the settlement.

Q: Were there closely argued critical decisions that the President was called upon to make personally?

VANCE: Yes. I can't recall what they were but in any one of those complicated situations there were such.

Q: Were there would be advisers on both sides?

VANCE: There would be different views?

Q: And it would be left to him then to decide?

VANCE: It's a lonely job where you have to make the final decision.

Q: Did he ever sit down in a sort of informal way with you at any point and just talk about what he believed or felt in regard to the Dominican Republic?

VANCE: No. Later on and during the negotiations in Paris he did that on a number of occasions, but not during the Dominican situation.

Q: That was still a little bit on sort of a higher official plane than it later became? We have about ten or fifteen minutes left on this tape. Do you have that much more time today?

VANCE: Why don't we just do that and call it quits for today, because I've got some stuff I've got to do.

EDMUND MURPHY
Foreign Information Officer, USIA
Washington, DC (1965)

Mr. Murphy was born in Massachusetts in 1913. He received his master's degree from the University of California in 1942 and then spent three years in the U.S. Navy. His career as a Foreign Service Officer with USIA included positions in

Mexico City, Lyon, Buenos Aires, Port au Prince, Bogota and Washington, DC. Mr. Murphy was interviewed by Allen Hansen on January 30, 1990.

Q: And then more than a year after you returned to Washington as Policy Officer, the Dominican Crisis of 1965 developed. Would you tell us about that, what your role was, what USIA's role was with the U.S invasion of the Dominican Republic?

MURPHY: Well, you remember that was the time when Trujillo was assassinated, was it not?

Q: Yes, just prior to Kennedy.

MURPHY: And the political situation looked like it was going very left. We had a big military presence at that time in the Dominican and the main thrust of American policy at that time was to try to assure that out of this came some kind of a Democratic pro-U.S. group in the Dominican instead of a Cuba type government. So we beefed up a big extra staff who served in the Dominican temporarily and we were very busy providing special materials to keep this post supplied with policy materials to influence Dominicans to support moderate, democratic elements.

Q: Do you recall that I was a Caribbean Desk Officer at the time and you and I became involved with a publication of a book called Caribbean Crisis: Subversion Failed in the Dominican Republic by J. Mallin?

MURPHY: Yes.

Q: Would you like to comment on that?

MURPHY: I remember that I spent many hours pouring over the manuscript of that book. We were glad that we were able to endorse a book that could be published promptly and maybe have some influence on public opinion on the crisis in the Dominican.

Q: One thing on the Dominican crisis, as you recall many in the American press were saying this was going to put U.S. foreign policy back 40 years. But less than two years later LBJ was meeting down in Punta del Este with all of the Presidents of the South American countries. Does that say something about predicting the future?

MURPHY: Yes. Well, in retrospect I don't think we seriously damaged our Latin American relations with that adventure.

RICHARD H. MELTON
Consular Officer
Dominican Republic (1965-1967)

Mr. Melton was born on August 8, 1935 in Rockville, Maryland. He received his BA from Cornell University in 1958. He later attended Wisconsin University where he received his MA in 1971. He entered the Foreign Service in 1961 and served in many countries throughout his career including Nicaragua, the Dominican Republic, Brazil, Portugal, England, Uruguay, and Costa Rica. Mr. Melton was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy on January 27, 1997.

Q: That brings us to 1965. Were you still looking for that assignment to Rome? How did you end up in the Dominican Republic?

MELTON: I still put Rome at the top of my wish list that was to be submitted every April 1--April Fool's Day. Of course the Department ignored this repeated request. But my next assignment was interesting. I thought that I was going to Canada--I had not yet done a tour in consular work as was expected of all junior officers at the time. I thought that I was going to go to Ottawa to work in the consular section there. My wife objected; Ottawa was too close to the U.S. and to Cornell, where we had both attended university. As things turned out, we didn't go to Ottawa because the Consul General wanted someone else--a nice young lady that he knew.

So after looking around, the Personnel Office found a slot for me in the Dominican Republic. The Embassy was being turned over at the time following an outbreak of violence and the landing of US forces under the authority of the OAS, and I ended in Santo Domingo where I served from 1965 to 1967. I arrived just as the fighting had ceased, but the political situation was still very unstable.

The Dominican Republic had also lived under dictatorship for many years. Like General Somoza in Nicaragua, General Trujillo had been in charge from the 1930s, until he was assassinated in 1961. He was followed by Joaquin Balaguer and Juan Bosch, who was overthrown in 1963. In 1965, some Bosch adherents took up arms. The regular military force had disintegrated and fragmented. At one point one of the rebel leaders had come to the U.S. Embassy and offered to surrender in exchange for certain considerations. The U.S. Ambassador, Tapley Bennett, refused to get involved and suggested to the rebel leader, Caemono, that he turn himself in to the authorities. That infuriated the rebel leader, who not only did not surrender, but redoubled his armed efforts and virtually brought down the government. Finally, under an OAS mandate, forces from the United States and Brazil, plus token contingents from Nicaragua and Honduras, intervened and stopped the bloodshed in Santo Domingo, where many thousands of people were at risk.

When I arrived, the Embassy staff had been almost completely changed. The Department, quite wisely, had made the judgment that old staff was no longer relevant and almost all were replaced. We were a new team charged with trying to stabilize the situation. Peace was maintained by elements of the 82nd Airborne Division and other foreign military forces that were still in place when I left two years later. The American contingent did admirable work; they showed great restraint in every respect, which was not true for all of the other troops. Our soldiers conducted themselves very properly.

Ambassador Ellsworth Bunker was there representing the OAS-led multilateral effort. Soon Ambassador Bennett was replaced by John Crimmins as chief of mission. That was an unusual situation because Crimmins had been assigned as the DCM. Frank Devine was then assigned as DCM. So we had a situation where we seemed to have two DCMs--although we all knew that eventually Crimmins would become the Ambassador. Despite some confusion for his handling of the situation, Ambassador Bennett went to Portugal as our ambassador and then to NATO, as our Permanent Representative, thanks in part to his good Georgia connections. Crimmins, for his part, was a tremendously capable, energetic chief of mission; he did a first rate job.

I was assigned to Santo Domingo as the commercial attaché although I had never actually done much economic work. What I actually ended up doing was handling the debt claims of Americans against a bankrupt Dominican government. I would periodically go to the Dominican budget director and present a list of claims, mostly from American firms who had not been paid for work they had done for the government. The Dominicans quite rightly pointed out that many of the debts were of questionable origin, but all took their place in the line for payment. One of the large claimants was Felix Benitez Rexach, a US citizen of Puerto Rican origin who had befriended Trujillo soon after his rise to power. He was rewarded by becoming the major contractor for all public works in Santo Domingo. He built the port and other major public facilities. Both he and Trujillo profited from this arrangement. He had many holdings which the post-Trujillo regime expropriated. So he asked the U.S. government to take up his claims; that confronted us with a dilemma. Undoubtedly here was a US citizen who had legitimate claims; the method by which these assets were originally acquired was another matter.

I had to deal with this. I listened to Mr. Rexach for hour after hour, day after day, and, in fact, we struck up a good relationship. He would come in to see me two or three times each week--along with his lawyer. He would leave the lawyer in our waiting room and then regale me with stories about Trujillo and his gang. As matters developed, Mr. Rexach became increasingly more interested in just talking to me; he seldom actually pressed his claim or urged me to do so. He just wanted to chat. The Ambassador was quite concerned about the potential the claims case held for disrupting our assistance and reconstruction efforts in the country. An expropriation finding could lead to a reaction long after I departed the Dominican Republic. Under Trujillo the Dominican Republic had been granted a large quota which allowed them to sell sugar to the United States at prices well above the world price. Trujillo worked assiduously with key members of the U.S. Congress to maintain the U.S. sugar quota.

The 1965 uprising eventually led to the victory of Joaquin Balaguer over Juan Bosch in an OAS-supervised election. Balaguer ran the country for the next 30 years. A frail looking man, slight of stature, Balaguer was an amazing physical specimen--only someone with exceptional stamina could carry on for all of this time. During the Trujillo era, he was viewed as a secondary player and a creature of the dictator. In fact, he turned out to be far more than that; he provided continuity to the system, which without the presence of someone like Balaguer, might have collapsed.

Sugar has long been important in the Dominican Republic. The reason there wasn't greater tension relating to the sugar trade was that American production is primarily from beets, whereas the Dominican production came from cane. There was a sort of splitting of the pie between the

two producers. The sugar quota covered only the cane grown product. As long as US beet growers were getting their desired price, the import quota could be split among various cane growers; with no economic impact on the U.S. producers.

American growers did not show much interest in that issue, leaving it to growers like the Dominicans to fight over the quota. Trujillo was interested in getting the lion's share of that quota. Since the American producers could not have competed in an open market due to higher production costs and since the quota ensured a profit for some sugar imports, all producers seemed to profit from the system--only the consumers and the U.S. taxpayers suffered.

This was my first experience with an embassy that was primarily staffed by non-State Department people. The Foreign Service officers and staff were a minority. We had a huge assistance mission; in addition to USAID, there were many other US agencies represented in Santo Domingo. We had for example one of the first FBI offices in the region.

There was a definite Trujillo legacy even though he had been dead for several years. One of the reasons why the instability had developed so rapidly and had gone so far was the weak and corrupt political system and the inability of the armed forces to intervene effectively to restore law and order. One small disciplined group was able to influence the entire country. The armed forces, although large, were undisciplined and had no will to fight.

At the time of our military intervention in the Dominican Republic, there was a hew and cry in the U.S. about our actions. Most of this happened before I arrived in Santo Domingo. By then, I didn't hear much debate about the appropriateness of the U.S. action. We were concerned about the proper role of the U.S. in the post-invasion period and how we and the OAS might extract the military force from the country without allowing the Dominican Republic to retrogress to its dictatorial period. The test was whether in an election the people would be permitted to make a fair choice. That objective became Ellsworth Bunker's principal goal. The OAS maintained its own views; Bunker had many non-Americans on his staff. I think that they did a good job in establishing the proper environment for a democratic election and the transfer of power to the winner.

There was some sentiment of skepticism, particularly among opposition groups, about the presence of foreign military forces. They viewed intervention as designed to block a return to power by the Bosch forces. We were accused of seeing communists under every bed and of exaggerating the "red" threat; therefore, the critics asserted, our intervention was counter-productive to democratic development. We were viewed as defenders of the status quo. On the other hand, what actually happened--the holding of free elections under OAS monitoring--did establish our credibility with these groups--to the extent that they would give any credibility to a US initiative. My view was that our policy of trying to make our intervention a positive action was correct.

Under Trujillo, of course, all of the people in power were part of a closed political system. It was a corrupt system. But the corruption was highly centralized and organized. If bribes were paid, it was all according to a well established and understood system, as was their distribution. When Trujillo was assassinated, the system began to disintegrate and corruption became anarchic.

Every official was on his own and had the freedom to squeeze as much as he or she could. That made corruption much harder to deal with because it was unpredictable; in a strange way, even those who had been corrupt began to feel uncomfortable about the new chaotic process of bribery and pay-offs.

I should note that as in Nicaragua a number of Dominican contacts showed up later during my career--e.g. Balaguer, Juan Bosch. They lasted for a long time on the Latin American scene.

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EDITOR'S NOTE: Mr. Ambassador, I suggest that a concluding paragraph summarizing your Foreign Service experience would be most helpful at this point.

MELTON: The Dominican Republic (1965-67) was a testing ground for the effectiveness of multilateral diplomacy. The 1965 intervention took place under the auspices of the Organization of American States. While the United States played a disproportionate role in these events, a reasonably successful outcome depended importantly on our ability to meld bilateral and multilateral efforts. The Dominican episode was an early illustration as well of the limits of military force, although the lesson was not so apparent at the time. Key to the eventual outcome was the early identification of a clear objective--the holding of early elections overseen by the OAS.

RICHARD C. BARKLEY
Vice Consul
Santiago do los Caballeros (1965-1967)

Mr. Barkley was born on December 23, 1932 in Illinois. He attended Michigan State College, where he received his BA in 1954, and Wayne State University, where he received his MA in 1958. He served in the US Army overseas from 1955-1957 as a 1rst lieutenant. His career has included positions in Finland, the Dominican Republic, Norway, South Africa, Turkey, and Germany. Ambassador Barkley was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy on May 12, 2003.

Q: Well then in '65, whither?

BARKLEY: Well in '65, in those days the general expectation was that a junior officer would spend two three year tours in two different geographical areas followed by one tour of either two years or more in the Department. So they asked me what geographical areas I would be interested in, and I said, "Latin America." Primarily because I wanted to learn Spanish. Before I departed I was told that I would be assigned to Mexico City in the visa section. I knew precisely what that meant. Although it wasn't the kind of work that particularly appealed to me, I thought it was something you had to go through as a junior officer. I accepted that and said on the other hand I will be in one of the great capitals of the world, so I was looking forward to that. When I left Finland in March of that year I was placed in Spanish training after home leave with the

expectation that I would indeed go to Mexico City. I was about I guess maybe a couple of weeks into my language training when I was called by personnel and told that my assignment had been changed, and that I would be going to the Dominican Republic. Well at that time there was a lot of activity in the Dominican Republic. In the spring of that year there were signs that the governing authority would be similar to that in Cuba. There was a certain anxiety that revolution indeed had been exported to the Dominican Republic by the Cubans. I don't think that proved to be historically true but there was certainly some glee in Cuba and other quarters on hearing that. Lyndon Johnson of course said, "That won't happen on my watch." So he sent an OAS force of Americans, joined by some Brazilians and Hondurans to make sure that did not happen. Then he brought in Ellsworth Bunker as his negotiator who turns out successful in settling things down and preparing elections. So it was a revolution there. I remember the man who called me. I don't remember his name, but I remember the conversation. He said, "Well we have changed your assignment; you are going to the Dominican Republic." I said, "Well why did you do that?" He said, "Well you are single, and in Spanish training, and you have got some Spanish. We want a single person down there because it is a dangerous area." I said, "Well, what's being single got to do with it?" He said, "Well if anything happens to you, you know. We don't have to pay so much." Rather direct for this kind of a conversation. I said, "Well, what options do I have?" He said, "Well you can resign." I mean as you can see the man's personnel skills probably lacked something. On the other hand he was telling it as he saw it. Anyway I looked at it very carefully and decided maybe I will do that, then. So as a result in July of that year, I arrived in a U.S. consulate in the up country of the Dominican Republic in a town called Santiago de los Caballeros. It was a key posting because the northern part of the country had not joined the revolutionaries in the south, and was still under control of the military and pro government forces at that time, although the government had basically fled. There was a certain amount of chaos. So I ended up of course, on the visa line there primarily, but I did other things, too. It was an extraordinarily small consulate. There was a consul. You don't need a consul general, a consul who was, I think, one grade above me. Then there was myself, and then an FSR, a reserve officer who was at that time there on the visa line, and that was it. Then there was a station, a small station of two or three people which was augmented from time to time depending on what the activities were.

Q: I wonder if you could at this point describe the situation, what had led up to where the Dominican Republic was at that point.

BARKLEY: About, I don't know how many years previously, I think maybe four or five, Trujillo who had been the long time dictator of the Dominican Republic was assassinated. A triumvirate took over from him. They were many of the people who actually had participated in the assassination. In about April of that year, there had been some change in the government structure. A new president came in by the name of Donnie Cabral. This was way before my time and my understanding of the situation. Then a police officer by the name of Francisco Commanjo Dejo who was a member of the police force led a revolutionary movement against Donnie Cabral. Cabral was American educated at Harvard, I believe. He was somebody that Americans understood. So he made the appeal that we come in and rescue him from impending chaos. Once again, I am sure, he played on traditional fears that this would be a repeat of Cuba. He was persuasive enough to American authorities that President Lyndon Johnson ordered an intervention force. It was organized under the Organization of American States, but basically it

was done by the United States. Ellsworth Bunker headed the OAS team. Cabral resigned and then they came up with a provisional president by the name of Hector Garcia Godoy. He was another sophisticated diplomat, and he did a good job, and together with the Americans he organized elections. One of the leaders of the revolution party to the election was a fellow by the name of Juan Bosch. Bosch actually, at one time, had been a president after Trujillo, and was freely elected. But he was an ineffective governor, and was subsequently turned out by a coup d'état. There was a lot of political turmoil before that. In any event, he reappeared and ran for office against an old Trujillioista, a man whose hands weren't quite clean, a man by the name of Joachim Balaguer. So in the autumn of that year when I was there, they had their election. Balaguer won the election and that began the process of stabilization.

Q: You arrived where in this process?

BARKLEY: I arrived in July before the elections. I was picked up at the airport in Santo Domingo immediately by this young vice consul who was eager to have somebody help him, and taken up to Santiago which was about 105 or 110 miles from the capital.

Q: But in the political process, were American troops gone by this point?

BARKLEY: No, they were still there. Indeed there were still problems up in the north where the military was, they were visited by certain elements of the revolutionary groups who were told they could have free movement as long as they didn't seize power or export revolution. But it wasn't quite that simple. Of course there were great sympathizers throughout the island for the revolution. The sympathizers were those of course who for the longest times had said that now that Trujillo was gone, it was time for someone interested in the welfare of the masses. Many people believed that some sort of revolutionary movement was required to set them on a road to a more equitable society. Of course, some of those groups were exploited. Some were well meaning which is always the case in a revolutionary atmosphere.

Q: Where did this city fit into this thing? Was it an agricultural city or…

BARKLEY: It is the capital of an area called the Cibao which was the northern part of the Dominican Republic. It was agriculturally the wealthiest part of the country. It had always had been an area which produced cattle, tobacco, and something the Dominicans called Fruitas minores, fruits and vegetables, etc. It was a very rich area. There was a lot of cattle. I think it actually provided most of the economic muscle for the country. Of course at the same time a lot of demographic changes were taking place. There was urbanization at a relatively rapid rate, and a large and rapidly growing population. There were enough things to keep things stirred. But it was the one area that was tranquil, except for one memorable occasion where we had a fire fight between some revolutionaries and the local military. Which in fact was a rather horrendous affair because we were right in the middle of it. That case actually was a serious problem for us, because as it turns out our consul was in the hotel and had been seized by the revolutionaries. The phones, happily, were working and he made a call for help. We tried to get American forces up to interpose. Eventually they came, but it took a long time. During that time, we were trying to negotiate between the two parties without any particular muscle except for the claim to talk for the American government. We finally got him out. There was actually a humorous side to the

affair, for in the hotel at the same time that the firefight took place were a number of American carnival workers. There were coochie girls and the fat lady and all of those traditional members of a carnival troupe. It was some carnival that worked out of Puerto Rico throughout the Caribbean area. So we had to provide citizen services, first to extract them from the area and then get them out to the airport and make arrangements for an airplane to pick them up, etc. The difficult part was getting them out alive. They were scared to death. We finally were able to do that, for both sides wanted non combatants out of the hotel so they could go after it. When we got them out, the biggest car we had to move them in belonged to the other vice consul. It was an old Pontiac. In that area there were a lot of what the Dominicans called "sleeping soldiers," or speed bumps. They were there to slow down traffic, but also had military purposes to make sure that people didn't rush through the city brandishing guns. So every time we got to one of those, we all got out of the car because the fat lady was so heavy we couldn't get over the speed bumps. It made it quite a long trip, but was one of those humorous foreign service experiences that made life interesting.

Q: Was there a problem getting a seat on the plane?

BARKLEY: No, we had a large plane brought in, a military plane.

Q: How did you find sort of life there? I mean were you sort of in a state of siege or?

BARKLEY: Well not particularly except for that one incident which lasted a couple of days, it was relatively tranquil. The military and the police there were quite strong, and they could be brutal on occasion. Our consulate was a little out of town. There was really not very much to do. There were two restaurants in town, a Lebanese restaurant and a Chinese restaurant. For bachelors, and there were a couple of us there, that is where we tended to go. There was a sort of commissary facility attached in Santo Domingo but that was a long ways away. We tended to buy things on the market and eat the local produce, and there were sufficient foodstuffs. It wasn't a problem, but there was not much to do during leisure time, so we organized our own. Played a lot of volleyball, and did a lot of things like that. Poker parties, all of those things. Of course it was interesting to me as soon as I landed the consul looked at me and said, "Well, we are delighted to have you here, but you are not at all what we asked for." I said, "Oh, what did you ask for?" He said, "because there is not much to do here, we asked for a family, and it is a safe area up here in the north. We wanted somebody with a wife and maybe small children because he would be bored." I said, "Well you certainly never got that message through to personnel, or if it did come thought they disregarded it immediately because they told me the reason they wanted me is because I was not married."

Q: How about the social life of a bachelor with the Dominicans?

BARKLEY: Well, social life for the Dominicans evolved around dancing. They had all these traditional dances particularly the meringue. The problem was that a bachelor could not go out with a decent girl unless she was chaperoned, so that aspect of it was extraordinarily difficult. Occasionally you could work that out. Two girls would go out with two guys with one chaperone, you know. But it was closely watched. That was just part of the expectation and standard of that time in Dominican life. I went to a number of these dances. There were a lot of

actually private parties. There were a number of people who had associations with the United States one way or another. So we tied in with a very nice group. It was not an easy life for a bachelor.

Q: Was there any relationship that you would pick up to Haiti? I mean was this the other side of the moon or…

BARKLEY: Well, that was another foreign service experience. Most of the Dominicans for some reason had an incredible fear of the Haitians. I think that goes back to the time of the Haitian war for independence. The Haitians seized the entire island, and of course rape and plunder were common, a very brutal period of time. It drove some people back to Spain and others into the mountains. After the restoration 25 years after that, the Dominicans continued to maintain a fear of the Haitians. Now, of course, a lot of them had Haitian blood as a result of the occupation. But there was a border between Haiti and the Dominican Republic. You could go up to an area called Dajabone, on the Massacre River, where actually there had been a massacre of Haitians during the Trujillo period of time. All of a sudden the road ended and there was the forest primeval in front of you. The military was always there, saying, "You can't see them but they are there looking at you." There was a sort of mystical fear. So I decided of course, this is a part of the country I would at least have to look at. I was either stupid or an intrepid bachelor in those days, so I made arrangements to go to Haiti. I caught a plane in Santo Domingo. This was after the country had settled down quite a bit. Port au Prince was an interim stop on the way to Miami. I recall very much getting off at Papa Doc Duvalier's airport. I was the only person to get off the airplane. That should have told me something. I had made arrangements to stay in a little hotel in Port au Prince. I was told that when you get to the airport, you should get a taxi, and hire that taxi for the period of time that you are there. The reason you must do this is that the taxis are all run by the Ton-Ton Macoot, which were Duvalier's thugs. They had the taxi concession. I'll never ever forget what happened. I came out of the airport with my bags. It wasn't hard to find them because they were the only ones that came off the plane. There was a cab in front, and it was a 1954 Chevrolet Del Ray coupe, red on the bottom, white on the top. The reason I recall that so well is because it was identical to the first car I ever owned. A gentleman got out. He was an incredible physical specimen. He just had muscles on muscles. He flashed this million dollar smile and said, "Cab Sir?" He spoke sort of this rough English but certainly serviceable. I said, "Yes, and not only that, could you stay with me for three days? I would like to hire you for three days." He was very pleased. So we got in the cab and he looked around and said, "What is your name?" I told him. He said, "My name is Racine Wisconsin." I said, "Surely your name is not Racine Wisconsin." He said, "Well it didn't used to be, but none of the tourists could pronounce my name, so I changed it to Wisconsin." So Racine Wisconsin took care of me for three days, and I want to tell you he was a great comfort during a particularly wild kind of safari. There were other aspects to it, but once again this has nothing to do with my career.

Q: No, but it is interesting to capture the time. What was Haiti like, Port au Prince and all?

BARKLEY: Of course Papa Doc had it in an iron grip. There is no question. I turned up at the hotel, and there was only one other American there. I'll never forget that. He had never been abroad before. He was in shipping and his task was to come in and inspect the bottoms of an American ship that had come in, had discharged its cargo and was picking up another cargo. So

the hulls had to be very carefully scrubbed and washed off to make sure there was no contamination. That was his task. He was scared to death. So he said, "Do you mind if we eat together?" I didn't mind; there was only the two of us. So next day I went out with Racine Wisconsin on to my tourist rounds. I came back that evening. The man was there; he was absolutely shaken. He said, "I have got to get out of here." I said, "What happened?" He said, "I was down quayside and we were unloading the cargo of sunflower oil through these rubber hoses. There was a leak in one, and a homeless person who was leaning on the quay saw the leak and put his finger down to see if it was edible and decided it was and started to lick up the sunflower oil that was coming out of this little leak. The guard on the quay told him to stop. The man reached down to do it again and the guard shot him dead on the spot." You could imagine what a horrendous experience it was. He came back and was absolutely terrified of course, but it seemed to be symbolic that those people who were in power wielded their power and authority in an absolutely ruthless manner. Of course, the city itself was very run down.

Q: Did you go by the embassy?

BARKLEY: I didn't that time. On another trip subsequently I went to the embassy, but I didn't that time.

Q: The visa business, I imagine you had an awful lot to do with maids trying to get to the United States.

BARKLEY: Oh everybody tried to get to the United States In the first place the problem was the that the first stop to the United States from the Dominican Republic is Puerto Rico. That was at that time a $45.00 flight round trip. Of course the idea was once you got into Puerto Rico you could go on to the United States. Well during Trujillo's time, most Dominicans didn't have travel documents. Of course after he left they opened up and almost everybody got a passport, and were determined to travel. Every Dominican had a passport. They all could afford to scrape together $45.00 somehow. Of course we found out after years that most intended to stay in the States. At the beginning there was a tendency to be lenient because people had not been out of the country for a long time. We found out that people who were going over for a weekend or 15 days ended up being there years and years. It became a standard thing because it was almost impossible to get a permanent resident visa, so people went as tourists and just stayed. So we had a constant stream of visa applicants, 95% of which were not valid. It was a very difficult task because basically you were the naysayer to all these people, and realizing that all these people who want out, want out because things were impossible for them there. The second thing is that most of the Dominicans that went to the United States did not get into trouble. I mean they were hard working people, and they were decent, but they were in contravention of American visa law. So our work was hard, and how do you determine who is a legitimate and a valid applicant and who is not. At t he same time there was an awful lot of corruption and people kept trying to buy visas, etc. It was quite an experience.

Q: Did you have a lot of Congressional calls or letters saying my good friends want to have this young Dominican come and visit them?

BARKLEY: No, not very much. It was quite clear during the time before I was there that visa fraud was rampant so there was a reluctance to do that. The other thing is that few Dominicans seemed to have had particular contacts in the United States except with other Dominicans. Of course to get congressional attention on that was very difficult. There were other aspects toward our policies in this area. One is that after the election took place, President Johnson ordered a huge aid program to go into the Dominican Republic. So there was an enormous influx of American aid operatives in that area. The start of it was somewhat chaotic as you would imagine. Much of it was very depressing I think. I found it to be so anyway. It is difficult to start programs and so many AID officials tried to take over existing programs so they could show immediate success. Then we had quite a sizable, and extraordinarily capable, Peace Corps group there. So there were two groups of Americans that were involved with development programs.

Q: How were relations with the Dominicans from your perspective?

BARKLEY: Well, Dominicans are delightful people; the vast majority are delightful people, mostly dirt poor, hard working, good citizens basically. Like every country they have at least their share of felons, but actually most were nice people. During certain stages of the revolutionary activities, of course, things were tense in some areas. That died down very quickly. The idea seemed absurd that you would ever be harmed moving around the Dominican Republic. I never had a guard, never even thought of it. Every now and then somebody would yell Maldito Yankee, or damn Yankee, or something like that, but it was very rare. I found people really quite congenial.

Q: Well you were there what, '65 to '67?

BARKLEY: Yes.

Q: Then what?

BARKLEY: Well then I got my next assignment which I always considered somewhat of a payoff for the two years in the Dominican Republic. They sent me to Columbia University to study a year of Atlantic Affairs. So I began at Columbia University in September of 1967.

ROBERT E.WHITE
Chief Political Section
Santo Domingo (1965-1968)

Mr. White was born on September 21, 1926 in Massachusetts. He received his BA from St. Michaels College in 1952 and his MA from the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy in 1954. After entering the Foreign Service in 1955, Mr. White served in numerous positions in foreign nations including Ecuador, the Dominican Republic, Honduras, Nicaragua, Colombia, Paraguay, and El Salvador. Mr. White was interviewed by Bill Knight on June 10, 1992.

Q: I loved Ecuador. I inspected there. It's a great place.

WHITE: Ecuador was a sort of microcosm of all the problems of Latin America. And then in 1965 Kennedy Crockett, who was office director for Central America and the Caribbean, offered me three posts as chief of the political section--Haiti, the Dominican Republic or Honduras. I chose the Dominican Republic because I felt that something exciting was going to happen in the Dominican Republic. There were a lot of rumors. Well, I proved to be right. I went in a few days after the Marines in the invasion of 1965. I was not sympathetic to the invasion but as long as it took place I was glad that I was there because I learned a lot about how we became involved in this. Where the rights and wrongs were. How you worked with the military under conditions such as this. I think frankly we would have been far better off, everyone would have been far better off, had we never gone into the Dominican Republic, had we allowed the reform group headed by Francisco Caamano to take over. But in this particular case, because of Ellsworth Bunker's insistence on finishing a job, he spent the next two years of his life involved with the Dominican Republic and making certain that things came out more or less as well as they could have come out. A free election was held and a return to democracy that has never been interrupted took place. Now I obviously don't have too stringent standards when it comes to democracy because there are serious defects in Dominican democracy but at least you have had a steady succession of elected presidents.

Q: Who was the ambassador then?

WHITE: The ambassador then was Tapley Bennett. Ambassador Bennett was most kind to me and would invite me, as the junior officer present, when people like Cyrus Vance or McGeorge Bundy or other high ranking officials came in. So I was exposed to policy making and negotiations at a reasonably high level. But by the time they finished restructuring the embassy in Santo Domingo instead of being the chief of the political section I would have been, I think, second from the bottom. They were going to have six or seven political officers. So I just went to Ambassador Bennett and said: "Look, this is not really what I had in mind and I don't know who all these political officers are going to talk to anyway." So I was able to salvage the job in Honduras, which had not yet been awarded to anyone.

Q: So this was just a few months later?

WHITE: Right. Two months later, I ended up in Honduras. I worked for a highly-skilled career ambassador, John Jova. Honduras at that time was not any kind of a priority in Latin America. One thing I do remember of interest...someone farsighted sent a team of foreign policy experts to judge what were the stakes in Central America? How seriously should we view insurgent movements in Central America? I remember that Tony Ross, a capable Foreign Service officer, was on that commission. Basically they came to the conclusion that except for the Panama Canal very little was really at stake in Central America. If I recollect correctly, they pointed out that there had to be social and political change in Central America; those societies had to move from one level of political development to another and that violence might accompany these changes but that this internal friction was not anything that the United States should get too excited about. I personally agreed with that assessment so I guess that's why I recall it. Of course, 15 years

later, we were acting as though our world was coming apart because a U.S.-supported dictator in Nicaragua had fallen.

I served in Honduras from 1965 to 1968. Then I took an unusual step and became first deputy director for Peace Corps programs in Latin America and then director.

LAWRENCE E. HARRISON
Deputy Director, USAID
Santo Domingo (1965-1968)

Mr. Harrison was born on March 11, 1932 in Brookline, Massachusetts. He received his BA from Dartmouth College in 1953 and his MPA from Harvard University in 1960. He served as an ensign in the U.S. Navy from 1953 to 1957. He joined USAID in 1962 and served in many countries throughout his career including Costa Rica, the Dominican Republic, Costa Rica, Haiti, and Nicaragua. Mr. Harrison was interviewed by W. Haven North on December 12, 1996.

Q: We'll come back to that. So you were there only just a year and a half and then you-

HARRISON: Actually, I got there in March of 1964 and on April 24, 1965, the Dominican Civil War exploded - the Dominican Revolution, as it was referred to back then. This appeared to the people in Washington to hold the possibility of being another Cuba. It was clear that, in the revolutionary forces, which ran the spectrum from right of center to far left, there were communist elements. As a result, shortly after it exploded, it became one of the highest foreign policy concerns of the Johnson Administration. One of the principal devices that the Administration came up with to confine the Revolution to the city of Santo Domingo was to bring in teams of State, AID, military, and Peace Corps people who had some experience in Latin America and send them out to all of the provinces as kind of shadow government to keep the work of government going, to assure that food was flowing and gasoline was available and so forth. There were seven such teams. I got a high priority message one day, saying, "Pack up field clothes and a flashlight and report to San Juan, Puerto Rico." I, along with 50 or 60 other people.

Q: Leaving your family behind?

HARRISON: Yes, and it was supposed to be a TDY thing. So I got to Puerto Rico. I was flown in a military aircraft to Santo Domingo, to the military airbase outside of Santo Domingo in San Isidro. I went to the AID mission directly and, within, I think, a day, I was in the town of San Pedro de Macoris in the eastern side of Hispaniola, which the Dominican Republic shares with Haiti. There were a couple of military guys, a Peace Corps guy. Our job was to make sure that everything was moving as smoothly as possible in these circumstances.

Q: You're talking about moving what?

HARRISON: Food, salaries to government workers, gasoline, public transportation was flowing-

Q: How big an area are you talking about?

HARRISON: The city itself is about 25,000, but we had to worry about the whole east of the Dominican Republic. I remember that I spent about a day in San Pedro and the next couple of days I spent traveling out to the smaller towns and villages, all the way out to HigŸey out on the eastern coast of the Dominican Republic - and La Romana, where the South Puerto Rico Sugar Company had a very big operation. I did that for about-

Q: What were you trying to accomplish?

HARRISON: Just to make sure that the Revolution didn't spread from Santo Domingo.

Q: Was it likely to?

HARRISON: Oh, there was no question about it. It could have. The Dominican Republic was and is a country where a lot of people are poor and unhappy, perhaps most people. It's a typical profile of a few rich and a lot of poor and denial of opportunity and so forth. Of course, it also had a tradition of authoritarian politics that was symbolized by the Trujillo dictatorship, which ended in 1961. Anyhow, after about a week of that, I got a message to come back to Santo Domingo. They asked me if I would stay on. They were creating a new job as assistant director for the AID mission.

Q: For a particular job?

HARRISON: Basically for program and planning. So, I accepted that.

Q: Who was the director at that time?

HARRISON: At that time, Carter Ide was the director. Carter was abysmally treated by the agency in Washington. He was viewed as not up to the job in post-revolutionary Santo Domingo. So, the person who was brought in was Alex Firfer from Bolivia. Actually, Alex and I lived together for a couple of months in the house that Carter had lived in . My family was still back in Costa Rica. I went back, a few months afterwards, to pick them up and come back, after things had quieted down some. It was a very exciting and dramatic time. There was firing going on all over the city, particularly in the evenings. The fighting continued, with the large U.S. military contingent trying to hem in the revolutionaries without doing too much damage to them. But they were shooting at one another and there were a fair number of casualties.

Q: Who were the contenders in this?

HARRISON: We have to go back a little bit, to the elections that the United States was responsible for sponsoring that took place in 1962 and were won by Juan Bosch. He was installed, if I remember correctly, early in '63 and was a disaster as a chief of state. He antagonized a lot of the principal elements of the society, including the military and, to some extent, the private sector, and, to some extent, the United States. We had a political appointee,

Ambassador John Bartlow Martin, who wrote a very interesting book about his experience there. He did everything he could to keep the Bosch government going. But Bosch was finally ousted by the military in the fall of '63. A military government was first installed and then a prominent businessman, Donald Reid Cabral, became the de facto chief of state. It was elements of the military, along with the left and some centrists, who rebelled against the Reid government - at a time of intense drought, by the way, which may have fed the process - in April of '65. I arrived in May.

You had the so-called "Constitutionalists" downtown, hemmed in by what was left of the Dominican military (some had joined the Constitutionalists) and the American Marines. One of the Fort Bragg Airborne outfits came in as well. Then you had an OAS patina spread over this. A Brazilian general came in with token forces from other Latin American countries. But it was clearly our operation.

Q: Was it effective?

HARRISON: Well, the fighting actually stopped in June or July. A provisional government was established that was led by Hector Garcia Godoy, an excellent guy. That was installed in September, if I remember correctly, of 1965. By that time, I had gone back to pick up my family and we had our own house and were established there.

Q: What about your work as assistant director?

HARRISON: Actually, I soon became the deputy director. Jack Nepple was the deputy and he left, I think, fairly early in 1966. So, basically, I ended up doing what a deputy does, but with particular emphasis on program and planning. It was an enormous mission with an enormous amount of money.

Q: What scale are we talking about?

HARRISON: $200 million in one year. We kept the government afloat. We paid salaries. We assured that the foreign exchange reserves did not drop below an acceptable level. At the same time, we were involved in every aspect of Dominican life. That includes all the traditional sectors. It included program assistance. We were so intimately involved, after the presidential elections of 1966, which installed Joaquin Balaguer, who recently retired from the presidency, that we were present at the weekly economic cabinet meetings held in the palace. (This is something which seemed to me to be increasingly unseemly; before I left, we finally stopped it.) The meetings were very, very large (all of the autonomous institutions as well as the ministries were represented). The president sat at the head of the table; Ambassador John Crimmins sat to his right; Alex Firfer sat to his right; and I sat to his right. We were so deeply involved in everything that we became sort of members of the government, in a way. There were a lot of Dominicans, not even necessarily of the Left, who were put off by our presence.

Q: Did you play an active role in these meetings?

HARRISON: Yes. We often were better informed on what was going on than certainly the president and often the cabinet ministers. I don't want to leave the provisional government because, in a way, it was a most unusual moment. It ran the country between September of '65 and July of '66, if I remember correctly. A lot of the people who were in it were on the Constitutionalists' side, including a number of Marxists, during the Revolution. A lot of us were very sympathetic to the Revolution. I personally was; the Ambassador was; Alex Firfer was. The Dominican Republic was not a good place for human beings, most human beings. There was so much unfairness, injustice, incompetence as well, abuse. I became very close to a number of people who were of the Left. My ex-wife also got deeply involved with youth groups in Santo Domingo of the Left. Interestingly, some of the friendships that were formed then persist to this day. It was a very moving experience.

Q: Who were these Left people?

HARRISON: The Minister of Planning in the provisional government was an engineer by the name of Luis Sosa Baudr_. He had, I believe, belonged to one or more of the extreme Left parties or movements. But he was widely respected because he was an excellent theoretical engineer. He also turned out to be a very fine person. We became quite close personal friends. We used to play poker every week.

Q: He wasn't a Marxist?

HARRISON: Well, he was at one time, but he got off of that. A lot of them did. Some of them were not Marxists. For example, the former head of the economic section of the central bank, who was the leading lay evangelist of the country, was the Deputy Planning Minister during the provisional government. He subsequently became the rector of the university and he's also a close friend, whom I asked to do some work for us when I was in Nicaragua some 15 years later. The best known hydrological engineer was U.S. trained, somebody with whom I spoke just a few weeks ago, who is ill right now--another young, bright, altruistic guy who sympathized with the Constitutionalist cause.

Anyhow, the personal relationships were-- The Dominicans are very warm, open people and that was a memorable aspect of those years.

Q: What were we trying to do, working with the government?

HARRISON: We were trying to rebuild the economy in one sense and, at the same time, move it towards democratic institutions.

Q: What were some of the particular program elements moving in that direction?

HARRISON: We had a vast program. Not only did we have a lot of money, but we had a lot of people. I had a blackboard in my office that had all of the long term direct hire and contract people. There were over 200 people on that blackboard. This meant that we were doing technical assistance in all of the key ministries. We worked closely with the economic section of the Embassy on economic analysis and economic policy questions. One of the crucial, burning

questions at the time was the devaluation of the peso. President Balaguer said, "If the peso falls, I fall and the Dominican Republic falls." So, we had all kinds of debates about devaluation. We worked very closely with the IMF people, who were also very concerned, of course, about economic policy questions and exchange rate questions.

Q: Did they devalue?

HARRISON: No, not at the time. They did subsequently. I read through the guidelines that you were kind enough to send me. As I reflect on the Dominican experience, as well as the other experiences, some of the most important things I think we've done have been related to educational institutions. We did a lot of educational institution building in the Dominican Republic, which has been very helpful to them over the years. We focused on a secondary agricultural school in Santiago, the second city of the country, where there was quite an unusual group of public-spirited businessmen and professional men, who put up a good deal of support and who subsequently built a university, which became probably the best university in the Dominican Republic, and we also helped that. We sent 100 young men and women to Texas A&M University to study agriculture. I think, if you could find out what those people are doing today, you would discover that that investment produced a very high yield. We set up another agriculture secondary school. We tried to help the Autonomous University, which was very radicalized and which kept us more or less at arm's length, although we were able to do a few things in the physical sciences with them. The university was a typical Latin American disaster of a university: highly politicized, very little learning going on. But it was those investments in institutions, in human resource institutions, in educational institutions that I think were the most important.

Q: It was the same sort of thing in the other sectors, too, building institutional capacities?

HARRISON: We had a very large Texas A&M technical assistance team, which was sort of a shadow ministry within the Ministry. Interestingly, the guy who was the head of the team subsequently became for a few years (I don't think he was very successful) the president of Texas A&M University--Jarvis Miller.

Agriculture had been one of our principal fields of effort. We particularly tried to promote large-scale agriculture through agribusiness investors from the United States. I left the Dominican Republic with the strong sense that we had been doing a lot of bits and pieces of things that did not have a coherent connecting structure. That was very important to what happened when I went back to Costa Rica. Basically, we were told, "You've got to make this country safe for democracy. Whatever resources you need, you can substantially count on." So, at the one level, we were stabilizing the economy and, at the other, we were trying to do all these things in the various sectors.

Q: Services to people in which sectors?

HARRISON: Certainly services in the agriculture sector, in health, the education programs that I've already mentioned. We had, for the most part, a very good working relationship.

Q: A lot of infrastructure work?

HARRISON: The IDB, the Interamerican Development Bank, and the World Bank were more involved with infrastructure than we were. The Aswan Dam, if you will, of President Balaguer was a dam--the Tavera Dam--that was supposed to solve all of the Dominican Republic's economic problems. It was not so much an electricity generator, although it did some of that, but it was very useful for irrigation. But it did not solve all of the Dominican Republic's problems, although it did lead to a memorable humorous moment that is very instructive about what the reality of Dominican leadership was. There was a signing ceremony for the kickoff of the construction of the dam. By now, I think, we're in '67, possibly '68. A high-level delegation came down from Washington. That included the then Under Secretary of State, Nicholas Katzenbach. We were in the Johnson Administration. I was the control officer for the visit. I remember all the planning that went into it. But one of the events was a call on Balaguer. Balaguer was a highly, highly, highly centralized administrator. He looked at the books every night, looked at all of the expenditures. He worked 18 hours a day seven days a week. At one point in the conversation (I was not there, but Katzenbach reported it subsequently), Balaguer turned to Katzenbach and said, "Mr. Secretary, there's something I just cannot understand and I'd appreciate it if you could explain it to me. I work 18 hours a day seven days a week, 365 days a year, running this country. How is it possible for President Johnson to run the United States?"

Q: Did Katzenbach comment?

HARRISON: I think he laughed. I should mention that I subsequently had the opportunity to tell President Johnson that story. I'll explain the circumstances later.

Q: You did mention that you were trying to do some work in restoring democratic institutions or creating them? What were you trying to do?

HARRISON: The elections that brought Balaguer to power were held in mid-1966. In those days, we were nowhere near as intrusive in our involvement with judiciaries, legislatures, and so forth, as we are today.

We worked with youth and tried to promote the ideas of pluralism in our youth programs . We provided technical assistance and financial assistance for the elections themselves, the electoral processes. The diplomatic dialogue, which as you can imagine from our attending economic cabinet meetings, was very, very intense. We had a most able ambassador in John Crimmins, who emphasized democracy, justice, and development. But it was nothing like the programs that we knew in the late '80s and '90s in terms of promotion of democracy.

Q: Do you think these programs were effective?

HARRISON: I'm generally skeptical about programs to promote democracy in the absence of a recognition on the part of the country itself that the reason that it has not enjoyed democratic institutions has a lot to do with the values and attitudes that have been traditional in those societies. That, of course, is what has become the principal focus of my work since I retired. That's another story.

Q: We'll come back to that. Any more on the Dominican Republic at this point?

HARRISON: Alex Firfer went to Vietnam about the spring of 1968 and I became the acting director until I left in December of '68. John Robinson replaced Alex, and we had a brief overlap. I went back to the States without an assignment. There was a mystery about all this. I'd heard that there were several possible places where I would go as director and none of them materialized. I was concerned because I had had not an ideal relationship with the president of Texas A&M University, a retired Army general by the name of Rudder, who was close to Lyndon Johnson, and I was concerned that that might have worked against-

Q: You had problems with the University in this program?

HARRISON: We had some problems. They were very standoffish in their relationships with the AID mission. They wanted to have nothing to do with us. I think they felt that we were somehow stigmatized by the intervention. They saw themselves not as USAID contractors but as representatives of Texas A&M University. So, it was over that kind of issue that we had some difficulties.

I went back and visited my in-laws in California, still not knowing where we were going. I got a mysterious phone call (this was at Christmas time), saying, "Come to Washington. We can't tell you anything else about it. Just come." So, I got there and I was told that I was going to be going back to Costa Rica as the director. But the mystery was that I was the last AID director that Lyndon Johnson appointed and so I was going to meet with President Johnson at the White House. I did. What I most remember is how hard of hearing he was. I ended up screaming at him. I told him the story of Katzenbach and Balaguer. I'm not sure he heard it. But, you know, we had a pleasant conversation that lasted perhaps 15 or 20 minutes.

Q: Did he make any special points?

HARRISON: No, he just said something like, "I'm very pleased that we're sending you after the Dominican experience to Costa Rica. You are my last mission director and I wanted to wish you personally the best of luck."

Q: Why were you the last mission director?

HARRISON: Because he was going out of office. It was 1968. He didn't run again and coming in was Richard Nixon.

Q: It's interesting that he would have thought that was important.

HARRISON: I agree with you.

Q: But you didn't get any sense of why, what was-

HARRISON: I think it may have had to do with his satisfaction over the outcome of the Dominican episode.

Q: I see. So, he was recognizing that you had been an important part of that, I guess?

HARRISON: Yes, probably something like that.

Q: Well, that's interesting. Any other observations on that meeting with him at all? Other people in the room at the same time?

HARRISON: No, it was just the two of us, as I recall.

Q: I see.

HARRISON: There was a photographer and a picture was taken (he subsequently signed it for me), and that was it.

DAVID E. SIMCOX
Political Officer
Santo Domingo (1966-1967)

Mr. Simcox was born on November 25, 1932 in Frankfort, Kentucky. He received his BA from the University of Kentucky in 1956. He joined the Foreign Service in 1956 and has served in many countries throughout his career including Mexico, the Dominican Republic, Panama, Ghana, Spain, Brazil, and El Salvador. Mr. Simcox was interviewed by Kristin Hamblin on August 26, 1993.

Q: After Panama you moved on to the Dominican Republic and were the political officer in the Embassy in Santo Domingo from June, 1966, to June, 1967. What was the relationship between the United States and the Dominican Republic at that time?

SIMCOX: There was a serious insurrection there in April, 1965--virtually a civil war. We sent in 22,000 troops, in effect, to establish order and take over the administration of the country. It started out as a unilateral, American intervention, but it was ultimately "blessed" by the Organization of American States [OAS]. Four or five other members of the OAS nations also sent troops to constitute an OAS peace force. Most of the soldiers were limited to the city of Santo Domingo because the rest of the country was quiet.

There was a government in power headed by a man named Garcia Godoy. He worked closely with the OAS representatives there, including Ambassador Ellsworth Bunker, whom I got to know there. Bunker was a master at gaining people's confidence and imposing a sense of trust and serenity in very tense situations like this. So it was almost like being--not so much as a representative to a sovereign foreign country but as a pro-consul, a civilian, political officer under an army of occupation. Perhaps that sounds a bit extreme.

Q: What was your job then?

SIMCOX: Well, our job was principally a reporting job, showing the flag, and trying to influence all of the politicians of the democratic parties to work together to try to develop a government that could take over from the interim government--a truly elected government. So some of us worked with the Democratic Revolutionary Party under Juan Bosch. My assignment was to work with him and his group to try to encourage them to participate fully in democratic elections. Others worked with the "Reformista Party" under Doctor Balaguer. Well, they had the elections, and Doctor Balaguer won in a landslide. Juan Bosch, who had been elected President before and been expelled by the [Dominican] military, was badly defeated. There was a good deal of concern on our part that he would call on his followers to rise up and claim that the elections were fraudulent. However, in effect, he "swallowed" the election outcome. Balaguer became President and served for four years and then for an additional four years. I think that, altogether, he spent 12 years or more as President. He was a very mild mannered, strange man, seemingly almost timid, a poet. He never married. He lived at home with his mother. But he ruled that country with efficiency.

JOHN HUGH CRIMMINS
Ambassador
Dominican Republic (1966-1969)

Ambassador Crimmins was born on November 26, 1919 in Massachusetts. He received his BA from Harvard University in 1941. He served in the U.S. Army as a 2nd lieutenant of artillery from 1941 to 1946. Upon joining the Foreign Service in 1955, he served in many countries throughout his career including Mexico, Cuba, the Dominican Republic, and Brazil. Ambassador Crimmins was interviewed by Ashley Hewitt, Jr. on May 10, 1989.

Q: We are still on the Dominican Republic. I think it would be useful to jump ahead now to your own period as ambassador.

CRIMMINS: I went down with the specific task of picking up the pieces and, as part of that, reestablishing communications with the constitutionalists, who, in many respects, were the bright hope of the future. There were a lot of young technical people who had been constitutionalists and who were important to, let's say, the development of the Dominican Republic. I got there in January 1966.

Q: Were any of the troops still there?

CRIMMINS: Yes, the troops were there until September of '66.

Q: Both US troops and the multilateral troops?

CRIMMINS: Yes, the Brazilians and the Paraguayans, Costa Ricans.

Q: Panamanians?

CRIMMINS: Were there Panamanians? They were all still there at that time.

Q: To interject a personal thing, was General Braga still there?

CRIMMINS: Braga was still there.

Q: He was a great friend of mine when I was in Brazil.

CRIMMINS: Braga had taken over from the primitive--oh, dear. I thought I'd never forget his name, the one who considered Ellsworth Bunker to be a communist. Really!

Q: That says something about the mentality of the Brazilians.

CRIMMINS: This is true. He considered Ellsworth to be [Spanish phrase, phonetically inesencial uchio]. And Braga took his place. I want to say Olympio, but it wasn't Olympio. Anyway, he was the hard-liner, the simplistic type who looked upon all constitutionalists as reds. I mean, just by definition, communists. He was still there.

Of course, I made all my calls. I went down as DCM because the desire was that Tap would leave at a quiet moment, because there was concern that if he left in the middle of a crisis, this would reflect on him, but more importantly on the judgment of the White House, etc., etc., etc. It got a little sticky because I had my own DCM coming, Frank Divine, who arrived two weeks after I did. We made him a special assistant to the ambassador. He went to live with his wife and kids in the DCM house. I was staying in the guest wing of the residence, and there were all sorts of rumors about this. Given LBJ's temperament, it was impossible to acknowledge anything. (Laughter) So there were all sorts of white lies told about all of this arrangement.

I took over in April. From a substantive point of view, at that time [Hector] Garcia-Godoy was the provisional president, the head of the provisional government, and I had enormous respect for Hector Garcia-Godoy.

Q: What kind of person was he?

CRIMMINS: I used to describe him as the only modern political figure in the Dominican Republic. He was very well connected, came from a very good family, married well, had been, if I recall correctly, in the diplomatic service, but had a subtle mind and all the right instincts, I thought, and carried out a very delicate tight-rope act, caught between the pressures from us and the OAS, mostly us, and then the Dominican realities, the right to center and left in the Dominican Republic.

I found, when I got there, that there was a very strong bias against Garcia-Godoy in the embassy. I was in an awkward position, because, as DCM, I was reading and approving telegrams, and I

didn't agree with the line that the embassy had been taking with respect to Garcia-Godoy, that he was weak and soft and really not very reliable.

Q: Who was political counselor at this point?

CRIMMINS: Jack Wilson. But Tap was very much involved in this. Tap was very good. Tap's feelings were hurt in this period. But anyway, I sort of would call people in and talk about this, and I thought Garcia-Godoy was doing a phenomenal job in the face of great difficulties. As it happened. Ellsworth Bunker agreed with that. In fact, he made a very graceful speech when he was leaving, about how he had misgivings about some of the decisions that Garcia-Godoy had taken or failed to take, and he said, "In every case, you were right and I was wrong," which was a very generous act on his part, but typical of Ellsworth. I have great regard for Ellsworth. We were very close.

Q: As everybody knows who has worked for him.

CRIMMINS: When the Secretary had given me my oral instructions, he said to me, "John, one thing I want you to know is . . ." Well, he sort of suggested that relations hadn't been good between Ellsworth and Tap. He said, "I know it's difficult. You'll be the chargé and maybe the ambassador." I want to come back to that point in a minute. "But I want you to know that if there's any difference between you and Ellsworth, Ellsworth is going to win every time." (Laughter) In other words, "We would support Ellsworth." I said, "I don't foresee any differences, but I get the message." And we never did. We were extremely compatible in every way, and we saw an awful lot of one another. He used to come in and out, be in for a week or ten days, and I guess we had lunch or dinner every day while I was there.

Q: What was the agency doing there at this time, and what was the military doing? What were your relations like with them?

CRIMMINS: First the agency. This was 1966. The agency was still more or less in its social justice phase, with the Cord Meyer effort. They had some people there that had been trained in the Costa Rican school, and they were preparing for the election. Basically, they were collecting information, and there was a lot of maneuvering going on.

Q: But the agency and the embassy weren't at odds on policy at all?

CRIMMINS: No, no. No, no.

Q: That happens later.

CRIMMINS: Yes. David Phillips was the station chief, and Jim Flannery was his deputy. I had a terribly high regard for Dave Phillips, who was invaluable, really, and who was a very good, straight-shooting guy, as was Flannery. So I had no problems with the agency at all.

One of the things they, of course, were particularly interested in was Bosch's security. This is before the elections of June 1966, and Bosch was Balaguer were the candidates. Bosch felt that

he couldn't campaign publicly because of threats against him, and I was always of two minds about that. I hoped that he would get out, but could understand why he wouldn't, because nobody could guarantee that there wouldn't be people taking potshots at him. We provided close-in security for him often. He would call me when he would be alarmed about something, and we would reinforce the guards around his place, or something like that.

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Q: We were discussing the Dominican Republic and you as chargé, then ambassador, and your relations with the American military and with the Dominican military, which were, of course, critical, also, in the situation that prevailed.

CRIMMINS: With respect to the agency, there was never any policy difference between the embassy and the agency, or between Ellsworth and the agency. They were disciplined and responsive, and I'm absolutely satisfied that no actions were undertaken by the agency that we had not been approved in Washington and by us in the Dominican Republic.

With respect to the military, I inherited a couple of attachés who were extremely biased against the constitutionalists, in favor of the hard-liner military, and who were very skeptical of Garcia-Godoy and his attitudes. They left in good time. I was counterbalancing them with an extremely able Marine colonel who was head of the MAAG, military assistance and advisory group, a fellow named Joslyn. Van was a pillar of strength, extremely responsive to direction, absolutely reliable. The two attachés who were, let's say--I hate to use the word "unreliable," but needed supervision. Let's put it that way. Needed close supervision. They had their tours ended, and they left quickly and their replacements were much more open-minded, much broader-gauged. Of course, the situation had changed. The tensions were reduced. The elections were held.

Is that enough about the military?

Q: Yes.

CRIMMINS: The Dominican military were a continuing problem, because there was disaffection within the military and there were constant alarms and excursions about plots against Garcia-Godoy, and then after Balaguer's election, even against Balaguer, even though Balaguer had been close to many of the military in the Trujillo period.

One of the great, great disappointments with respect to the Dominican military was our inability to modernize the military and to help, let's say, in the fading away, through retirement, attrition, in general, of the troglodytes. This was only partly successful. But to go back to the alarms and excursions that I referred to, there were varying intensities to these alarms and excursions. A couple of times they were very serious. One involved Elias Wesson, who now is Balaguer's secretary of defense. Wesson was clearly plotting against Balaguer, and we helped scotch that. Another plot was emerging from the Air Force, I think the Air Force chief of staff.

To illustrate what the relationships were, I invited all the senior military to lunch one day in the middle of these rumors. The particular object was this full colonel who was the chief of staff,

who, it turned out, was a great baseball fan. When we were having treats, we were talking statistics about home runs in the dead-ball period and the live-ball period, that kind of thing. (Laughter) Then at the lunch, I offered a toast to President Balaguer, full of our support to President Balaguer, in effect, against all threats, foreign and domestic, civil and military, and that sort of thing. Well, it worked. The guy was eventually eased out and given some other job somewhere without any elements of strength to it. But it was a constant--well, it faded after '67, I guess. I was there from '66 to '69.

The principal effort post-election was the development of the Dominican Republic. We had an enormous AID mission and an enormous AID program, enormous in terms of the size of the country.

Q: Except for the Brazil experience, your previous experience had been largely political.

CRIMMINS: That's right.

Q: Did you feel that you were prepared to manage an effort of that size?

CRIMMINS: I did.

Q: Were there problems getting it up to speed?

CRIMMINS: I had very good people. Morrie Taylor was my economic counselor, and Alex Fourfur was my AID mission director, and Larry Harrison was his deputy. They were very, very good. Morrie had been a Treasury attaché, was a very well-trained economist, and was a first-class instructor for me. Larry Harrison was good, too.

Q: Both Alex Fourfur and Harrison were highly operational types.

CRIMMINS: That's right. I never had any problems with it. Let me say this. This is going to sound self-serving, but one of the basic points about policy and the execution of policy in what you call the trenches that impressed me enormously when I became chargé and chief of mission was the power of the ambassador in the field. It's really enormous. Enormous. I mean, people complain about diplomacy over the heads of the ambassadors and that, to a degree, is true. It depends on the region. I think it's more true in Europe than it is in Latin America. But I think any ambassador worth his salt has no excuse for not being able to run a cohesive, tight operation and to keep potential freelancers in line. The basic letters still remain the same.

Q: Even considering the existence of the back channels and all that?

CRIMMINS: That's right. Yes, I do. I think that the back channels can be monitored and, of course, you have to impress yourself upon the operators of the back channel that you won't brook--

Q: As you said earlier, you have to know the right questions to ask.

CRIMMINS: That's right. That's right, and more in the field, Ashley. In my experience, a chief of station, for example, who does not level with an ambassador would be replaced immediately. I wouldn't stand for this. This is the difference, you see. Let's say an assistant secretary in ARA doesn't have one-tenth of the operational power with respect to other agencies that an ambassador in the field does. I'm not trying to equate the two in terms of function or constitutional authority, but in terms of day-to-day operations, an ambassador has a mandate in terms of the 1962 letter, that provides the opportunity for him to exercise every necessary control.

Now, in the case of Chile, just to run ahead, Ed Korry was kept in the dark about track two, just the way Charlie Meyer and I and Alex Johnson and Secretary Rogers were. This kind of thing. These are exceptional circumstances. They're in straight line with the Bobby Kennedy, Dez Fitzgerald kind of thing we saw, and the Nixon-Chile thing and then Ollie North business, part of a chain of history.

Q: Sort of a transcendental track two.

CRIMMINS: That's right. In my experience, I have never run into a situation in the field, even the Dominican Republic or Brazil, as chief of mission, ambassador, that I did not feel that I was capable of ascertaining the answer to any question that I put, and, moreover, was the beneficiary of candor on the part of potentially maverick elements of the embassy. There was one attaché in Brazil that went off the deep end, but that was a special case.

To go back to the Dominican Republic, the relations with the US military and the agency, I told you about. With respect to the Dominican Republic, I touched on our relationship with the Dominican military, a relationship that was greatly assisted by the very fine work of Van Joslyn, the Marine colonel who was the head of the MAAG, who had a particularly effective relationship with the Secretary of Defense, Peres C. Peres, and who was an absolutely faithful executor of tasks that were put to him by me and by Frank Divine as the DCM and the chargé when I was in there.

So you had the elections. The development effort was central during the rest of the period. I had very good people, had a huge staff. We started to cut it down right away after the elections. By the time I left in '69, it was probably half of the size that it started. Just to illustrate the problem, when I took over, there were 26 legal attachés in the embassy, FBI types. (Laughter) They were very happy. They were down to two in a couple of months, and down to one very shortly thereafter. They were happy. They were sent when LBJ was desperate for information about what was going on in the Dominican Republic.

To continue with the development thing, not only were we providing funds into the AID program, but we were giving the Dominican Republic special treatment on the sugar quotas. This was a hard fight with Washington on the sugar quotas, particularly. It was easy to get AID money, which was slow disbursing, but the sugar money was right there. We had a tremendous fight in Washington--Linc Gordon, particularly--on devaluation of the Dominican peso.

Q: Did Washington oppose it?

CRIMMINS: No, wanted it. Insisting on it.

Q: The mission opposing it.

CRIMMINS: The mission opposing it. We won out, but it was a very hard-fought issue.

Q: Why did you oppose it? On the grounds that it really wouldn't do that much?

CRIMMINS: On two grounds. The first one was political. This goes back to Dominican history. Trujillo, shortly after he took power, regained control of customs revenues. In the "20s, the peso had dropped from par and there were terrible troubles and political troubles, and this was imbedded in the Dominican psyche that if the peso were not at par with the dollar, then everything was going to collapse.

Balaguer and his economic advisors, such as they were, were convinced--totally convinced--that the government would collapse if they devalued the peso. We agreed with that. We agreed that that was probably a 60-40 probability. I was very given, in my career, as you may remember, to specific percentage figures for chances. (Laughter)

Q: I do remember.

CRIMMINS: Economically, Morrie Taylor and the AID program office, which had a group of economists, too, argued that the benefits of devaluation were theoretical, that the disequilibrium was so fundamental as it appeared--and we did a big, big, big, huge effort in this direction involving John Ferch, who was consul in Santiago de los Caballeros in the north, and who we knew was a trained economist, so we brought him down as part of the team. He had a significant input into this effort. At the very least, we raised enough doubts among the economists in Washington about the true necessity for the devaluation, that they did not press. Balaguer used to plead with me not to press them on this. There was no vested interest in the--you know, it was visceral and instinctive and very, very real. Very, very real.

So then there were alarms and excursions, as I said, about coups.

Q: Let's move on with the time we have left today, John, to the question that we touched on a little bit when the machine wasn't on, and that was that the whole Dominican experience was a major success for you as foreign policy, as it is sometimes viewed as being in popular mythology, and whether it was a success for the Dominican Republic itself. Where do you come down on this?

CRIMMINS: In the first place, with respect to the Dominican Republic itself, on its face, the evolution suggests that it was successful, that there was an election and that Balaguer stayed. In the successive administrations of Balaguer, there were human rights accusations made against him, about which I really don't have first-hand information. But anyway, there was an election. Then eventually, in '78, of course, there was the election of [Antonio] Guzmán and a transfer of

power, under considerable pressure, I understand, from Washington, specifically President Carter.

Q: I was personally involved with that, because I was Director of Caribbean Affairs.

CRIMMINS: That's right. Did Carter actually call Balaguer?

Q: Yes.

CRIMMINS: I thought so. That was a great operation, incidentally. I had retired then. This was in August of '78?

Q: '78, yes.

CRIMMINS: I had retired earlier in the year. So congratulations.

Q: Following up your good work.

CRIMMINS: Anyway, the question that you never can answer, this was an "if Lincoln hadn't been shot" kind of thing, the question is: would this have been substantially different if Bosch had not been overthrown or if Bosch had won the election? If Bosch had not been overthrown, if the intervention had not occurred and Bosch had been restored as president, there would have been bloodshed, continuing bloodshed, and that is a plus. The bloodshed was stopped--or minimized, anyway. That's always good and, I think, sometimes lost sight of, but stopping the killing is always good.

You can't answer the question of what would have happened if there had been no intervention. At that time, I did not consider Bosch to be an extreme leftist at all. He was a very difficult, difficult guy, and I had dealt with him in '61 and '62 when I was running Caribbean and Mexican Affairs. He was a prima donna then and not really a modern figure any more than Balaguer was a modern figure. But he would have had another left-of-center government. We have a terrible time with left-of-center governments in the Latin American policy traditionally, and we tend to exaggerate the degree of left in the left-of-center rubric.

Q: Or even what left means.

CRIMMINS: Or what left means. That's right. It's a terrible problem.

So with respect to the Dominican Republic, there were some pluses, but the question is, to my mind: did the intervention bring about this, or would it have occurred in the normal course? But to me, there was a very powerful negative in the intervention, and that is the reaction in other parts of Latin America to it.

Q: "Here we go again."

CRIMMINS: Yes. "Here we go again." To me, the Dominican intervention of 1965, in effect, removed the OAS as a potential useful instrument of US policy, because there was an unspoken--in some places, spoken--Latin American attitude, "Never again are we going to be caught in this trap, and never again are we going to validate a US intervention after it's occurred," which is what the OAS, in effect, did.

Q: It did it for the second time, because it really did it in the case of Cuba, too, in the missile crisis.

CRIMMINS: The missile crisis was, let's say, a clear and present danger. This was a very fuzzy, fuzzy thing. I guess I've said this before, that I didn't believe that there was a threat from the left.

Q: From Cuba.

CRIMMINS: From Cuba. Absolutely. Okay. That undoubtedly affects my judgment. But on the broad effects with respect to policy toward Latin America, I think were totally negative--totally negative. The fact that there was absolutely no hope for the Vance initiative--I guess it was '78 or '79, this idea that was floated of setting up a peace force in Nicaragua to separate the thing--it never got off the ground. I attribute this directly to the Latin American experience and reaction to the Dominican intervention, that they simply were not going to do this.

Q: Our current troubles in Panama reflect this.

CRIMMINS: Exactly! This is what I mean by the "never again" syndrome that afflicts Latin America. People have said, in meetings that I've attended, "We did this so nice and cleanly in the Dominican Republic. It was such a great success. Why don't we just do that in Nicaragua?"

Q: We did do it in Grenada.

CRIMMINS: Exactly. That, to me, was almost despicable, the Grenada thing. It's abuse of great power.

So I think that the results of the Dominican Republic are ostensibly good. The question is: would they have come about without an intervention? Would the Dominican Republic have gone downhill if the intervention hadn't occurred? I don't think that a case can be made either way, really.

Q: Conclusively.

CRIMMINS: Conclusively. On the broader international implications, I think it was pretty near disastrous, really.

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Q: John, you were talking very extensively--in fact, most of the last session--about the Dominican Republic and your experience in the Dominican Republic as DCM, chargé, then

ambassador serially and consecutively. You alluded a couple of times to Ambassador Ellsworth Bunker. I wonder if you could clarify exactly what Ambassador Bunker's role was with respect to the Department and the White House, on the one hand, in the Dominican Republic, on the other, and how you related to him in your several positions.

CRIMMINS: Ellsworth's formal position was that of ambassador to the OAS. In that capacity, he was chairman of the special committee in the Dominican Republic set up under the meeting of consultation in 1965. There were three members of that committee, one the Brazilian permanent representative, and the second was a Salvadoran, Clémon Duanius, as I remember. Ellsworth was the third member and chairman of the group. This special committee, in effect, was delegated by the meeting of consultation, who handled the Dominican problem. They were the action group. In terms of Ellsworth's responsibilities to the United States Government, Ellsworth, in effect, was the personal representative of the President. He was close to LBJ as a result of the Dominican operation. I don't think they were close before. But he was, in effect, ultimately responsible to the President in a way akin to that of a regular ambassador, but even more so.

I think perhaps the best way I could define the relationship between him and me is to say that when I was leaving for the Dominican Republic in January of '66, with the understanding that I would become chargé very shortly after I got there, Dean Rusk, the Secretary of State, told me that he wanted me to understand that if there were any differences of opinion between me and Ellsworth Bunker, Ellsworth would win. I told the Secretary that I didn't think there would be any problems and, indeed, there were none. We saw eye to eye on practically everything and had what I considered to be an excellent relationship. He didn't get involved in the operations of the embassy in any way, and with respect to the peace force, I was, of course, there all the time, and he was in and out.

When I took over in April, his role was phasing out. He was phasing out of the thing because the election was coming up, and the peace force was to leave in September. So he would come down. From April to the time of the departure of the peace force, I imagine he was down there four or five times, and he would be there for three or four days at a time, often with Harry Shlaudeman, who was sort of his special assistant, at the time.

He had been involved, of course, since the very beginning of the intervention and had been instrumental in negotiating the act of reconciliation and the institutional act, sort of the basic constitutional documents under which the provisional government operated.

Does that clarify this?

Q: Yes.

CRIMMINS: I think perhaps I should just flesh out or clarify the reference to my conversation with Dean Rusk. Rusk intimated to me, without coming out flatly and saying this, that there had been a certain amount of--"friction" is too strong a word--sort of discomfort between Ellsworth and Tap Bennett. It was very vague. His comment to me obviously was intended to forestall any such situation.

Q: Bennett was a rather flamboyant character in some ways.

CRIMMINS: Well, I wouldn't call Tap flamboyant. That's one of the last words I would call Tap. No, Tap was very correct, I would say. But anyway, okay, so much for Ellsworth. Ellsworth was a great man. I say that unreservedly.

Q: I think everybody shares that view. I certainly do, based on his work in Panama. I wasn't there at the time, but I studied it a lot. Remarkable man.

CRIMMINS: Yes.

JOHN A. FERCH
Principal Officer
Santiago de los Caballeros **(1967-1969)**

Mr. Ferch was born in Toledo, Ohio on February 6, 1936. He received his BA from Princeton University in 1958 and his MA from the University of Michigan in 1964. As a member of the Foreign Service, he served in countries including Argentina, Colombia, the Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Guatemala, Mexico, Cuba, and Honduras. Mr. Ferch was interviewed by William E. Knight on September 27, 1991.

FERCH: I was offered a post we no longer have in Peru called Arequipa. I got the post report and it mentioned that spiders were a big problem. Well, my lovely wife said no way was she going to that place. So I told them that I was not going to go to Arequipa and was going to look for another place. Someone told me about a post in the Dominican Republic called Santiago de los Caballeros, a place I previously had never heard of. We had opened this post after Trujillo had died, as a listening post, and in the fashion of all bureaucratic entities it had grown fairly large. So, I said I would like to go there, and I went there.

It was delightful. We arrived two months after the troops left and you would have thought that the tension would still be in the air. But this was a two-year Caribbean vacation. There was absolutely no tension. The people were the nicest people I have ever met at a post. They were very laid back. I joked that they had had their civic sense amputated years before by Trujillo because they gave a high priority to having a party. We enjoyed ourselves immensely.

I did a lot of independent reporting trying to prove myself as a political officer, as only young men can do. I traveled all over the north, reporting on this and that and, of course, no one really cared. I did get a commendation out of the effort, however. I guess no one had ever gone into some of those little towns. But they were smarter than I, they shouldn't have gone there. There was nothing going on of any interest to the United States at all. But I went there and it was a lot of fun.

But I knew that I had to get back into economics. So I looked around for economical postings. ARA proposed that I go as economic counselor to Quito.

LOWELL FLEISCHER
Political Officer
Santo Domingo (1968-1971)

Mr. Fleischer was born in Ohio on March 15, 1937. He received his BA from Ohio Wesleyan University in 1959 and his MA and PhD from the University of Connecticut in 1962 and 1963 respectively. As a member of the Foreign Service, he served in countries including Colombia, the Dominican Republic, Yugoslavia, and Venezuela. Mr. Fleischer was interviewed by Thomas Dunnigan on January 31, 1995.

Q: Well, at the completion of your INR tour, you went back to Latin America, to Santo Domingo. What were you doing there at the Embassy?

FLEISCHER: I was a political officer at the Embassy in Santo Domingo. That also was a very interesting tour for lots of reasons. One, I just been married. I got married while I was here in Washington. That was almost our honeymoon cruise down to Santo Domingo. In fact we did take a Grace Line ship which you could still do. I think we couldn't go to Santo Domingo by ship, but we sailed to Jamaica, then flew over from Jamaica. I remember arriving in the Dominican Republic without our luggage which had gone astray somewhere. I was a junior political officer there. This was about mid-year of 1968. The US intervention in the Dominican Republic was over by that time, but everyone was still dealing with the aftermath. The Dominican Republic is a very small country, and the US Embassy was huge. We had five State Department political officers in this little island nation. I mean, it's unbelievable, to say nothing of the number of CIA personnel. There must have been twenty. Twenty-five maybe even. I remember when my wife, who was very new to the Foreign Service, returned from a wives meeting and asked me who all those political officers were. They were all CIA people. We had an absolutely huge staff in the Embassy. The political reason behind it was that President Johnson's reputation was at stake. He'd sent all of these troops into the Dominican Republic and certainly nobody in the State Department or anywhere else wanted to have some kind of a failure to hang around his neck. So the Embassy was really oversize. You can imagine what work there was for five, FIVE political officers to do in this little island. We knew everybody and we were falling all over each other reporting on the most insignificant youth groups and meetings with people. Some of the stuff that would be in the archives back here that we reported on in those days would, I think, shock people today.

Q: Was there much anti-American sentiment then lingering from our deeds in 1965?

FLEISCHER: I guess there was, Tom, but in some ways I'm surprised that there wasn't more. Again, there were problems with some leftist groups. We'd read things in the newspapers, and there were times for example when we couldn't go across the bridge to go out to the beach

because there were anti-American demonstrations going on. But, again it was nothing really very violent. I don't think any of us ever didn't go to a restaurant or go out about town, normal sort of things. We all had very good Dominican friends. But there were lingering resentments. One of the things that I did for a while was follow the activities of the Partido Revolucionario Dominicano, which was Juan Bosch's party in those days. I knew some of the people fairly well. I remember one Senator Pablo Casimiro Castro. He only had one arm because he had been involved in some kind of skirmish and had lost part of his arm during the US intervention. But he was always willing to talk to me. Now, he didn't want to be seen with me necessarily in a public restaurant, so we would always have these clandestine meetings. I'd drive outside of town and meet him at a restaurant, or he would drive over to my house and we'd meet at the house, or something like that. The PRD in those days certainly could be classified as an anti-American party in some sense. They had opposed the US intervention, they were opposing all of the US influence in the Dominican Republic-- and there was a lot of US influence. I mentioned previously the large number of USAID people in Colombia when I was there, well it was dwarfed by the number of people we had in the tiny Dominican Republic after the US intervention. We had a whole education section for example that was housed physically in the Dominican Education Ministry. That's how intimately involved we were in running things in the Dominican Republic.

Q: What were our relations with the Balaguer government?

FLEISCHER: Our relations with the Balaguer government were very good. I thought Balaguer was an old man in those days and here he is still sitting in the same presidential office where I used to see him practically thirty years ago. We used to marvel at reports that he signed personally every check over ten thousand dollars paid by the Dominican government. I think he kept track of the entire country's budget on the back of an envelope in his pocket. I guess he wouldn't do that anymore. He really controlled every aspect of government personally. After all, he came to political maturity in the Trujillo regime and he was pretty used to having it his way. Our relations with the government were really quite good, however. The depth in ministries was pretty shallow and if you really wanted something done or find out something you had to talk to the Minister or maybe you talked to the Vice-Minister, but certainly nobody below that. No one else had any real authority. John Crimmins, who was our Ambassador when I got there, maintained excellent relationships with the whole government. I think he would be a good example of an activist US Ambassador during this period of time. I don't think anything went on in the Dominican Republic that he didn't know about. For all practical purposes, he was his own political counselor, his own AID director, etc. He knew absolutely everything that was going on and he wanted to have his hand in everything that was going on. In those days, we used to write so-called "Weekas" which were weekly summaries of events, and send them to Washington. It was not always the highest priority on everybody's list to get that thing done and it usually fell to the lowest guy on the staff, which was me, so I'd end up writing the thing. I remember spending some Saturday morning sitting with John in his office because John didn't like the way the "weeka" was written. If the report, no matter how insignificant, was going our under his name, he wanted it to reflect his opinions and his take on things.

Q: Yes, most ambassadors I know had never heard of the "weeka." It just goes on without them.

FLEISCHER: That was not the case with Ambassador Crimmins.

Q: But we also had relations with the opposition I take it from what you are telling me about your relations with the PRD?

FLEISCHER: Yes, we did, and as time went on while we were there, those relations got a little bit better. I can remember having affairs at my home when opposition politicians would actually come. I think during that time our relations with the opposition did count. We were always very prompt to follow up coup rumors and that sort of thing. I can remember many a night going out trying to find somebody in the PRD, or somebody in the Social Christian Party which was another opposition party in those days. It has since merged with the official party and it's all one now, but there was a separate Social Christian Party then. And putting out the word, you know, that the United States was unalterably opposed to any undemocratic change of government had its effect. The Military Attachés as well as those in the Milgroup were quite busy trying to build up relations with the general staff as well other officers as low as second lieutenant. The military was still a pretty strong and influential outfit. But we certainly had the staff in the Embassy to try to find out what was going on.

Q: You were there during that rather bitter election campaign they had in 1970?

FLEISCHER: I was indeed. And it was a bitter election campaign. All of us spent a lot of time out in those days just trying to figure out what was going on and who was going to do what to whom during that campaign. We set up a headquarters back in the Ambassador's office and we followed things very closely.

It was a very bitter campaign and the United States became part of that obviously. It would have been hard not to have been a part of it. But I think the Embassy came out of that fairly well. John Crimmins by that time was back in Washington as the Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary for Inter-American Affairs. He had been replaced by Frank Malloy. It was Frank's first ambassadorial appointment. He had been the DCM in Rome just before being named ambassador to the Dominican Republic. He was a consummate professional. He was determined that the staff should go out to gather information about what was happening, but that we should not become part of the campaign. Eventually Jack Crowley, who eventually replaced you at USOAS, arrived as DCM. Frank Devine had been John Crimmins's DCM. So again two highly rated professionals who later on went to become ambassadors in their own right. So I think for the most part we were able to keep the Embassy as big, as influential, and as meddling if I may be so blunt as to use that phrase as the Embassy was during that election campaign. We at least were able to keep ourselves from becoming an issue.

Q: Let me ask one final question with regard to the Dominican Republic. Looking back on it, when you were there, was there a feeling that intervention in '65 was necessary, worthwhile or did it do more harm than good?

FLEISCHER: I'm sure Tom you will find people who will say it did more harm than good, but the judgment of people I knew then, and the Dominicans with whom I have kept in contact over the years since then, is more positive than that. I know an awful lot of Dominicans who are

convinced that because of the US intervention, the Dominican Republic is a more viable political entity today than it would have been had an all out civil war developed without US intervention. Now there are some died-hard partisans -- Juan Bosch for example would never obviously agree to that; neither would Pena Gomez who was the PRD candidate in this last election and who some analysts think actually beat Balaguer but was cheated out of his rightful election victory. There are people like that, activists who are convinced that the US intervention should not have taken place and did more harm than good. I don't know that given the climate today that we end up doing the same thing in such a small island again. I cannot imagine the American people tolerating the same kind of intervention in Haiti today, no matter what the problem there.

LAWRENCE P. TAYLOR
Consular/Political Officer
Santo Domingo (1969-1971)

Ambassador Taylor was born on April 18, 1940 in Ohio. He received his AB from Ohio University in 1963 and his MA from American University in 1969. His career has included positions in the Dominican Republic, Yugoslavia, Indonesia, Canada, England, and Estonia. Ambassador Taylor was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy on April 10, 1998.

Q: *What happened when you got out, finished the course?*

TAYLOR: Finished the A-100 course? Like every A-100 course, you're in a magical world there, somewhat of your own imagination, in the A-100 course. When you're out, hey, you've got to get to post. You've got to prepare to get to post. You've got an assignment. You're the low person on the totem pole. You've got to worry about practical things all of a sudden. Vietnam's very far away. I'm not going there. I'm going to the Dominican Republic. And so I've got a wife; I've got a child; I've got to go do a brand-new job. And so that's where my focus moved to in the end.

Q: *Had you asked for Latin America?*

TAYLOR: I had asked for Latin America, that's right.

Q: *And so you were going to the Dominican Republic.*

TAYLOR: I went to the Dominican Republic.

Q: *Well, when you went out to the Dominican Republic, can you describe the situation in the Dominican Republic at that time, because this was still an interesting time.*

TAYLOR: It was a fascinating time, yes. What surprised me was how much the country and the embassy still lived in the shadow of 1965 and the U.S. intervention.

Q: *Explain what happened in 1965.*

TAYLOR: Well, President Johnson decided that political events on the island necessitated an American intervention, and he sent military forces to restore the government. I think it was President Balaguer at the time. It turns out, of course, that the personalities of 1969, 70, and 71, and even 10 years later, were still the same personalities. They just never seemed to go away, Balaguer and Juan Bosch. Balaguer - for all I know, he's going to be president again.

Q: *He's still going.*

TAYLOR: It's endless, right. But what really surprised me was that there were very large sections of the embassy who had come in 1965 and 66 on temporary duty, who didn't seem like they were planning on leaving any time soon, although their mission seemed to have gone away years earlier. I'm thinking in terms of, well, the FBI still had a very large presence there, although they weren't certain what they were... They were certainly enjoying their time there. You know, here you have an island and a system that was still very much thought of, and maybe somewhat legitimately, as being another potential Cuba.

Q: *Wow.*

TAYLOR: And great many social problems, agrarian problems, class problems, income problems, education problems, all festering around in an environment in which the Cuban Revolution was riding fairly high - at least the philosophy and ideology and image of it were. And when you traveled around the country you could sense that and you could feel it, and it seemed to be the question of peaceful evolution or violent revolution, and the question of violent revolution's connection to international Communism was thinking that dominated the American presence in the Dominican Republic at the time.

Q: *I found it interesting, looking at the map you see this little appendage called Haiti sticking out there.*

TAYLOR: Yes, there it is.

Q: *It seems to be completely two different worlds. Was there any spillover?*

TAYLOR: Yes, but maybe you would expect. I was going to say, *not* what you would expect. The spillover is basically in illegal activities, in smuggling and black marketing and the bringing in of Haitian labor for sugar cane cutting season, even though it's not supposed to be brought in. And the normal relations between the countries didn't exist, but this kind of black market and illicit exchanges did exist and were carefully controlled by the authorities on both sides to serve their own interests and to be sure they stayed under control.

Q: *Who was our ambassador when you were there.*

TAYLOR: The Ambassador when I arrived was Frank Meloy, Francis Meloy.

Q: *Who later was killed in -*

TAYLOR: Later killed in Lebanon, right.

Q: *How did he operate, or are we to know?*

TAYLOR: Well, he took a great deal of interest in the junior officers. There were a lot of junior officers in the Dominican Republic, and I must say that we probably had as close a relationship with him as anybody I knew. It was all up to him. We didn't know what to do. But he had us all over as groups and as individuals constantly. He included us in so many of the social functions, and he met with us individually and in groups on a regular basis. Goodness, I thought that's what ambassadors were supposed to do. It was only later that I learned that hardly anybody ever did that. So the junior officers in the Dominican Republic had a pretty good relationship and a pretty close relationship with him.

Q: *How did you find your wife reacted to all this? Had she been primed for this before, or was she, as most of the wives do, they come out and all of a sudden, whamo, they're hit in the head with this thing.*

TAYLOR: Well, they're hit in the head with it, and I mean, Linda's great. She's a trouper. The government got two for one for close to 30 years from us. I don't know whether the government gets that any more, or should, or maybe even should have in our case, but in any event, she is a real trouper. But over time, you realize that the real burden of Foreign Service life falls on the spouse and on the family. The officer has a job, has a niche, has a set of expectations, has a set of relationships into which to step and to begin immediately. And the spouse, at least in those days, is dropped off in a strange culture, in a strange house, and said, "Good luck" - no car, no money, just "Good luck." We assume you're going to be happy and successful, and we'll see you in six months or something. And they have to really, then, start from scratch and do it all themselves. Fortunately, I had a spouse who was pretty good at that, pretty flexible, not a whiner and a complainer, and when problems developed, just solved them and went forward.

Q: *Well, now, what was your job when you first arrived?*

TAYLOR: When I first arrived, this is very interesting, actually, because they had a new consul general. They had a horrible consular situation there, horrible consular situation, not just in the press of the business, not just in the incidence of fraud, but it was simply totally out of control. Americans did not even control the Consular Section. Mob chaos controlled it. It was totally out of control. And the new consul general, John Diggins - I remember him so well - John Diggins decided that the way to deal with this situation was to have the Ambassador send over all the new junior officers and we were going to have a whole new approach to consular work. And he convinced the Ambassador to do that. None of us wanted to work in the Consular Section, but we all went over, and John Diggins did a great job of leadership, both with respect to his vision about how to take control of the consular situation, but also with his sensitivity to the fact that none of us wished to be there. None of us thought we were going to a consular assignment, and he reached out to each of us personally and to our families and made us feel part of a real team in trying to get on top of this problem. And again, just like with Ambassador Malloy, those of us

who were there got off to a lucky start, to be exposed to real leadership and not sort of bureaucratic fumbling, which could have been just as easy in other places, right from the beginning.

Q: *Well, what was the problem in the Consular Section?*

TAYLOR: The problem in the Consular Section was that virtually everybody on the island wanted to go to the United States, and virtually no one could meet the requirements of U.S. law. And so every day the Consular Section was besieged with hundreds and hundreds of people waiting in line, surrounding the section - it was in a separate building from the embassy - trying to get a visa in one way or another. And the waiting room had become in total control of the mob, of the applicants, and the space of control for the consular officers was about the space of this desk, looking out over a waiting room that was just seething with applicants holding fraudulent documents, trying to bribe you, trying any way they could to get to the United States. And so all of that had to be brought under some sort of reasonable control, new management procedures and interviewing procedures and crowd control procedures had to be put in place, and the whole thing just needed about eight step-ups of professionalization. It was just a disgrace. It was a disgrace to the United States, but it was a disgrace to the Dominican Republic and the applicants that we created a situation that allowed that to happen. It was our responsibility to straighten it out, and John Diggins saw that, and he did it.

Q: *Had it been like that for some time?*

TAYLOR: Yes, it had been like that for a long time?

Q: *Well, how did he go about it? Can you tell his -*

TAYLOR: Well, first he brought in new people. He wanted new people who hadn't been associated with how it had been. Then he redesigned, physically redesigned the space, moved all the applicants out of what had formerly been their waiting room, and built in, then, waiting and intermediate procedures, where one registered and then went to another station and so forth, finally ended up with an interviewing technique, and to some extent built in an assembly-line procedure, because what was happening is that at eight o'clock every morning there were several hundred applicants, and at five o'clock in the afternoon, when we closed exhausted, there were still several hundred applicants. It just was overwhelming. And he built in this assembly-line technique of a while, through this staging process, that not only kept it under control, but expedited the movement through the system. And we did that for a week. You know, it was very controversial. The Ambassador questioned whether this was treating the applicants correctly or not. We were maybe too much like an assembly line and not enough like a personal interview. But I'll tell you, it was a brilliant thing, because in a week we broke the back of that crowd. We didn't know what the numbers would be, but in a week we ran so many people through that system, that the next day there were only about 10 people waiting. And then the crowds built up during the day. By 5 o'clock there wasn't anybody left, and we could go back, then, to actually under the new procedures, with the new control systems and so forth, we could go back to interviewing people like people, so that week of breaking the back of that overhang of numbers

was absolutely essential to getting to the point where we could interview people in a more civilized way.

Q: *But essentially you were refusing most of the people, is that right?*

TAYLOR: Yes, 99 percent of them.

Q: *How did you keep them from coming back?*

TAYLOR: We started to have to mark their passports. Instead of just returning them without a visa, we marked them as having been reviewed for a visa. I should tell you also that one of the great - probably not a surprise - one of the great difficulties, complexities of the situation was that so many of our Foreign Service colleagues in the Political Section would send over their friends for a visa, although their friends seemed not the least bit qualified to go, which always led then to great difficulties within the embassy, as these things got kicked upstairs. But you know, what happened was, it wasn't really their friends. Their friends were qualified. It turned out to be the niece of the cousin of the maid of their friends who actually showed up, and they just weren't remotely qualified. But some of these things had to go to the Ambassador to be resolved. You probably know about that.

Q: *How did you find the Foreign Service national?*

TAYLOR: I thought the Foreign Service nationals were very good. I liked them. They did an immense amount of work. I thought they were honest, but unfortunately a couple of years later they were fired for visa fraud, so I think I learned a lot of lessons from that. And I think one of the most important lessons is how much we rely on Foreign Service nationals and how much we have to rely on their integrity, and that to have that, to have that commitment from them, to have that integrity in an environment where they're subject to all sorts of other pressures, it's very important that the American supervisors make them real members of the team. If all they do is treat them like hired hands for six or seven hours a day, then these other pressures that are on them can win. I think it's very important that they be made to feel that they are recognized as real members of the team and that they are appreciated as real members of the team if we are to retain that support and integrity that we need.

Q: *Were you doing consular work the whole time?*

TAYLOR: *No*, by the grace of the Ambassador, I got into the Political Section after a year.

Q: *You were saying, there was this Balaguer or something?*

TAYLOR: Balaguer and Juan Bosch.

Q: *And I think, at least Bosch I guess is blind, but he's still doddering around.*

TAYLOR: I can't believe it - that's Balaguer, I think. I think Bosch has passed away. I'm not sure. Yes, that's Balaguer.

Q: *But was there a sort of a reappraisal by the time you got to the political section about how threatening Cuba was at that time, and even before, in '65, or was Cuba still a major concern.*

TAYLOR: Cuba was still a major concern, although I don't think anyone felt it constituted an immediate threat to the Dominican Republic or to American interests in the Dominican Republic. And I think there was a tremendous awareness throughout the embassy of the importance of growth and development of employment and of peaceful change, land reform and so forth, to producing the kind of system that would have stability and staying power without violent revolution.

Q: *What were you doing as a political officer?*

TAYLOR: Well, you know, I was doing what you would probably expect, a lot of whatever drops to the bottom, but then in terms of my substantive responsibilities, consistent with my Peace Corps experience and the fact that I liked to out of the embassy and in the countryside meeting people and actually seeing what's going on, I did follow the role of the Church in the Dominican Republic, and I followed agrarian reform and kind of peasant movements in the countryside and local politics outside of the capital, in the interior towns and cities, tried to keep my finger on the pulse of what was, you know, moving politics at that moment.

Q: *Well, how did you find the political system worked? Were there, as in other Latin American countries, you know, the ten families who run things or not, or was this a different breed of cat?*

TAYLOR: Well, it was a slightly different breed of cat. It certainly had the oligarchy and the tip of the iceberg, but it was a country that, again, had just emerged from the very long rule of the Trujillo family, and that period still cast an influence over the whole system. It was a system that was trying to find its legs, in terms of trying to become more democratic and more participatory, but it was a system that had been used to moving on patronage, on a kind of feudal benevolence from powerful patrons and so forth, and so the parties tended to organize themselves along that fashion and distribute goodies to sort of buy votes in that sense.

Q: *Well, how did you adjust? Here you'd been in Colombia where, all power to the people, and you're out, you understand what the real people want, when you're in the Peace Corps and all, and here you are with the embassy and you're getting out in the countryside and all - I mean, was it a little hard to adjust to being as an American official and all that?*

TAYLOR: No, I didn't find it difficult. Maybe it's because some years had passed. I didn't move directly from the Peace Corps to this role. But also, I think, some credit to the leadership of the embassy, which seemed to be big enough, in an intellectual sense, to have room for all sorts of view points and perspectives, and I never felt that the kind of perspective that I tried to introduce into understanding the Dominican political system and how U.S. interests played in all of that, I always found that people welcomed the thing, and what they did with it, that may be a different story, but nobody ever sort of say, you know, we don't like that.

Q: *What about the Catholic Church? What role were they playing there?*

TAYLOR: Well, you know, a mixed one. You had some very traditional members of the institution who lined up as you would think, and at the same time you had some local priests who were borderline revolutionaries, quite frankly, in terms of the agenda that they were pushing at the grassroots level, in terms of land reform, peasant rights, community development, and this sort of thing, and those were the priests that I got to know quite well. Again, it was, I think, easier for me, being that age and coming out of a Peace Corps background, to have relationships with them and for them to have some confidence that I was a person they could deal with and talk with. So in a sense the embassy actually slotted me in exactly the role that I could be most effective in.

Q: *Did you find that, by and large, the political section and the economic section, the more senior officers were captured by the oligarchy or the wealthier people, as so often happens?*

TAYLOR: Not in the Political Section at all. I think the Political Section had a very broad view of what was going on in the Dominican Republic and had good contacts in all segments of the society.

Q: *Obviously you're pretty far down the feeding chain -*

TAYLOR: Right at the bottom.

Q: *-but '69 was the arrival of Richard Nixon with his deputy, Henry Kissinger, on the scene. Was there any feel that you were getting from more senior officers that there was a difference?*

TAYLOR: Yes, but I didn't see it. There was no question the more senior officers were talking about Latin America being left out. It didn't fit into Kissinger's world view; it wasn't one of Nixon's priorities. You know, he had a rough time in Latin America in his history.

Q: *He was spat upon*.

TAYLOR: And that may be true in some glorified policy sense back here in Washington, but I never saw it affect anything practical that I worked on or that the people I knew worked on. But I took that on board, and I thought it was probably true in a certain way, but I didn't see it affect my work.

Q: *During this '69-71 period, were there any developments in the Dominican Republic - earthquakes, wars, disasters, Presidential visits, or what have you?*

TAYLOR: There was a major plane crash outside of Santo Domingo. That was the closest thing to the kind of event you're talking about.

Q: *Did you get involved in that?*

TAYLOR: Very much so. The whole embassy got involved. The Ambassador formed a crisis team immediately. There were American citizens on the plane, so the Consular Section was very

deeply involved. There was some concern that the crash may have been a terrorist act, at least at first. It turned out not to be the case. But we worked day and night for two days, about 48 hours straight, until the authorities and the system got on top of that, and then after it, all of us who spoke reasonably decent Spanish spent a lot of time canvassing all of the hotels where American citizens might have stayed in order to help identify people who were on the plane or not on the plane at the time, because the passenger list was incomplete and inaccurate.

JOHN T. BENNETT
Deputy Director, USAID
Santo Domingo (1969-1972)

Mr. Bennett was born on January 21, 1929 in Wisconsin. He received his BA from Harvard University in 1950 and his MS and PhD from the University of California-Berkley in 1952 and 1958 respectively. His career has included positions in Tunisia, South Vietnam, the Dominican Republic, and Guatemala. Mr. Bennett conducted his own interview in September 1996.

BENNETT: The Dominican Republic had had a rough passage. Getting rid of Trujillo was difficult. Juan Bosch, the successor, was overthrown in a military coup that ultimately put Balaguer back in office. There had been a lot of fighting and the U.S. had sent in the marines to save the resident Americans. The country was deathly poor, overpopulated, undereducated, and a major source of legal and illegal immigration to the U.S. The country had stabilized, but growth was slow to non-existent. And the elite were rich and intent to hold on to their positions.

The AID mission was under pressure because lots of money had been committed but had yet to be disbursed. That was unacceptable when one went up to the Hill to ask for new appropriations.

The technical assistance side of the program had also grown like topsy. Part of this was designed to track capital projects and to spend the local currency (pesos) generated from balance of payments support, including commercial imports and PL 480 foodstuffs brought in and sold on the local market. The capital projects had pipelines of funds that had built up for years. Because the projects on which funds had actually been spent were often defective, we had another set of problems; the reaction in the mission to date was to get more and more restrictive in supervising the projects.

But the real test of the program was whether the economy was growing or not, and if not, why. It was pretty clear that the peso was overvalued (set at parity with the dollar since 1932, despite rampant inflation at times), savings and investment were inadequate, and exports were not growing because of the overvalued exchange rate.

Frank Meloy was the ambassador and he needed to be persuaded, before we even got a crack at the Dominicans. He was somewhat austere initially but became really very cooperative and helpful as time went on. We became close friends, so that it was a real personal loss when he was murdered in Beirut.

The persuasion process began by getting a Rand economist by the name of Bob Slighton to come down and put together a study of the economy and its problems. This had the effect of establishing an objective outside evaluation and also ultimately to provide us with an academically respectable document to back us up. It took more than a year to bring this off and get the ambassador on board. Then we began meetings with the Dominicans, with the ultimate of getting a briefing for President Balaguer. When finally scheduled, it was to last for an hour - it actually went on for three. The ambassador attended as well. We thought we had made a major impression. Balaguer was to get back to us with his staff about what ought to be done. The meetings with his staff dragged on over the months, but nothing happened and nothing changed. We had been had.

The overvalued exchange rate was the major initial target. The World Bank people were helpful but the Dominicans hid behind the IMF which argued privately to us that it could not recommend changes unless the Dominicans asked for their advice. Of course, the Dominicans never brought it up. Instead they argued everything was just fine. All they wanted was a clean bill of health from the IMF. They didn't quite get it - they were always in arrears on paying for current account expenditures, sometimes by many months.

For us, it meant stalemate on our major objective. We did tighten up on capital and technical assistance projects. The pipeline ceased to grow and may actually have been reduced. We cut the number of people by a substantial amount. And we talked to any Dominican who would listen about what we thought needed to be done. There were problems with this approach - we had to be careful not to appear critical of the Balaguer government, but we also tried to build support among the public and even his opposition. On an individual basis, we made considerable progress, but even Balaguer loyalists were afraid to approach him on this subject.

We eventually recommended that the AID program in the DR be phased down and out. The ambassador approved. It didn't happen. Washington inertia and the Cold War - nearby Cuba was always seen as a threat.

It is an interesting problem of leadership in an organization to keep people gung-ho and committed at the same time one is dismantling some of their favorite projects. We did not succeed in all cases, which meant that we had to replace some of the most difficult cases. Robbie was really smooth at it and at identifying good replacements with whom he could work well.

There were plenty of problem examples. The DR has a climate somewhere that will grow almost anything. So we had projects for everything. Some, like cacao, were not making much progress and even if they were, would change few lives. Others were conceived too narrowly - a major land development project considered only reclaiming the land and putting in canals. Storage, transport, and a fair price for the crop seemed to have been forgotten early on. Getting them added late in the day proved almost impossible.

Old projects that had gone sour were also a pain. A big American invested export tomato operation went bad when the tomatoes wouldn't grow on the land they had picked. We closed it down, amid screams. A big banana plantation on the north shore also went bad. It was covered

by U.S. government guarantees but we managed to close out the American investor without much loss because it had failed to meet its contractual obligations. This all meant living with lawyers and finding ways to persuade the Dominican government that closing them was in their interest. By deeding the land to the government, which then announced big plans that we knew would never be carried out, we brought it off. The lesson from this, however, was that projects conceived in haste, as these were right after the anti-Bosch coup, are not likely to be worth much. They pleased Washington at the time, but were since forgotten.

The DR has great beaches and mountains and a climate that ranges from desert-like to tropical rain forest. There are mountains and flatlands and a complex history, with lots of interesting people. It was nice too, to be able to take the ambassador out on some of these trips, though he was frequently reluctant to get too far away from his responsibilities.

One facet of our travel lives was the danger from the violent opposition. The air attaché had been kidnapped while horseback riding early one morning right in the city and held for ransom for some weeks and after we left, the USIS director was similarly seized and held.

I had a habit of walking to work or riding my bicycle there every day. It wasn't far. I was told after about six months that I was a target and that I could no longer go anywhere without a bodyguard. It was ludicrous to see a fat bodyguard in his trunks with a pistol jammed in the waistband at the beach. But I hoped it might intimidate whoever was after me. The down side: my teen-age daughters found their presence unpleasant - they objected to being ogled.

The real issue in the DR was political change. Dominican society has its elite plus the murderous Trujillo past which to many cried out for justice or revenge from those who had been its victims. We in the AID mission got into a real fight with the embassy over American interests in the DR. We were the liberal activists and the political section of the embassy was the conservative down-rock-the-boat types. The issue came up several times.

On one occasion we got to redraft a section on the U.S. strategy in the DR. The first draft from the political section basically said everything was okay and the U.S. didn't have much interest in change. That was not my or Robbie's view and we spent the next several weeks writing drafts about what the U.S. interest was. We fed these to the ambassador who seemed to be happy with them - in fact our draft became the one everyone was working off. That is, until the DCM, Frank Devine and the political counselor, Jim Haar, realized that they had been aced out and rebelled. Both Devine and the ambassador were kind men and realized how destructive it would be to his staff; we switch back to the political section draft. We managed to get a few changes in it, but that was all. On the other hand, in the great scheme of things in the DR, the exercise changed nothing. The paper sank like a stone in Washington, as did most of these exercises.

On another occasion, the ambassador was to make a speech with substantial potential political impact. We got our licks in but then the ambassador got cold feet. He didn't want it to be "too strong" or capable of being misinterpreted. He really squirmed, I think he was torn between what he really wanted to do and what he thought wouldn't create too many waves - as well as healthy skepticism about how difference it would make either way. The country's subsequent up and down history bears that out - revolutions, which some of us essential, only come with generation

changes and when a government is repressive as was the Dominican, it may take more than one generation to move the tectonic plates of society.

The elite were the old families, particularly from Santiago, the military, some businessmen, the bureaucrats many of whom were incompetent but held office because they were loyal, and the holdovers from Trujillo times. The military and the police were particularly difficult. We continued an advisory effort with both of them, but it was not very successful. A tough Marine colonel ran the military and AID the police side. But changing a culture in which the police and the military were little gods, with guns, is not quick work. Everywhere we went in the country, the military and the police were watching - we gringos were rightfully regarded with suspicion. In one example, we had a program to replace worn out handguns with new ones. The deal was that we would give one new one for each old one turned in. I personally picked up several hundred, put them in a motor boat and dumped them in a thousand feet of seawater. We were observed and it took a half-day to clear the matter up.

My tour drew to a close and I was assigned to senior training at the Stanford Business School. I was not particularly pleased because I thought with a Ph.D. I didn't need more academic training. Instead I had hoped to go to the National War College. However, on the training preference report, I had listed Stanford as my third choice. Apparently nobody else wanted it, so I got it. It turned out to be an exciting year, the best school experience I can remember.

JOHN L. DEORNELLAS
Labor Attaché
Santo Domingo (1970-1972)

Mr. DeOrnellas was born on April 28, 1921 in Alabama. He received his AB from Spring Hill Jesuit College in 1942 and his LLB from Georgetown University in 1949. He served in the US Army Air Force overseas from 1942 to 1945 as a 1rst lieutenant. His career has included positions in Paraguay, Ceylon, Honduras, and the Dominican Republic. Mr. DeOrnellas was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy on December 13, 2002.

Q: Well, when you left there in 1970, where did you go?

DEORNELLAS: I went to the Dominican Republic. Which, for the labor field, was culture shock, a huge change. The American labor movement really had no significant influence in the Dominican Republic at that time. Well, Socialist, if not Marxists, did have considerable influence in the labor movement, and the kind of people that I was supposed to be dealing with were still resentful that the American, well more or less, invasion if you will, intervention, under Lyndon Johnson in ’66 I guess it was. So I didn’t have very much to work with there. AIFLD was trying to run a program but we really weren’t dealing with what there was in terms of fairly important unions who were from a Socialist background at least. They were hostile to the U.S. And then there was the Christian so-called labor movement which was relatively hostile to the U.S. throughout Latin America. They didn’t have any particular significance in Honduras, there

was an establishment there, they didn't have much. They had more in places like Chile and some other places. They were fairly significant in Santo Domingo. However, neither the Socialist bunch nor the "Christian" or "Catholic" bunch had any connections with the embassy and apparently they had had very little if any connections with my predecessor, so it was very difficult for me to try and establish contact. I was struggling away and beginning to make a little bit of contact with the Christian-Catholic bunch when the job in the Dominican Republic was abolished. You might be interested to know that as for the Socialist group, I managed to talk to one or two of them on the telephone but they never would let me come to the place. I found out from no less than the station chief of the CIA, who was a friend from way back, South America, that by golly the agency's policy was that the only person in that whole setup who was supposed to have contact rights on behalf of the U.S. Embassy was a man who had come from Romania, I think he was nominally Jewish but he had a leftist background. He had been with Bosch, B-O-S-C-H, who was the leader of the Socialist clutch. He had been with Bosch in exile and so forth. The agency had arranged for this guy to supposedly keep in touch with Bosch to the extent of to let them know if he expected if anything really bad happened, the agency would be informed. The arrangement was that was the only way the American was going to deal with this outfit was through this particular contact with the agency. No less than the station chief acknowledged that to me and he admitted he was a little embarrassed about it, but it was policy laid down from Washington and it had been approved. So that was one reason I couldn't deal with them very well. But it was kind of frustrating, there wasn't a whole lot to do there compared to Honduras where I had been busy as a bee.

Q: Had all the apparatus of Trujillo been dismantled by the time you were there?

DEORNELLAS: Well, it kind of depends on how you look at it, I guess. Balaguer, the old bachelor or whatever, who was the president and effective dictator, pretty much of the country, had been created by Trujillo and he had been the nominal [president] under Trujillo. I'm sure he was still in with the Trujillistas. In any event, he was not doing anything quite as rough as had happened under Trujillo and they went through the motions of that in elections, you know. All that sort of thing. But in effect, it was also pretty much a dictatorship, maybe a little less of one, truly military dictatorship than Honduras. There were certainly remnants of the Trujillo regime.

Q: From your perspective, was labor being exploited, or did they have a pretty good say in the economy?

DEORNELLAS: I don't think the labor unions were significant, really, in the Dominican Republic. The American food companies weren't operating there. There was one European founded and operated outfit that did grow some bananas out on the East end of the island. In any event, I would say that with the possible exception of the port workers, the labor movement in Santo Domingo wasn't doing anything particularly effective. The dramatic thing about the port workers was that they had such a huge membership they had limited job opportunities since Americanization had begun there. As a matter of fact, they had to spread the work around, but they managed to keep the faith enough to where a guy could work only two or three days a month but at least survive. That was kind of tolerated or allowed, but in any event, I don't really think that - I was half-sympathetic to abolishing the job because one, I felt frustrated and two, I

just didn't really think there was probably enough work available in the field to have a specialized job.

Q: Well, did you feel that the workers were being exploited?

DEORNELLAS: Well, you know, there's a limited pie to divide up in all these places. How much of a slice can you hand any one person? In terms of the kind of [assignments] or whatnot that had been pretty well established in Honduras with the banana companies, I don't think there was that. I don't think there was any real effective intercession by unions there. The country was, I guess, compared to what many other countries were like in Latin America, or at least some, was relatively prosperous. At the other end of the island, Haiti, you know, was miserable. So by comparison with across the border, the Dominican Republic wasn't so bad. Didn't have anything like the population pressure that Haiti had, for one thing. And there was a pretty fair amount of cultivable land and Balaguer did run an orderly place. I guess it was somewhat attractive to foreign investment, but it wasn't that controverted at least in my time there. The people were sort of used to it, being subservient to a really dominant political regime. In that sense, I'd say that [authoritarianism] still existed, really. Balaguer made a point of not being the blustery, classic dictator. He was a very self-effacing person in manner. He ran a pretty forceful ship.

Q: You left there when?

DEORNELLAS: '72.

JOHN J. CROWLEY, Jr.
Deputy Chief of Mission
Santo Domingo (1970-1974)

Mr. Crowley was born in New Mexico on February 10, 1928. Mr. Crowley received his BA from the University of West Virginia in 1949 and his MA from Columbia University in 1950. He served in the U.S. Army from 1946 to 1948. As a member of the Foreign Service, he served in countries including Venezuela, Peru, Belgium, Ecuador, the Dominican Republic, Grenada, and Suriname. Mr. Crowley was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy on June 27, 1989.

Q: You came back to the War College, and you were there from '69 to '70. And then on went onto again as deputy chief of mission to Santo Domingo. How did you get that assignment?

CROWLEY: Well, that was pretty normal. I actually had wanted to go to Caracas, because my career interest has been in Venezuela. I tried to do that, but Joan Clark, who was then the personnel officer in ARA, said, "But we want to send you to Santo Domingo because the DCM from Santo Domingo, Frank Devine, is going to Caracas, and the ambassador has already accepted you"--Ambassador Frank Meloy. So I said, "Okay." So it was just a normal assignment.

Q: Well, what was the situation in Santo Domingo? You were there from 1970 to '74. When you arrived, what was the situation?

CROWLEY: It was a relatively prosperous time. The price of sugar was up and the price of petroleum had not yet taken its great leap. It was still about $4.00 a barrel. The Dominicans sold a lot of sugar to us and other places; they had plenty of foreign exchange. Not to say they were not a poor country, but they have since been in worse shape. They are, in fact, in worse shape today, relatively speaking, than they were then.

As far as embassy problems are concerned, I began to run into security problems for the first time. My namesake, Lt. Colonel Donald Crowley, the Army attaché, had been kidnapped just a few weeks before I went down there. Fortunately, he was released after the government gave in to the demands of the kidnappers. But we began to see that we did have a security problem. The ambassador began to travel with a follow car and bodyguards, and I had a bodyguard all the time I was there, plus a driver.

We had a security watch committee, and we declared different levels of alert for the USG community. Some alerts meant everybody should stay home, and others meant you could go downtown, but not to the beach. We had a very large post. We had the residue of LBJ's huge civilian invasion which followed the military invasion in '65 to help straighten the country out, and we had all kinds of AID people.

Q: What was the general judgment in the embassy, not officially, but among yourselves, about the calling in of troops and all. This was what?

CROWLEY: '65.

Q: '65. I've heard varying accounts of it. What was your judgment? You know, five, six years later, people who were around there are wondering.

CROWLEY: At the time, in '65, although I was part of the task force here in Washington, my personal thought was maybe it was an overreaction based on the imperative not to have another Cuba in the Caribbean. Based on the evidence, though, it didn't look like we were about to have another Cuba.

However, during my time there, when Colonel Camano Deno, who had been the leader of the '65 revolt, came back into the Dominican Republic clandestinely with about, I forget, 30 or 40 people, armed by the Cubans and apparently in a boat that they bought for him, came in and declared that the savior had returned and the people should all rise up. Then I began to think, this guy left here, went to Mexico, he's been living in Cuba all this time and he visited the Soviet Union. He's here with their arms and their money, maybe LBJ was right and I was wrong about this. As you probably recall, the support he got in the Dominican Republic was zero. Nothing happened, and, in fact, he and everybody got wiped out in the mountains. I think there was one survivor. So I think that there is a possibility that in 1965 the place could have gone the way of Cuba if we had not intervened.

Q: Often, in retrospect, it's very easy to say, "Well, it wasn't necessary," but you're never quite sure what you've squashed. What was the feeling of the Dominicans towards Americans after this? I mean, the fall in party lines, or was there sort of a general feeling of what?

CROWLEY: You know, Dominicans are conscious of the fact that, as they say, when Uncle Sam sneezes, they're liable to get pneumonia down there. They're very conscious of the fact that they are in our zone of influence. They know that we're the largest trading partner, we're the largest aid benefactor, and all that. Some of them accommodate to that very well. Others don't, and they say, "Well, we don't like this situation. We want to change it."

Juan Bosch is one of those people, and the people in his party. So there could be outbreaks of anti-American feeling, mainly stirred up by people like this. Not long ago there was a ship visit down there and there was a violent riot just because an American ship visit was coming in for the first time in several years.

We had threats that we received through intelligence sources against the ambassador, sometimes against me or against military people. We didn't have any attacks, bombings of any of our buildings, but there was a feeling of tension. We did have a second kidnapping. You know, the late Barbara Hutchison, who was the PAO, was kidnapped, so these things could always happen.

Q: What were our interests in Santo Domingo or the Dominican Republic, American interests?

CROWLEY: They're so close to us and, as you may know from history, they almost became a state. During General Grant's time, some of his cronies went down and they figured that it would be a nice real estate speculation around Samaná Bay. Well, you can't see it there too well on your map, but Samaná Bay is one of the best natural harbors in the whole Caribbean.

So they wanted to negotiate a deal whereby we would pay the government so much money and then the Dominican Republic would be annexed and the Samaná Bay would become a naval base, and these birds were going to buy up all the real estate around Samaná Bay and make a million. Fortunately, it was stopped by one vote in the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. The Senator Sumner found out what was going on, and he put his foot down and that ended it. Even though they had conducted a plebiscite also in the Dominican Republic about whether this was acceptable, and it came out some tremendous number of people in favor of it and only 11 against. [Laughter] Obviously a rigged result.

We've done a lot of intervening down there, so we feel, I think, we have to feel a certain responsibility for the place. We wanted to see a democratic system evolve from the legacy of Trujillo, and it has pretty much. And we wanted to, at least in the State Department, wanted to keep the sugar trade up so that they would have a decent income, but the Department of Agriculture has other interests, of course. The domestic sugar people now have reduced our purchases down there to the point where it's very serious for the Dominicans, and people are going out of the sugar business trying to find other products they can sell.

Q: So really looking at this, this is a case where, say, when you were in Peru, American economic interests in Peru were quite influential. In the Dominican Republic, our economic

interests were such that we were just trying to, at least from the State Department point of view, help the Dominicans as opposed to American interests. In other words, we were not involved in the Dominican Republic for economic purposes.

CROWLEY: That's right, although we had some major investors there. We had ALCOA, who were mining bauxite in the south, and we had Gulf and Western, which had the most economical sugar mill. But if you take a minute and look at what Trujillo did, Trujillo made the country his private preserve, and he took over practically all of the profitable business in the country. So that when he died, the state's influence there was such that they didn't privatize, which they should have done, but they kept it all together. So they have about 30 or 40 enterprises run by the government, most of which have not been very profitable, but they had the bulk of the sugar production and the other exports, so they didn't have a lot of US investors that would come clamoring, you know, beating on our door.

But I think it's fair to say that they have been a--I hesitate to use the term--but it's like a client state, and they know that and they need to operate within our sphere of influence.

Q: Now, you're operating within this thing, and here you are as a deputy chief of mission. You had two ambassadors while you there. How were you used?

CROWLEY: Well, Ambassador Meloy, Frank Meloy, this was his first time in Latin America. He was still learning Spanish, and he used me quite a bit in visiting the number two official in the foreign office. Most of the other things I did, though, were internal, because we had a large mission. We had AID and many appendages of AID, we had a Peace Corps and we had the MAAG, so that there was a good deal of administration to be done and coordination, mainly, to make sure that everybody was adhering to policy.

Q: What was your impression of AID? Sometimes these programs tend to be over-administered and run more for the convenience of the bureaucratic apparatus of AID. How did you feel about this?

CROWLEY: Well, in contrast to the program in Ecuador, which I think was serving American business too much, the one in the Dominican Republic was very labor intensive. The strategy of it was to soak up the unemployment so there wouldn't be a lot of disaffection that might go over to the left and build pro-communist and anti-American sentiment.

So the reconstruction of the city, and actually the reconstruction of the damage of the war, plus the rebuilding of old Spanish colonial buildings down there, was an AID program which absorbed lots of people, thousands of workers, with pick and shovel and paintbrush and everything. It was good for the country because it made a real jewel out of the old part of the city. It was wonderful for tourism. You know, the oldest cathedral in the hemisphere and then now these buildings are there, Columbus' nephew's house and all that. So it served a good economic purpose and, I think, good political purpose, and there was no way, except for some Americans maybe selling them a few tools, there was no way that a big American contractor could get in on it.

Q: How about the AID apparatus itself?

CROWLEY: I thought they were two very good directors. Strangely enough, two succeeding directors, both named John Robinson. The Dominicans thought there was some kind of plot. [Laughter] The first one, Jack Robinson, died just last year, and the other, John, is retired. But they had, I thought, a good basic program. They had some difficulty operating there because the Dominican bureaucracy was not well developed, having been run as a one-man show for so many years.

A book that I have read recently and which I'm reviewing for the Times of the Americas is on the Dominican Republic, and the authors think that in the last couple of decades, there's been considerable economic reform and democratic progress. And they say now if the people at large can get a better share of the benefit of all this, then they can say something has been achieved.

Q: Did you find that we were calling the shots more than, perhaps, we should have been as far as saying, "Well, you should vote this way in the United Nations, and you should open up this sector of your political life to . . ." I mean, were we being a bit big brotherish?

CROWLEY: Well, when I was there, Joaquin Balaguer was the president, as he is now again. At that time, I guess he was in his late '60s and he could still see. He's a very astute politician. He's not terribly attached to the niceties of democratic processes, but he goes along with them, although he doesn't really think a lot of it is necessary.

He would take our advice on some things, but on other things, he was very independent. And if he didn't like a particular AID program that was proposed, it wouldn't get signed. So I would not say that Balaguer is a kind of person you could put under your thumb. He recognized our influence and our power and all, but one of the reasons why the Dominicans liked him, I think, was that they knew that--although he never confronted us the way Arosemena did in Ecuador--they knew that he was a tough customer and that he would not give in to anything he didn't want to.

One experience I recall was Ambassador Meloy chatting with him one time and saying, "Mr. President, you've been president now for two terms and you're probably looking forward to retirement. Have you thought about a successor? Is there someone that you would want to sponsor?"

And Balaguer thought about it, and he said, "Yes, probably," but he didn't say who, you know. As a matter of fact, there was nobody, because he's been re-elected twice since then, and could he's now 83 and blind. But I don't think he had any successor in mind at all. [Laughter] He was considered himself indispensable.

Very interesting man. Never accused of any personal corruption. No need for money. Lived in a very modest house, and really had nothing to spend money on. He worked all the time. Even at his beach home he wore a coat and tie. The problem was that there was a good deal of corruption in his government, and we always thought that probably the military corruption, he definitely didn't look at, because that was the way to keep the military happy.

On the civilian side, it may have been just incompetence or ineffective bureaucratic procedures. But it was not only common to him, this corruption problem, because his successor, Antonio Guzmán, later committed suicide when he found out the amount of corruption that his own family had been engaged in, and he was millionaire. He didn't need the money, either. So corruption, I'm afraid, is kind of endemic there, as it is in many Third World countries.

RUTH E. HANSEN
Political Officer
Santo Domingo (1974-1975)

Ms. Hansen was born on February 18, 1946 in Illinois. She received her BA from Wheaton College in 1968 and her MSFS from Georgetown University in 1970. Her career has included positions in the Dominican Republic, Poland, Panama, Yugoslavia, and Bulgaria. Ms. Hansen was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy in 2004.

Q: Where were you headed for your first assignment? What was your "cone"?

HANSEN: I was in the political cone. I had been told I might be offered a Foreign Service job earlier if I opted for the consular or administration cone, because the political cone was far more competitive. But I stuck with my first choice and so came in as a political officer. There were four political officers in my A-100 class, the others being men. I think they were all given political officer assignments. I was interested in Latin America at the time, and the normal practice was to be assigned first to a consular position. The Latin American region of course had plenty of those. My first assignment was in the Dominican Republic and that pretty much suited me. I was given some brush-up Spanish training at FSI and went to Santo Domingo in the spring of 1974.

Q: How was your consular training?

HANSEN: It was good and solid but not nearly as thorough as it is these days. There was one quite surprising session on issuing passports for individuals who went abroad for sex change operations, traveling in one direction as one sex and returning as the other.

Q: You were in the Dominican Republic from when to when?

HANSEN: It was originally a two-year assignment, but I was dissatisfied with the assignment for a variety of reasons, some of them personal, and I was able to curtail the assignment to 18 months. I went in the spring of 1974 and departed in November 1975.

Q: What was the situation there when you arrived?

HANSEN: The President was Joaquin Balaguer, who served as president during several different periods over a period of years. Though I don't recall the details, there was political unrest in the country just at the time I arrived and there had been demonstrations where violence occurred. This meant that, the first few days I was in the country, I had to stick close to the rather drab temporary apartment I was assigned to, so it was an inauspicious start to my first overseas assignment. Things were pretty well closed down for a while because of the political atmosphere. Later, during my first year in Santo Domingo, the head of the USIA office was taken hostage and held for several weeks. She was very game about it all, it seemed, and came out of it alright.

Economically, the country was in dire straights, as I expect it still is. There was widespread poverty, unemployment was high, economic prospects for the youth were poor. Santo Domingo was one of the "visa mills", so the workload at the consulate was very heavy and demanding. People were very anxious to get to the United States, one way or another, and the visa lines were long. There was a high rate of fraud. You had to expect that applicants would lie to you. It was a very uncomfortable situation and very difficult work.

Q: This is always a difficult job for a young American who has probably never been lied to blatantly. Did you have a problem dealing with this?

HANSEN: I sure did. I think most of the junior officers did. The Consular Section was set up so that we would rotate among different kinds of consular work – non-immigrant visas, immigrant visas, US Citizen Services. My first assignment was on the non-immigrant visa line. After the first day there, I honestly thought I could never go back and do it again. It felt impossible. I went back the next day and got through it, and by the end of the week, I was falling into the pattern of it. It was a really terrible job and, yes, people did lie to you. They were so anxious to get visas. The consular officers became known in the country, and people would stop you in the street or on the beach to make a pitch about their visa problems. At the end of my tour, at the airport on my way out, someone raised a visa issue with. It sometimes got to you. I'm sure I had never lost my temper before like a did with some of those visa applicants. On the other hand, Julio Iglesias came through the visa line one day, so there were compensations.

Q: How did an interview work?

HANSEN: On the non-immigrant visa line, we had three or four visa windows, like bank tellers, and a kind of cattle shoot funneling the applicants up to the windows. The waiting line was under cover but otherwise open-air. There were local guards outside but really very minimal security. One applicant opened his briefcase in front of me, just to extract some papers, and there was a pearl-handled revolver inside. The applicant would have his passport and his visa application form and whatever supporting documents he would bring. You'd have a couple of minutes to talk to him, ask where he was going and why, and especially why he would come back to the Dominican Republic rather than stay in New York or Miami or Puerto Rico. Of course, it was very hot outside, and waves of hot air and odors would come wafting into you through the visa window. It was a very unpleasant experience for both the consular officers and the applicants.

The local employees were very important to our work. The Dominican Republic is the kind of place where personal relationships mattered a lot, and it helped to know "who was who." Well,

we Americans certainly didn't always know, and the local employees on occasion could tell us that so-and-so was related to so-and-so and helped give us a sense of what the bigger picture was.

Q: What kind of supervision were you getting?

HANSEN: My very first supervisor was a wonderful gentleman, Don Parsons, one of the best supervisors I ever had in the Foreign Service. I admired him very much at the time and we've kept in touch over the years. He was very good in keeping our spirits up. He took a light-hearted attitude toward the work, but he also took it very seriously. At a Country Team meeting, I happened to hear him speak to the Ambassador about some of the issues we were facing in the Consular Section, and it helped remind me that, as frustrating as the consular work could be, it was also serious work that could give you a good picture of what life was like in the country. that you could get a real picture of the country. Generally speaking, though, I would say that the Consular Section was quite isolated from the rest of the Embassy. The consular building was several blocks away down the street away from the embassy. However, I think the DCM was very good about trying to keep in touch with the consular officers in terms of their work. One came and sat with us on the visa line a couple of times. Both the Ambassador and the DCM included consular officers in representational events.

Q: Did you get any feel for the Dominican Republic while you were there?

HANSEN: I traveled all over the country. We were a very close knit group in the consular section, and I got to be close friends with a few other Americans in the embassy and some of the local employees. We traveled all over. Of course we all learned to dance the meringue. One of the popular day trips was to San Cristobal, not far from Santo Domingo, to the residence of the former dictator, Rafael Trujillo, who was killed in 1961. There was a pleasant town, Santiago, in the center of the country, a nice mountain town called La Vega, the town of Sosua on the northern coast that had taken in Jewish refugees during World War II, plenty of beaches to check out. The Dominican Republic is a small place so it was fairly easy to cover most of the territory, though the driving could be hair-raising sometimes. So we saw and experienced a lot, and certainly saw how difficult the life was in the country.

Q: How did Haiti compare?

HANSEN: I visited Haiti a couple of times as a tourist. It was shocking to see the difference. Having been around the Dominican Republic, I knew how poorly the people lived. But conditions in Haiti were far worse, even way back then. A former USAID colleague visited me one time in the Dominican Republic and she wanted to take some pictures of life around Santo Domingo. She especially wanted to get a picture of a horse or a donkey pulling a cart, but she missed a couple of shots. Well, we were going on to Haiti, and she thought she'd get that kind of snapshot there. We got to Haiti, and one of the first things we saw was actually a person hauling a cart in place of a horse or donkey. It was just a miserable place with some shocking things to see, like people living almost in holes in the ground. The situation seemed much worse than in the Dominican Republic, as bad as it was there.

Q: You were coned as a political officer. Did you get any feel from your colleagues at the embassy about what political officers were doing?

HANSEN: A little bit. As I mentioned earlier, I'd become a little disenchanted about the political cone after the A-100 course, so I originally wasn't that unhappy to have gone into a consular job initially. As it happened, when I got to the Dominican Republic, one of the young political officers had to leave post early for some reason, so there was an unexpected vacancy in the Political Section. Although I had mixed feelings about it, I thought well, really, I ought to see if I can get that job because I am supposed to be a political officer and, now that I've seen what the consular work is like, I would just as soon make the switch. By then, I had developed something of a friendly relationship with the political counselor and I thought I could go and have a chat with him about it. But when I went in to see him, he stayed firmly behind his huge desk and it was pretty clear that it was not going to be a very comfortable discussion. I explained my interest in the political officer position and he explained how really they were thinking of developing this position as sort of a "sports officer" position as a way of promoting understanding between the two countries. He didn't quite literally say it should be a guy in the job since it was going to be sports related, but it was pretty clear that he didn't want me in the job, whether because of my personal qualifications or, more likely, because I was a woman. I did not make any complaint about it, but it was pretty clear to me that I was not going to get that job.

Q: After Santo Domingo?

HANSEN: I came back to Washington. I really was questioning at that point whether I would stay in the Foreign Service, and it had largely to do with my personal situation. I was still single, and I would say generally that Foreign Service life is not as kind to single women as it is to single men. In the Dominican Republic, I had worked with a number of colleagues who were single professional women. I admired them very much. They were highly capable, very accomplished and cultured, great bridge players. But frankly I wasn't sure I wanted to end up like them. So I returned to Washington in part to reconsider the Foreign Service as a profession. I was going to a job on the INR watch staff, the 24-hour Current Intelligence Staff that worked alongside the Operations Center.

THEODORE A. BOYD
Junior Officer Trainee, USIS
Santo Domingo (1974-1975)

Mr. Boyd was born on October 9, 1941 in Terre Haute, Indiana. He served in the U.S. Army from 1959 to 1964. Throughout his career he has held positions in countries including the Congo, Kenya, Ethiopia, the Dominican Republic, Bolivia, Iran, Nigeria, Ecuador, Togo, and Cameroon. Mr. Boyd was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy on November 29, 2005.

Q: When you are up against personnel people and other things it's a little check mark and they don't care as much about it unless…

BOYD: But it still looks good on the biographic register. OK so that was that and after that I was assigned in my first overseas assignment, as a JOT was Santo Domingo, the Dominion Republic.

Q: You were there from when to when?

BOYD: Just one year from ’74 to ’75. I was there for the kidnapping of the PAO (public affairs officer).

Q: I was going to say yes.

BOYD: Barbara Hutchison, yes.

Q: What happened?

BOYD: Some disgruntled people came into USIS. The USIS building was away from the Embassy. There was also another building for USIS activities, the Bi-National Center (BNC). At the time the American staffing at USIS was Public Affairs Officer (PAO), Cultural Affairs Officer (CAO) and the Junior Officer Trainee (JOT). The CAO was also the Director of the BNC. At the time of the kidnapping, the PAO was the only officer at the USIS Building. The PAO wasn’t the only one who was captured at the time. There was about a two week: standoff, and then they were released.

Q: What was the issue?

BOYD: Some people were dissatisfied with what the government was doing and they wanted to get some of their people who were in jail released so they could all go to Panama so that did happen. My memory disserves me because that was about thirty years ago now.

Q: Tell me, what about the situation in the Dominican Republic a as you recall it.

BOYD: In the Dominican Republic. The major activity at the BNC was Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL). There were some cultural programs — concerts, art exhibits, plays — but the BNC was basically an English teaching school.

Q: What were the students after? Why were they learning English?

BOYD: So they could get admitted to schools in the U.S. and also because knowledge of English virtually anywhere is a marketable skill. After a year in the Dominican Republic, we were reassigned to Bolivia.

LEONARDO NEHER
Political Counselor
Santo Domingo (1974-1977)

Mr. Neher was born on December 5, 1922 in Akron, Ohio. He attended Akron University for a year before serving in the U.S. Army from 1943 to 1946. After his time in the Army, he received his BA from Bowling Green State University in 1948 and his MA from the University of Chicago in 1952. Throughout his career he has held positions in countries including Morocco, Vietnam, Syria, Zaire, Chad, the Dominican Republic, and Burkina Faso. Mr. Neher was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy on October 18, 1989.

Q: When you left, again, as part of this peculiar hopping around was very atypical of the Foreign Service, particularly going to a Latin American assignment as Political Counselor. You went to Santo Domingo from '74 to '77. This is really an odd ball because I would have thought this was...was this part of the global outlook program of Henry Kissinger, wanting to mix up the assignment process to bring people with a different point of view, particularly I think, was "strong Latin America" wasn't it?

NEHER: That may have been what made the offer come, but it wasn't my reason for accepting. Mine was back on my original decision to see the world. You're in the African Sahara and you're offered an island in the Caribbean, what can be a greater change? I turned down--I just replied "no" I wasn't interested to an overture that came to me from an Ambassador in another African country. He wanted me to come as DCM. From the career point of view, it would have been a much greater step up than going as the Political Counselor in Santo Domingo. But I turned it down because, after talking with my family, we all said, "No, we didn't join the Foreign Service for that, to be important. We joined to see the world." So I took it in spite of the fact that there'd be no ORE, and there'd be no real status.

Q: ORE is...

NEHER: Official Residence Expenses. You know, the Department provides residences for DCM's and pays lots of the expenses of maintaining and running an official household--supplies, equipment, gardener and inside staff. It's a big addition to your income; you're no longer out of pocket for these expenditures. I took the Santo Domingo assignment knowing I'd have to go out and rent my own house and bring my own furniture and be farther down the pecking order in the embassy, but I'd be in the Caribbean speaking Spanish instead of in Africa speaking French. That's why I took it.

Q: In 1974 what was the situation as you saw it in Santo Domingo?

NEHER: The government was really a continuation of the one that we helped to put into power after the disorders in 1965. There was leftist uprising in 1965, and President Johnson was determined not to have another Vietnam or Cuba on our doorstep, so he sent in the Air Force and Marines ostensibly to protect American lives but in fact to prevent a leftist, possibly communist government from coming into power. Then in the election of 1966, Joaquin Balaguer won and remained in power through succeeding elections. He had been president of the republic while Trujillo was in fact the dictator. But in my time in the Dominican Republic, the United States wanted to encourage the country to move toward true

democracy. We felt some responsibility for that country, and there was an election coming up in 1978. We had to try to help, to midwife, the whole process--the election process--the campaigns, the selection of candidates, alignment of parties. We played a fairly direct role. Unlike anything I'd done in Africa, or anywhere else, we were really very much involved.

Q: This is still in '74?

NEHER: '74. Their Central Intelligence Agency was created by ours, and people were trained by ours. We had very close ties to all the top military people. Most of the leaders had been educated in the United States. Some of the contenders in the election, the most important candidates, were people we had helped keep out of power. We had a long history of intervention in the country, and the Dominicans assumed that we still exercised political power there. So we had enormous influence. We were now using it to encourage them to move in a democratic way, and to dissuade the reasonable left from maintaining ties with the radical parties and groupings of the extreme left. Among those far left activists there were real bomb throwers. I mean they were killers. The people were Marxist in that special wild Latin American sense of the word, not in the European sense. They were violently anti-Yankee. So we had to try to deal with that, and see if we could get this process moving toward a free election with rational parties competing. And after the election, we wanted to be sure the very conservative military would in fact honor the results of the election if the leftists won. As Political Counselor I was in the thick of this effort.

Q: How comfortable did you feel in this pro-Consular role?

NEHER: Very comfortable. No discomfort at all.

Q: Even though you came in as a...this would have been just the type of thing, I think, you would have been opposed to as a young officer?

NEHER: No, because there the regime which had been in power was quite corrupt, very arbitrary. Very reactionary, representing the landed aristocracy, the new rich and the corrupt, abusive military who were the remnants of the old Trujillo dictatorship. An election could bring new people and new ideas into the political picture and defuse some of the antagonisms between the government and the most progressive forces in the society. From my point of view, that alone is a reason to do something. Relations between the regime and the university, for example, were such that no government representative would dare to step on the property of the university or even go near it. He would literally be killed. In one incident which happened while I was there, a policeman riding in a taxi drove too close to the university. Students stopped it, pulled the policeman out, and killed him. The university was autonomous, self-governing, and completely radicalized. The leftist parties and their rallies were harassed, sometimes declared illegal, and the police moved against them. They broke up the rallies, beat people. Even the main party in contention, the Dominican Revolutionary Party (PRD), had not been allowed to hold rallies on most occasions. There was always harassment, and this was no way to build a democratic system. So our job was to try to stimulate the process. How did we do this? Ambassador Hurwitch, the Ambassador at the time, had absolutely first rate political insights and judgments.

Q: This was Robert Hurwitch?

NEHER: Robert Hurwitch. He was very astute, and sharp. He knew Latin America from years of experience at a high level in the Department. He knew what he was doing, and it was great to work with him as Political Counselor, even though he was difficult as a person. And he had influence, enormous influence in the country, and as a key member of his staff I shared that influence. The people I was talking to knew I was close to Ambassador Hurwitch and that Hurwitch was talking with the president, and General this, and General that. We had a strategy that was to let the main opposition party know clearly that if they shed their irresponsible Marxist allies, with whom they had been grouped with previously, we would not consider them a threat against any U.S. interests. We let that be known both to them and to the more conservative, ruling party. We organized big receptions which brought together all the responsible parties in contention in the run-up to the election, making sure to mix generals with professors, rich landholders with labor leaders, businessmen with journalists and made sure that photo opportunities would be rife, newsworthy ones where they were seen shaking hands with political enemies. There they were, together, joking, drinking or in serious discussion. They had no other places to meet, no other occasions. Their political worlds touched at these functions. We also brought scholars and intellectuals from universities in the United States and sponsored discussions among left and right on a range of topics from literature to government. So these political activists were pictured in the newspapers and on television fairly often. They appeared as the responsible, respectable middle class people that they really were. They were well dressed and would be seen discussing with this General, or with that government official. It helped to legitimate, you might say, these political parties, particularly the most serious contender, PRD. It encouraged the PRD to maintain a moderate, middle of the road stance and signaled to the governing party and the military leaders that we, the U.S., viewed them as legitimate contenders in the election--a sort of "hands off" warning. And they won the election. But the military moved in immediately, seized the ballot boxes, tried to prevent the vote from being counted. And the U.S.--I was gone by that time--virtually threatened military intervention. The theater commander came up from Panama and met with the Dominican military and with the people who had been legitimately elected, and finally the ballot boxes were returned and the election results were honored.

To illustrate how artificial the tension between the government and the left was, the newly elected president went down to the university and attended the graduation ceremony. And when he walked into hall he got a standing ovation. The tension had disappeared. It had been artificial, imposed by the excessive security concerns of the regime and its hard-line military. It was gone. And some of these people that the military thought were communists--and even some of our own security services agreed--turned out to be very moderate and, in fact, rather conservative people.

Q: Well, tell me about within the Embassy. I mean, here we were pushing something but you mentioned the military--our military--because obviously this was an important element, so I'm sure attachés were very much involved in what essentially was a political situation, and

the CIA. Can you describe some of the trends within the Embassy on this? How different groups either approached it, or thought we should deal with the problem?

NEHER: The key factor in all of this was a very strong and knowledgeable Ambassador. And when he set the policy, he damned well insisted that it be followed. We had deviations from it. We got a report back on a conversation that our Military Attaché had had with a Dominican military officer in which he was suggesting that the United States really didn't want to see this PRD come to power. That these were communists. And that Attaché was very conservative; he himself thought they were communists. But he had no political criteria or intellectual capacity for judging them, and when he talked to this, one of the toughest military leaders, and implied the United States did not want to see the PRD come to power he was way out of line. It was a dangerous gambit which could have implied that the Dominican military would have a green light from the U.S. to move in and stop the democratic process. So the Ambassador got him into his office--I was there--and at his scathing finest told him he was on the next plane out if he ever said anything like that again. He was ordered to go back and correct that mistaken impression. Which he did. It was absolutely essential that everyone on the U.S. team have the same line. We were all on board, all agreed with the policy, and agreed that we had to work together in harmony.

Q: Did you find the CIA...

NEHER: No, the CIA from the beginning was right down the line with the Ambassador. We didn't have any evidence that the CIA was playing a separate game, or was communicating anything different at all. We thought they played it square, and they were very helpful, and very cooperative. We had meetings where we discussed strategy, who would do this and who would do that. The CIA had the best connection with the high ranking military, better than the Defense Attaché. They were on board entirely.

Q: Did we see much of a Cuban menace there at the time? How concerned were we about Cuba and its influence?

NEHER: What happened...go back to 1965. During the abortive rising by the left, sparked by a call to arms by Francisco Pena Gomez, the head of the PRD, President Johnson sent the FBI down there to help with security; he wasn't sure the CIA could do the job. So he sent the FBI down primarily to look at those involved and document the ones who were dangerous to U.S. interests. The FBI loaded up the biographic records. They found lots of communists. Anybody who was at all radical risked being documented as a communist.

When I arrived in Santa Domingo this was still a problem. Back in Washington, people at State, CIA or Defense could conclude that most of these people were dangerous to the security of the U.S. But we knew they were not, had good evidence that many of those documented by the FBI as communists had never belonged to the party or to any marxist party. So we set out to change the records in Washington and make it possible for these people, who were destined to become very important in the Dominican Republic, to get visas to the U.S. We started a vigorous and comprehensive program of biographic reporting, correcting the misinformation in the files in Washington. My deputy in the political section

was an exceptionally able reporter. He had a fabulous memory and great access to political activists. We did dozens of in-depth biographic reports and made it impossible for anybody in Washington to contend that this or that person was a communist, or a menace to the United States. We documented these people for what they were, and they were leftist moderates for the most part, not even the radicals that the records showed that they were. The PRD member who would become the Foreign Minister in 1978 couldn't get a visa couldn't get a visa to enter the United States without a special exception under a section of the Immigration and Nationality Act. These people, documented as extremists were probably more conservative than middle of the road Republicans in our own country, and certainly as conservative as some of the people in the Balaguer government. They were landowners, businessmen, professionals committed to the stability of the country. But the records showed that...

Q: In the first place I would imagine the FBI would have come in with almost absolute ignorance of the situation. And two, this would be under J. Edgar Hoover, and probably came down with a mandate and really almost from the President on up.

NEHER: You couldn't go wrong if you said, "These are all commies." You couldn't go wrong by offering that judgment. That was the road to promotion in the FBI.

Q: And then to untangle this mess, one had to do a counter job.

NEHER: We did it, and the leftist party won, and was never a threat to the United States. In fact, it was a much more rational government than that of Balaguer. It held cabinet meetings, chose technically qualified people for ministries, debated the budget and scrapped the old, secret system that Balaguer created. The parliament was also a more rational, modern one and the debates were more informative. The PRD brought a lot of advantages, helped to root democracy, which had been our long term goal. Unfortunately, the PRD government was even more corrupt than that of Balaguer. One scandal after another swept the country. And in a final disgusting note, President Guzman committed suicide before the end of his term, some say out of shame for the corruption, even by his own family.

Q: Then we'll keep moving on this. We'll talk about the environmental. You went to be in charge of international programs at the...

NEHER: ...not in charge.

Q: You dealt with international programs at the Environmental Agency from '77 to '79. That was a sort of odd ball assignment. How did you get it, and what were you doing?

NEHER: I was finishing up in Santo Domingo, and I think I had not even indicated where I wanted to go next, or offered any suggestions for an onward assignment. Part of that adventuring spirit I treasured meant that it was more fun if you didn't have any idea where you would go next. I mean, choose a continent, or choose something like that... I got a call from a friend at EPA, John Blane, who had been the DCM in Chad when I went there to replace him. We overlapped there for a couple of weeks, so he knew me. He had been at EPA as an assistant for international programs. He told me it was a great job, asked me to come up

for an interview. He'd send me a ticket; EPA would pay for my flight. Hop on a plane, come up and talk to the people and see if it was something I wanted, and if I did, I could have it. So I got on a plane, and came up, and I talked to them. There was a problem I recognized right away. The people he had worked with for two years had left, and there was a new wave of people, new Carter administration people, mostly women and with ties to Atlanta. They had a very different view of their work and of their place in Washington, and I wasn't quite sure that I understood what they were talking about, what they wanted me to do. But because John Blane had promoted the work so enthusiastically, I accepted it. So I went back and finished my tour in Santo Domingo and then reported to EPA.

PAUL GOOD
Cultural Affairs Officer, USIS
Santo Domingo (1975)

Paul Good was born in Wilmore, Kentucky on February 8, 1939. He attended Cascade College, where received his AB in 1959. Mr. Good also attended the University of California, where he received his JD in 1971. His career has included positions in the Dominican Republic, Thailand, Chile, and Colombia. Mr. Good was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy on August 3, 2000.

Q: I mean, as far as you were concerned, did they put you on a black list or just say, "Oh hell, let's give him another job?"

GOOD: No, they had another job. I mean the area director was on my side. I didn't have any problems with her. I saw her the other day down at the Kennedy Center. She's still around, very professional, probably our first high flying female officer-

Q: Was she Dorothy Dillon?

GOOD: Dorothy Dillon, great person, really a classy lady. She knew how to run an organization, and she knew how to still remain a woman, unlike what we'd been picking up since the mid-'70s, conflict of identity I suppose. We've had it for a lot of our junior officers coming in. I'm retired; I can say that.

Because she was on my side, and continued to be on my side, there's trouble later when I go to the DR experience, I didn't have any problems with that.

Q: So where did they send you?

GOOD: Santo Domingo.

Q: How did you feel about that?

GOOD: I didn't have any preconceptions because I'd never been there. I didn't know it at that point, but I hated islands. I learned that after I got there.

But on the way to there, I took the long route. I flew to Panama City and then took the bus from there, country by country, one country a day until I got to over by Guadalajara in Mexico. Then I took the train across through the mountains, the larger-than-Grand Canyon canyon they've got there. Then I took the bus up to El Paso and the bus over to Los Angeles and took a train up to Vancouver, B.C., and across to Winnipeg, where I ran out of time, which was a strange thing, because I hadn't finished my 20 minimum days. But Washington thought that they had promised the PAO in DR that I would be there by the fifth of January. When I got there, she said, "Why are you here? It's wintertime, and the universities are not in session. It's vacation. People aren't here. It won't be ready until next month. You should have stayed away."

Well it was too late at that point, and they gave me a waiver on the 20 days. But I saw the family up in Portland, Oregon, and that was fine; they were doing all right. I started out then to be a CAO in the DR.

Q: Cultural Affairs Officer?

GOOD: Yes.

Q: You were in the Dominican Republic from '75 to?

GOOD: '75, another short tour, from January to September.

Q: What was the situation in the Dominican Republic?

GOOD: Short of water. Politically it was dull. It was well past '65 when they'd had the invasion. Bosch and Balaguer were still fighting about Balaguer, who was in. It was slow, it was fairly expensive, it was different, and it was interesting. The cultural complex that they had built near the embassy was magnificent, a great place to show the moon rock when it came through, and we had a very interesting programming possibility there. Gulf and Western, the big American company, had a lot of investment there. They had the sugarcane plant down on the coast, they had a lot of hotels, and there was a currency problem. You couldn't export all the money that they were making. So they did what Spain did, or what the tourist organizations in Spain did. They decided to take the tourists' money in New York in dollars, keep the dollars up there of course, and then use their profits to pay for the operation of their tourist industry in their hotels, so they had local money to burn. The ambassador didn't have much to do. He decided, "This is a big American company, I'd like to deal with them, they've got money, and we can have fun." He was a great guy.

Q: Who was he?

GOOD: Robert A. Hurwitz. He was the one that got convicted of misuse of government property and had to retire.

Q: Well, we'll put it in later on.

GOOD: Okay, I meant to look his name up last night. He got into trouble of course with the government. There were three counts. They said that he had used leftover government lumber to build a beach house, that he had forced the defense attaché out of his office, which was separate from the embassy, in order to group the American Women's Club in there because his daughter was the president of the club, and that he used representation funds to hold a wedding reception for his daughter who got married in post.

The background was that the B and F officer, they called it B and M officer there, it was one of the giant administrative posts, didn't like the ambassador, didn't like the way that he was going, and he blew the whistle. The ADM officer, who was an AID fellow, had not stepped in or made any efforts to make sure the ambassador didn't get into trouble, just said yes, yes, yes. I don't know the merits of it, but the local population couldn't figure out why we were upset with the ambassador. He didn't do anything they wouldn't do, and so he stayed on and became a lobbyist/investment advisor for Taiwanese money coming into there.

Q: Oh. (Laughing)

GOOD: He was treated far more importantly than the American ambassador, because they knew him. Now he did himself in there ultimately, because he was on his second marriage when I was there, lovely lady. He divorced her and married an ex-wife of the first secretary of the Venezuelan embassy. That didn't go over so well. That was after I left. But he's the only ambassador I've ever known, who's said at a party, "Don't you stay for me to leave before the bell. I'm going to stay all night. I love to dance," and he would roll up the carpets all night. But he got himself involved with these cultural programs, so I was left without a job. That's what it amounted to. There wasn't that much exchange work going on. We didn't really have cultural presentations except as it was under this program. As soon as the ambassador got involved in it, quite promptly the PAO decided that she better be involved with it. I know logically that's exactly what I would have done if I were the PAO. So all of that was gone. I didn't have anything to do. So I went to her and I said, "Barbara." This is Barbara Hutchinson, who was our hero because she was kidnapped and held for 17 days before they released her. I didn't know her before that. She had already been through that experience when I arrived.

Q: Yes, she ran into that in the Dominican Republic?

GOOD: Yes, at post. She didn't get pulled out after that; she stayed on. But they tell me that she wasn't the same person. Her personality had changed. I don't know, because I didn't know her before. But I do know that within two weeks after my fiancé arrived, she came up from Bogotá, and I did one of those DR divorces, a bilateral one with my ex- wife agreeing. My present wife Barbara arrived, made a pass at her and was refused. Now I didn't know that, but I did know that all of a sudden my relations with the PAO suffered a severe change. And it wasn't until some years later that my wife told me what had happened. She said, no, of course, and that hurt. That hurt very much, because when I went to Barbara to say, "Look, you've taken over the cultural presentation job, which is a major part of my job. Let me do the admin (administrative) work for you, because I'm good at that, I have experience with that, and you don't like it. You've said you

don't like it," she got defensive, thought I was trying to take over and so wouldn't let me do it. Keogh, the director of the agency, came through shortly thereafter with Dorothy Dillon, on a trip of the area. I presented her with the problem, and she tried to get Barbara to change her mind and let me do the admin so that she could concentrate on the cultural side. Dorothy got nowhere with her either. So Dorothy convinced Keogh to curtail my assignment and get me onto something else, because there was obviously no reason for me to be there.

Ted Boyd was also there at the time. I found him in my office the day I arrived. He was a JOT, junior officer, the longest running JOT I've ever met. He was in that category for five years. He had been a state communicator, Addis (Addis Ababa), took the test, was selected to come in, his wife in Ethiopia, she's an Eritrean, and decided to marry her. They came back together to Washington. We had a rule then, an unwritten rule; you may remember it. I'm not sure State had it, but certainly USIA did. If you married a foreigner, you had to stay in the States for three years.

Q: Yes, generally this is it.

GOOD: That's long, long ago, but that's what the rule was. So there he sat in Washington. He got himself a Master's degree in the process. That was good. Then they sent him off to his first posting, the DR. He was sitting there doing nothing, but reading paperbacks because Barbara wouldn't let him do anything, except once a week on Wednesday afternoons he could go over and do some student counseling at the Bi-National Center we had in the DR. So he was very frustrated.

But he's a good phlegmatic type guy, background, Baptist minister's son, big guy. He's still in. He won his EEOC (Equal Employment Opportunity Commission) suit and stayed in. His wife won her EEOC suit and got a double promotion, and she's still in. They've done very well.

But he wasn't doing well there. He couldn't get out of JOT status because he didn't have his language certification. His Spanish was fine, but FSI didn't have money to send anybody to do the test. So when Dorothy came down. I said, "Dorothy, look, here's the problem. Would you please when you go back, get FSI to authorize a tape test. I'd done one of those in Thai when I was overseas." I knew it existed. She did, they did, he took his test, he passed it, and he still couldn't get out.

I was livid at that point. His wife was pregnant. They were assigned to Bolivia, couldn't take her down there. They couldn't have a baby at that height, so he was (laughing) stuck a little bit longer. He really had a tough time. He kept his cool throughout. He had been there through the kidnaping. So he saw her on both sides, and I suppose most of my perception was coming from him. He had enjoyed that time, because he was running the place. He had been the only American officer in USIS at that point and was able to do everything, and then she came back and cut him off at the knees, and he had nothing to do. So he was frustrated.

So, Keogh gets back to Washington, and somebody in his office convinces him, probably personnel, "but you can't do that, it would set a bad precedent." It would indicate that Washington's going to second guess the PAO, and he hadn't been down there so long, and it

wouldn't look good for Barbara, and so on. So Keogh reversed himself. That was I think in May at that time.

I learned another trick in August. The area director could not make a change without the director's approval, but personnel could. If the area director was on leave, personnel could make that decision. Dorothy went on leave in August. Rob Nevitt, my boss from Ubol, Thailand, instantly, as deputy director of personnel, cut my orders and brought me out. But Barbara got her axe in at that point. We went through my OER (Officer Efficiency Report); it was fine.

Q: That's the efficiency report?

GOOD: It's the efficiency report at that point at post. She said, "I don't have it typed up," because she delayed and delayed and delayed about our leaving, "so I'll send it on." What she sent on was not what she had in draft when I saw her, and was so bad and so full of improper references, that when it got to personnel in Washington later management said, "Impossible." Now the panel was meeting at that point, and they had seen it. Two of the three members on my panel were friends of mine from Chile. I'm not sure with that, even a changed report, whether they'd have been able to promote me at that point. I was eligible otherwise. But personnel pulled the report, so I had nothing to be judged on. The panel was angry because they wanted to write something for her file for having improperly drafted an efficiency report.

That hurt; that hurt badly because I had a hole in my file The hole couldn't be filled because Earl Klitenic, who was head of personnel and for whom I worked recently at the Voice, he's still over there, didn't think that she would agree to do anything better. It was so bad that even if she had sanitized it, she would make sure that whatever went in was going to be negative because she was still mad about the fact that my wife turned her down. Well, we got her; my wife put a good South American curse on her. She died a few years later, so she's gone.

I feel a bit sorry for her because to be a woman in the information business in South America, at least in those years, was very difficult. She couldn't shmooze with the guys, and all the journalists really that mattered were male. The papers closed late. She really couldn't do what a man could do. Now a man doing what a man can do often times burned himself out because it was very, very taxing.

Q: Yes.

GOOD: But she couldn't do it. It's not quite as bad as an information female officer in a Muslim country, but down toward that end of the spectrum.

Q: Yes.

GOOD: So I wasn't unhappy about leaving the DR because obviously I didn't have anything to do, and I found I didn't like to be surrounded by water. I confirmed that when I came back on a PAO conference later when I was in Surinam. I had an instant feeling of discomfort. It might have been all right if we'd been assigned in the interior of Santiago, which is the old capital, the old natural capital, the old center for the upper class, the branches and so forth. The highest

mountain in the Caribbean is there just on the side of Santiago, or maybe up in the north where the beaches were. But the south beach, as is the custom of the Spanish settlers, was on the rough shore because it was more protected when it comes to invasions. The beaches were few, and the waves were wild, and I just didn't like it.

Q: When they brought you back, did you go back to Washington itself? You were about due anyway, weren't you really?

GOOD: I was due, yes. I should have come back, as I said, at the end of Chile because I had the assignment all set. This also made it very obvious that it was Jim Halsema who had canceled my job up there, because no sooner had they canceled the job, and I'd moved on, than labor management recreated the job and put Earl Klitenic down there.

So I didn't have a smooth route those two years, but it was only two years. But it killed me. I never got another promotion in the next twenty years, twenty-five years, twenty-six years. I beat the system, but I was dead in the water, which again didn't bother me particularly, because as you know the senior assignments in the agency are not the best.

WILLARD B. DEVLIN
Consul General
Santo Domingo (1976-1978)

Mr. Devlin was born on September 30, 1924 in Massachusetts. He served in the U.S. Army from 1943 to 1946. He received his BA from Tufts University in 1949 and his MA from the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy in 1950. Throughout his career he served in countries including Iraq, Peru, China, and the Dominican Republic. Mr. Devlin was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy on October 15, 1986.

Q: You left Hong Kong in 1976. You happened to be, if I recall, in Washington, and they told you instead of returning to Hong Kong, you were sent to Santo Domingo as chief of the counselor section. It's not only a change, but from a work point of view, a change for the worse, wasn't it?

DEVLIN: Well, Santo Domingo doesn't compare to Hong Kong in any sense. Santo Domingo is the place where, if you win a prize, first prize is two weeks in Santo Domingo. The booby prize is a year in Santo Domingo.

Q: And you got two years in Santo Domingo.

DEVLIN: I got two years in Santo Domingo, a bit less than two years.

Q: Could you describe the counselor section in Santo Domingo?

DEVLIN: Well, the consulate general had its own separate building. We were about two or three block away from the embassy. We had a tremendous non-immigrant visa workload. The average number of applicants per day ranged from 400 to 700 or 800. We had to lead the applicants in through essentially a chute arrangement.

Q: Like a cattle chute?

DEVLIN: Like a cattle chute, under cover but outside of the building. They spoke to the non-immigrant visa officer through a bulletproof window. I think there were four windows. Before they got in the line, we had a Dominican policeman there who had a large box, and he insisted that each one in the line deposit their pistol or other weapon in the box before going through.

Q: And carrying weapons was . . .

DEVLIN: Carrying weapons was quite common, and every day that I went out to check on how the line was going, without exception, in looking in the box, there would be three to ten pistols in the box.

Q: What were the Dominicans after when they were coming to get a visa?

DEVLIN: Whatever kind of visa they were after, they were after immigration, essentially. The Dominican Republic economically cannot support its population. There was great unemployment there and under-employment. It is physically near the United States. It has a long tradition of ties to the United States culturally, economically; there are all sorts of ties to the United States. And by now, there are many, many personal and family relations in the United States.

Q: Where were they going for the most part?

DEVLIN: Initially, Florida. That was the major destination. Most, we knew, were thinking of staying, but also into New York, and pretty much diverse throughout the country.

Q: Being so close to the United States, and I understand that particularly from the Caribbean islands, many of those that come over both as non-immigrants or immigrants, but as you said, to work in the United States no matter what their stated goal was, many of them were working as domestic servants, is that correct?

DEVLIN: That's correct.

Q: I would imagine that you would have a great many irate American citizens calling, writing, complaining to their Congress because they were unable to get an illegal housemaid in. Was this the case?

DEVLIN: There was a lot of that, and it was close enough, too, so that in many instances, the American citizen came down. It was also close enough so that, once again, immigration attorneys came in to visit in order to push their cases.

Q: I almost hate to have this go on the record, but would you give me your impression of what you think of immigration attorneys?

DEVLIN: Well, it is not a very high opinion. I think the immigration attorneys that I've met--and there are quite a few by now--very, very few have impressed me as being terribly competent in their own field. Ethically, I don't give them very high marks, so overall, my impression and opinion of immigration attorneys is, at best, negative.

Q: I've heard consular officers describe immigration attorneys as "those who weren't fast enough to keep up with ambulances." What about Congress? Did you get much pressure from Congress?

DEVLIN: Yes. We got much more pressure from Congress in Santo Domingo than we did anywhere else. I think part of this was because of the proximity and because of the larger number of people who were coming in, and because of the larger Dominican community in the United States. So that I think there's a direct relationship with that to the extent of congressional pressure.

Q: Did you have any direction or pressure from the Department of State, the visa office, or from head of consular affairs? Or were you pretty well left alone?

DEVLIN: Pretty much left alone. One of the advantages of being that close on not just visas but on other matters, too, it was easy, convenient, and effective to just pick up the telephone and call the head of the visa office or whoever in whatever part of the SCA seemed to be appropriate to call. Also to do the same thing with interested parties in the United States, particularly, for example, in protection work.

Q: This would be like in Hong Kong, as I recall. When I served as consul general both in Seoul and in Saigon, I would be pulled out of bed at 3:00 o'clock in the morning and asked by someone about a visa case. I was not in a very good position to answer from my apartment. Did you have the same problem?

DEVLIN: No, because we were in the same time zone as the eastern United States.

Q: Would you in Hong Kong have that sort of a situation?

DEVLIN: In Hong Kong, no, I don't recall ever getting a call at night. We got a fair amount in the office.

Q: Who was the ambassador when you were in Santo Domingo?

DEVLIN: Good question. Ambassador Hurwitch.

Q: Was he a politically appointed ambassador?

DEVLIN: He's a career man.

Q: Did you find this was useful? Did he bother you with pressures, or did he leave you alone?

DEVLIN: Yes to both. There seemed to be almost a policy on the part of the Dominican Government to encourage emigration, and we would find that very high-ranking persons in the government would be applying whatever pressures they could on whatever person in the embassy they could, me, the ambassador, the third secretary, anyone, in order to push visas for their friend. The ambassador, on more than one occasion, did seek to put in a good word for some applicant that would be sponsored by somebody in a position of influence, would always do it in such a way, though, that obviously one could refuse, and very often I did refuse.

Q: You were running what can only be described as a visa mill. How did the staff, both the Dominican staff working for you and the Americans working for you, hold up under the pressures there?

DEVLIN: Well, throughout the consulate general; first we had a rotation of junior officers, and we moved those throughout each section within the whole consular office. To the degree possible, we moved the regularly assigned officers from one particular function to another, so that other than the person in charge of non-immigrant visas, we would not have any other one person who would spend all of their time doing non-immigrant visas. So we made an attempt to share the load, because the non-immigrant visa side was the most difficult.

Q: Did you have problems with officers turning sour, who had prejudices against either Dominicans or had a great deal of difficulty living with the fact that almost everybody they would see on a working basis is lying to them?

DEVLIN: Some of that, but a problem with the first junior officers, particularly non-immigrant visa workers was not that they would turn sour, but that they thought that the people really did deserve to come into the United States, and that we should be as little hindrance as possible, and that what we were doing was really rather archaic. We also had a problem with the young officers, because this was their first time in which they had been the object of rather lavish flattery, had been treated very royally by quite wealthy people in the community, had been guests at some rather fine homes, and they had difficulty appreciating that these people had friends who had friends who had friends who had friends, who wanted a visa, and that for these wealthy people, influential people, really, it was appropriate in their society for them to speak to a consular officer in behalf of somebody who was three or four or five stages away in terms of friendship, in order to facilitate a visa for them.

The way the system worked was that, "I will do you a favor, you will do me a favor." And each person does favors for those above him and those below him. In this way, the favor for Jose Mendez, who is a barber, goes from one of his clients to another one of his clients, each up at a higher level, until it reaches maybe a general, a colonel, an owner of a large establishment, a member of the Foreign Ministry, even a member of the Cabinet, even from the president's office, and in order for that person at the end of this to be able to show that he has authority, has power, and can, in fact, do things for his contacts below him, he will approach the embassy on a visa case.

We would receive pressures from all of these people. The junior officers had a great deal of trouble recognizing that their popularity--and they were popular--was not based entirely upon their handsomeness and their wit and their wisdom, but that there was, in fact, no such thing as a free lunch.

Q: Did any get over their head while you were there?

DEVLIN: No.

Q: No one was relieved of duty?

DEVLIN: No.

Q: How did you deal with this?

DEVLIN: In my weekly meetings, I raised it several times, and on an individual basis, and in talking to the heads of the immigrant visa and non-immigrant visa units, I kept emphasizing this.

Q: How was living as chief of the consular section, as consul general? How did you find living at Santo Domingo?

DEVLIN: The living was quite comfortable. Housing was very good. In that position, one was invited to virtually anything and everything, almost without end if one so chose, a very active social life. The Dominicans, as a people, are gracious and friendly. The problem which comes out into a social problem is that the Dominicans are gracious, they're friendly, intelligent, they like Americans, and they see nothing wrong with converting a purely social occasion into a time to press for visas for a friend.

Q: What about the fact that so many of the Dominicans were armed? You must have been refusing a great many visas. Would this cause any problems? You tell a person who's going to pick up a gun at the end of the day that, no, he can't have a visa.

DEVLIN: Well, the only problem that we had was for a while myself and the administrative officer received threats against our lives.

Q: Because of visas?

DEVLIN: Well, we didn't know. First, when I got there, there was always an armed policeman at my house, and then after we received these threats, then I had a bodyguard with me at all times. Then the admin section thinks that the threats were not really valid threats. They came to the conclusion that the threats were, in fact, sponsored from within the embassy for entirely internal purposes, in order to give somebody a promotion within the embassy, to do something or other. So with this conclusion, we were told that our lives were no longer in danger, so the bodyguards were removed. We still had the policeman at the house, as usual.

There was a constant awareness that a lot of people had guns, and it was very macho for people to have guns, to carry guns. In a volatile society like that, it was wise to be cautious. An American officer had been kidnapped several years before I was there. I remember one time when walking back from lunch three or four blocks away from my office, a Dominican attorney whom I knew pulled over. He was driving by and saw me, pulled over and just about hustled me into his car. The walk that I was taking would bring me right by the same side of the street as the presidential palace, which is presumably an area which would be pretty much under guard, and there are lots of guards there, also lots of people. So the attorney said to me, "You should never, never go out on a walk alone. You are known. Too many people here know who you are, and you're just exposing yourself needlessly to danger." Now, I think he was extremely over reactive, but nonetheless, I think there was probably something to it.

PATRICK F. MORRIS
Director, USAID
Santo Domingo (1977-1979)

Mr. Morris was born and raised in Montana. Educated at Georgetown University, Mexico City College, and San Marcos College, Lima, Peru, Mr. Morris served in the US Army in Europe during World War II, where he was captured and imprisoned by the German Army. He joined the newly established Point IV program in 1950 and worked with that agency and its successors in various senior level capacities in Washington, D.C., in Paris and throughout Latin America. His final posting was in the Dominican Republic, where he served as Director of the US AID Mission. Mr. Morris was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy in 2007.

Q: You were in the Dominican Republic from when to when?

MORRIS: I was in the Dominican Republic beginning of ’77 to the middle of ’79.

Q: Did you, when you went to the Dominican Republic and even slightly before that, we had a new administration, the Carter Administration, which I understand had a different outlook toward AID. Did you feel that where you were?

MORRIS: Yes, I did, but before we get to that I think that there is one particular incident in my career that I think is of some significance in terms of how AID made its decisions on where money would go. And this has relevance to the Carter Administration approach.

During the time that I was in the program job, deputy assistant administrator for programs, there was a movement in the Congress to redefine how our assistance money would be used and it was determined, by the Congress, that we should concentrate our assistance on the poorest of the poor. I do not know whether you remember that. And this meant in effect, for Latin America, this meant that of all the countries in Latin America there were probably two, maybe three that could be considered the poorest of the poor.

Q: Haiti always being one.

MORRIS: Yes, Haiti, Bolivia and maybe Paraguay but that was it. So all of the time that I had that job I was trying to defend a program in Latin America that had been eminently successful in terms of providing effective assistance and being able to document the effectiveness of the assistance. So here I was trying to defend all of our Latin American programs that were in existence on the basis of their importance to the United States and on the basis of their effectiveness. Because of this push in the Congress the central AID office, which was program policy and planning, that had to sign off on all of our programs was not very sympathetic.

After I had fought tooth and nail to keep some kind of a program going in Latin America and fought within AID and then fought again with the bureau of the budget, now OMB, to keep Latin America at some kind of a decent programming level. Then, after all of that was finished, the program was put together at a reduced level to be sent up to the Hill. It had to be signed not only by AID Administrator Robert Parker, it had to be signed by Henry Kissinger, who was then Secretary of State; this was the Ford Administration. And so Parker made an appointment with Kissinger to bring the program up to have it signed. I got a call from Herman Klein, who was then the assistant administrator for Inter-American Affairs and he said, "You put this program together and Parker is going up to see Kissinger and he wants representatives from each one of the bureaus to be with him in case Kissinger has any questions. So you go representing us." So I went to the meeting. Kissinger took the package and he flipped through the pages, this is the entire meeting; it lasted about 10 minutes, maybe 15, but Kissinger opened the document, started to flip through it and he said to Parker, where is Brazil? And Parker looked at me and you know, I would have said it was eliminated by central AID but before I could say anything, Kissinger did not even wait for an answer. He went further on and he said where is Mexico? And Parker looked around and Kissinger did not even give him a chance, he said, "I am supposed to sign this document? Here are the two most politically important countries in this hemisphere outside the United States and we do not even have them in this program." He said, "What kind of an agency are you running, Bob?" And Parker said, "Well, you know it is the Congress; the Congress has decided that all this money goes to the poorest of the poor." And Kissinger said, "Look, I am going to sign this but this is the last document that I will ever sign that does not have something in it for Brazil and Mexico." And that was the end of the meeting and he did not talk about anything; he did not talk about anything else, he did not talk about anything in the program, any of the other areas of the world or anything else.

I cite this for two reasons. One because of the irony of it all, but secondly because Kissinger, when he became national security advisor and later secretary of state, really did not have a clue about Latin America. You know, I mean, his whole orientation was otherwise. But during his time evidently he got the message that these countries were important to us. And I will never forget that, because it is, to me, and I think that it goes to some of the questions that you have been asking about what role did the ambassador play and so forth in these discussions; to me, coming out of the Latin American area probably had a lot to do with my own view, but there was never any doubt in my mind that the real reason that we were in Latin America was for political reasons, not economic reasons; for political reasons. And to disregard the political reality when you are putting together a program did not make any sense at all.

Now, when the Carter Administration came in they were imbued with this, the poorest of the poor and so we got another dose from the Carter people about what you could do- where you ought to be concentrating your funds in Latin America. Well, by that time I was in the Dominican Republic. And of course the other thing that I resented from the Carter Administration was the assumption that since we had been under Republican administrations of Nixon and Ford that everybody working for AID must be Republican.

Q: That happens again and again with administrations.

MORRIS: Yes, exactly. These turnovers; and I am a registered Democrat. In fact, I am trying to remember now where in my career; oh, it was before I went to Paris that I had come out of Venezuela, I was in the State Department position as director of Bolivia/Chilean affairs and I was waiting for a new assignment from AID overseas and I had a very good friend who had become chief of personnel in AID. This was during the Nixon Administration. That was when I went to Paris because he told me, frankly, you are a registered Democrat. And he said do not expect to go out as an AID director as a registered Democrat right now. The Nixon people had looked up my voter registration. These things go through phases, of course, even within an administration; as they get towards the end they have already placed all their political buddies. But I went to Paris because, well, I liked the idea of going to Paris but besides that I could not have gotten an AID director's job during the Nixon Administration because I was a registered Democrat. And then the Carter Administration comes in and of course I had been named an AID director during the Ford Administration, to the Dominican Republic, and there is no doubt that Ford was a breath of fresh air during those brief years he was there.

But anyway, there were no political considerations when I went to the Dominican Republic but then here come the Carter people and they are assuming that everybody was a political appointee of the Republicans and you had to prove yourself all over again. I was a registered Democrat and I had been stopped from getting an AID director's job during the Nixon Administration and now I was in the Dominican Republic and the new Carter people were coming in and saying, you know, he must be a Republican if he has got an AID director's job in the Dominican Republic. But I was not intimately aware of all of the machinations going on in Washington during the Carter Administration. I had already set up; well first of all, I inherited a program in the Dominican Republic that was large and diverse and had well known political objectives that was working very well.

When the new assistant administrator for Latin American affairs of AID, one of his first visits was to the Dominican Republic; Abelardo Valdez, a Texan, later became State Department chief of protocol, and he had been an intern, he was a Harvard graduate law school, bright guy, he had been a scholastic intern in the White House when Lyndon Johnson was president. And he came in with all of the moxie of the Carter people and set out to change everything and one of his first visits was to the Dominican Republic and he was my houseguest while he was there. I took him around, we talked, I showed him our projects. I was surprised at what a limited attention span he had. He could not concentrate on anything for over five minutes so it was very difficult to try to get him interested in what we were doing and why we were doing it. So I was not sure when he left what his impressions were of my program or the job we were doing or anything else.

Then, right after that, we had a visit from the new head of AID, and I am trying to remember his name now, ex-governor of Ohio, a Democrat; a nice guy.

Q: Celeste or something?

MORRIS: No, no; it was John Gilligan. A very nice guy, Irish-American, and he was very different from Valdez and was interested in everything we were doing and was very complimentary of what he saw. Well, he- and I have already described my conversations with Bob Hurwitch about whether or not we should cut back the program or whether we should just maybe even begin to phase out and Hurwitch agreed with me that with the coming change of government in the Dominican Republic we ought not to make any decisions until the new government came in and we saw what it looked like, and in the meantime we would carry on the projects that we had there and the programs that we had, doing the best we could. Gilligan understood this and agreed.

An interesting sidelight on this. Years later, I still see Valdez from time to time. He left AID, became chief of protocol at the State Department then he joined a law firm with ex-Senator Tidings and has been practicing law in the District ever since. And I see him from time to time and at one point, years ago when I talked to him, I asked him, what was his impression, and his people in Washington, of my program in the Dominican Republic? And he said oh, you were always known as a producer. He said you were always coming up with new and interesting projects. And I thought well, at least I had a good reputation; after they got to know the program they came to appreciate the fact that we were doing the kinds of things that even the Carter Administration could support.

Q: Well, when you got there in '77, the Dominican Republic, could you first explain what the, sort of the political and economic situation was and all? You know, who was president and all that.

MORRIS: Yes. When I got to the Dominican Republic- oh, by the way, just one little side note but it was very endearing for me. When I was sworn in to go to the Dominican Republic, they have these formal swearing in ceremonies at the State Department, and a lot of people were invited. My wife was there, a couple of my kids, I guess, but I did not invite very many people; I sort of figured it was fairly routine and the people who put these swearing in ceremonies together just routinely invite certain people, and I was delighted to see Ambassador Bunker, who came. Because Bunker, beside the fact that I worked with him, not for him but I worked with him; he was the head of the Panama Canal negotiating team and I was Panama affairs, so I knew him well and I was happy to see that he had come to my swearing in. And he made a point of, after my little acceptance speech, to come up to me and wish me the best of luck. In fact, I referred to him, when I saw him in the audience, I referred to him in my acceptance speech since Bunker was one of the chief negotiators to put into place a transition government in the Dominican Republic after the overthrow of the dictator Trujillo. And he had lived in the Dominican Republic during those negotiations for about six or eight months during a very dicey time; this was when Lyndon Johnson was in the White House and he sent this massive military force to the Dominican Republic after Trujillo had been assassinated. So Bunker was there, under OAS

auspices, to stabilize things there and to put in place a transitional government and then preside over elections, democratic elections. Well, those elections resulted in the election of Joaquin Balaguer.

Joaquin Balaguer had been an intimate associate of Trujillo, almost maybe an administrative assistant, chief of staff, but one of the most talented Dominicans in the history of the country. He never married, seemed a bit effeminate in mannerisms but was a genius in political intrigue and political operations. Balaguer and one of the best orators in the history of Latin America, really a splendid orator, and oratory in Latin America is something that is prized. Most of the countries that I served in, most of the public figures were good orators, but Balaguer was superb. His oratory captured the imagination of the Dominican people.

Now, that was in, let me see, I was in Venezuela at the time, that was, maybe 1966, it was probably 1966 when Balaguer was elected. Well here now it is 1976, '77 and Balaguer is still president. He has already been reelected once and new elections are coming up and he was gong to run the third term- No, I guess that is not right; there were term limits. I got there in the last half of his second term. But Balaguer was going blind and in fact for all practical purposes he was already blind. He needed people to read documents for him; he could not read the documents. But he had a tremendous memory and he was in control and he had a number of basic philosophical viewpoints about leadership. One of them was that a leader to be remembered had to construct large monumental projects. So during his presidency he was a builder. He did urban renewal in the old part of Santa Domingo and he had monuments built all over the place and that was what he imagined his legacy to the future would be. New bridges over the Ozama River, a new airport, a new concert hall and civic complex. After I left in another term he built a large monument to Columbus' discovery of America. Remember, the first Spanish settlement in the New World was in Santo Domingo.

He was also very tight with money and he really controlled his budgets and he did not want to have a lot of foreign debt. And so he was very careful about which programs, which projects AID might get into that was not going to cost the Dominican Government money. He recognized that the country needed a lot of things; a great deal of, terrible poverty in the Dominican Republic, a legacy of the Trujillo years and before, the colonial years; a large rural population in poverty. But he did not really have any understanding of development, long-term development needs and he depended on his ministers to make decisions in these areas. And we had very good relationships with the ministers that we were dealing with. I had very good relationships at all levels. One of the things that I was struck with in the Dominican Republic that in the private sector there were a lot of really outstanding people that were well educated and could make, and were making, a lot of money for themselves and were making some contributions to long-term development in the Dominican Republic so I cultivated those people as well. Our program followed the old Institute model only to a degree because by that time almost 10 years had passed since the Institute had been absorbed but we did have projects in agriculture. I was just putting together a possible education sector loan at the time that I left and that- my idea was that we would leave it until the new government came in to see whether they would be interested in the program because education was an area where the Dominicans were really in bad shape; they were in terrible shape. The level of public education at the primary and secondary levels was miserable.

Q: Well what was the problem?

MORRIS: Lack of a system, really. They had a very rudimentary system of elementary schools and secondary schools, teachers were poorly paid, they were not well trained and only the private schools could you get any kind of a decent education at the elementary and secondary levels. And of course you had the Catholic Church and you had the parochial schools but they were mostly in the urban areas. The rural areas, they were just not covered. And of course the parochial schools charged tuition and the poor people had to depend on the public schools and the public schools were in very bad shape lacking in space, materials, an qualified teachers. So this was an area that I was interested in doing something about and I brought a team down from Washington to do an education sector survey to begin to put together possible projects within the education sector where we might make a difference.

Another area that I took a personal interest in was employment. The unemployment rate was 20 percent, 25 percent and this was at a time when there was a certain amount of prosperity in the Dominican Republic; they were not doing badly. Their primary export, of course, was sugar and of course then they had tourism and some mineral exports; those were probably the large foreign currency earners. But they were not sufficient to employ the large numbers of people that were moving from the rural countryside into the urban areas.

Q: What about Haiti? What was the impact of Haiti on- I would think that, you know, the people, the Dominicans are moving into the cities the Haitians would be moving into the sugar fields or something of this nature.

MORRIS: Well it is interesting. You know, I can see that you are quite well informed about certain aspects of the Latin American picture and I am glad you ask the question because it is relevant and a lot of people do not know but the Dominicans got their independence <u>not</u> from Spain; the Dominicans got their independence from Haiti. The Haitian revolution against France spread into the Dominican Republic and the first Republic of Haiti took over the Spanish side of the island as well. So for two years here this larger piece of the island Espanola was being governed by these Haitian revolutionaries that had overthrown the French Government. And of course the Dominicans, who still declared their loyalty to Spain, were incensed that they were being governed by these wild black people from Haiti. So it took two years before the Dominicans were able to militarily defeat the Haitians and declare their independence. But that's enough history of the Dominican Republic.

Q: Yes, let us talk about the time you were there.

MORRIS: Right, exactly. But that particular historical event had a lasting effect on the Dominican view of Haiti. The border between Haiti and the Dominican Republic has always been closed and not easy to cross but when the Dominican Republic, under Trujillo primarily, expanded its sugar plantations- the Dominican Republic is a natural area for growth of sugar cane. It is like Cuba. Sugar cane can be grown in large quantities economically on both of those islands; much higher yield in sugar than in Louisiana, for example, or any place in the U.S. So the Dominican Republic under Trujillo had become a major sugar exporter and the sugar cane

producers, cultivators of sugar cane needed a large influx of seasonal labor which the Dominican Republic itself could not supply so they imported Haitians, contract labors who worked under slave conditions, slave-like conditions. They contracted- Trujillo contracted directly with the Haitian Government and brought Haitians in. The Dominicans, by that time most everything in the Dominican Republic was owned by Trujillo; he just kept taking over private properties in his own name. And the Dominican Government paid the Haitian Government and of course the Haitian workers were treated pretty much like slave labor for generations. And in fact a large portion of the Dominican population is African-American, not completely, not exclusively but primarily as the result of the large influx every year, year after year of Haitian labor moving across the border into the Dominican Republic. There was never really good relations between the two because the Haitians felt exploited, and they were. There were people in Haiti who were making a lot of money from this arrangement but it was not the people who were doing the work.

Q: From your perspective how concerned were we about Cuba there? During that time.

MORRIS: It is interesting. You know Cuba, for some reason or another, did not really seem to come up at all. I remember when I was in Venezuela that there was a real concern and I think that I mentioned this, that the Cubans had actually financed the sending of arms to guerrillas in the mountains in Venezuela. But for some reason or another and I am not sure why Cuba just did not even seem to exist. You know, Puerto Rico was the problem and it did not have anything to do with politics, it had to do with Dominicans wanting to get into the United States and the easiest way for them to do it was to cross into Puerto Rico on makeshift boats and take on Puerto Rican identities and then come to the United States.

Q: Did you find- one remembers with Trujillo there was some congressman, this was the same with Somoza in Nicaragua, some congressmen became sort of too palsy walsy with both the Somoza- the Trujillo regime. Was there any carry over of this? In other words, very close ties to the Dominican Republic within Congress, did you find?

MORRIS: No. I think by that time, by the time I went there I think that particular episode was in the past. And as far as I know there was general ignorance in the Congress with regard to the Dominican Republic. We had a number of visitors. Andrew Young came down. Andrew Young at that time was the U.S. ambassador to the United Nations. He came down on a visit and he had some people from the Congress in his delegation and I was really almost shocked at how ignorant they were of the Dominican Republic and what it was all about. And there were a couple of staff people that I knew, that I had known from my Panama Affairs days who were on that junket. A young guy, later- he was out of Kennedy's office, I cannot remember his name now, he was a bit more knowledgeable but the congressional people on that delegation were not knowledgeable at all and so I suspect that the Dominicans had probably neglected trying to romance American congressmen.

Q: Well then, you were there until '79. Did you sort of feel that the Dominican Republic was sort of out of the Latin American circuit in a way?

MORRIS: No.

Q: Events in Latin America did not particularly-?

MORRIS: No. It is interesting. I understand where your question is coming from. This is a Caribbean country but the Caribbean and Central America were sort of tied together under the old Institute of Inter-American Affairs and so there was a long history. Even during Trujillo's time the Institute had some programs in the Dominican Republic. This was a dictatorship, a military dictatorship but we were doing business with military dictators in other countries as well. You know, the Somozas were in Nicaragua; we had programs in Nicaragua all the time the Somozas were in power. So no, the Dominican Republic was just part of our historical relations with Latin America.

Q: What really were you getting, not sort of the official reading but in talking to people in the Dominican Republic about 15 years after but about our sending troops there after- Was this a good thing or was it resented? How did people-?

MORRIS: Well it is interesting, you know, because there were two areas under the Roosevelt corollary to the Monroe Doctrine where we used these fig leafs to justify our intervention. You know, the first interventions took place during World War I under Wilson in both Nicaragua and the Dominican Republic; Haiti and the Dominican Republic, both of them. We had troops in Haiti and the Dominican Republic in 1917 and we also had troops in Nicaragua. At that time it was for the collection of foreign debts. Because the Germans were trying to collect money from the Dominicans and the Haitians and Wilson was afraid that the Germans would actually invade to collect their money so he sent troops to both Haiti and the Dominican Republic as a precaution. But they stayed there until 1932. In fact, it was the United States that put Trujillo into the leadership in the Dominican Republic. There was a long period in which the United States military was the governing force in the Dominican Republic, the same as in Nicaragua. In fact, both Trujillo and Somoza were products of U.S. military intervention in those two countries. So the Dominicans, when Trujillo was assassinated and it looked like the government was disintegrating, they probably welcomed- I do not know what the reaction was at the time but I never, ever heard, while I was there, any real resentment of U.S. occupation.

LOUIS F. LICHT III
Political Officer
Santo Domingo (1978-1980)

Mr. Licht was born in Maine and raised in New York. Educated at Yale University and the Fletcher School, he served in the US Army in Vietnam and joined the State Department in 1974. Mr. Licht served in Washington, dealing with Latin American Affairs as well as Arms Control and Nuclear matters. His foreign posts were Santo Domingo, Lima, Canberra, Yerevan and Chisnau (Moldova). Mr. Licht was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy in 2000.

Q: *So, around 1978, you were seeing another way to...*

LICHT: This opportunity with the Dominican Republic came up. It was an exchange program. So, I went to Dominican Republic as a political officer for two years. We arrived there almost a day that Balaguer lost the election [May 16, 1978], and had to give up the reign of power. Ambassador Bob Yost, who had just arrived in country, parked outside Balaguer's residence in his black car and made his presence known. The United States was watching what was going on, and Balaguer finally...

Q: *We were sort of encouraging them to have a peaceful changeover.*

LICHT: A lot of characters ran in the last election. This was 40 years later.

Q: *How did you find (Ambassador Robert Lloyd) Yost? Did you get to know him very well?*

LICHT: Not very well, but he was a very approachable man. He was a man who was dignified but informal. I remember him showing me how to take pictures when we went on our trips. He was a nice man. I think some people thought he was a little hesitant in doing things, and taking dramatic action, and they got a little impatient with him. But, he had good instincts, and spoke good Spanish. He had a lot of experience in the Foreign Service.

Rand is wonderful. I don't know if you have ever been to the Dominican Republic, but it still has, physically, a colonial embassy. It's a lovely residence. The chancery is right nearby, and all whitewashed. We had the pool in between. The Yosts were pretty traditional Foreign Service-type people. I guess sort of on the edge were the wives who were no longer required to do things. I liked Bob Yost [Editor's Note: Ambassador Yost presented his credentials on May 15, 1978 and departed post on June 7, 1982].

Q: *When you arrived there in 1978, what was the political situation?*

LICHT: The country was going through this transition from (Joaquin) Balaguer, which really was a transition from Trujillo to quasi-democratic government. Balaguer had been its number one man. So, it was a question of whether democracy was taking hold. Of course, the country was in reasonably bad economy shape, and has been ever since. The U.S. intervention of 1966 still dominated conversations, especially as the evenings got later. The U.S., of course, was the biggest presence of any foreign power by far. There was an extensive AID mission.

There was also promotion of democracy, but not in the same intensity as I saw years later in Moldova or Armenia, where one was really bringing in a whole new idea to a different part of the world.

I know the political counselor was a little concerned about his security. I don't think we were overly concerned about security. In the middle of my tour there had been a hurricane, a major hurricane, blew all the trees around the city, made it look completely different.

Q: How did the embassy respond to the hurricane? [Editor's Note: Hurricane David hit on August 31st 1979, with125 mph winds in Santo Domingo, and Category 5 winds elsewhere in the country and killed more than 2,000 people.

LICHT: Lots of support from the AID mission and I think we were pretty effective. I happened to be on leave when the hurricane occurred and heard about it and then I called up the embassy. They said, "You can come back but your family has to stay behind." I remember getting off the plane, the New York Times had a picture of me, in the airport with an airplane absolutely upside down on a hanger. And we landed there, by golly! I think we were pretty effective, what we could do under those circumstances the U.S. did. No one was killed, which was amazing, considering

Q: How did you find the government there? You're sort of the new boy on the block but you're looking at it as a political officer. Did you find it, had it recovered from the Trujillo time? Was there a lot of corruption, cronyism or what have you?

LICHT: The military had a very strong hand, still. I think there was plenty of cronyism and we all accepted that was probably the case. It was a Latin American country evolving from a traditional sort of dictatorship. But there was some hope for democracy. There were real parties that were working hard and there was the PRD (Dominican Revolutionary Party), which was a strong party, opposed to Balaguer's party. And so there was a real political struggle going on that basically was adjudicated by probably a reasonably fair election. I'll have to look back and see exactly what we thought about it at that time. I was only there for the first two years, that's all.

What was noticeable and what eventually became apparent is that the new president, Guzman's family was stealing the country blind. In fact, as you might remember just before his term ended he shot himself and one of the interpretations was that he was in effect protecting his family honor. To the extent you could see it from the embassy and some could see it more clearly than the others and you could see it by talking to American businessmen, it was still a corrupt place. Who you knew was more important, who you slipped something to was more important.

But a lot of us, you use your imagination. Here you are, you arrive new, at your first post, you're a political officer, you're grasping the language or getting it more and more all the time, people are telling you things. The first line of defense for the local elite, the embassy groupies, the people who always showed up at receptions. Maybe somewhere along the line you penetrate. It was a good group of people down there, though. Peter Romero, the assistant secretary for Latin America, was on his first tour down there and Nino Gutierrez, he was ambassador to Nicaragua, I think he's Pete's number two, now, in the bureau, also started there.

Q: Was there concern that we were acting a little too much like a colonial power?

LICHT: Not on our part. I'm sure there was. I don't remember it as a feeling in the embassy there. They were soliciting us. One of my jobs was to be labor officer there, it came along with the other stuff. So I was the main contact with the labor movement and the AFL/CIO's problem down there. I spent a good deal of my time fending off people who wanted to go to the United States but were not getting visas, or sending over the right visa slips so that the consular officer wouldn't refuse them. I have to admit that in one case, I convinced them that the applicant was legit. He received a visa, went to the U.S., he and his wife, and took the union treasury. So that

wasn't the high point at all. I was very disappointed. But I sort of had that sector of politics to myself.

Q: Did Haiti loom at all on you, or was it a different world?

LICHT: Haiti turned out to be a different world when I went over there to look at it but the Haitian workers are an important part of the agricultural scene, because they harvest the crop. There were very important distinctions about race, if you were very black or light. The Haitians were very black. So Haiti was a presence in the Dominican mind and not in ours. We didn't see any threat or anything like that. The history, the Haitians, they had dominated the island for a while.

Q: How about Cuba?

LICHT: There was concern that Jose Pena Gomez, who was head of the PRD, black and very fiery, very smart and never made it to the presidency, he died recently, that he might have close relations with Cuba. And then Juan Bosch, who was the other, elderly political figure, the counterpart to Balaguer, his relations with Cuba were considered important. So those were things we were concerned about. I guess the Dominican government reassured us but it was always a question.

Q: As a political officer, did this mean you got out quite a bit and talked to people and all that?

LICHT: Well I certainly tried. Occasionally I left the city and I tried to talk to as many people as I could. They tended to be younger ones. The political counselor pretty much wanted to dominate all the important people.

Q: Who was the political counselor?

LICHT: His name was John King. John F. King, he was a journalist before joining State in 1962. He came in in public affairs position and later became the Department spokesman for Kissinger for a number of years. Then he became director of Andean affairs and then he became political counselor in the Dominican Republic. I think he went to Argentina as political counselor. He was a Foreign Service Reserve officer, but always at high levels, an excellent writer.

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Those years I was working in the Dominican Republic, it amazed me how much information that was dependent on airgrams from the Dominican Republic. And it seemed as if the political wheels just went around a lot faster than other places, so that it ginned up all this interesting stuff in this little place. And in a way the stuff you got from there really overshadowed a lot of the stuff you got from places which were more important, like Mexico.

There were embassy officers in the Dominican Republic who just loved the place and they made very good contacts and being a small place you could touch base with a whole bunch of people. So is this the center of the world? No, by golly, but there's plenty to analyze.

JAMES L. TULL
Deputy Chief of Mission
Santo Domingo (1978-1981)

Mr. Tull was born on December 5, 1930 in Iowa. He received his BA in 1957 and his MS in 1958 from the University of Colorado. He served overseas in the US Navy from 1951 to 1955. As a member of the State Department, he served in Colombia, England, Uruguay, the Dominican Republic, Cyprus, and Costa Rica. Mr. Tull was interviewed by Raymond Ewing on May 31, 2001.

Q: And from EUR/EX you went abroad?

TULL: Yes, Ambassador Robert Yost was just finishing up his tour as a senior inspector and had been named as chief of mission to the Dominican Republic. I had put my name out and was lucky enough to be selected by him as his DCM. I was particularly fortunate as Bob himself had had several DCM-ships- with his experience as senior inspector, I really received comprehensive training in a lot of very basic areas with any No. 2 must have.

Q: He did not have experience or background in Latin American affairs, did he?

TULL: No, he had earlier been our ambassador in Rwanda and had substantial African and European experience.

Q: How did you prepare yourself for this assignment? You had Spanish. Did you go to the DCM course?

TULL: Yes, and it was a very good one- two weeks in the Virginia countryside with nothing else to do but plan and study for the job ahead. I also took some Spanish brush-up. Language does not come easy to me and it had been five years since I left Montevideo.

Q: So you went down to Santo Domingo about the same time as Ambassador Yost?

TULL: Yes, we both arrived in August, 1978, just a few days before Antonio Guzmán Fernandez was inaugurated president of the Republic. He was the leader of the Dominican Revolutionary Party, the PRD, with which we had not had a very happy relationship. In 1965, President Lyndon Johnson, claiming the country might become "another Cuba" if the PRD succeeded in ousting the existing military government, ordered American forces to intervene. Our 101st Airborne Division fought several pitched battles in the streets of downtown Santo Domingo against determined PRD forces. So I anticipated a touchy "getting to know you" period. But the PRD went forward without a frown or grimace and we got along just fine.

Q: Do you think that this was due to the Carter administration? That it made a difference in terms of their perception of our attitude toward them?

TULL: Absolutely; in fact they had just had a graphic illustration of this. A short time before we were to leave for Santo Domingo, some elements in the Dominican army tried to intervene and halt the election vote count as they had done so many times before. Via the CAS and directly, we really raised unshirted hell about this, the military backed down and the voting proceeded, sealing Guzmán's victory. I'm certain this blotted out or at least dimmed some of the bitter memories of 1965.

Q: Did we hold back in terms of aid to see what their reactions would be?

TULL: No, the USG already had a fairly substantial AID program up and running when we arrived, and a small military assistance program, too. If anything, these increased in the first year. Then in August 1979, hurricanes "David" and "Frederick" struck within a week of each other. Disaster relief grew enormously, and this went on for another twelve to fifteen months. So we certainly supported them as best we could.

Q: Was there was a great deal of damage from the hurricanes?

TULL: The destruction was tremendous. The "eye" of David passed about twenty miles west of Santo Domingo and both the city and the countryside were devastated. They stopped counting the dead at 2,000- electric power was not returned in Santo Domingo until November, and there were many more months ahead of black-outs in the campo. Winds were 140-150 miles per hour, and stripped the land bare. Our house was on a small rise about a mile or so from the ocean- when David finally moved on, we had a broad ocean view!

Q: What sort of assistance were we giving? Relief or reconstruction?

TULL: While I was there, it was mostly immediate relief – food and medicine initially, then temporary shelter as quickly as we could. The hardship was awful. But there was no looting. When relief supplies started to pile up, our AID director sent two of his drivers out to see if any was reaching the "black market," if they could purchase any on the street. They never could, not once, and Santo Domingo is a city crowded with poor even in good times.

Q: Besides disaster relief, what other types of things was our AID mission engaged in?

TULL: The same kinds of programs found at any AID mission- basic human need goals: health, education, agricultural assistance, some financial assistance mostly in the form of loans, and maternal child care. As I mentioned, we also had a modest military assistance effort- again, mainly loans and training, no MAP (Military Assistance Program), plus a full array of the other USG agencies which are part of most embassies.

Q: Peace Corps?

TULL: Yes, I recall we had about 100 volunteers, mostly stationed on small agricultural projects in the west near the Haitian border.

Q: Was the border with Haiti closed?

TULL: In a strict sense, no. The ambassador made one trip over and back, but permission signed personally by both presidents had to be obtained first. I don't know of anyone else who undertook this, but there was a large amount of illegal contraband of all types moving across the border daily.

Q: But there have been times when the border was sealed and almost nothing moved.

TULL: Yes, during frequent periods of tension between the two. There is a long and bloody history between Haiti and the Dominican Republic. In 1937, the dictator Trujillo had 17-20,000 Haitian cane cutters massacred for encroaching on the border and in colonial times, Haiti invaded the Dominican Republic twice. Relations were always a little nervous.

Q: The Dominican Republic, in terms of its foreign relations, always looked to the U.S. quite a bit. What sort of relations did it have with Cuba?

TULL: The PRD was a member of the Socialist International (SI) and its secretary general, Jose Francisco Peña Gomez, was head of SI's Latin American office; so they did have frequent contacts with Cuba, the Sandinista regime in Nicaragua at that time, and other parties we were not particularly happy with. Frictions arose from time to time, but these never became a major factor in our relations with the Guzmán government.

Q: You mentioned Trujillo. He left in the early '60s prior to the U.S. intervention?

TULL: He left feet first- assassinated in 1961. We had broken relations a year earlier, but maintained consular ties and a consulate general, headed by Henry Dearborn who you'll recall was my DCM in Colombia and had gotten me my job in London. We were very active in the movement to oust Trujillo and in fact, had, via the consulate general, provided the weapons that eventually were used to kill him. I have always felt- and this is strictly personal- that Henry never received the ambassadorship he deserved as neither the Kennedy not Johnson administrations wanted to expose him in confirmation hearings to questioning about this. It was several years later during hearings that Senator Frank Church held that the full story of our role in Trujillo's death was finally revealed. Even twenty years after his death, when Trujillo's name would come up, Dominicans would all begin to speak in hushed voices and cast furtive glances around.

Q: At the time you were there, there was a large Dominican community in this country. Was there a lot of pressure on the embassy for visas?

TULL: Enormous pressure, every day and at every social function. The early morning crowds on the visa line were huge; one of our busiest consular offices was out fraud unit. We even had a former U.S. ambassador to the Dominican Republic hustling visas for a group of Chinese and Dominican businessmen. Yost had to call him in and warn him not to use his courtesy diplomatic passport to clear them and their luggage through customs!

Q: Was there a large American community in the Dominican Republic?

TULL: I'd estimate the business community at around 300-400 in Santo Domingo proper, with an Alcoa plant and a number of off-shore textile factories scattered about in the countryside.

Q: Of course, there are a special category of Dominicans that come to the United States: the baseball players.

TULL: And there are a host of these, especially from the small village of San Pedro de Macorís, about thirty miles east of Santo Domingo. In a baseball-mad country, in Macorís they are particularly mad. It is a grubby little town, distinguished only by the mansions which hometown boys now in the Major Leagues build for themselves and their families. The game was introduced by our military during the early days of the 20th century and the Dominican Republic, along with Puerto Rico, Venezuela, and some other Central American countries, have a winter Caribbean League in which some American players and managers participate in our off-season. My team was the "Aguilas," or Eagles, which Tommy Lasorda of Dodger fame managed for a couple of seasons.

Q: Did you have quite a bit of contact with President Guzmán and his top people, or did the ambassador do that himself?

TULL: Early on, we decided to split the contact work as follows: the ambassador would take the president, vice president, cabinet officers, and military chiefs; I would do the rest. This of course was not "hard and fast" and looking back, I think our convenience played a big role too. I knew the president and his family pretty well and never felt constricted in my work. Guzmán and his PRD group were bright and eager to succeed, although I understand that later on, the old Dominican bugaboo, corruption, really got out of control. Tragically, Guzmán committed suicide a few days before the end of his term because of corruption charges against members of his family.

Q: Where did you go at the end of your tour in Santo Domingo in 1981?

TULL: I left the Dominican Republic in July without an onward assignment. In the course of my consultations in Washington, I ran across Ray Ewing. He had just been named as ambassador to Cyprus and was looking for a DCM. Events took their course.

MICHAEL M. MAHONEY
Consular Officer
Santo Domingo (1979-1982)

Mr. Mahoney was born on June 24, 1944 in Massachusetts. He received his BA from Saint Michaels College in 1966. He received his MA from the University of Wyoming in 1969. He served in the Peace Corps from 1968 to 1969. His career included positions in countries including Trinidad, Tobago, Greece, the

Dominican Republic, Canada, and Italy. Mr. Mahoney was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy in 1995.

Q: Where did you go from there?

MAHONEY: I then went to Santo Domingo, to run first the Immigrant-Visa Section, and then the Non-Immigrant-Visa Section.

Q: So you went there when?

MAHONEY: The summer of 1979 to the summer of 1982.

Q: What were the political and economic situations in Santo Domingo at the time you went there?

MAHONEY: This was about 14 years after the American intervention of 1965. The political situation was that, for the first time, I think, they had had a peaceful transfer of power, in an election that took place in 1978, from one party to another.

The economic situation was reasonably optimistic. It seemed to me to be a very peaceful country, poor but developing, with a lot of emphasis being given to tourism and to a tax-free manufacturing zone. But still a country that had developed a great deal of interest in immigration to the United States after the 1965 intervention.

Trujillo had been the dictator from 1930 to 1961 and had basically closed up the country. There was almost no immigration. He didn't want anybody getting out and organizing exile movements against him.

There was a period of turmoil after his death, and then the Marines went in, in 1965.

I think this stimulated, on the part of the population, a huge interest in everything American, and a tremendous amount of interest in getting out of the country. This interest, combined with a really tremendous talent on the part of many people in the Dominican Republic for forgery and for fraudulent activities, made it one of the most difficult places in the world to run the visa business.

Q: Did you get an idea of where the Dominicans went in the United States and what they were doing? I realize they were only in the first generation, but where they might be pointed toward?

MAHONEY: By 1979, when I went there, at least 100,000 of them had already gone to the United States. The great bulk of them were in New York City, lesser amounts had gone to Puerto Rico, and a smaller amount had gone to Florida, the Miami area. But the great bulk were in New York.

Q: What were they doing?

MAHONEY: A huge number of them seemed to be working in the garment trade, and others seemed to be in various kinds of laboring positions, auto-body spray painters, that sort of thing.

What was interesting to me about the immigrants from the Dominican Republic was that, in the time that I was there, there were no third-preference immigrants, for example, not a single one.

Q: Third preference being?

MAHONEY: Third preference in those days was people of high professional development -- doctors, orchestra conductors, university professors. Almost all the people who were immigrating either went as brothers and sisters of Americans, as domestic workers, or as spouses of American citizens. And a huge amount of that immigration was initially accomplished by means of fraudulent marriages.

Q: What was visa work like when you got there?

MAHONEY: It was very intense and demanding, because the Dominicans saw it as a chance to change their entire lives. The interest in the visa business ranged all way up to the highest levels of the society. It was not unusual for me to be called by the deputy foreign minister, sometimes the foreign minister, of the country, intervening in visa cases.

Q: Who was the ambassador, and how did he/she operate?

MAHONEY: The ambassador was Bob Yost, who had been the deputy inspector general before that and had come in the wake of a scandal involving a man named Bob Hurwitch, who was ambassador and had been removed and plead guilty to a felony of misuse of embassy funds and laborers in connection with building himself a retirement beach house in the Dominican Republic.

Yost, therefore, came in on a wave of being squeaky clean. And he was pretty good about visas. He generally said that they had to be kept away from him and from the DCM. With two or three exceptions, among hundreds and hundreds of cases, I didn't feel that he ever brought to bear undue pressure about visa cases. In fact, he generally just refused to involve himself in them. He was very good that way.

Q: How big was the Visa Section?

MAHONEY: The Non-Immigrant-Visa Section had four or five officers and about eight or ten FSNs, and the Immigrant-Visa Section also had four or five officers and about 35 FSNs. It was a very big Immigrant Section. And there was also a fraud unit, which did nothing but investigate either fraudulent non-immigrant documents or fraudulent immigration-related marriages.

Q: How were you able to deal with the fraudulent marriages?

MAHONEY: Essentially, when someone came in who had recently been married to an American, usually it was a person who had never been to the United States, had only met the

American for a brief period of time, and was often unable to answer very basic questions such as: What's your wife's father's name? How many bedrooms do they have in their house in the United States?

Then, normally, an investigator would be sent out in the field to go to the person's home village. And they would find that the person, although not married, was living in a relationship with a woman. This was very common in the Dominican Republic. The relationships were very stable, but often not blessed by marriage. He might have been living with the same woman for 15 or 20 years and have five or six children, and no one in the village had ever heard that the person had been married.

So this information would be accumulated and sent back to the Immigration Service, with a request that an immigrant petition be withdrawn, because it appeared to be based on fraudulent grounds.

Q: Did you have problems with your investigators? Was there a lot of money floating around?

MAHONEY: There was one serious inquiry that was made about one of the investigators. A team came down from the State Department, administered lie detector tests, and was unable to confirm the allegations. And that was the end of it.

We saw the potential for trouble, but we felt that the investigators were basically honest. The Dominican Republic was like a sieve of information, and if there had been any scent that these people were able to be paid off or what have you, I think that information would have gone around very quickly.

Q: Were there problems of keeping the officers working and happy and not becoming overly disillusioned?

MAHONEY: That was a real challenge, because most of them were first-tour officers, and they suddenly found themselves in this confusing situation in which they received tremendous attention, often from the highest levels of Dominican society. They would find themselves invited out on yachts and invited to fancy estates for long weekends and so forth. And always at the end of this, or sometime shortly thereafter, they would be presented with some request about a visa for someone's relative. Many of them found this attention difficult to deal with.

Many were put off by the nature of our work, particularly by the immigration work, because they believed that almost all immigrant visas were issued as a result of some sort of fraud, despite everybody's best efforts to keep up with them. They felt that the system did not work, and that there was no support in the United States to make the system work, and that they were strictly operating on their own, and that whatever pressure or feedback they got from Congress or elsewhere was in favor of simply issuing these visas.

And the same was really often true from the State Department. Because if the State Department got complaints, from Congress or other interested parties, about the number of immigrant visas refused, very subtle but powerful signals would begin to come out of Washington that this was

not the way things should be done, and that we really had to get these visas issued, and that we didn't want to have a backlog of refusal cases and so forth.

So that made many of the junior officers very disillusioned with consular work, and some of the mid-level officers, too, frankly.

Q: How did you feel about it?

MAHONEY: I had very mixed feelings. But my reaction was that one got up in the morning, did the best one could, and went home at the end of the day. That you had to be extremely, extremely careful about the relationships that you had with local people, and completely blunt with people about not accepting favors, accepting lunches, dinners from people. That you were paid basically to make the most honest decisions that you could. That if higher authorities who had the authority to do so took some of those decisions out of your hand, unless you had evidence that it was because of some sort of fraud at work, that that was simply something you had to live with. And that if you didn't get positive feedback from superiors and others, that was too bad, but the government was paying you a lot of money to be honest, and that was how you had to go.

Q: Did you find that you kept a rather close eye on the young officers coming in, to see that they didn't get too far out of line or succumb to temptation?

MAHONEY: Yes, it was critical to do that. I spent a lot of time with every junior officer who came in, orienting them, talking about the nature of the society they were getting into, the nature of the visa business, explaining to them what I saw were the pitfalls, and then trying very diligently to monitor their work for any signs that they were getting away from what I thought the correct work profile was.

Most of them, I thought, were honest and energetic, but had never been in a situation like his before, where they were really in a society in which there was not a true legal system. The way decisions were made about competing equity claims in the society was, I thought, entirely on the analysis of a base of calculations of the forces and influences at work among competing parties, and had nothing to do with what we would think of as a legal system. There was no one in that society who saw the subornation of the United States visa system as any kind of dishonest, illegal, or criminal act whatsoever. Nobody, from the top of the society to the bottom. There were other things that they thought were important and that they took seriously and that they thought were good and bad and right and wrong, but the visa business wasn't one of them.

And so, for junior officers, for new people coming into this, it was really like a man suddenly stepping off the end of a pier and falling into some kind of water without any bottom.

Q: Were there any crises while you were there?

MAHONEY: In the visa side?

Q: Either there or where the embassy got involved that you had to deal with.

MAHONEY: There was a terrible hurricane shortly after I arrived that caused all kinds of American Services problems. But as far as the general management of the embassy went, I didn't think so. The crisis had really been the year before I came, when the previous ambassador was removed and, as I said, plead guilty in a court in Washington to a felony. I think that the management of the embassy that came in after that was pretty serious and straightforward and, being aware of the previous problem, was determined to run the show in a proper way. So I thought the embassy was actually run in a pretty good way.

Q: You left there when, in '82?

MAHONEY: I left in the summer of 1982.

RONALD F. VENEZIA
Deputy Director, USAID
Santo Domingo (1979-1984)

Mr. Venezia was born in Tuxedo, New York on January 15, 1940. He received his BS in 1963 from Kent State University and his MPA from Harvard University in 1972. As part of USAID, he held positions in countries including Guatemala, Costa Rica, the Dominican Republic, and Honduras. Mr. Venezia was interviewed by W. Haven North in 1996.

VENEZIA: Santo Domingo.

Q: Santo Domingo and as the deputy director?

VENEZIA: Deputy Director. It was a move to the Caribbean. I'd worked in the Caribbean. I had been in the Dominican Republic once before, a housing conference. So it was a brand new country to me. So we arrived. Well we didn't arrive. We were supposed to arrive and the country was devastated by two hurricanes the weekend we were supposed to arrive, so I didn't go and I couldn't get in, there was no way in and they said, stay home. The last thing we want to do is to have you in. You can't help, you can only be a pain in the neck so just stay were you are. I said fine, thank you. So we got in there three weeks after the hurricane. It was a major hurricane. First one had hit with heavy winds. The second one had dumped an enormous amount of water and caused flooding. It was tremendous damage. After I arrived I began to participate in some of the reconstruction work. The telephone lines were spaghetti on the street. It was a very major hurricane. We did a coffee rehab project, shades of Haiti, and I applied some of my experience there. For some areas there was housing repairs, and we did a major rehab of downed electrical distribution lines.

The Mission Director was a guy called Phil Schwab. One of the great grand old men of Latin American AID. Known as Mr. Brazil, rightfully so, he had spent many years in Brazil. In the north east of Brazil and had ended up on the desk on Washington under the back to back arrangement as the AID deputy on the desk, and I think oversaw the closing down of Brazil. He

was an educator by trade, and long experienced, a wonderful guy and the raconteur of stories. He had a story for almost every occasion. It was always very appropriate and very funny and he had a way of telling it which was very compelling. I was still pretty much wet behind the ears. I've had a little bit of experience in ROCAP but we're talking about my second, let's see, one, two, three, four, my fifth AID assignment and I was the deputy director of a decent sized AID mission. I felt I was moving along rather quickly and probably moving ahead of my learning curve, but anyway, I ended up being a young deputy, working for a grand old man, who was very youthful and we started out with a program that had come from the Balaguer days. Balaguer who was just finishing up on what was his fifth term now, had run for election about a year before and had manipulated the election. He or the army had manipulated the election and the word had come down from Washington to the embassy. Go in an tell Balaguer, start counting, because he had stopped counting the ballots, basically stopped because they were running against them. So Bob Yost, the new Ambassador, a wonderful guy, very unassuming guy, he came out of the inspection service. Very quiet, serious professional, decent, warm, human. He had his orders. So he phoned Balaguer and says I need to come talk to the President. He got no answer. Called him again, got no answer. Called all day, didn't get an answer. Would not grant him an appointment.

Now being an American Ambassador in the Dominican Republic is hard to explain. There are millions of Dominicans in New York City. There is an enormous link between the Dominican Republic and the United States. It goes much deeper than simply tourism. There's a cultural link and a deep affection and connection and a lot of back and forth - 6 months in New York, and 6 months in the Dominican Republic.

The U.S. government played a strong role over the years, so the Ambassador is somebody. Well Bob Yost had a job to do and President Balaguer lived on Maximo Gomez, which was a major thoroughfare. There was always, on any given day, even on the most mundane day, there'd be a couple of hundred people hanging around either trying to see Balaguer or get jobs. During the elections there were a couple of thousand people and there was a bus stop right there and it had a bench. So after not getting any return phone calls from Balaguer, Bob Yost got in his car, his big Cadillac, got out of his car, and sat on the bench, and people said, he was instantly recognizable, people said, "what are you doing here?" "I've asked for an appointment from the President and I'm waiting for his answer.", the country was in political crisis at the time, he had stopped counting the ballots. The opposition had clearly thought they'd won, and they had, and so there was tremendous fervor in the country. So he sat there for hours in the sun and the press, television, all came and said, "What are you doing here?" He said, "I'm waiting for an appointment with the President." He forced Balaguer to see him and when Balaguer finally received him, he said, "Start counting the ballots. Let me tell you what you're going to do, you're going to start counting the ballots," and Balaguer didn't dare ignore the advice. Anyway, I got there...

Q: Wonderful story.

VENEZIA: I got there after that election. Yes, Bob Yost was a wonderful guy. One of the best ambassadors I've ever seen. He's dead, by the way. Sickness caught in the Foreign Service, hepatitis.

But anyway, I got there in the first year of the opposition and there was a euphoria. Here was an elected government, and reform minded, so there was a lot of effort to do something and right after the hurricane we had a package of hurricane assistance. So it was a very active mission, all of a sudden from one day to the next.

Under Balaguer, as he has proven again since the last time he came back into power, the Country ran on what I have always referred to as a milk bottle economic model, that is, he puts out the milk bottle every single day with a little note in it saying how many bottles of milk he wants today. When he was President he actually ran the check book of the government. He decided who got paid, who didn't and his only developmental philosophy was concrete. In other words, if it didn't move he paved it, or he painted it and that's all he believed in. Under his earlier days AID had serious problems. We had tried to put together an education loan (again under Larry Harrison influence) which involved raising teachers' salaries from an abysmal level and he'd said no. He wouldn't borrow, so we had hardly any program when I got to the Dominican Republic.

The portfolio before the hurricane was one agricultural loan and one health loan, that's all, and one accompanying grant and that was more or less it for the program. There were some programs in health and population So we had, depending on how you look at it, we had a clear field. We began to gin up, and as we were doing this the hurricane reconstruction assistance kicked in, and suddenly we had a very active government who then wanted to borrow, and wanted to get involved, change things. Unfortunately, they turned out to be terribly corrupt.

At the same time Central America was falling apart, probably about 1979. The Sandinistas were coming into Nicaragua, Castro was riding high, and the Kissinger report was about due for Central America--I think, I'm not sure, '79,'80. But there was the tidal wave of assistance aiming down our path.

Phil Schwab was a big picture man, and in many ways he delegated and so I was quite active in terms of being a deputy. I was a very engaged deputy and in charge of marshaling the various divisions. They would go to Phil, and I always wanted to make sure they felt they could. I remember this guy from the NSC visiting the DR, he came by and he said I'm here to find out what you think we should to do with your ESF money and I said one, what's ESF?, and two, what ESF money?, and it was 10 million bucks. Which was to us you know an enormous amount of money and that was just a down payment. In the three years I was there the portfolio went from about ten million to a hundred million dollars.

It was amazing to watch this balloon go up, the result of the Reagan election and decision to confront Castro. Not only confront him but overwhelm him.

Q: Was Castro a problem for the Dominican Republic, over the influence there?

VENEZIA: It was never my job to know that...

Q: Right.

VENEZIA: The Cubans were training a lot of the Dominicans on the Isle of Pines. But the Dominican Republic was a conservative country, conservative institutions, strong Church relatively corrupt but strong army, the army still played a major role....

Q: Right.

VENEZIA: ...and it was a relatively large country for the Caribbean, so we went along for ride and we developed a lot of imaginative programs.

Q: With the grant money?

VENEZIA: Grant and loans. We were doing loans in those days and we had a big PL 480 loan program. It was an annual PL 480 loan. We did projects in roads. We did projects in agriculture, education, one of the loans that I take pride in was the creation of a public administration project school in Santo Domingo.

Part of the Catholic University which is on going at the moment and doing quite well I'm told. We had a program, education program in terms of student loans. We were one of the first Missions in LA to start a micro enterprise program among the vegetable vendors in the markets. It started with lending them money to buy their own bicycles instead of renting them each day at exorbitant rates. That led to women vendors capital, and then to small industry loans. The institution we created - ADEMI - today provides technical assistance to other like programs around the world. I worked directly on that with Aaron Benjamin, and we were quite pleased with the results.

Q: Right.

VENEZIA: It was an exciting time. But I ran into trouble. Bob Yost left and was replaced by Bob Anderson, Robert Anderson, who was a very different guy and one of the things I had not learned in my short career at that time, was how to handle ambassadors. I always thought they were all like Bob Yost. Well, I can tell you, they're not, and Bob Anderson and I not only did not get on well, but he was a bully and I was bullied. I was intimidated. I look back on it and I say to myself, I wonder why I ever did that, but...

Q: Where was Phil Schwab in this situation?

VENEZIA: Phil was the quintessential avoider of conflict. Phil ended up being a DCM. Acting DCM, and I started running the AID mission. Always consulting Phil, but I was doing the day to day stuff. Pretty much while he was across the street as DCM. Then Phil went on home leave, so I was there by myself and I was not prepared for what came. A guy who had been Kissinger's spokesman for the State Department, had been ambassador to Morocco as I recall, had been obviously interested in far greater things in life than being in the Dominican Republic but that was the only thing that he ended up being given, and he's just one of those people who was just an enormous pain in the ass to work with and very difficult to deal with. Very difficult for someone like me who would be intimidated by him. So it was bad and when I say bad, it was one

of those times were you couldn't do anything right if you tried and anything you did ended up either looking bad or being bad. So...

Q: What was he trying to get you to do?

VENEZIA: There were a lot of problems. I had a 9 million dollar outstanding payment for a PL 480 loan from the government grain company and the guy who ran the grain company was the President's lead political advisor and was the guy who would invite the Ambassador and the President to dinner, at his house. Well I was trying to collect 9 million bucks from the guy, which he had clearly stolen, for his own - certainly for political - purposes, but I wasn't even sure that he hadn't done it personally. And he wore a gun on his ankle, which whenever he had meetings he would make sure that his leg dangled and you saw he was wearing a gun. He was an absolute Mafia thug and I was going to collect the money, and that was one issue and there were several issues with regard to AID's relationship to the government. He was very upset that I would go see a minister without his approval and I said to him, "Mr. Ambassador, you don't understand, my division chiefs go to see a minister without me. That's the only way you can work in this country. If I have to deal with a minister through you, I'm not going to get anything done." He couldn't understand that. He came out of the European Bureau of State, he came out of Morocco. I eventually went there, and found out that in Morocco nobody ever sees the King, unless it was a birthday or something. You were luckier than hell to see the Prime Minister and if you actually had a meeting with the Minister of Finance that was fat city.

Well, in the Dominican Republic I can remember under Bob Yost having a real down and out fight with the Minister of Agriculture, I'm not sure, it might have been on PL 480. I'm not sure what it was, but he was a good guy. It was a protocol discussion but it was on the facts and in any case when it was over, it was 4 o'clock in the afternoon. His name was Hipolito and he didn't enjoy the result of the meeting, so I called Ambassador Yost, and I said, "Mr. Ambassador, I have Hipolito here, and we just had a real to do on something," and asked him to do me a favor, he said, "Sure, Ron, come on up to the Residence for coffee with Hipolito." The residence was up behind the office so at 5 o'clock we just walked over to it, sat down and had coffee, talked about pleasant things and it set the Minister of Agriculture completely off his feet, and whatever problems he had at 3:30 or 4 o'clock simply disappeared, he went back to his office and said he'd had coffee with the American ambassador. Bob Yost could do that. Bob Anderson, never even understood it or never wanted to, I just felt extremely more and more uncomfortable and there was a parallel problem. And this was one of my own making.

I'd come out of the Alliance for Progress era. I'd gone to the Kennedy school, I'd studied in economics, I had gone back to Central America and I'd worked on social programs and I went to the Dominican Republic, and I said what this country needs is more social programs. Well there was an election in the United States and Reagan had became elected and the whole underpinning of foreign assistance had begun to shift. Part of my inexperience was my inability to recognize that. So the mission had to put together its annual strategy document and I oversaw that. It was done by the program officer, good guy and he said look you know I see a shift as necessary in our programs, and I said no, no, no, you don't understand. Look at the poverty around us, for God's sakes, we've got to hold the course on this thing. So we sent in a strategy document which temporized, continued along the social direction and paid very little, almost token attention to the

private sector in this year. Well as it turned out, the strategy document was turned down, and that was unheard of. Phil had gone up to defend it, and got creamed. I felt bad about that, felt that I had let him down. He just said, let's do it again. Well, we tried again to put the same agenda forward with better justification this time and I went up to defend it and it was turned down for the second time. So I was having a real rough time in my career.

I didn't want to go to work in the morning. It was one of those times when I'd say, what's going to happen to me today with this guy and we were trouble with Washington, so I said to myself, well I can try and solve this problem or I can leave it behind me. So I let it be known, I guess, through a couple of phone calls that maybe I was the problem. I felt strongly that I failed Phil and I just felt I had to do something. So I let it be known that it was time for me to leave. I was open to leave, maybe we could solve the problem that way and I put together a third document which I said, "I don't believe in this document, but it's what they want to hear." So I put together a slam bang private sector oriented document and it passed no problem at all. Then I left.

I received an offer, to go to Washington, become the deputy director, at that time of the Near East. The guy that was the head of PD office, which was the capital development office which handled the infrastructure portfolio, can't think of his name, was an institution in AID. He was Mr. Capitol Development. So I left Latin America for parts unknown.

AARON BENJAMIN
Program Officer, USAID
Santo Domingo (1979-1984)

Mr. Benjamin was born on 21 March, 1932 in New York City. He attended Brooklyn College and received his BA in 1954. He attended Columbia University and received his MA in 1959. As a member of AID, his career has included positions in Bolivia, Ecuador, Peru, Nicaragua, the Dominican Republic, and Egypt. Mr. Benjamin was interviewed by Charles Christian on May 15, 1996.

BENJAMIN: I was invited to come to the Dominican Republic in April of 1979 to participate in the Hurricane Reconstruction Program.

Q: Then you were sent back overseas.

BENJAMIN: Yes, I was then assigned to the Dominican Republic, which had suffered two powerful hurricanes in succession, Federico and David, which affected the western half of the island as well as the capital city. My assignment was to manage reconstruction and housing programs related to the disaster.

I started out by working closely with the Dominican National Institute of Housing. AID was ready to provide grant funding for emergency housing to that agency, but the government bureaucracy couldn't seem to absorb these resources and respond expeditiously to the emergency, so I started looking around for other possibilities.

As it turned out, several NGOs, already actively engaged in disaster relief programs, were located throughout the Dominican Republic. Among the better known organizations were CARE, Catholic Relief, and Save the Children. I approached them and asked if they would be interested in getting involved in emergency housing programs. They responded enthusiastically and within a week or two, I had several of them signed up. We took small grants of $10,000, $20,000 and channeled them through these organizations. They would hire foremen, typically a carpenter, a plumber, an electrician, each to work with a group of twenty people in the community to help them build simple houses using concrete block with galvanized iron roofing material instead of the palm fronds and shingles that they'd used before, which were hardly hurricane resistant materials. Locally produced block making machines were purchased and people in the community were taught how to make concrete blocks. This program lasted for one year and was sustained by an AID grant of $530,000. It resulted in the reconstruction of 1,879 existing houses and the construction of 84 new houses.

Q: Concrete block houses are very substantial.

BENJAMIN: Yes. These were very substantial houses. We worked out arrangements where a cooperative would be formed, would be given a grant, and would then contract with individual families. Each beneficiary would have to make payments within his or her economic capacity to repay. This wasn't going to be a gift, but rather a loan that the beneficiary would repay over time. The repayments would go into a revolving fund, and the fund would be used to finance more houses. We had about 20 of these projects going on during the first year. They were innovative and fun to do because with a little bit of incentive and guidance, these people could do virtually anything. They got to the point where they made their own windows-wooden, louvered windows without glass, which is all they needed in that climate. Eventually, some of the cooperative did so well that they sold the surplus windows to the Housing Institute for its projects. These were people who had no previous technical or business experience, but with a little bit of guidance and technical assistance they became successful entrepreneurs.

This enthusiastic participation by local communities inspired us to finance a Center for Appropriate Technology, which became a research center for traditional building materials and construction techniques. Its function was to explore the use of local materials and building methods to reduce costs, making housing affordable to those who needed it most ..It wasn't until the second year that the Housing Institute got its act together and we grant funded a house repair program, including materials worth $220,000, which were used to repair 1,300 units. This grant was followed by a $l.4 million grant that financed an additional 1,000 core houses. In total, between the programs of the NGOs and the Housing Institute 4200 houses were repaired or newly constructed through the AID funded Housing Reconstruction Program.

Incidentally, I would be remiss if I didn't mention that the Dominican Savings and Loan System, one of the earliest in the AID supported family of Latin American S and L Systems, had under its jurisdiction the administration of several Housing Guaranty Projects. That program started in the middle '60s. Working closely with the Dominican Housing Bank, the agency that oversees the Savings and Loan System, I was able to negotiate a new $15 million HG for Worker's Housing.

That program was unique in that the employer provided the down payment, the government the land, and the worker paid the balance of the long term mortgage.

After the early reconstruction phase of the AID Program, I got involved in the micro-business program. It was administered by the Dominican Development Foundation, which worked with smaller groups to fund micro-businesses such as clothing, candy, building materials, all on a very small scale. AID had already given small grants to the Dominican Development Foundation in support of this effort. The program was expanding and the Foundation requested a new grant of $500,000 to help expand its program. Given the good payback record of its clients, AID approved the request, which was coupled with a strong technical assistance component. We were convinced that instruction in management, marketing and accounting was essential to the viability of the program.

I'll give you an example of how successful the program was. Take a family that started with a small home based clothing manufacturing business, with a total of four sewing machines. The family secured a $3,000 loan from the Dominican Development Foundation and was able to buy six more sewing machines and more materials and rent additional work space. In one year, the business had grown to include 25 sewing machines. A key to the success of this program was direct technical assistance in business management - accounting and marketing.

Q: That's terrific!

BENJAMIN: It was a success beyond our imagination. But all of our micro-business programs grew that way, and where we didn't lend to individuals, we helped to set up "solidarios", or small cooperatives. The typical cooperative of street vendors (push cart peddlers), for example, included five or six people each financially responsible for the other. If one of the group ran into financial problems the co-op would make up the difference and keep the person going for awhile. So it worked out very well.

Q: Were your programs ever audited? Did they come out all right?

BENJAMIN: Absolutely, and the results couldn't have been better. The Micro Business Program has become one of the most successful initiatives of AID, representing a maximum return with a minimal amount of investment. Programs of this type can now be found all over the world.

The AID-sponsored Micro Business Program in the Dominican Republic moved from the micro business up to the small business level. Once the micro business entrepreneur reached a certain production level, let us say 25 sewing machines, he then looked for more substantial credit. AID took this opportunity to develop a larger scale small business and industrial credit program with the Central Bank. Loans were made available at a level of $3,500 -$25,000. In this manner, the size of the credit package was ratcheted up, based upon the initiative of the Dominican small businessman, with the cooperation of the Dominican Development Foundation and the Central Bank.

After about five years of supporting this program, we recognized a need at the sub-micro business level for very short-term loans for production materials. Some manufacturer would need

a loan of $100 to buy cloth, for example, to be repaid in two weeks. The person receiving the loan could then obtain a loan for double the amount-$200, and pay it back in four weeks. This progression would continue until the loan reached a level of $1,000, at which point the recipient would be qualified to obtain a larger, long-term loan from the Dominican Development Foundation. A new organization called ADEMI, was created to operate this program, and was initially supported by an AID grant.

With all of this institutional infrastructure now in place, we decided that it was time to explore the field of export promotion. It seemed that many of the products being manufactured by Dominican micro and small- businessmen could find an international market, so in order to support export promotion, we contacted the Chicago Board of Trade and the Atlanta Trade Fair, both of whom had shown a strong interest in Dominican artisan products - woman's leather and crocheted purses, straw baskets, and the like. These organizations sent representatives to the Dominican Republic, who talked to tradesman, discussing products and market opportunities in the United States.

Q: So you moved into the export market?

BENJAMIN: Yes, At that point, the Mission changed my title from Housing Officer to Housing and Trade Development Officer. This change occurred at the time that the CBI, the Caribbean Basin Initiative was initiated.

Q: That was the big thing that was initiated in Kissinger's day.

BENJAMIN: Before we leave the Dominican Republic, I'd like to take a moment to talk briefly about the excellent Regional Planning Project in the Dominican Republic that was sponsored by Bill Miner's Office which had a contract with the University of Wisconsin to provide technical assistance in this area. They studied the southwestern portion of the DR to determine how to prevent environmental degradation and protect natural resources, in that region i.e. topsoil water sources, timber. One of the major threats in the Dominican Republic was the loss of topsoil. For example, when trees were indiscriminately cut down for firewood, the topsoil, previously held down by the trees, would be carried down to the rivers, and dams which would eventually silt up. I recall one disastrous example of these consequences. AID had financed a large dam which was designed to last about 40 years but because of siltation, the dam had lost 20 years of its projected life. AID's regional planning efforts were designed to anticipate and prevent this type of problem.

I had an interesting variety of projects and felt that I had spent a very productive five year tour in the Dominican Republic. One has only to look at Haiti, on the other end of the island, to see the effects of indiscriminate cutting of trees. Actually, the Dominican Republic has enacted legislation prohibiting such cutting.

Q: Now you had been posted in South America, Central American, and now, the Caribbean. That gives you quite a comparison, I'm sure.

BENJAMIN: Yes, but the greatest contrast was yet to come. My next assignment was Egypt! I said, wait a minute, they must have made a mistake. They don't speak Spanish in Egypt. Apparently, at that time, policy was changing and they wanted to rotate people. Those who had been in Latin America for a long time were destined to go the other side of the world, and vice versa.

LOUIS F. LICHT III
Bureau of Intelligence and Research, Middle America-Caribbean Division
Washington, DC (1980-1982)

Mr. Licht was born in Maine and raised in New York. Educated at Yale University and the Fletcher School, he served in the US Army in Vietnam and joined the State Department in 1974. Mr. Licht served in Washington, dealing with Latin American Affairs as well as Arms Control and Nuclear matters. His foreign posts were Santo Domingo, Lima, Canberra, Yerevan and Chisnau (Moldova). Mr. Licht was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy in 2000.

Q: You were there until 1980. Were you able to, was that your time, you went back to INR?

LICHT: That's right, I came back to INR/RAR (Office of Research and Analysis for American Republics) in the Middle America-Caribbean Division (RAR/MAC) after that to work on Mexico and Central America…that was the period when we were concentrating on Central America, though I never quite got into that. I spent the next three years there. This was the same office I had been in before but newly renamed.

Q: So this would be '80-'83? How did you find the intelligence coming in to you? Were you getting pretty good stuff from the CIA and from the military and elsewhere?

LICHT: There was good stuff and there was bad stuff. It's hard to characterize. Some was on the mark and some wasn't. What I can remember is not very accurate. Of course, I'm concern about what I can say.

Q: Certainly, but I was just wondering about the intelligence mix, whether what came in from say the CIA and maybe the military was melded in or did you pretty much take sort of State Department reporting plus newspaper reporting…

LICHT: No, I think we tried to put it all together. And the Agency reports were important. It was always hard to decide when you got something from one source that was completely different from the other. And I guess we'd fall back on the State Department sources, because we seemed to know them. By the time you'd been there you probably had made a trip somewhere to talk with somebody, to get some perspective. The trouble with INR, of course, if you hadn't been there a long time it still took a lot of work to figure out what was real and what was off.

Those years I was working in the Dominican Republic, it amazed me how much information that was dependent on airgrams from the Dominican Republic. And it seemed as if the political wheels just went around a lot faster than other places, so that it ginned up all this interesting stuff in this little place. And in a way the stuff you got from there really overshadowed a lot of the stuff you got from places which were more important, like Mexico.

There were embassy officers in the Dominican Republic who just loved the place and they made very good contacts and being a small place you could touch base with a whole bunch of people. So is this the center of the world? No, by golly, but there's plenty to analyze.

ROBERT ANDERSON
Ambassador
Dominican Republic (1982-1985)

Ambassador Anderson was born on January 6, 1922 in Massachusetts. He attended Yale University until 1943 when he joined the U.S. Army, where he served as a 1rst lieutenant from 1943 to 1946. Throughout his career he has held positions in countries including Thailand, China, France, Benin, Morocco, and the Dominican Republic. Ambassador Anderson was interviewed by Horace Torbert in 1990.

ANDERSON: I will move now, if you would like, to my last assignment in the Foreign Service, which was as ambassador to the Dominican Republic.

Q: Fine.

ANDERSON: Bill Clark, who was the number-two in the State Department and Al Haig asked me if I would take on this assignment. Al Haig, in particular, wanted to get, shall we say, some outside blood into the Latin American Bureau. He got Dean Hinton down there, and he got Tom Pickering, and two or three others, and I was one of those. This was one of the more challenging assignments I've had. It was a very delicate one, because of the historical relations between the Dominican Republic and the United States, the nearness to the United States, the dependence of the Dominican Republic on the United States, in so many ways.

And anyone that goes down there has to conduct himself or herself, as an ambassador, in a very circumspect way it's so easy to be taken as a governor general or some kind of lord and master even today.

I found that the delicateness of this assignment was a great challenge, because you were on the stage 24 hours a day, literally. In anything you did, the Dominicans were watching, and they would report it in the news, on the television, and in the newspapers, etc. So one had to be aware of this.

Q: Just to get us oriented timewise, this was about June 1982, was it?

ANDERSON: Yes. I think I received my call from President Reagan around Thanksgiving, 1981. I actually went out in '82, because, as you know, confirmation takes longer and longer because of all these ethics requirements and every other blessed thing that go on now. I stayed with Admiral Train up until about end of January.

And then I went to the Foreign Service Institute, because I had to learn Spanish; I didn't know any Spanish. This was my first and only assignment in Latin America. And I must say, I managed to get a half decent mark, and within six months, I gave my first press conference down there, and was able to, above all, talk alone with the president. That was the key thing down there.

Well, when I started to prepare myself to go down to the Dominican Republic, they had elections in May of that year, and a gentleman named Salvador Jorge Blanco was elected president. When the U.S. troops went in, in '65, Ellsworth Bunker went down and stayed for a year or more, and brought the opposing civilian factions together to form a government. One of the gentlemen sitting across from him at the table was Salvador Jorge Blanco, who was not considered a conservative by our people, and possibly bad news for us. So here he was elected president, and some of our folks felt that this could be a disaster for the United States. I remember, Dick Walters--General Vernon Walters--in particular; he knew Joaquin Balaguer, who was president for about 12 years before.

Q: He went in about '63.

ANDERSON: Twelve years, and then he had three terms. He was voted out and a democratic change took place, and a gentleman named Guzmán was made president. I'll mention him in a minute. Then Jorge Blanco, the same party as Guzmán, won the election.

Walters said: "The only person that can really govern this country is Balaguer. All these others are too far to the left." I couldn't understand this very clearly; I didn't know much about Jorge Blanco at all then, except that he was a very successful lawyer from Santiago, who represented a number of American companies. I couldn't see where he was a socialist or anti-private enterprise, or anything else.

And so I asked Ellsworth Bunker, one of the dearest friends I've ever had and one whom I respect very deeply, if he would have lunch with me at the Metropolitan Club to talk to me about the Dominican Republic. And I asked Ellsworth: "You know, I get these readings about Jorge Blanco, who's going to be president, that are not very flattering."

He said: "That's ridiculous. He is a pragmatist. He will be fine as president. He's very bright, brilliant, and he will cooperate. But he's his own man."

I said: "Ellsworth, that is marvelous. Thank you, sir." I did not worry about it from that day on, once I had Ellsworth's very objective and wise counsel.

So I went down there in June and I met President Antonio Guzmán, presented my credentials on a Saturday, two weeks before July Fourth. We agreed we'd meet one week later; I told him I really would like to sit down and have a substantive chat with him. The following Friday night, he had a very serious gunshot wound and died the next day, the day I was supposed to see him.

The only reason I want to go into this a little bit is an example of why I am convinced that the wonderful job that Ellsworth Bunker did, to establish a democratic base back in the mid-'60s was extremely valuable, and it took hold.

The basic answer to establishing a successful democracy in the Dominican Republic was to get the military out of politics. Balaguer, in the beginning, was just the man to take over the leadership of the country after Trujillo, because he worked for Trujillo. He's a caudillo. He's a dictator himself. The only difference is Balaguer didn't throw people to the sharks, didn't beat people, kill people. But he was very authoritarian, and if one didn't do things his way, certain economic difficulties might arise: Let's put it that way. He started the process of removing the military from power.

Guzmán, who took over peacefully from Balaguer, was a master at taking further steps to get the military out of power. He would retire some of them; he'd rotate them. That was his greatest contribution to his nation. Because by the time that Jorge Blanco was due to come in, the military accepted the fact that it no longer was a political force, and that its role was to accept the civilian leadership of the country.

Now, here you had a president who some say shot himself, but I have always said to our own government: "If the Dominicans wish to say that, that's fine. But we should not say that." Because with a suicidal death, as you know, you lose certain rights of the church and all sorts of other things.

Q: The only record I found on this, in my hasty review, refers to it as suicide.

ANDERSON: That's right. They did. But I told our embassy: "We're never going to say this," and we didn't.

Now here, mind you, I had been in the country about ten days. I received a call at 11:00 at night, from the palace, from a General Imbert Berrera, who was the man that drove the car, that had the people in it who shot Trujillo. He was an advisor to Guzmán in the palace. I had not yet met him. He called me to tell me what had happened, and asked if I could get some medical help to save his life. I got hold of the watch officer at the White House, and in point of fact, we were able to get a medical plane out of Holmstead Air Force Base down right away. But it came too late. I think that probably he was virtually dead when Berrera called me.

I called my staff together and asked: "Okay, this is what's happened. According to the Constitution, what's the next step? Because here you have the president, who remains president until August 15, when Jorge Blanco is supposed to be inaugurated. So we have a 45-day period here, where somebody else will get to be president. I assume it's the vice president. Is that right?"

And so we got out the Constitution and there was a specific article calling for him to take over immediately.

I called back General Imbert Berrera immediately. I didn't want to see anything happen here, where the military might suddenly do something in this very unusual situation. I told him: "I know Washington will be extremely interested in what's going to happen now." This was after he confirmed to me that he had died. I said: "According to your Constitution," and I was able to read him the articles and everything else, over the phone, "I understand this, this, and this are supposed to happen." I said: "I assume that actions are being taken right now to install the vice president as the civilian president for the balance of this administration."

And he said: "Oh, yes, yes, yes, yes."

I said: "Well, I'm delighted. And I wish you would tell the people at the palace, and the new president, that I am so informing Washington right away. And I wish you'd also, if any of the military leadership is there, tell them that, too, would you please."

And they got the message, I can tell you, because 72 hours later I received a call from this General Berrera. I had since been to Santiago and attended the funeral as one of the pallbearers. General Berrera: "The military leadership would like to pay a formal call on you at the embassy."

I said: "Fine. Is there any particular reason?"

"They want to assure you of their loyalty to the constitutional system."

I said: "That's wonderful." They came over to my house. Two or three of my staff were also there. The Chiefs of all the Services came in full dress uniform. They had a formal document they all signed (the president, who had just taken over, also signed it) stating their total loyalty to the Constitution. I made a few remarks, thanked them for their courtesy and said I would report this meeting to Washington immediately.

I think that gives about as good an example as any to say that the roots of democracy were firmly implanted in the Dominican Republic. I would never be so foolish as to say that a hurricane couldn't uproot them, but it's going to take a pretty, pretty strong wind to have the country revert to any kind of a military dictatorship.

Now, as for Jorge Blanco himself, the president. I guess this was the second week I was there, a few days after the funeral took place for President Guzmán. Tom Enders, who was assistant secretary of state for Latin America, telephoned me and said: "Look, we'd like to have Jorge Blanco, the fellow who's going to be president, come up to Washington and see the president. The president would like to discuss Central America. And maybe the president-elect, might like to go up to Congress and see some people." Remember he wasn't even president.

Q: This was before he was inaugurated?

ANDERSON: Yes, he was still president-elect. The fellow that took his place was of the same party, but a political opponent of his within the party.

Q: That is the vice president.

ANDERSON: Who was now president, for this 45 days. And so here we were asking Jorge Blanco to leave, go to Washington as president-elect with a 45-day president in office. I thought this was quite something. I didn't know him at all then, and had to persuade him to do this. He did it on one condition. He said: "If you will go with me. I have to do it that way. Otherwise, the people won't understand."

Q: Will think that you're getting him out of the way, in order to--

ANDERSON: Or that it really is urgent, for the President of the United States wants to see me, etc.

And so I was out at the airfield. I walked across the tarmac and flew to Washington with him, and was with him on all his calls. He then established a very good relationship, before he ever became president, with our president and with our leadership because he supported us in Central America.

At one point I said: "I think, Mr. President, that this could stand you in good stead in the future." And it certainly did. U.S. assistance when I arrived there or the year before, was $30 million a year, and increased to $160 million just before I left in August, 1985. He deserved every bit of it for the help he gave us on the Caribbean Basin initiative legislation and on Nicaragua.

On Nicaragua there's an interesting story he told me, and I think this can now be told. He did some very helpful things.

Q: Ambassador Anderson, I'm afraid we were cut off in the middle of a sentence there, but can you recapture where you were and continue?

ANDERSON: I'll try, Tully. I believe I was just starting to talk about some very valuable things that President Jorge Blanco did, with regard to helping us in Nicaragua. He used to see the Nicaraguan Foreign Minister, earlier a Catholic priest, if I'm not mistaken. President Jorge Blanco told me of one particular meeting with him, to try and convince him of the intentions of the United States with regard to Nicaragua.

He told the foreign minister he was absolutely convinced that the United States had no intention whatsoever of invading and occupying Nicaragua. Jorge said to the foreign minister: "And I'll tell you why I'm telling you this. You may remember that the United States came into my country militarily in 1965. They're not there now, and they left after a year. If they had not come in, I would not be here today, facing you as a freely elected president of a democratic nation. Believe me. If you could transform your policy so you could become a democratic nation, you wouldn't have anything to worry about as far as the Americans are concerned." I thought this was quite a statement to make.

One other point on the military intervention of President Johnson in 1965. We should remember, I think, very clearly, that when the Marines went in then, it was not like previous interventions in the Dominican Republic to take over the country so we could collect taxes, and create a Trujillo. We unwittingly created Trujillo. You know that. Our military trained him and thought he was just a great fellow.

I'm going to make a statement now which I'm prepared to argue with anybody. Our military intervention in 1965 was strictly limited to separate two warring factions, and to prevent deaths. There was a line we wanted to protect in Santo Domingo. We didn't go all over the country. That intervention was probably one of the most successful foreign-policy actions we have taken since World War II, with regard to the use of military force.

Why do I say that? Because today you have probably the most solid democracy in the entire area. That would not have taken place but for this very limited, precise action, and an incredibly skillful, patient effort by Ellsworth Bunker. The 20th anniversary of our intervention took place when I was in the Dominican Republic. There were a few reports that communists, leftists and assorted radicals were going to stage huge demonstrations. My security officer was battening down all the hatches. He was having a fit. I wasn't that concerned, personally, nor was my DCM, although we noted that the biggest university was just down the road and was very leftist and radical and had students who would demonstrate about anything at the drop of a hat.

So we went to work that morning and were waiting for all hell to break loose. Finally, around 9:00 or 9:30 in the morning, about 20 or 25 bedraggled students came walking down the road with a few placards protesting our military invasion 20 years ago. The security officer came and told me about this. I said: "Well, that's great. Let's go down and see them."

And the security officer was having a fit. "You can't do that."

I asked: "There are about 20 of them out there, or something, right?"

He said: "Yes." I went out on the street, talked to them, and invited them in for coffee. That was the demonstration marking the 20th anniversary of our military intervention. The Dominicans themselves know the value of that intervention. I thought that this little historical footnote would be of interest. I haven't had anybody really dispute me when I cite this is an example of, perhaps, the most successful political use of military force, since World War II.

One point about Jorge Blanco and Ellsworth Bunker. It has to do with the inauguration of Jorge Blanco in August 1982. There was a gentleman who was going to be the head of the delegation for the United States, named James Watt, who was the Secretary of Interior. I had earlier made a number of recommendations on who should be on the delegation and who should head it. I had suggested Ellsworth Bunker as an ideal head. The selection became very political. The ball was being thrown around in Washington on who should head the delegation.

When James Watt was picked to head the delegation, I telephoned Washington--I will not say to whom--and said: "I will not be present." I was a brand-new ambassador who had just arrived. I

said: "Forget it. This is most inappropriate. He has nothing whatsoever to do with this country. It isn't going to mean anything. And he is very controversial in the United States already. I don't want to be around."

Fortunately for the Dominicans as well as me, he became ill and couldn't come. Ellsworth Bunker, my original suggestion was made the head of the delegation and he came. Jorge Blanco hadn't seen him since they were sitting across the table that I mentioned to you before, negotiating back in '65 and '66.

The night before the inauguration, Jorge invited the American delegation to come over to the palace. The whole delegation marched over, and I led them into Jorge's office. I stood aside, because I knew I didn't have to do much by way of introduction. There were Jorge Blanco, the former negotiator for his country's independence, who was going to head his country, and Ellsworth Bunker, the man who made this possible.

Jorge Blanco saw Ellsworth, rushed up to him, threw his arms around him and started to cry. It was a very moving and touching scene. I can't think of a better person that the United States could have had to be the head of our delegation. I mean, Tom Enders was on the delegation. Russ Doherty was there, the labor leader, who knows Latin America well. They had some good people on it. Bill Middendorf was another one; he and his wife came down. But this relationship between Bunker and Jorge Blanco was such a precious thing to watch.

Now, a first that took place between the United States and the Dominican Republic. This is hard to believe, and I couldn't believe it for a long time. It was a visit that Jorge Blanco made later on. When I was fighting to get some kind of an official visit, I found out that despite the fact that we had had diplomatic relations since about 1890 there had never been an official visit, or a state visit, by a Dominican chief of state to the United States.

Some people said: "Yeah, but Trujillo used to come up here." Well, he might have come up—

Q: But it wasn't--

ANDERSON: No official or State visit. So I used this with the White House, and I kept pointing out the help we were getting from Jorge on the CBI and Central America. And so, lo and behold, it was made not an official, but a state visit. I wasn't even pushing for a state visit, which, as you know so well, Tully, is much harder to pull off. We had a most successful visit with President Reagan. He came to know Bush very well. This first state visit, or official visit of any kind, was another accomplishment of Jorge Blanco, which was so helpful in our relationships with his country.

Do you remember when I was down there, we went into Grenada?

Q: Yes.

ANDERSON: Eugenia Charles, who was the Prime Minister of Dominica, came up here on behalf of the Eastern Caribbean states, to request the United States' help, because they didn't have enough forces to correct this very anarchic situation that was going on in Grenada.

I was awakened early on the morning of the invasion by Washington, and was asked to go over and tell the president just before it was going to happen, and seek his understanding. So I got word to his staff and I was over seeing him at 7:00 in the morning. I told him about it, our action in Grenada that would soon take place, and why we were doing it. He looked at me and said: "Look, you obviously know that I can't come out publicly and praise this. I'm not going to say anything. I'm just going to remain silent. But I think you know the way I feel." There was no criticism of our activity from him.

That same day, a prominent political leader named Pena Gomez of the same party as Jorge Blanco--he's black, very active, very dynamic, charismatic, but who has some very strong views on certain subjects--was coming over for a one-on-one lunch. By that time, the news was out that we were all in Grenada and things were coming under control. Pena stormed through the door, and I said: "Oh, I can see we're going to have a nice lunch, aren't we, Pena." He proceeded to upbraid me for the invasion. I went through the scenario with him in detail. He said: "You cannot go around invading these countries. Who do you think you are?"

I said: "We went in at the request of others to help return the country to peace."

When Pena countered with: "That isn't good enough," I became exasperated with him, and said: "All right, Pena, I'll tell you what. Except for Cuba, the Dominican Republic is the largest nation in the Caribbean in area and in population, including Jamaica and all the other English-speaking nations."

Pena: "So?"

I: "You don't disagree there was an anarchic situation in Grenada that had to be taken care of. And you didn't like the Cubans there, right?"

Pena: "Right."

I: "Well if you people could assume your responsibilities in the Caribbean, seeing that you have a few airplanes and some other assets, maybe Prime Minister Eugenia Charles could have come to you and asked the Dominican Republic to go in and help them. But I guess they felt that you probably would say no. If you had taken a more positive attitude, and assumed a leadership role, maybe we would not have had to play a role in Grenada."

That shook him. He said: "I have to admit that you have something here." We remained very close friends. But I thought that the Jorge Blanco reaction to Grenada was something that ought to be noted.

Now, I don't propose to go on any more with the Dominican Republic. If you have anything in mind, on the Dominican Republic or anything else where I might be helpful, you have only to ask.

Q: Just to bring this record up to date a little bit, what is the present status in the leadership of the Dominican Republic? Is it still as hopeful as it was?

ANDERSON: That's an important question. The president is elected every four years. There was an election in May, '86. Believe it or not, Joaquin Balaguer was reelected, again, for the fourth time. He's totally blind.

Q: A bit over the hill, I gather?

ANDERSON: He is quite old. He's in his eighties. He hasn't changed his thinking. The thing that became apparent when he took over in his fourth term, having been out of office for eight years, was that he didn't realize that the country has progressed economically, and that there is now a very important, burgeoning middle class which is the real key of the nation, the real kernel of the nation's future. He just ignores this.

He still likes to go out on the weekends, go into an area and give small bits of land to peasants. That's the caudillo approach that he has. That's economically a disaster. You take large land holdings and divide them up into little, tiny plots owned by different people and you're not going to get little economic production out of them.

Another thing that he's done, which disappoints me about as much as anything. He wants to build buildings just so people remember him; he's printing money to do it. Jorge Blanco didn't print a note. One governor in the Center Bank tried to print some notes and he was fired. That's why Jorge Blanco was able to conclude agreements with the IMF and the World Bank. That's why he was able to get a lot more aid, because he showed himself a serious leader. That was great.

Balaguer is just the opposite. Inflation is now running rampant. The current tragedy is there is an election, Tully, next month, in May. There are two candidates. Balaguer is running again! The other principal candidate is Juan Bosch, a Marxist-Leninist, very leftist, just about as old as Balaguer. He can see, at least.

This is a most unfortunate development for the Dominican Republic, and this is the one thing that I'm unhappy about. I talked to you earlier about the democratic evolution and the fact that the roots of democracy are getting imbedded in the Dominican Republic. I feel that Balaguer has had a stranglehold on the country. As he won't nominate a successor to his party, others don't wish to fight it. There are some very competent younger people who are coming up, who cannot really take part in the political life of the country the way they should. If this goes on this way, this structure may start to weaken. That's what disappoints me. But I still don't feel that there's a military coup in the offing, or anything like that.

Q: It's not hopeless, yet?

ANDERSON: No, but it's not a healthy situation. Does that answer the question?

Q: I think it does, very much, indeed, although it doesn't leave one exactly thrilled.

Well, now do you have any comments on the generality of the United States policy and handling of Latin America? Has it become more sophisticated and matured? Do you think we are generally on the right track these days, or is there a peculiarity about our relationship with Latin America which needs to be corrected? What are your general observations on what American policy should be, and American conduct should be, diplomatically, towards Latin America?

ANDERSON: Let me go about it this way. After I finish this comment, I want you to remind me to talk about the Foreign Service in Latin America.

Q: Right. In a way, it was an implicit part of my question.

ANDERSON: I am very pleased with the way that the Bush Administration is handling our Latin American policy. I think that President Bush--and I know that he recognizes this, because he and I have talked about it in the past--recognizes the necessity to consult with Latin American leaders before the United States goes in and tries to take a political or other action.

Let me give you a very explicit example. As you know, the Organization of American States, the OAS, has long been considered a virtually useless organization, because of United States dominance of the organization in the eyes of our Latin American friends. They, therefore, will not allow controversial political subjects to be discussed or acted on, in the OAS forum. They're all there, huddled together, virtually against the United States. That's one of the reasons the OAS has not been very successful.

Now President Bush comes into office. They had these elections in Panama that, as we all know, were a total fraud. What did President Bush do about that? He did something that is almost without precedent, and I give him full marks here, and this is indicative of the way I believe he wants to try and handle our relations with Latin America.

We had our own views about what we might like to do, regarding these elections I don't think it was military action at all but rather certain political actions. So how do you go about trying to accomplish what you would like to see done? You talk privately with the key leaders of Latin America first, before you say anything publicly. The result was amazing. Carlos Andrés Pérez, the president of Venezuela, was in the lead here. But this highly controversial political subject was discussed in the OAS. The United States was not in the lead in the discussions. It was three or four Latin American leaders that took the lead. The U.S. would then support their positions.

The result was unusual. A commission was formed, headed by the secretary general of the OAS, and three or four members, and was charged to go to Panama and investigate what happened. Now it's very true that they went down, investigated, came back condemned what had taken place. The OAS then voted to condemn it. But, as expected didn't vote for action against a fellow Latin American country.

That's all right, as far as I'm concerned, as a starter. Through this action, the president was able to move the OAS back into the political ball game. So now if a subject dealing with the American continent comes up, it doesn't have to go into the U.N., where you face all sorts of other problems. The OAS can now be a channel for action. This is why that was an excellent move.

Now, you could very well say, "Well, what about the invasion of Panama?" Well, I personally feel that it was a correct move. There was no choice but to do that. I am not privy to the inner counsels of our government now, but I would be willing to wager a bet that there was prior consultation, quietly, with certain leaders. I just feel it in my bones.

Q: There must have been, yes, obviously; or you'd have had much more criticism.

ANDERSON: I can tell you that, privately, Carlos Andrés Pérez had no problem with it. I also noticed one other thing. The president of Peru, you may remember, came out after the invasion and excoriated our president saying: "This is the most imperialistic move I've ever seen." Of course, he has an election right now, (and I don't think he's going to win, either). But you know, with an election going on; he had to say something like this. He also said: "If you think I'm going to go to this drug summit in Cartagena, with that president who's invaded one of our fellow Latin American countries, you're crazy." He was the first one to meet him at Cartagena; threw his arms around him, cooperated fully. [Laughter]

So you see why I think that the way the president's handling our relations with Latin America is quite different than before. The way, for example, he comported himself at the drug summit. He didn't go down there the way, probably, some of his predecessors might have, and start telling them how they should do things.

First, he went down and said: "This is a two-pronged problem. There's a supply side and demand side. The demand side is my fault, my responsibility. We have to do better. I'd like to hear any thoughts you have."

Then he said: "The supply side is your problem." Then he didn't start saying all the things that they weren't doing right. He said: "Now, we're trying to help you now. Is this help useful? Is there any other way that you feel we, together, can try and work on the supply-side problem?" Approached it in a collegial, not dictatorial way. I think that that is a very good approach.

He saw the president-elect of Brazil two or three times up here, before he took over. I don't know whether this poor guy's going to be able to make it or not. He has a handful of problems that he will have to work on. Our President's concern about them, and the attention he gave to the President-elect should be helpful.

There's a change here and I look forward to the president continuing to try and work things out with Latin America. The initiative of trying to conclude a free trade pact with Mexico, the way we did with Canada is another indication.

Q: Well, you said you might also have some thoughts, though, on our diplomatic representation in South America.

ANDERSON: Yes. You and I have been in this business a long time. Having served on five different continents, and therefore having served in a number of bureaus, and especially having been the spokesman of the State Department, where I had to deal with each bureau every day for my daily press conferences, I have felt that the staffing in Latin America was the weakest that we have. It was ingrown. Most of our career people in this area have big blinders on. They're very happy, they're contented, because in the old days they'd enter the Service, get a Latin American assignment, and just stay in the area for their whole career. One reason they liked it is that there were more countries, so they could end up as an ambassador, hopefully. Others in the bureau weren't really interested in Latin America.

One has to realize that unless you have an area where there are real problems, the national leadership isn't going to think about it. The Congress isn't going to think about it. Therefore, your top officers are not going to want to spend their career dealing with issues that are of no concern to anybody but themselves.

I'm not trying to be--what should I say--critical of these officers. If I had started out in the Latin American Bureau, as a young fellow, and all my colleagues that started out in the Latin American office were staying in Latin America--and you get to know your friends as you go from assignment to assignment--I might have ended up like that. I kind of doubt this though, because my intellectual pursuits were broader than just Latin America. In fact, I never was excited about Latin America that much, because the area did not deal with the major problems in the world affecting the United States, especially before Castro came into power.

When I was spokesman of the State Department, I'd have to go to each bureau to obtain suggested answers to the questions each day. From the Latin American Bureau I couldn't get straight answers; they were afraid of the press. They didn't want to answer. I would say: "You have to answer, or I've got to answer. If you can't give me one, I'll get it and I'll tell you what I'm going to say after I've said it. You can listen to what I'm going to tell the press." It used to make me absolutely livid.

When Bill Rogers took over under Kissinger as Assistant Secretary of State for Latin America, before he went up as Under Secretary for Economic Affairs, it was a different story. It was wonderful. He came from the outside. I would have to go to him every morning to get answers to questions, and some were pretty piddling. But I couldn't get it out of his public affairs people or the desk officers, or the office directors lots of times. They just didn't do it.

Q: Of course, the history of the bureau, I think, is that the top ranks of government, the White House and so on, have not always been that interested in that bureau.

ANDERSON: Well, that's what I was saying.

Q: But a lot of businessmen have been very interested. And the pressure has sometimes come in, I think, through the business community, who had specific interests there. I wonder if that has an effect on things in some way; that they get a slightly warped view. Anyway, it's a very interesting problem.

ANDERSON: I am sure that the American business community--particularly in the past, when you had W.R. Grace and Company and some of these giants--I'm sure they had an influence. And they're the only ones, probably, in America that cared at all, about Latin America.

Q: Well, United Fruit, the copper companies, all of those.

ANDERSON: Yes! ITT was down in Chile. Yes. But this did not attract the top people in our service. You know that yourself. You were in European affairs.

Q: Well, it's accidental in my case. [Laughter]

ANDERSON: I'm not saying that none of them were any good, at all. It's just that their optic was limited, because their entire careers were focused on this hemisphere. And, you know, there are things going on in Europe and Africa and other places that have an effect on Latin America. And they wouldn't be interested.

They had this one program that I did approve of very much, called the GLOP. I don't know whether you ever heard of that or not. The GLOP program meant that if you were a specialist in an area every so many years you had to serve out of the area for at least one tour of duty.

Q: Yes.

ANDERSON: You know, the European boys loved Europe. This is one of the reasons that this came. Get these guys over to Africa. Let them get their feet dirty. But also for Latin America. Get them out and let the blinders be removed. And then they'd be tremendous officers.

JOHN ALLEN CUSHING
Consular Officer
Santo Domingo (1988-1990)

Mr. Cushing was born in New York City and raised in New York and Hawaii. He graduated from Reed College and continued studies at a variety of institutions in the US and abroad. After service in the Peace Corps, he held a number of positions as English language instructor before joining the Foreign Service in 1988. Mr. Cushing served abroad, variously as Consular, Political, Economic or Public Affairs Officer, in the Dominican Republic, Korea, Benin, Papua New Guinea, and Trinidad & Tobago. In Washington, Mr. Cushing served as Korean Desk Officer. Mr. Cushing was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy in 2009.

Q: Your A-100 class. Could you sort of characterize it?

CUSHING: There were only two people in the class older than I was; I was almost 43 when I went in and there were a lot of people in their 20s, maybe a few in their early 30s. I didn’t

socialize with them a great deal, mostly because I had a wife and child already and was older than most of them. It was pretty good. I was very excited to be in an entering class. I don't remember a great deal about the exercises now except that it was exciting, it was stressful on my family. We put our son into a new school. I took placement exams in French, Spanish, Japanese, Korean and Persian and I do recall that even in A-100, people were playing favorites. We had this off site exercise down at Harper's Ferry in a hotel and there was an imaginary crisis involving a mythical country called Al Jazeera and they had two separate groups. Two separate American embassies, one here and one there and they named a person to be the Deputy Chief of Mission, there were retired ambassadors serving as ambassadors for the role play but they named this very attractive woman to be the Deputy Chief of Mission and I was a low-level officer, did some interviews with people playing the natives and discovered what the cause of the crisis was and how to solve it but the woman playing the DCM did not have time to meet with me. I said, "Hey, I've got the answer here." She said, "No, I'm busy. I'm in a meeting. Don't bother me."

So I thought, "Well, I wonder if the real Foreign Service is going to be like this." I finally said, "Listen, I would really like you to listen to me" and she said, "Stop interrupting me. I am serious" and she began screaming. I thought, "Well, is this what real work will be like?"

Q: She was one of the, as they call it, professionals?

CUSHING: She was a member of our class also. The two ambassadors were real retired ambassadors who were there for the role play and everyone else had been appointed so they said, "OK, you are now the DCM" and I was just a lowly junior officer but the crisis involved demanding payment for a debt and reducing the subsidies on flour and gas, which is exactly what happened in Egypt. I said, "Listen, I know what the answer is here" but she would not listen to me. We were in a group meeting and so I said, "Listen, I have something really important" and she said, "Shut up. I haven't got time for you." So I thought, "Well, OK."

She was posted to a consulate in New Zealand and even New Zealanders complained about her behavior and attitude when she was working in the consular section. She eventually married a New Zealander and dropped out of the Foreign Service. That was the end of that. I was a little bit disillusioned by that.

It was sort of the end game of the Cold War. Reagan and Gorbachev. Gorbachev came to Washington, DC and there was a great deal of excitement. There was a boom in Soviet things. The Secret Service and the Soviet guards were trading pins and there was a great deal of excitement about that.

My first assignment was Santo Domingo in the Dominican Republic in the consular section. So I then took the ConGen course and my scores in that were 91, 95 and 98. I think they had a section on passports and citizenship and they had one on immigrant and non-immigrant visas and one on American citizen services. My average was just short of 95 for those courses, so I did reasonably well in those.

We had come to Washington in late December or late January of ’88 and just before July 4th we flew off to the Dominican Republic. I had done the A-100 class and the ConGen course and a little bit of area studies and Spanish and so forth.

Q: You say you were in your 40s when you took the A-100 and many of the class were in their 20s or early 30s. Did you get the feeling that you were going to be, because of the time factor, somewhat limited in where you could have all the fun in the Foreign Service and you were unlikely to reach significant rank or something? Was that almost a given?

CUSHING: I assumed that. I never had any expectation that I was going to rise very high. For one thing, except for the Dominican Republic, every supervisor I had was quite a bit younger than I was and so I was not in a position to get a mentor of any kind. No matter where I was, there was often a certain level of, I don’t know if you would call it discomfort, but I was always older than my supervisors and in many cases, more articulate or more intelligent or a better writer or something but I just tried to downplay that. It made for some limited expectations; I knew I wasn’t going to rise very high and I didn’t much care because it was such a relief to get out of my dead-end job in the Tacoma public schools and to get into something where I would have an opportunity to travel. I thought, well, this is already my second career so it’s really not that important.

So we got to the Dominican Republic. We took our dog along. It was a very high-stress environment in terms of visas because there were long lines, lots of people, and lots of interviews every day.

Q: What was the situation in the Dominican Republic? You were there from when to when?

CUSHING: I was there from July of ’88 to January of ’90.

Q: So what was the situation in the Dominican Republic?

CUSHING: The president was Joaquin Balaguer of the Social Christian Democrats.

Q: He was pretty old, wasn’t he?

CUSHING: Balaguer was in the government under Trujillo, who was killed in ’61 and then Balaguer was out of the country for a while and then he came back. He and his rival Juan Bosch were both extremely old. Balaguer must have been in his late 70s or early 80s by then and completely blind. The joke was he never knew when the electricity went out because he was blind.

It was definitely a third world country. What I thought was at the time the electricity went out all the time because there was a great deal of corruption in the electric company and there were problems with the union. The union at night would come and cut down the transformers from the poles and sell them for scrap metal and so there were constant brownouts and blackouts. We would have two or three hours of electricity a day. Of course, with no stop lights the traffic was constantly in chaos. There was always gridlock because when you came to an intersection that

had stoplights, each person assumed that well, if there had been electricity, I would have had the green light so they'd just get all jammed up together.

I never really expressed this to anybody there but I thought: either get the electricity squared away or just throw all these computers and air conditioners into the sea because they are worthless. You pretend you are this modern society with computers and television stations and air conditioning and so forth but you never have any electricity so you might as well go back to spearing fish and living in grass huts.

We had four auto accidents there just because the driving was so bad. Sometimes the water was off.

We started off renting a house and it turned out to be a big mistake. It was extremely noisy and very stressful because of the noise and also at one point we had hired a maid and an intruder came over the wall with an ice pick while none of us were there and raped the maid by holding an ice pick in her ear and saying, "I will have my way with you or I will stab you in the ear with my ice pick." That was extremely unpleasant.

We were in this house, especially my wife really not liking it. She liked it a lot at the beginning and then it was noisy, noisy, noisy so eventually, in January of '89 we were able to move to an apartment and were at the back side of the building away from traffic so that was quite a bit better. That was an improvement although the apartment had a generator but it could run only the elevators and a few lights in the hallways in the stairs so people would get a long extension cord and plug it in to one of the outlets in the hallway where there was electricity and try to run things off of that. We had a very small generator that could run the freezer.

I remember once watching the football game on city power and it was a very dramatic end to the game and there was a hail Mary pass and the quarterback threw and it was in the air and then poof, nothing. Everything went dead. By the time I got the generator on, the announcer said, "Wow. That was the most amazing play I've ever seen."
The filter for the swimming pool would only run on city power. The generators did not have the capacity to run the filter so the pool would get green and slimy. When the water was off, my shower in the morning would be to go down to the pool with a bar of soap and a plastic garbage can and just get a plastic garbage can of this slimy water and douse it over myself and get soaped up and then put another plastic bucket of slimy water over myself and then towel off and then take a smaller bucket of slimy water upstairs to shave with in the dark. I'd often come into work kind of cut up and people would say, "What happened to you? And I'd say, "A cold water shave in the dark. What do you expect?"

Q: Let's talk about the work.

CUSHING: I had pretty good supervisors. I started out with immigrant visas and I did immigrant visas for a while. They were remodeling the consulate at the time. First we had a little cubicle or office and people came in, right into the consulate and saw us and we had a stack of cases on our desk and we'd do those and we had no time off for lunch so I'd just take in a can of tuna and

some crackers and eat the tuna and crackers while I was working. We didn't have a lunch break; it was a very high volume place.

There was a considerable amount of fraud; a woman would say she'd have so many children, she would claim people on her immigrant visa who were not hers, there would be one baby born in say, September of '69 and then there would be another kid born in March of '70 and then another kid born in January of '71 or something. I'd say, "These can't possibly be all your children." "No, look each one is in a different year, look at that. '68, '69, '70. There's no problem whatsoever. I don't know why you are bothering about this," and so forth. We had a lot of fake marriages.

Q: Where were they going? Mostly New York or was it?

CUSHING: Mostly to New York; some to Miami, some to New York. There would be an entire package; there'd be phony wedding pictures and a phony marriage license and we'd have all these cases where a 55 year old Puerto Rican woman came to the Dominican Republic and fell in love with a 20 year old cab driver on the way from the airport to the hotel and they got married three days later.

I still remember one. This fellow claimed that his fiancée, I guess his fiancée had a green card in the U.S. and was petitioning for him. I said, "Do you have any letters that would show proof of a continuing relationship?" So he took a letter off the top of the stack and handed it to me and it said, 'José, I am sending back the ring. Send me my clothes. I know what you have been doing. If I ever see you again I am going to cut your heart out and feed it to you.'

I said, "Wow. This doesn't look like she is ready to get married to you." He said, "Oh, can I see that letter? Uhh, women get emotional sometimes."

I tried to give people the benefit of the doubt. At one point there was a woman who had a bunch of kids and there was one girl and I said, "This is a little fishy here. Would you tell me what is going on?" And she said, "Well, listen. This is our niece; both her parents were killed in a car crash when she was an infant. We have raised her as our own child. We registered her as our own child. She is not my biological daughter but I love her just the same as my regular children." I said, "Well, OK. Look, we'll include her in the visa package but don't ever tell anybody else this."

We had one guy who was deaf, dumb and blind and tested positive for venereal disease. Occasionally we'd get someone who was HIV positive and didn't know it. I didn't want to be the one to tell him so I'd say, "Listen. We've got a little problem with the process here. I think you need to go see your physician and talk to him about this."

So the immigrant visas were fairly routine. They would try to fraudulently include children. There would be fraudulent marriages and so forth.

When I worked on non immigrant visas, I probably should have refused more people. I had kind of a soft heart so other people were refusing nine out of ten and I was refusing maybe six out of

ten. I expect there are a lot of people who overstayed their visas because I didn't want to turn them down.

There was this one girl who needed medical treatment. She had a brain tumor. She came in with a shaved head. I started looking at the papers and she burst out crying. I said, "Que paso (What is it?)" She said, "No quiero morir (I don't want to die)." So I said, "OK, if you stop crying by the time I count to ten, I'll give you a visa." So she did.

There was a Haitian gentleman who was both a medical doctor and a minister and he had a letter that he was going to a conference of Methodist ministers in Illinois somewhere. I thought well, he looks like a high class gentleman. So I gave him a visa and about three or four weeks later my supervisor called me over. At that time we had no computerized name checks. We had microfiches with names of people on a watch list but they were always months out of date. There was no way to telephone from the Dominican Republic to Haiti. So I gave this fellow a visa. I thought, medical doctor, minister going to a religious conference in the U.S., fine.

About four weeks later my supervisor called me to his office and he said, "Did you give a visa to a Haitian named Roger Lafontant?" I said, "Yes." He said, "Oh. Well, he's the head of the Ton-ton Macoutes." "Oh?" "He went to Miami, bought a boatload of guns and came back and was involved in an aborted coup." I said, "Oh." He said, "The next time you get a Haitian applicant, would you check with me first?" I said, "Sure, I can do that."

Q: For someone reading the Ton-ton Macoutes is the sort of the mafia and enforcers of the Duvalier regime and all that, a pretty scary bunch of guys.

CUSHING: One time there was another Haitian there and I refused him so he reached into a pocket and put a whole bunch of dust on the window. There was a window of bulletproof glass and there was a little slot through which you could pass documents. So he threw this whole bunch of dust down on his side and he cupped up his hands and blew it, so this enormous cloud of powder came all over me and he said, "You refused me for a visa. This is magic ju-ju dust and you are going to die."

Q: Well, you are still here.

CUSHING: Yeah. So I dusted myself off and said, "Next."

We had a fellow who wanted to take his grandson to Disney World in Orlando and he was a dentist. He had a couple of suitcases with him. I said, "How do I know that you are a dentist?" He said, "Wait a minute." He brought up one of the valises to the window and opened it up and it was full of all the teeth that he had pulled. I said, "Oh, OK. How do I know that you have enough money for your trip to Disneyland?" He said, "Oh, wait a minute." He opened up the other valise and it was jammed with these wads of one and five dollar American dollar bills. I said, "OK" and gave him a visa.

Some of the younger guys were trading visas for the favors of young ladies. If they saw an attractive young woman…

Q: You are talking about vice consuls.

CUSHING: Yes.

Q: Sex has always been a big problem.

CUSHING: Yes. I was married so I never got into that but what they'd do is they would grant the visa and they'd leave their name card inside and say, "Let's discuss your visa case further" or something. Sometimes they would append the visa and say, "Well, we've got a couple of little details that need to be worked out" and then they'd write their name and number on the card and slip it in the passport.

There was a woman once who said she'd like to meet me privately. I refused her and she said, "I'd like to meet you privately to discuss this case" and I said, "I don't think that would be appropriate, thank you." I got a passport once with a hundred dollar bill in it. When I flipped it open there was a U.S. hundred dollar bill and so I immediately called the consular officer in the next booth. I said, "Would you come over here, witness that this passport contains a hundred dollar bill which I have not touched?" Then I called my supervisor over and said, "My neighboring vice consul is willing to testify that this passport contains a one hundred dollar bill that I have not touched."

The applicant was saying, "Oh, my goodness. How did that get in there? I must have forgotten it when I was sorting through my papers." So we gave him back his hundred dollar bill and his passport and told him to get lost.

There were a lot of fraudulent documents.

Q: Was there a history of special investigations of vice consuls or consuls who were selling visas there or not?

CUSHING: We had one FSN, Foreign Service national, a very nice older woman who every year bought another stretch of beachfront property up on the north coast but apparently they could never pin anything on her.

There was another woman from Puerto Rico who was a working spouse, PIT, part time, intermediate, temporary or something who was selling visas but instead of being prosecuted, she was just fired. Then she was hired by the Dominican telephone company, interesting.

I think there was some kind of investigation after I had left. I honestly don't know what came of it.

Q: Who was your ambassador while you were there?

CUSHING: Paul Taylor.

Q: What was his background?

CUSHING: He was a veteran of the navy and the embassy was quite a ways from the consulate, about three or four blocks. I didn't see him all that often but I did hear a few stories.

One of them was that one of the economic officers took a survey among embassy people, are you satisfied with the provision of electricity? Everybody else said no. We have to use the generator a lot and the electricity goes out a lot. The problem with using the generator was it was very noisy and very smoky; it made a big racket so a lot of people had them out in their yard in a little house. If none of your neighbors had generators, you were the only guy there running a generator so there were cases where people had a generator and if they turned it on and none of their neighbors had any electricity there was bad feeling; in one case the family had a swimming pool. The neighbors were in apartments where all around them they would throw garbage from their balcony into the guy's swimming pool to express their discontent that he had a generator and they didn't.

Getting back to the ambassador; they had a survey, are you satisfied with your electricity or not? So the economic officer took it to the ambassador and said, "Well, I've never had any problems with my electricity. I don't understand what this is all about. So you are going to have to put me down as saying yes, I am satisfied. I don't know why all these people are complaining like this. I always have electricity." So it was like 99% no, I am not satisfied and 1% which was the ambassador, yes, I am satisfied with my electricity.

A couple of other stories I heard; he had this Lincoln town car as his ambassadorial vehicle and he had it repainted three times until it got to the exact shade of midnight blue that he liked. He was dissatisfied that the bookshelves in his library in the ambassador's residence were not level so he would put a ball bearing on each shelf and see if it rolled one way or the other and then ask the carpenters to reposition the bookshelves.

At one point there was a town hall meeting. A lot of the embassy wives were saying, "Well, we can't buy any meat because our freezers keep going off. There's no electricity so we can't buy any meat because it will spoil and so the ambassador's wife said, "Well, why don't you all come in and use the freezer at the residence. You'd be welcome to label your meat and put it in there and why don't we say every Wednesday from 1 to 3 you can either put meat in or take it out."

Q: Did you have much social contact with the Dominicans?

CUSHING: My wife got into a dance class with a very interesting fellow who was a very good dancer and a very good teacher and so we met various dancers and artists through him. So we did have some contact with Dominican people.

Q: You left there in what? 1990, was it?

CUSHING: Yes.

Actually, I have one more story from there.

One other thing that happened was when we arrived in the Dominican Republic, our air freight got sent to Dakar, Senegal and the administrative counselor, Lucille Thomas, was not seized with any sense of urgency at all about that. We got there with no air freight because it had been sent to Dakar, Senegal so it took us another two months to get our air freight. She was not highly thought of, the person, the administrative counselor there.

I was bidding on my next post while in the Dominican Republic. This would have been about June of 1989. I had lived in Japan so I already spoke Japanese and had tested at 3-2, and there was a position open at the consulate in Osaka-Kobe for a political-economic rotation so I bid on that and my career development officer, CDO, called and said, "Well, things are looking pretty good" and then she called and said, "Congratulations, you've been paneled." So my wife who was from Japan was very excited. She called up her mother in Japan and her family and said, "Hey, guess what? Our next assignment will be in Japan" and everyone is congratulating me.

Then I got a TM-1, which was a cable from Tokyo saying 'Welcome to Embassy Tokyo' and this, that and the other and then about three weeks later my career development officer called me up and she said, "Well, it seems as if that position in Osaka-Kobe was listed by mistake. There is already someone else in the pipeline that is going there. Everything else that you bid on has already been taken and Friday is my last day as your career development officer. Goodbye and good luck."

So I was suddenly stuck. I had no onward assignment. We had already told my wife's family that we were going to Japan and I was dumbstruck because I thought, "Wow. This is so bizarre. I was told I was paneled, I got a TM-1 from Tokyo and suddenly this thing is jerked away from me and no one ever gave me a satisfactory explanation for what had happened." I have no idea what happened but it made me realize that the entire bidding system was rigged. If you didn't know somebody, if you didn't have connections then it was entirely possible to get screwed out of something even after you had been told that you had it. That was a rather disillusioning experience.

Fortunately, at the DCM in Santo Domingo, a woman named Pat Langford, was very sympathetic. She talked to the ambassador and she wrote a letter to Ed Perkins who I think was director general at the time and explained what had happened. Ed Perkins was apparently quite embarrassed by the whole thing so he sent down a directive that I should get something fairly good and so they gave me The Hague in the Netherlands as my second post.

My wife was not very happy because she didn't like cold places. What she said was, "Look, we are originally scheduled to rotate out of there in January. Why don't we extend until June and bid on the summer cycle?" I said, "Look, if we go to The Hague, I'll have language, we will be back on the summer cycle" so she finally grudgingly accepted that.

My new career development officer was Joe Ruth. There's also something in the middle here. After I had gotten screwed out of the position in Osaka Kobe he said, "Look, I understand what happened and we are going to try and make it right for you. There's an economic position at the embassy in Tokyo. I will put you in for that." I said, "Well, OK. That's fine." "That's really

outrageous what happened to you," he said. We all feel very badly about it and we don't know how it happened." So I said, "OK, could you send me the position description?" He said, "Oh, sure. I'll get right on that."

So weeks went by and I got no position description for the economic position in Tokyo. Then I called up my new CDO and said, "What happened to the economic position in Tokyo?" "Oh, somebody else got it."

By this time my deputy chief of mission, Pat Langford, and the ambassador had both talked to Ed Perkins who apparently talked to my CDO and said "Get this fellow something halfway decent" and so I got The Hague.

ROBERT S. PASTORINO
Ambassador
Dominican Republic (1992-1994)

Ambassador Robert S. Pastorino was born in San Francisco in 1949. His career included positions in Caracas, Lisbon, Colombia, Nicaragua, Mexico, and an ambassadorship to Santo Domingo. Ambassador Pastorino was interviewed by David Fischer and Charles Stuart Kennedy in 1998.

PASTORINO: Of course, one could get into trouble if one went into rural areas. In fact, there's a well-known case of the Peace Corps volunteer who was down south in the jungle, doing research on tropical birds. He was kidnapped by the FARC. He was held for about twelve months. He was kidnapped on Valentine's day and his release was effected mostly by the persistent and heroic efforts of the then Peace Corps Director, Jose Sorzano, a Cuban-American, who later became the National Security Advisor for Latin American Affairs. I was close friends with Jose. I saw him work and struggle for a year during the kidnapping, looking for a way to effect the release of a volunteer botanist who was trying to help the environment. In fact, Jose pulled it off after a year. As far as I know no one paid any kind of ransom and he was indeed released without any harm.

The only other violent political incident I remember was one that I was almost involved in. Ambassador Asencio, thirteen or fifteen other Ambassadors, and twenty or thirty other people were kidnapped while attending a reception at noon at the Dominican Embassy. They were kidnapped by Castro-supported guerrillas, held hostage for several weeks, and finally most of them were released. The Ambassadors were held the whole time, while many of the other people were released in stages. It's all in a book by Diego. It's a case where some of the Ambassadors went through the syndrome of ending up siding with and supporting the guerrillas. On the other hand, in the case of Diego Asencio, he actually turned a couple of the guerrillas and that probably led to the release.

I was out of the country when the Embassy was seized by the guerrillas. I had left two weeks before the hostage taking was effected. But as US Commercial Attaché, I had been invited to the reception, and I almost assuredly would have gone. I doubt that they would have held me very

long, being relatively low ranking, but it's the closest I know of that I ever came to that kind of hostage situation. It's ironic of course, that 20 years later, I went to the Dominican Republic as US Ambassador.

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Q: Well, let me ask you then. How did you get named an Ambassador?

PASTORINO: In all honesty I continued to play the waiting game. I thought by now a Mission of my own would come and I figured, "if it comes, it comes. If it doesn't, it doesn't." Actually, I was having the time of my life in Mexico, doing one of the best jobs I did anywhere, in one of the most important positions in the American Diplomatic Service.

When the Ambassador had offered me the job back in Washington he had assured me that he would help me obtain a Mission. He was good to his word. Every time he went back to Washington on consultations he would look around and let me know of the possibilities. I remember he came back after one year and said there were a couple possibilities but they're not really ripe yet. I thought to myself: "Fine. If that's what he says, that's okay. If it comes, it comes."

Then he came back after another six months and said there were some great possibilities. "How would you like to go to the Dominican Republic?" he asked. I wasn't sure how certain he could be, he did not make the appointment certainly, but I didn't argue, saying the Dominican Republic sounds fine. Even at that, there was still the long process of being selected by State and then going through a vetting at the White House, including the possibility that some political campaign contributor might want Santo Domingo. I wasn't sure what would happen and I didn't start packing my bags. But, in the end, it all went very smoothly.

The Ambassador must have sent a cable back or called back to Washington, saying Bob's interested. I didn't do anything. He said I didn't have to. A few days later, I got a call from a good friend, Bob Gelbard, who was in ARA. He asked if I wanted to be on the list for the Dominican Republic, which was to be sent to the White House. I said yes. A month later I got the okay and the papers effecting the transfer back to Washington. It was about two years that we had been in Mexico. In many ways I was sorry to be leaving Mexico; I thought I was doing a good job and I loved the job. But, I was not going to turn down an Ambassadorial appointment. The career must go on. The family of course had to look at another move, and Fran had to contemplate being the Ambassador's wife, a situation that I had no doubt she could carry out to the great credit to the US Government and people.

The process was fairly smooth but because of no fault of my own, took quite a while, almost six months in Washington. I didn't have a controversial background except, perhaps for some, my assignment in Honduras carrying out the US Government approved assistance for the Contras. I was told by Foreign Relations Committee staff, one of Senator Dodd's people, that I should obtain a statement from the Special Prosecutor that I was neither the target nor the subject of any investigation having to do with Iran-Contra. It took me three days to get that. I visited the Special Prosecutor's Office in downtown Washington and they checked the files and found I had been

interviewed in Honduras. The files showed I was neither a target nor a subject and I was given the required document, which I turned over to the Foreign Relations Committee which carried out the first step of the Ambassadorial confirmation process.

Because of circumstances having nothing to do with my appointment, we waited around Washington for six months, between late July and the end of 1991. It was a little frustrating; I had no real job or tasks, except to prepare for the confirmation hearing.

I will explain the delay. It's one thing that is wrong with the confirmation process. My name was sent up to Congress for confirmation with three other names: Curtis Kamen, who was to go to Bolivia; George Jones, who was going to Guyana; and my long-time friend Mike Kozak. George Jones had somehow gotten on the wrong side of Jessie Helms, who was the minority Chairman of the Committee and who had the reputation of being tough on the State Department. I believe George had done something while in Costa Rica which Senator Helms did not approve of. And Kozak's nomination was being held up for his activity on the Central American issue, I understood. Neither Kaman nor I seemed to have any problem with either Dodd, who was the Democratic leader, nor with Helms.

The committee decided in August or September that they would not consider any of the names until all could be approved. I had a good contact on Senator Helms' staff who assured me that no one had any problems with my nomination and I was ready to be confirmed. I had a private lunch with Senator Dodd, where we discussed several issues involving the Dominican Republic, which interested the Senator very much because he had served there in the Peace Corps. He also assured me I had no problem. In fact, the meeting with Senator Dodd was over a sandwich in his office, a very informal setting and one I appreciated very much.

Thus, I was never in doubt about my confirmation, only about the timing. Not only is the nomination subject to the Senators' concerns, it is also subject to the Congressional schedule, in terms of when it would be brought up for a hearing and then votes of the Committee and the full Senate, but also because a nomination would die if it was not acted upon before Congress adjourned.

I didn't need much time to learn about the Dominican Republic, or to do the other preparations for the hearings. I sat in the Caribbean Office in Latin American Affairs in the State Department, meeting everyone interested in the Dominican Republic, and learning the issues in detail. After about a month, there wasn't too much more to learn. So I enjoyed four or five months of relaxation, almost vacation, although I did spend about six hours daily in the Department. But, it was a little frustrating for us, because planning was impossible without a definite departure date. We did have to worry about school for Susan, as well as other family plans, including Fran, who was working.

Once, the committee confirmation hearing, the first step, was literally postponed at two o'clock in the afternoon, two hours before they were scheduled to begin. And I had to change all the plans of the family who were on their way to meet me. I believe one of the Senators had expected one of the nominations to be withdrawn and when he found out it wasn't, he postponed the hearing. At two o'clock we were told, "don't come up to the Hill. The hearing is canceled".

So it went on through September and October. There was some concern because the Congressional session was nearing its conclusion. Paul Taylor, who was the Ambassador at that time in the DR, had his plans also up in the air, but evidently he was just as happy staying on a little longer. No one at the Department seemed to be very concerned. Several people suggested I go to the Committee and get myself removed from the package of four nominations and then be considered on my own. I didn't, because I didn't think that fair to my colleagues, who were also friends.

One of the tasks I did during this period was choose my Deputy Chief of Mission, Mr. Manuel Rocha, a close, great friend and an excellent diplomat and Foreign Service Officer. Manuel will become an Ambassador and continue to serve with great distinction. Manuel is a person to be emulated and can serve as a model for professionalism and integrity. Besides that, he was brilliant and he knew the Dominican Republic. We had served together three times previously, and I had promised him in Mexico, that I would ask him to be my DCM should the occasion arise. When I returned to Washington from Mexico, there was a DCM in place in Santo Domingo and there was no need for me to select someone. Then, tragically, the DCM passed away.

I immediately called Manuel and asked him to come to the DR with me. Then, there began a three-month ordeal in which I had to negotiate with the Director General of the Foreign Service and the State Department to get Manuel assigned, even though tradition dictated that the Ambassador should himself choose his Deputy because of the overwhelming need for trust and confidence between the two officers. As noted above Manuel was perfect, except that in the Director General's eyes, he was too low ranking, not yet a Senior Officer.

This, according to the Personnel minions, made him ineligible if not unacceptable, and they demanded an open, formal selection process. They began the process by sending me three names. I interviewed all three officers, and rejected them, despite some pretty impressive credentials. I told them I still wanted to select Rocha. The bureaucracy then sent me another list of three. I repeated the process and maintained my preference. This went on until I actually threatened not to have a DCM. When that didn't seem to work, and a stalemate was in the offing, I had to play my trump card, which I had held off. It worked and I can say that one of my best decisions in my whole term as Ambassador (or Ambassador Designate) was the selection of Manuel Rocha. I think I may have ruffled some feathers in the Department but it worked out in the long run.

Finally, back to the confirmation process, I believe the Kozak nomination was withdrawn, and then two nights before the Congress was to adjourn, the Department satisfied Senator Helms about George Jones, and the hearings were scheduled for the next afternoon. I received a telephone call at 11:00PM telling me the hearing was set for the next day. My family and I went to the hearing. Senator Helms wasn't even there, the Republicans being represented by Senator Richard Lugar, a wonderful man and a real foreign policy expert. Senator Dodd was there to chair the hearing. Lugar asked me one question. Dodd asked me the same three or four questions we had discussed several months before. Curt got two questions, I believe. Most of the inquiries were for George about the up-coming elections in Guyana. We all answered correctly I guess,

because the three of us were approved by the Committee that night and our nominations sent to the floor for the Senate's last day, probably about December 15.

Then I waited for a little while, but not for long. The nominations were sent to the floor and voted on sometime in the middle of the night with probably no more than two Senators on the floor. Thus, after waiting almost six months the process was finished and I was confirmed as US Ambassador to the Dominican Republic. After being sworn in by the Under Secretary of State and hosting a small reception at the State Department, we were ready to take up the assignment. I do remember being very proud at the swearing-in ceremony with all of my family present, including my sister and her family, and my elderly aunt who had flown in from San Francisco, her first plane flight in her life. We were still living in our house in Fairfax and we left for Santo Domingo after the holidays, arriving in the Dominican Republic on the 10th of January. We stayed about two and a half years.

Q: Let me ask you first, what surprised you most? We were all DCMs, were career Foreign Service Officers. Was there anything that surprised you about being an Ambassador?

PASTORINO: I don't think so; I have not really thought about it in those terms. I was surprised at the Ambassadorial residence in Santo Domingo. It was one of the old, traditional palaces of the old Foreign Service, basically a colonial mansion; kind of like those in the movies which disparage diplomats. The residence sat on a whole square block in downtown Santo Domingo, two blocks from the Dominican Presidential Palace. The Embassy was situated on one part of the property, the house in the other part; the house had expansive porticos in the front, a curving driveway, several expansive public rooms, a dining table seating 24, four bedrooms upstairs, a library and sundry other features, including a massive curving stairway.

The property had a tennis court and swimming pool, and two pool houses. Some of the trees on the property were actually national monuments because of their age and beauty. Everything was green, flowering, and well taken care of. We had a guest house separated from the main house. I remember it must have taken us three or four days to explore the whole estate. We had a staff of six or seven, including a resident American who supervised the staff, and did all of the complex accounting which the US Government demanded to keep our personal funds and Government funds separated.

Of course, not all was perfect with the house and grounds. Being old, the infrastructure was ancient and almost beyond repair. The water and electricity frequently failed; I remember once that I was going to fix some wiring myself. In the process Fran and I pulled literally hundreds of yards of electrical wire out of the walls and conduits. It had been replaced by other wiring but no one had ever bothered to remove it. Fran did a wonderful job of making sure the upper floor was the comfortable living quarters that we were used to.

The treatment of the Embassy staff did not surprise me. It was an excellent staff and they were prepared to provide the traditional excellent assistance to and cooperation with the Ambassador. Being the big boss, and being number two person in the country in the mind of many Dominicans, also didn't surprise me, nor did it phase me. That's how it'd been in Honduras. I already knew the traditional perception of the US Ambassador in many of these Latin American

countries; the press and media attention was overwhelming but everyone told me that would happen, and I expected it. And, I knew I would be assisted by an outstanding Press Attaché.

Upon my arrival I was not really worried about the substance of the issues, or how to act as an Ambassador, or how to run an Embassy. My only concern was how do to deal with an eighty-six year old, blind man who had been the Foreign Minister of the Dominican Republic before I was born. That of course was President Joaquin Balaguer, who had already been President five or six times, both as a Trujillo appointee, and as a democratically-elected President. He was President, a father of the country, and beloved by many Dominicans. While much like the typical Latin American *caudillo*, he was also a democrat, having won five out of seven elections; and having lost the two, he had left office, turning over power to the opposition.

So that was my only nagging worry, and this was not something you could study or figure out in advance or go consult a text book, or even check with the Foreign Service Institute. After all was said and done, I need not have been so concerned. It turned out to be fairly simple. He was a gentleman. I think we came to a quick understanding. He always received me when necessary. Obviously, he understood the U.S.-Dominican relationship. I didn't get everything the U.S. government wanted out of the Dominicans, partially because they are good negotiators and they have an independent streak, even though they are still dependent on the US. It turned out to be very easy to deal with President Joaquin Balaguer.

I presented my credentials within four days of arriving, not because of any great policy need or pending negotiation, but because by tradition the American Ambassador presented credentials as soon as possible. I hardly had time to get fitted for the four hundred dollar white, tropical suit which was a requirement for the credentials ceremony, and which I've worn only three times since.

I brought the whole Embassy Country Team to the Palace with me and we had at least forty-five minutes with President Balaguer. Most Ambassadors when they present their credentials get five or ten minutes. The President and I talked about baseball, his long history in the politics of the Dominican Republic, and only peripherally about any outstanding issues. I'll never forget the main ballroom in the Presidential Palace, with its gold-leaf decorations. It is a long room with mirrors and windows overlooking the Caribbean Sea, and not much furniture. The President and I, with his cabinet and the Embassy Country Team sat along the far wall, our teams spread out in opposite direction from us, as we all sat in large chairs. I must have looked like a little boy sitting next to the old gentleman; old but extremely distinguished.

Balaguer treated me with the respect he had for the United States and the American Ambassador. Right away I told him I would never do anything or say anything without telling him. I told him I wanted to work together. I had complete access to him. Whenever I needed an appointment, I had it within a half hour. In the next two and a half years, I met with him at least once or twice a week. Sometimes, for no other reason than to just discuss what's going on; a few times when I called on him under instruction to ask him some serious things or say some serious things. Being that President Balaguer was a perfect gentleman and master diplomat, often all I had to do follow his lead. Even I could act like a gentleman in those circumstances.

The first couple of times I met with the President, I took the DCM, Manuel Rocha. Manuel Rocha had served in the Dominican Republic as a Political Officer several years before. He knew everyone in the country. It's a small country but it still was not easy to know everyone, and not in the knowledgeable way in which he knew them and their background. He was friends with many of them. More than anything else, he knew the politics, the inside information about politicians, issues, events, U.S.-Dominican relations, and other important information which is not in the briefing papers.

The first time I went to see Balaguer, there was no major issue, but I remember I actually rehearsed. Balaguer has written great books in Spanish and about the Spanish language; many consider him one of the great authors of Latin America. So, I wanted my Spanish to be as perfect as possible, not the Spanish I had learned to speak on the border.

In these meetings the President always made me feel at ease. Of course, there's one thing unique about being with a blind man; he can't see, and he was totally blind. There were no cameras. There was always a guard outside on the balcony. Often it was just the President and me in the meetings. At other times, Rocha would go with me and he could actually give me hand signals if I was making mistakes. Manuel is like Pastorino, a demonstrable Latino. So I didn't make many mistakes.

Balaguer knew the Dominican Republic like the back of his hand. He had not been born blind, and in fact only lost his sight in his later life. He would tour the country to determine what was going on. People said he would get out of his limousine in the main plaza in a little town he had not visited in years and would ask whether Jose's pharmacy is still on that corner. Are people satisfied with the bridge? Why was the gas station two blocks from the plaza removed? He has a photographic memory and an extra perception. People knew better than try and fool President Balaguer. He depended greatly upon his two sisters, never having been married. He trusted them politically and personally to be his eyes. For instance, his slush funds were controlled by one of them.

I accompanied the President on trips to the hinterland, when he inaugurated dams and roads. He liked having the American Ambassador there and I liked being there to help cut the ribbons and see the country. Being 86 years old, he knew every event that had happened in the country in the last fifty years. He was the best Desk Officer the Dominican Republic could hope to have.

During the whole time I was there, he had a Foreign Minister who was an old style politician, who knew very little about U.S.-Dominican relations, but everything about Dominican politics. I remember, just before the credentials presentation ceremony, I went to call on the Foreign Minister and I sat in his office for two hours listening to street politics in the Dominican Republic and how the Foreign Minister had campaigned and won his several elections to Congress.

But, in the end, it was President Balaguer who ran policy in the Dominican Republic, whether it be international or domestic. When I went to see the President, I knew that I could finally get a decision. Often my staff or I would talk to cabinet officials, including Ministers, or

Congressmen, and they would ultimately refer us to the President. Many did not want to risk making a decision which Balaguer would disagree with.

We negotiated several treaties and agreements, aid loans, investment agreements, the textile accord, etc. I would go talk to the Secretary of Commerce, Bello Andino, a nice guy, but with the perception of being a kind of a bagman. Many also complained about Bello's human rights record in a previous position. But, he did have the President's ear on some issues. But even he, the Secretary of Commerce would tell me: "I can't decide that Mr. Ambassador. You have to go see the President. Please tell the President for me that I think it's all right, but…" In fact, I had Cabinet Ministers coming to me at times asking me to go to the President to get their programs approved or carried out.

Q: So really the American Ambassador was the number two guy?

PASTORINO: In some ways, yes, and many people perceived it this way, but I tried to draw us back from that perception and situation. I didn't think that should be part of American diplomacy. In other ways, it was not true because the Dominicans did demonstrate some independence, and US policy had changed. We intrinsically wanted a different type of relationship, and the major global policy issues had changed and most of our interests were mutual. On the other hand, it was almost impossible to change the relationship and the perception of the U.S. Ambassador and his role. No matter how I tried to act, I was the U.S. Ambassador and nothing would change that.

In a personal sense, I could not do anything privately; I had almost no privacy of any kind. I tested the system early, only a couple of months after arriving. On a quiet Sunday afternoon with nothing on my schedule, and in spite of the beautiful compound at the Residence, I decided I wanted to go to the basketball game. There is a Dominican Professional Basketball League, comprised of both Dominicans and Americans; the Dominicans are good players, some have played in the NBA. The gymnasium was about eighteen or twenty blocks away. I wanted to walk, and go without the chauffeur and the bodyguards. There was really no security threat.

First, I had to figure out how to get out of the compound. The guards, my personal guards, had the day off and I didn't call them in. But I still had to figure out how to get out of the gate without someone calling the security officer to provide protection. I did it by going to the Embassy and coming out that side of the complex, not returning to the grounds by that entrance. Pretty soon all the compound guards were confused, if not asleep, and finally I was outside by myself.

No more than six or eight blocks away I saw a Dominican policeman following me. I knew he was following me because I used a simple trick: you go up one side of the street; then, you make a U-turn; if he also makes the U-turn, you know he is following you. I stopped him and asked him what he wanted. He said the Dominican guards at the gate had found out I had departed and called headquarters to get protection for me. I gave up and asked if he liked basketball. All Dominicans love sports and he went to the game with me. He again followed me at a distance on the walk home.

On the 20-block walk home to the Residence, a Dominican Air Force Colonel recognized me, stopped me, and asked if I wanted him to accompany me as protection. Quickly I gave up trying to have some privacy and when we really wanted to be by ourselves, out of the glare of the media and publicity, we would get on the plane and go to Puerto Rico or Miami. I learned to like San Juan more than Miami. San Juan was closer and it was more Latino and we could do what we wanted.

So, there was no way I could not be the American Ambassador to the Dominican Republic while on the island. On a professional basis, it was not much different. The Dominicans expected US policy to be such and such; they expected demands or requests; they understood the relationship. And in fact the U.S.-Dominican relationship was perceived as normal and beneficial for the Dominican Republic, and most Dominicans didn't want it drastically changed. Sometimes, it is the perception of unknowing Americans that the relationship should be changed; often these Americans, who have their own axes to grind, don't understand the relationship as it really is. Often they mistake small groups for the majority in a country they don't know or understand.

I was well known as an individual. Many people in many countries make it their business to learn about the US Ambassador, sometimes in order to benefit themselves, either directly or through use of a relationship or special knowledge. In some ways, I was not hard to get to know. I thought Dominicans should know me and something about me, to demonstrate a little what Americans were really like. I thought that was part of the job in selling the US and even the US culture.

I love baseball and I became known as the San Francisco Giants Ambassador to the Dominican Republic. I often talked baseball with the Dominicans, both personally and publicly, I realized a long time ambition, to meet Juan Marichal, who I had watched many years as a Giants fan. Marichal had an annual charity golf tournament at Casa de Campo, a world class golf course in the Eastern part of the country, to which I was always invited. I had the opportunity to meet other guests such as Stan Musial, Orlando Cepeda, Harmon Killebrew, Al Kaline, Brooks Robinson, the Rojas Alous, etc. Many were Dominicans, and many came to the Residence. This always generated publicity and some Dominicans decided Pastorino might be a regular guy, not a CIA Agent, since they were also sports fanatics. I was asked to appear on sports talk programs, and I threw out the first ball on innumerable occasions. I visited many of the baseball academies organized by Major League baseball teams, including the Dodgers camp, which I hated to admit it was one of the best. The Vice President of the Dominican Republic, Carlos Morales, owned one of the best baseball teams and often invited me to his team's games. I threw out the first ball for the Caribbean World Series.

My attendance at baseball games was sometimes difficult. People would come up to me in my seat and ask for visas, or just to talk, or to give me advice. It was not much better in the luxury suites of the ownership of the teams because their friends would always have an excuse to talk to the Ambassador about visas or some other problem. Of course, most of those people who had access to the private boxes already had visas, they probably had green cards, but access to the US Ambassador to get a visa for someone else was a real badge of prestige.

Only once was I ignored at a baseball game. By the second inning one night, I noticed the fact that I was not being approached and I asked the guards what was going on. It turned out that Tommy Lasorda was at the game and for the first time, I was not the most important American in the Dominican Republic, at least not that night at the ballpark. Lasorda was a national hero in the DR, having played and managed there earlier in his career.

Speaking of Lasorda, I must tell one more sports story. One afternoon I invited Tommy Lasorda, Billy Russell, and several of the Embassy Junior Officers to the residence for an informal lunch. Lasorda knew I was a rabid Giant fan, and by definition a Dodger hater, and he came loaded for bear. From the minute of his arrival we got on one another about our teams, him telling me about all the Dodger World Championships, and me talking about the few Giant victories and about the abuse we gave Lasorda in Candlestick Park. It didn't come to blows but he actually told Fran I would go to the devil if I didn't become a Dodger fan. However, we seemed to get along, both liking the Dominican Republic, and both being Italian-American baseball fans. He even told Fran her spaghetti was almost as good as his commercial brand that he advertised. It was an enjoyable afternoon.

So, I thought the two and half years was very enjoyable. While I had never lusted after a Mission or for being Ambassador, I certainly enjoyed it and am grateful I had the opportunity.

Q: What about the issues? Were there many? How complicated were they?

PASTORINO: A little bit about the issues. We had about ten or eleven issues. The Dominican Republic is a small country but we have a relatively large Embassy because of a huge visa workload, their economic dependence on the U.S. for trade, assistance, and finance, and the one million Dominicans who live in the US, most in New York City. There were a lot of American assembly plants, in pharmaceuticals, telecommunications, data entry and processing, and textiles and clothing. Much of the investment in the assembly plants was American, from Puerto Rico. There were also many Dominican Americans who had retired back to the DR, and so there was social security considerations. Sugar was still a major export, and the Dominicans were always very concerned to conserve their sugar quota. It was interesting because much of it would be lost should Cuba get a quota again.

And, there were incipient drug problems, given the DR's geographical location and potential as a shipping and transit point. I was proud that we did a fairly good job of keeping the drug problem to a minor scale although I understand that now might have changed. The narcotraffickers did not take over the DR, allowing them to send drugs to kill Americans, under my term in Santo Domingo. We did a lot of work with the Dominican equivalent of the DEA, and with the Dominican Attorney General, to increase their capabilities to fight drugs and to help them maintain the fight. I was very active working with the authorities, helping to manage our joint drug enforcement programs, and in keeping up a public discussion of the threat. I used the visa tool to fight drugs in a very public way by not granting visas to drug dealers, or lifting them if they already had them.

Other major issues became Haiti, and the Dominican Presidential Elections of 1994, which became in some ways tied together.

Q: How Haiti?

PASTORINO: Before I turn to Haiti, let me a note another reason for the importance of the U.S. Embassy in Santo Domingo: the one million Dominicans living in the U.S., a great number in Harlem and the Bronx in New York City, and also some in Miami. There is tremendous traffic back and forth, both of persons and of money and even some drugs. It was another reason for having a large Embassy.

The Embassy in Santo Domingo was the only diplomatic entity; there were no consulates. We had a library in Santiago de los Caballeros, the second largest city and a business center. It was small country that I could ride from one end to the other in a few hours. As I had done in Mexico, I went all over the country. There wasn't a week that I didn't travel outside of Santo Domingo. I would have enjoyed it more if I could have had a private part of my trips. In certain ways I don't know the Dominican Republic as well as Mexico and as well as I'd like because I never saw it as a private person.

One time our cousins came down and we met them on the north coast in Puerto Plata, where the casinos are located. I wasn't sure I wanted to go to a casino because I wasn't sure of the signal it would send to the Dominicans, but we finally went. Fran and I both like to gamble. We played the slots and roulette and I had a pretty good evening, won some money, maybe a hundred dollars.

Q: You don't think the dealer was told to let you win?

PASTORINO: No. The story is more interesting than that. While I was playing, I saw someone watching me very closely. In my own mind I was deciding whether or not to approach him. Finally I got up and moved to another table. He went with me. I asked who he was. He told me he was from the Dominican internal revenue service and was watching to see how much I was winning. He said he was going to report it to his superiors, but when I asked, he admitted I would not have to pay taxes on the winnings. To make a long story short, he told me I was well-liked in the Dominican Republic and he hoped I would win more money. Finally, he also asked me for a visa for his family. Anyway, he followed me around for another half-hour.

Anyway, to get back Haiti, it was probably the hardest issue I faced, and one in which I spent an inordinate amount of time. I sometimes thought I was our Ambassador to Port-au-Prince in addition to Santo Domingo, partially because we did not have an Ambassador in Haiti for much of the time. The last few months the situation was eased because we had a great Ambassador there, Bill Swing.

My assignment in the Dominican Republic with reference to Haiti was to keep the Dominicans supportive of our policy to help return President Aristide to power, from which he was removed by a military coup after having been democratically elected. In a few words, that was the summary of my objectives, my mission, with regard to Haiti. As you know, the Dominican Republic and Haiti share the island of Hispaniola, so when we later talked about embargoes, political support, refugees and other issues, it was difficult to separate the two countries.

Of course, relations between the two had never been close, and in fact, Haiti had once controlled the Dominican Republic for 20 years back in the 19th century.

Q: But Aristide must have been opposed by Balaguer?

PASTORINO: You took the words out of my mouth because Aristide was hated by the Dominicans. They perceived him as a Communist and they knew he was a defrocked priest; some thought he had been excommunicated by the Vatican. That proved to most Dominicans that he was a Communist; he was perceived as a threat to the Dominican system. In addition, there were some Dominicans who were a bit racist, whether they admitted it or not. There were economic reasons also separating the Dominicans and Haitians. The latter crossed into the Dominican Republic to pick sugar, and many did not return to Haiti at the end of the harvest, remaining permanently in the Dominican Republic, where the Haitians could live better than at home. Of course, they accused the Dominicans of exploiting them on the sugar plantations, an accusation somewhat accurate. On the other hand, the Haitians continued to immigrate, both legally and illegally to the Dominican Republic.

Regardless of the real situation, the US had determined to support Aristide's return to the Presidency and the removal of the usurpers. Aristide was a symbol of our support for democracy in the hemisphere, even if he was not a great friend of the US. In fact, many policy-makers suspected him of being a Marxist, and he frequently criticized the US for its global policies. Some believed he was not appreciative of the assistance we provided. But, we did support Aristide and because of the relationship between the DR and Haiti, we needed the Dominicans support, especially in a political sense. We certainly wanted the Dominicans to support our efforts in the Organization of American States, and in the UN. The US did not want to use military force to remove the Generals, but hoped that political persuasion, and then a series of economic and other sanctions would do the trick.

A large part of the US effort involved the Organization of American States (OAS), keeping the whole region on board, so that it didn't look like a unilateral Yankee effort. Part of the OAS effort was comprised of innumerable meetings, proposals and resolutions which were voted on at the OAS.

I had to go constantly to the Dominican Government to make sure they voted the right way. Most of my contact with the Government was done through the Undersecretary of Foreign Relations. Another fabulous guy, Don Fabio Herrera Cabral. He was about eighty-two and had been in their Foreign Ministry for a thousand years. He was a political and personal friend of Balaguer. He was a member of the Balaguer Party. He had no political ambitions for himself, but knew all about domestic politics. I was usually on the phone with Don Fabio twice a day. I met with him in his house, in his office, in restaurants, in his club, at my house. We were sometimes inseparable. He was always very honest with me, several times noting that the US tactics wouldn't work with the Haitians, who he had known very well for many years. At times, he also served as the unofficial contact in the Dominican Republic for the Haitian military factions. The Dominican Government recognized the Haitian Ambassador who had been sent to the DR by Aristide; thus it had no official relations with the military rulers in Port au Prince.

As I said, most of the technical, detailed work on Haiti was through the Foreign Ministry, but I always discussed the issue with Balaguer, probably once a week. I would go to Balaguer when the Department wanted Dominican assurances directly from the President, although they knew that Don Fabio was speaking for the President. Of course, it was easier to work with Don Fabio, especially since the President did not want to be too closely identified with the policy of supporting Aristide, who Balaguer did not like and only met with once in two years that I know of.

I did have access to Balaguer at his home or at the office. That was made clear to me and to Dominicans shortly after I arrived when one of Balaguer's two sisters died. The funeral was in the Balaguer private residence, and it was almost a state funeral. She was laid in State in the Balaguer private residence, three blocks from my residence; it was not a big house. The whole diplomatic corps was invited as a group to attend at noon. We received a special message inviting me to pay my personal respects privately just before the diplomatic corps. When I arrived, probably about 11:30AM, the family, cabinet ministers, and long-time friends were asked to leave so I could go in alone to see the President. The military and the police escorted me directly into the house, through the large crowds milling around.

I was invited for the private appearance for two reasons. It showed there was a special relationship with the American Ambassador. So that was my access. And, it demonstrated to the country the special relationship with the United States.

Q: This is obviously a small country; the American Ambassador had enormous clout; what does this do to the Political Section or Economic Section? So much of the dealings were personalized at the Ambassador/Head of State or cabinet level, that what did these other people do?

PASTORINO: Okay, and then we'll get back to Haiti. We had a very good economic section. I had an Economic Counselor who was outstanding on the substance of the issues but who tended to wait for my guidance before acting. I'm sure he thought he was being overshadowed by the Ambassador, not only me but my predecessor, who in fact was also an economic officer. There were many times when I would talk to the President about the general outlines of an issue and then turn over the details to the economic section to negotiate with the Dominican Government, but always keeping a close watch over what was going on. In fact, Economic Counselor and the Commercial Counselor did most to the negotiations on the textile treaty and the new agreement of automobile tariffs which had discriminated against the US, those negotiations taking place both in Santo Domingo and in Washington.

The Mission had an outstanding AID representative, Ray Rifenberg, who ran an active, creative AID Mission which was very influential in developing policies and programs and in their implementation within the Dominican Republic. I didn't have to push him at all. He was out there in front as much as he wanted, actually developing and implementing new economic developmental assistance concepts and theories. For instance, he strongly believed that programs wouldn't work without the approval of the people and he developed mechanisms such as Embassy/community task forces to design assistance efforts. As part of this, he directed most of the assistance toward non-governmental organizations (NGOs), which he hoped, and I agreed,

would lessen the corruption quotient, because the government was not as directly involved. These concepts were in the vanguard and utilized in other programs around Latin American and the world.

The Commercial Section as I noted was active on the automobile issue, for instance. The Department of Commerce wanted to get rid of the discriminatory tariffs on American automobiles which were helping Japanese exporters and dealers. The Commercial Attaché, Larry Eisenberg, came to me with a strategic plan and program to achieve our objectives. He carried it out, using the Ambassador where necessary and we were successful within one year of changing an onerous situation that had harmed American interests for many years.

Larry obtained the cooperation and involvement of the US Congress, and he negotiated with the Dominican Ministry of Commerce and the Customs authorities, as well as dealing with the Dominican auto dealers which were distributing Toyotas and Hondas, rather than Fords and Chevrolets. It was really shameful, with Puerto Rico just a few miles away, which was fully capable of supplying new vehicles, as well as replacement equipment, service, and all the accessories, both original and replacement. But, US and Puerto Rican suppliers could not compete when the US vehicles and components had to pay duties ten times higher that those on Japanese goods.

As part of the program, I went to the President, letting know of our concerns and letting him know of our program, both with the Commerce Ministry and with other interest groups. I could have demanded the tariff reduction, I guess, but we didn't want to be so overbearing. When our program seemed to bog down after a few months, I went to see Balaguer again to gingerly prod him. Six months later, the Dominicans changed the tariff rates such that the playing field was leveled, and American cars and components could be imported again into the Dominican Republic. The commercial section did all of the work, including the design of the necessary customs changes and their relation to the competitive needs of the American exporters.

The political section was excellent, and kept very busy in supporting me in the Haitian effort; in following and reporting on the very contentious electoral campaign; in investigating the human rights situation and preparing the necessary but burdensome human rights report; in maintaining everyday contacts with the political parties and other interest groups that became so important in the democratic electoral campaign; and in generally maintaining contact with the Dominican Executive, Congress, and Judicial branches, as well as with the State and Municipal Governments. As we all know, behind the public face of the Embassy and US Government, there are hundreds of reporting requirements to the Department, international treaties to keep track of, diplomatic notes to write, memorandums to compose, contacts to maintain, and, in general, active representation to carry out. So the sections were busy; there were lots of issues; the US really had a role; and there was a fairly intense relationship to manage.

The Consular Section was probably the busiest. Polls showed that 70-80 percent of Dominicans readily admitted they would rather live in the US than in the Dominican Republic. Most of them showed up regularly at the US Embassy Consular Section, which was in a separate building close to the Embassy, to requests visas, even those who had just been turned down.

In fact, I think we turned down about 70%, if I remember correctly, of the visa applications because the applicants were clearly ineligible. Since so many Dominicans went to San Juan or New York on Embassy-granted tourist visas and never returned to the island, it was easy for Vice Consuls to disbelieve applicants who swore they were going for ten days to visit friends. We knew they probably wouldn't return. The situation was somewhat similar to Mexico, where people can cross the border illegally without a visa, although it was much more difficult in the case of the Dominican Republic. They had to cross the dangerous 30 mile-strait to Puerto Rico, which they did in all types of boats. Once they arrived in San Juan, it was as good as being in New York, because one doesn't have to pass through US immigration; San Juan/New York is a domestic flight. While I paid lots of attention to the Consular Section, I certainly couldn't do all their work.

Certainly the DEA and Customs had large responsibilities, and scarce resources in Santo Domingo, so they were also very busy and had many dealings with the Dominican Government, and in some cases with US Authorities in both Washington and San Juan. I remember working with their representatives in both Miami and San Juan on issues of interest to these agencies. Of course, anything which I did had to be supported by many hours of their preparation and operational activity.

All of the sections of the Embassy were relatively small sections. I don't remember any complaints that they didn't have enough to do. I had an agreement with them. Be creative, give me your ideas, go ahead and follow through once a decision has been made, and you'll get a good efficiency report. I believe several section heads received promotions.

Thus, the Embassy ran pretty well and Manuel and I didn't have major problems, except with the Consular Section. I'm not going into details. Basically, some of the middle level officers didn't want a heavier workload, especially if it involved anything non-consular in nature. For instance, I wanted all sections to be involved in the drug fight against the traffickers, whether it be intelligence, the sharing of information, or in the case of the Consulate, extra precautions against giving visas to drug dealers. Admittedly, this last task made the consular officers life more difficult. They had thousands of applicants which they had to process daily, and needed to do extra checking to determine drug ties, whether it be longer interviews or more detailed document searches and verification, or better knowledge of the drug culture and trafficking *modus operandi.*

This extended their day and put pressure on them. But, I considered it part of their job, and once greatly embarrassed them when in an extended interview I actually obtained a confession from an applicant that he had been convicted in New York for dealing cocaine on a New York street corner. When I tried to install better interviewing techniques, or a better background data base on the drug traffic, I was opposed by middle level officers. I thought the Junior Officers were more than cooperative. This whole issue somewhat poisoned the relationship between the front office and the Consular Section and actually ruined one friendship which I had maintained for several years.

Going back to Haiti. The first task was to keep the Dominicans on board with the US and OAS policy. The next stage was an operational one when the OAS finally voted and implemented the

trade embargo. There were two ways of shipping goods into the Haiti. One was by sea, which was the route for much of the contraband; that method did not generally involve the Dominican Republic although there might have been some off-loading into the DR and then marine shipment around the border in shallow waters.

The second route was over the land border. That was not easy but it was a traditional smuggling route for small shipments and had been used for many decades, with the Dominicans making big money. Both main roads to the border were two lanes and paved, but not very good, especially for large trucks. One became an unpaved road on the Haitian side. The DR/Haitian border is about two hundred miles long. It was mapped but not much more. There was very little easy access through the mountains and jungle away from the roads, but goods and products had always crossed readily. Much like any border in the world, and especially where there is an economic disparity between the two sides, as there is in this case, there are great incentives for smuggling. Haiti is basically an economic basket case. The Dominican Republic is a little more advanced.

Historically the border has been relatively open, and there are innumerable family relationships which span the border. For instance, Francisco Pena Gomez, who ran for President, was part Haitian, his mother having been born on the Haitian side, although she lived most of her life in the Dominican Republic. There were lucrative economic markets and ties. Haitians crossed to work and some to buy goods they couldn't get at home. The Dominicans had goods to sell to Haiti. On the other hand, if you wanted some wonderful artisan goods and paintings from Haiti, one could buy them in Santo Domingo, much of which was smuggled in.

Some Dominicans of course were happy to close the border, but many others made money out of the smuggling. And, even if the Government wanted to, it was difficult for physical and corruption reasons. The most important item in the embargo was fuel, which we embargoed in an effort to weaken the Haitian military. But, at times, so little fuel was needed to maintain the military and the Haitian economy that people carrying five or ten gallon cans across the border could meet large parts of the fuel demand. So it was almost impossible to stop small shipments, even if the border officials wanted to, which sometimes they did, but at other times they were willing to look the other way, regardless of what the Government in Santo Domingo mandated.

The Dominican Government did make honest efforts at times to close the border. They made a commitment to us and a public one in the OAS to implement the land embargo. Corruption, unfortunately, reared its ugly head at times. The military that guarded the border made some money on smuggling. While we offered small amounts of equipment and resources to police the border and supplied a little intelligence, we never considered a major action like sending Americans; thus, we were dependent upon the Dominican Government.

So I had to utilize jawboning and persuasion with the Dominicans. We did not threaten them with dire consequences if did they not uphold the embargo. I personally did not think that the Haitian situation, which was not caused by the Dominicans, warranted strong-arm tactics against the Dominican Republic, and indeed Washington's general policy with Latin American was against it. I made frequent public statements to the press; I constantly talked to the President, the

opposition, the Congress, whoever would listen; I coordinated with Latin American diplomatic community.

I forcefully made Haiti an issue whenever I made public speeches, including the three intensively covered, annual speeches to the Dominican-U.S. Chamber of Commerce before National TV and live audiences of more than 500 persons. This Chamber speech was then repeated in the other large cities where the Chamber had a presence. Dominicans got tired of hearing about the Haitian issue; USIS was tired of writing the issue into the speeches; and frankly, I got tired of saying it.

I went and paid very public visits to the border. I told President Balaguer about the trips in advance and he never demurred. In fact, I think I probably asked whether I could go. I was pretty sure he would not say no. On the other hand, I also told him about the time I went to a small fishing village in the Eastern Coast of the island which was a center of smuggling of illegal aliens the 30 miles to Puerto Rico in small boats. I made a very public appearance, brought the press with me, showing my face hoping to drive the smugglers underground. I actually visited some of the boats that had been confiscated. I drove the smugglers underground that day, but I'm sure they reappeared a few days later, or moved their boats to other tiny ports nearby.

I remember one time I went up to the Haitian border, at one of the dirt road crossings. There was a small bridge over the creek, which served as the frontier. When I arrived, the border area was clean, it was almost empty. No one was crossing, either over the bridge, beneath it on foot through the shallow water, nor were they crossing a mile or two up and down from the bridge, sites we also checked out. I walked half way across the bridge and up and down the stream, always staying on the Dominican side. I had a big public meeting with the military officials on the bridge. Lots of media, and lots of *abrazos*, and I'm sure lots of speeches. I talked to the Haitians across the border. I talked to everyone, especially the media, both the press and the television reporters.

I had meetings with the Dominican Military Commander, the Governor, the *Presidente Municipal* (the Mayor of the town), the customs people, etc. I think I even talked to Peace Corps volunteers in the area. Everyone assured me that this border site was hermetically sealed. Of course, I knew that the border here might be sealed for two or three or four days, but it would open up later. There was not much else I could do, unless we were going to offer to police it ourselves. I couldn't move the Embassy to the border. However, on the broader question of the land embargo, I do think we had some positive impact. It was always clear that the major fuel movements were by ship from international waters, nowhere near the Dominican Republic. But, there was a slow down across the land border, if even only temporarily. It certainly cost people more to smuggle; it slowed down shipments; it changed the transport methods, so there was some impact.

Finally there was another level of dealing with the Haiti issue. As part of the persuasion effort, I worked closely with the Aristide-appointed Haitian Ambassador in Santo Domingo. He needed assistance because the Aristide Government in Washington to which he haphazardly reported, couldn't provide him information or guidance on a regular or reliable basis. Much of his news and instruction came through me, relayed from the State Department. The Haitian Ambassador was very effective when he had the right information and instructions, especially with the media.

In fact, we became a somewhat public combination; we were together frequently. There were positions and points of view to be made publicly which were more appropriately made by him, just as there were things I could better say.

He was a competent, friendly, well spoken person who had an almost impossible job. He was an academic, not a diplomat. He had lived in the Dominican Republic so he spoke perfect Spanish. He also spoke French and Creole and English. So I spent a lot of time meeting with him and telling him what our position was and what we were going to say. Also, I spent time with him because he wanted to know what he was supposed to do next. His communications with Aristide in Washington were not very reliable.

For much of the time the US Government did not have an Ambassador in Port-au-Prince. We had a very effective Chargé, but some Haitians only wanted to talk to an Ambassador. Also, they didn't like what they heard from the Mission in Haiti, so some of them, on more than one occasion, thought they might hear something better from the US Ambassador in Santo Domingo, or maybe I would give them a more favorable hearing.

I got one call from the Dominican Government in the middle of the night saying the brother of the Port-au-Prince Chief of Police wanted to see me in Santo Domingo. At that time the Chief of Police was one of the most unsavory of all the military, and one of the grossest of the human rights violators. I did not know the brother who wanted to see me. I informed Washington which considered this a pretty unorthodox channel but they advised me to meet with him quietly and report. The telegram also gave me talking points which basically were: say nothing, just listen. Since, I had followed the Haitian situation closely, being involved in it at the Pentagon and at the NSC, I had a good handle on the background and the recent reporting kept me up-to-date on the current situation.

Well, on this particular occasion there was a comedy of errors. I had told the Dominicans I would receive the brother at my house at noon. Evidently, he came on time and saw my guards, and got nervous. He wouldn't drive through the gate, driving around the block three times. The guards of course remained at their posts at the residential entrance. He finally entered at about 12:20 PM. Meanwhile, coincidentally, I had been called over to see the President at 11:45 AM. I went and we had a forty-five minute meeting. I was sitting there, getting worried although I figured that Fran would invite the visitor into the library and keep him company until I arrived. Here he was one of the worst guys in Haiti, and I visualized her having coffee with him. When I arrived about 12:35PM, sure enough she was talking to him about Haiti and the Dominican Republic. This was the kind of person I didn't really want to be alone with myself, but she had received him, had told him I would be a little late, and was calmly entertaining him.

Anyway, I finally walked in and relieved her. He made some proposal on how to make peace in Haiti, which would satisfy the Haitian military. It was not new. It was something they had already offered to the Chargé in Port-au-Prince. I guess they thought the Chargé in Haiti didn't transmit it, or if I sent it to Washington, it would go to a different place. Of course, I said I'd transmit it to Washington and tried to get more details. I met with him about two hours, and sent a cable. I got instructions later, filling me in on the proposal as heard next door, and was told to

ignore this channel in the future. I of course told Don Fabio about the meeting, who passed it on the President.

Another "channel" was a woman who was Haitian/Dominican, who had been mixed up in some kind of criminal activity. She had betrayed somebody somewhere and was perceived as a dangerous person. She was sent to me as an emissary, in this case from the General in Port-au-Prince. I had met the General at one time much earlier in my career. It was arranged that we would meet in a Santo Domingo Restaurant. But nothing came of that channel either because she had nothing new to add.

I went to Port-au-Prince only once while I was in the Dominican Republic. I went up the border and looked across a few times when I was there on other business; for instance there was a US mining investment near the southern frontier, and we had Peace Corps volunteers in the border area. I went once on a joint country team visit to Port-au-Prince, which the Haiti country team later reciprocated. I had suggested this type of meeting since we were facing the same issue on both sides of the border—the return of Aristide. I took four or five section heads, and we were given a short tour of Port-au-Prince. When the Haiti Country Team came to Santo Domingo, they went shopping and stocked up with things they couldn't find at home.

Meanwhile, Presidential elections took place in the Dominican Republic in the summer of 1994 and that became a major U.S.-Dominican issue, which kept the Embassy very busy. President Balaguer was going to run again, for the seventh or eighth time, and he had strong opposition, Francisco Pena Gomez.

Pena Gomez was a black, populist, brilliant, long-time politician. About 50 years old, he was the youngest of three principal candidates. His party was styled somewhat along the lines of the Mexican PRD of Cuauhtemoc Cardenas. I had good relations with Pena Gomez. He was no longer anti-American, if he had ever been. One of the tasking I had from the State Department was to get to know Pena and Juan Bosch to determine whether we would have serious problems in the relationship should either one be elected President. Both were considered by some to have been Communists earlier in their careers, and both had spoke admiringly of Castro and his policies. Pena Gomez, I understood, had once been saved from possible execution by an Embassy political officer many years before when he was detained by Trujillo's henchmen. The Foreign Service Officer, who was a friend of Pena's, walked into the detention facility, amid lots of chaos, and calmly escorted Pena to safety, evidently using his Embassy status as leverage.

Let's get back to the elections. One candidate was Pena Gomez and the third major candidate was Juan Bosch. If Balaguer was old at eighty-six, Juan Bosch, who many called the Professor was eighty-three years old. Bosch was thought to be slowing a bit mentally but physically he was very active and enthusiastic; he was still very charismatic. Bosch had been President, duly elected in the 1960s, and had been overthrown by a military *junta*, accusing him of turning the Dominican Republic into a Communist regime along the lines of Castro. To this day, I believe that Bosch believes that it was a CIA plot that put the military up to the overthrow.

Juan Bosch and his party had now become centrist. I reported quite quickly after meeting him and many others that the US would be able to get along with Bosch. There would be some

historical and perception problems but we would have to work them out. Very shortly after my arrival, I made a name for myself when I went up to speak to him at a Seminar we were both attending. The media saw us talking and the short conversation made front page headlines, especially since, out of respect for his past position, I called him Mr. President. That salutation really interested all those Dominicans who then and throughout the campaign truly believed that I was going to choose the next President of the Dominican Republic. Bosch publicly did not like the American Embassy and publicly did not like the American government, because of the coup in 1965. Evidently, he had never met since with a U.S. Ambassador, certainly never in public and certainly never at the Ambassador's residence.

Upon his overthrow he had gone into exile in Puerto Rico, and then returned to his homeland several years later. He had later run for President again. Bosch was a revered public figure, renowned in the Dominican Republic and in much of Latin America, both for his political leadership and for his many wonderful books. But, he still did not deal openly with the US. I had determined that none of this would deter me from meeting with him if he had no problems. It was actually fine that the first meeting was so public. During that first meeting, I introduced myself with the famous "Mr. President" saying "I'm Ambassador Pastorino, and I'm very pleased to know you. I have read your books, I know about your background. It's an honor to meet you". As I remember, President Balaguer asked me about the meeting the next day. There was no criticism and it didn't affect my relationship with the President.

The next public meeting with Bosch was also very interesting. A couple of months later, the Secretary of Commerce of Puerto Rico brought a trade mission with Puerto Rican products to the Dominican Republic. I hosted a large reception at the residence to honor the Secretary and the trade delegation. As they often do, the Puerto Ricans like to act as though they are a sovereign country, which makes the situation a bit tricky, but it was a good opportunity to promote the US and have a big reception. Dominicans and Puerto Ricans have similar backgrounds and many family ties.

Unbeknownst to me, Juan Bosch had lived in the house of the father of the Secretary of Commerce when he was in exile, and he had been put on the guest list, probably by Manuel, who saw this as a good opportunity. On the other hand, perhaps he had always been on the guest list and had never come to the Residence; I of course noted his name but, if I thought anything, I thought he probably would not show up, in spite of the fact that we usually had close to 95% acceptance rates for Embassy functions.

All of a sudden, there he was standing in the doorway, with his aide. I couldn't believe it. Since we would normally allow the media, at the behest of the Press Attaché, into the foyer but not in to the rest of the house, the media were right there all over us. Juan Bosch, cordial as always, said graciously "Mr. Ambassador, thank you for inviting me". He of course then swept over to the Secretary of Commerce and gave him a big "*abrazo*". It was like uncle and nephew. And that was that. Bosch came in and chatted with the guests. He stayed fifteen or twenty minutes. Again, there were tremendous headlines the next day, and it got major television coverage, with all of the attendant speculation. Some thought I would endorse him for the Presidency. Of course, since some reporters were paid if their articles appeared on the front page, speculation about Bosch and Pastorino was money in their pocket.

There was a fourth candidate, from the PRI party, who had been Vice President at one time. He was well known but definitely the outsider in the race. The PRI was small, an offshoot of Balaguer's party. In order to not appear to be playing favorites, Rocha suggested that I institute a regular series of luncheons with the three candidates. I would invite them and their aides to lunch every couple of months, being careful not to hide it, and taking care that they all were treated equally, even though they were separate luncheons. We used the lunches to talk about the international issues, such as Haiti, and they would always talk about their Presidential campaigns. So the political counselor had an easy memorandum of conversation with the candidates. The public and politicians knew I did this and pretty soon it went unnoticed. Of course, the media was not invited. It also gave me a wonderful opportunity to really get to know the candidates, and we often went far afield from politics and foreign relations.

I will never forget the first time that Juan Bosch came to one of these luncheons. Remember, he was eighty-three years old. Manuel Rocha briefed me about Bosch's interests, and even his attention span which was thought to be very short. He thought the luncheon should be held to about an hour and fifteen minutes and I had Fran plan the luncheon like clockwork. I think I gave her a formal briefing and a schedule. Bosch came that day with two or three aides and I had one or two of our people. It went like clockwork. We discussed politics, economics, the history of Latin America, U.S.-Dominican relations, etc. He never once brought up the controversial past history.

After almost exactly an hour and fifteen minutes we had finished desert, including Fran's homemade chocolate chip cookies, which we served because Manuel knew Bosch liked chocolate chip cookies. Well, I'm ready for the luncheon to end, although I'm enjoying it immensely, and the Professor begins to eat the cookies. Another thirty minutes passed and he is alert as ever. After another twenty minutes or so, his aides leave. One of those by the way was Leonel Fernandez, now the President of the Dominican Republic. More than two hours have gone by and pretty soon the Embassy people have also left. I think we went two and half-hours. He didn't miss a thing in the conversation; I hope I didn't either. It's funny what cements relationships, but the chocolate chip cookies seem to have cemented ours. I think he asked Fran to go into business with him making the cookies. He used to mention them whenever we met.

That was part of the run up to the elections. There were not many major issues. A principal issue was Balaguer's age. Both Pena and Bosch talked about changing various policies, especially getting rid of the corruption that they perceived. Pena Gomez, being younger, talked about modernization and generational change. Haiti was somewhat of an issue because of Pena's background and speculation how he would deal with the military, and how he would cooperate with OAS policy on the embargo and the return of Aristide.

For the US, the campaign revolved around whether it would be a clean election. The opposition charged fraud before the election even took place, and asked the US to guarantee its fairness. In effect, the opposition was utilizing offense as the best defense against possible fraud. Of course, this put us in a difficult spot, with Balaguer and his people assuring us and the whole world they had never stolen elections and would not this time. We were very interested in a clean election

because of our policy of supporting democracy. It was also interesting politically because Balaguer, Pena, and Bosch had been running against one another for years.

The Dominican Republic had an electoral commission which managed the electoral process and counted the votes. It had some credibility because it had been in existence for several elections, and had several clearly impartial members, including a well-know priest, Agripino Nunez Collado, who was the Rector of the Catholic University in Santiago. US AID gave some technical assistance to the Commission for registration, computerization, etc. And the OAS provided electoral assistance also, including the sending of observers to the headquarters of the Electoral Commission during the campaign. One of those observers was responsible for monitoring the computerized vote counting operation, including obviously the computer room at the Electoral Commission Headquarters.

At the campaign drew to a close, charges of fraud flew from every direction. The Electoral Commission members began to split in accordance with the parties that had named them, although the biggest fear was that somehow Balaguer would figure out how to steal the election. The priest, whose contact was AID Director Rifenberg, was a genius at settling disputes. In fact, he was a type of national mediator, who was called upon whenever any kind of dispute arose, especially those in the labor/management sector. As well as he did, he still called the Embassy regularly requesting our help in damping down the electoral disputes, and providing credibility to the outcome.

Several times, I went publicly to the Commission to hear about the latest problem. That news would become public and some Dominicans were reassured that the election would be clean, at least that is what I was told. I must say that in all this time I never really discussed the campaign with Balaguer, nor did he ask me to do anything, except that I told him of the great, overwhelming US interest that the campaign be fair. To this, the President responded that was also his over-riding interest, both as President and as a Candidate. Of course, I continued to meet with him regularly, especially given the Haiti problem which was intensifying in the Dominican Republic as the embargo became strategically and politically more important.

The campaign itself went on for several months. It had all the trappings of a US campaign, with the Latin salsa added. Each candidate and party had committee organizations in every town and village. Each put on massive meetings and demonstrations almost without end. This entailed parades, get out the voter events, registration rallies, free food and drink, instructions on how to vote, song-girls, baseball heroes, some of whom were candidates, slogans, fireworks, everything one could imagine. It reminded me of my early days in Venezuela when I covered the Presidential campaign in 1968. The political campaigns were fun in the Dominican Republic. It was real democracy in many ways, and I enjoyed it although I had to be so careful to be seen as neutral.

I had attempted to convince the Dominicans of my neutrality long before the campaign started. As soon as I arrived the media and the politicians were asking me who the US Government was going to support. I would get that question at every opportunity, when I was visiting American factories, going to ball games, making speeches, etc. Deep down I think I knew I would never

convince some of the people that the US didn't have a favorite. To some Dominicans it was impossible to believe that the US wasn't backing one or another of the candidates.

I finally got fed up with the questions and became very dramatic at a wide-ranging, street corner, improvised press conference. I began to describe the qualities the US was looking for: maturity, loyalty, intelligence, etc., all of which could have described any of the four candidates. Finally, after going on for about five minutes, I told the media that I personally would support, and then I left a pregnant pause. With the microphones in my face, with the pencils poised, with great expectations, I broke the silence and said, "I support George Bush."

I had really surprised them, and I got bigger than normal headlines the next day in the press and on the evening news. But they didn't get to write the stories they wanted to. And, I'm not sure whether it saved many questions. The rest of the campaign I told them I was supporting George Bush, which got me in trouble later when President Clinton was elected. Someone came down from Washington to investigate that statement, before I was blessed and allowed to continue my mission as Ambassador for the first two years of the Clinton Administration.

The election turned out to be extremely close. It was very clear it was going to come down to a battle between Pena Gomez and Balaguer. Each would get thirty-five to forty percent of the votes. In the end there was a one- percent difference between them with Balaguer having about 20,000 votes more. There had been close elections before in the Dominican Republic. Charges of fraud had been hurled in most of them, no matter who won. This case would be no different. The elections did take place very peacefully. Everyone voted.

There was one serious problem which happened just before election day, possibly ten days before. The OAS observer at the computer facility was asked to leave by the Electoral Commission and in fact her entrance was barred to the facility. She actually left the country quickly, having been threatened by someone. Meanwhile, for two days the facility had no observer, and there were charges that the electoral lists were tampered with, thus making some voters ineligible, while allowing others to vote more than once. I think I heard about the observer being barred the morning after it happened; in fact, I met with her later that day. I immediately informed Washington and discussed the situation with the Commission and the Government, I think with Balaguer. The Commission invited the OAS to send a new observer the next day, but OAS bureaucracy and the new observer's personal plans prevented him from arriving for almost a week. During that them the facility was "unobserved".

A large OAS observer team was in the country for election day, as were many media, and observers from private organizations. Our Embassy people were out in the field also, watching the process. The OAS delegation was all over the country, but there were thousands of polling booths. One of the leaders of the OAS team was a well-known U.S. Congressman. All of the observers wanted my opinion as to what happened and who won. They thought I had to know every detail. I was on the phone, as was my staff, for hours on end during the next week after the election. Of course, the most urgent time was the next day, because all of the various observers and teams wanted to draw their conclusions immediately, whether they had good information or not.

Ultimately, President Balaguer was declared the victor and after long negotiations among the influential groups in the DR, he was inaugurated. Along with his declaration of victory, it was decided that his term would be two years instead of four, thus fashioning a political compromise. Elections were held two years later; Balaguer could not run because the Constitution had been changed to prevent immediate re-election by a sitting President as part of the compromise with the length of the terms. Actually, I believe the genesis of that idea had come from AID. Leonel Fernandez of Juan Bosch's party won the next election. The next election will be in 2000, and it looks as though President Balaguer will once again be a candidate. I missed all of the final negotiations and outcome, my assignment ending in mid 1994, thirty months after I had arrived.

The Haiti issue and the elections came simultaneously and the two issues had to be very carefully balanced. On both we wanted the Dominicans to do something. Instructions came slowly from Washington at times, because there were conflicting opinions on what the US Government should emphasize.

I remember one issue in which I couldn't get any instructions. I asked for instructions by cable and by telephone. I knew the issue was important and I knew Washington was having difficulty deciding on what instructions to send. As on many issues, there were various opinions with several offices and agencies expressing their positions, including the Office of the Vice President. I had often thought earlier in my career about what I might do if I were to find myself in this position. I finally sent a highly classified cable telling Washington that I would do the following if I heard nothing from Washington. I still received no answer and so I went ahead. I'm not even sure today what the issue was but have described this predicament to show that the Ambassador can be left to his own designs at times. Evidently, my action didn't have major repercussions. I didn't get fired. I don't even remember what came of it.

Given the controversy of the Haiti and election issues, we had several congressional delegations visit us in Santo Domingo. I found them not to difficult to take care of, especially when they were delegations returning to study the same issues. There was a lot of detail work to do in the preparation of meetings; they all wanted to see Balaguer, and he was most gracious in seeing them; the preparation of papers; protocol; logistics of transporting and housing the Congressmen; the social activities; etc. We also received delegations from Washington who came down to either negotiate or sign agreements.

One of those I most remember was one chaired by New York Congressman Charlie Rangel, who came to look into the Haitian issue. I think I escorted him up to the border and to other parts of the Dominican Republic. Like many of the other delegations, he then went on to Haiti.

I had fairly frequent dealings with Congressman. When I went to Washington for consultations, I would visit the Hill. One of those visits was to Robert Torricelli, Congressman from New Jersey who is now the distinguished Senator from that State. I went to see him about a specific and difficult issue: one of his constituents had been requesting his assistance in getting me to force the Dominican Government to pay off the constituent for some powdered milk he had foolishly sent to the Dominican Republic and then had released from a bonded warehouse before receiving payment. The Government had evidently used the milk to sway voters in a previous campaign.

The constituent had been a Peace Corps volunteer in the Dominican Republic in his youth, and thought he could finally get payment the "Dominican way," through a bribe. He had then bribed not once but twice a member of Balaguer's inner circle, who had taken the money and done nothing to make the milk payment. Anyway, Torricelli's staff was irate because I couldn't or wouldn't do anything. I suggested that the Department advise the staff of the constituent's problems, especially that of the Corrupt Practices Act, which prohibited bribery. State refused to, I think because someone feared the wrath of Torricelli.

On one of my trips to Washington, I paid a visit to the Congressman, explaining the situation and the political problem the Embassy was faced with in supporting the constituent. Torricelli told me to proceed within the law. He was not furious and he said he understood. This milk problem reared it ugly head later when the constituent was finally indicted, after a cable from the Embassy detailing the details as prescribed by the Corrupt Practices Act. A judge asked that the Embassy to depose the Dominican taking the bribe, four weeks before the Presidential election. The immediate deposing was stalled.

The Haiti issue had other repercussions. It was a partial cause of a public polemic that I had with the Dominican Cardinal just before I departed. The Cardinal was very unhappy about the US policy to support the return of Aristide and he never tired of criticizing it, usually whenever I made a speech. He was a very political churchman, frequently influencing Dominican domestic politics. Actually, he was quite powerful. And, he had aspirations to be elected the first Pope from Latin America. He didn't keep this ambition to himself; people knew about it. Anyway, after one of his attacks on the policy and me, I got a little frustrated and wrote him a letter challenging him to disavow all the American assistance the Church received in the Dominican Republic if he was so unhappy about US policy.

The letter was meant to be private and he had it published in the press, which led to an immediate taking of sides by Dominicans. A polemic between the Cardinal and the American Ambassador was almost better than a baseball game. The reaction was interesting. The diplomatic corps supported me almost unanimously, although not publicly, with so many of them representing Catholic countries. As usual many of them were somewhat anti-clerical and many thought the Cardinal should have been taken down a notch or two. Within the population, a public poll showed that more than 40% of the respondents actually supported the US Ambassador. Of course the media had a field day, with the issue remaining in the headlines for more than a week.

My other relations with the Catholic Church were far more rewarding. We had the good fortune to be in the Dominican Republic for the 500th anniversary of the discovery of America by Christopher Columbus. Of course, this also generated controversy with many Latin Americans, because they called October 12, 1492 an "encounter" rather than a "discovery." The Dominican Republic, which was the first landing site, after an islet in the Bahamas, was the unofficial Latin America host for the celebration and the Pope visited in October 1992 for several days, which included a high-level meeting of Latin American Cardinals and Bishops.

As part of the Diplomatic Corps, I participated in all of the ceremonies and meetings, including the welcoming and departure ceremonies at the airport, a huge outdoor mass in the Eastern part

of the country, where we helped provide the transportation for the Pope, parts of the Church conclave, several receptions, and finally a private audience, reserved only for the Ambassadors and their wives. I gave the Pope a message from President Bush, which I developed on my own, and had several conversations with him.

The Dominicans went all out for the Papal visit. They rebuilt downtown Santo Domingo, refurbished many of the colonial areas, and finally built a huge monument to Columbus and the Discovery, a monument which everyone said Balaguer would never be able to finish. It was a huge concrete structure, thirty stories high, shaped in the form of a cross, directly across the river from colonial Santo Domingo. On the top was a series of flood-lights of high wattage shining toward the sky. The lights reflected off the clouds at night and lit up the sky over Santo Domingo in the form of a perfect cross. Airplane pilots could see it hundreds of miles away. Several acres of land had been cleared for the structure and the new surrounding park from the existing slums and this proved politically difficult for Balaguer. People joked that the wattage was so high that the lights would go off in the capital when the cross was lit. That didn't happen but the project pointedly made the comparison between the energy needed for the cross, and the brown-outs and black-outs which had taken place for years in Santo Domingo. On the ground floor of the lighthouse, as it was called, at the intersection of the arms of the cross, was a massive, centuries old, marble, ornate tomb which had been made in Spain and which the Dominicans said contained the remains of Columbus. Of course, Seville, Havana and Barcelona, among other places also claimed to have the great explorer's body.

The Dominicans provided space in the structure for a large trade and cultural exhibit, which kept the Embassy, especially USIS, busy for months obtaining a space and technology exhibit, with very little Washington assistance. It was really a poor performance by Washington, although the exhibit itself was given high marks by the Dominicans. I had the opportunity to open it to the public, which gave the media another chance at the Ambassador and US policy.

It was events like the anniversary of the Discovery, the Papal Visit, and the nice beaches which brought us several guests during our assignment. One Christmas, the whole family, including my sister and her children, came down and we rented a villa in Casa de Campo. Most of the cousins also visited; those trips were far more enjoyable that most of the official visits which we received.

I remember particularly one in which my elderly aunt and uncle from Los Angeles came. They were both world travelers and had visited us before. We took them to the north coast of the Dominican Republic to the site where the first Columbus settlement was built. The Dominicans were excavating the site and making it more accessible. The project was done under the direction of an 85-year old Venezuelan archeologist who gave us a guided tour of the ruins, which were not much more than some stone foundations and trails. The Venezuelan paid particular attention to my aunt Judy, and we kidded her about having an admirer.

We then took them further into the center of the island to visit a site where some American volunteers were providing health assistance to the Dominican population, I think it was a dental group. I was rather well known and the Dominicans were profusely grateful to the US for the help, most of them giving me the personal credit. My aunt Judy gave me one of the greatest

compliments of my Foreign Service career, notwithstanding a whole raft of awards and commendations, when she said I really was doing a great job in representing the American people. This wonderful compliment came from a person who for many years often clashed violently with the US foreign policy which I had represented for so long.

I think we may have also taken her to see some Peace Corps volunteers working in the field. During the early '90s there were more than 400 volunteers working in many areas in the Dominican Republic, one of the largest contingents anywhere in the world. Of course, they came under my jurisdiction, and I spent a lot of time on Peace Corps activities, visiting them in the field to learn about the projects, whether they be in agricultural production, small business, the development of small infrastructure projects like electricity and water, or rural schools.

I spent time working with the Dominican Government on their programs, and tried to maintain the usually already high morale of the volunteers. I would preside over the swearing-in and mustering-out ceremonies, and we opened the guest house at the Residence to volunteers who came into Santo Domingo for a day or two of rest and recuperation. This latter idea created a small spat with the first Peace Corps Director, who was afraid that the "easy" living at the Residence for one day would somehow convince them not to return to their sites. That fear was wrong and it was one argument I won easily. The Peace Corps volunteers were also a great source of information on the economy and social situation in their areas, although I usually did not pick their brains until they were ready to finish their assignment. The Peace Corps did very good things for the Dominican Republic; at the same time, the volunteers learned and matured to a great degree.

There were also of course great family memories in the Dominican Republic. Perhaps one of the most memorable for me, and one of the proudest, happened during our first year. Our daughter Susan graduated from the American High School and I got to be part of all of it, including escorting her to the prom and giving the commencement address at the graduation. It made me feel much more like a father, rather than like an Ambassador. Susan had not had an easy time in the Dominican Republic with her father as Ambassador. One could never be sure whether friends were friends, or were using her to try to get close to the Ambassador, but she did well and I got to be part of the great High School events.

At the end of 1994, I received a call from State informing me that the Department was seeking a replacement given my assignment would be ending sometime during 1995. Most changes were made during the summers and I would have had a full three year assignment had I arrived in mid-1991 instead of six months later because of the confirmation delay. But, I had expected to stay only between two and three years and so the news did not completely surprise me. It was decided that Ambassador Donna Hrinak would replace me during the summer of 1995, sometime after the Presidential elections, assuming she was confirmed in a timely manner.

The change was not as easy as planned. Her confirmation process took some time, and then personal reasons precluded her from coming until late in the summer. Then the election controversy threatened to drag on for many months, just as the Haitian problem seemed to drag on forever. June and July began to be very trying as we really did not know what our plans would be. It was somewhat frustrating, with the Department not being able to fix a date, insisting

that I stay on, but not really making any decisions. I was rapidly becoming a lame duck and I had my bags packed to depart right after the elections. Rocha had already left, being named to the US Interests Section in Havana, but we did have a capable Administrative Counselor on board, Chris Orozco, and I saw no need to prolong my assignment. So, we departed in July, after one last meeting with President Balaguer, a very nice diplomatic reception, and far too many *despedidas* (going-away parties which always serve as wonderful representational affairs).

Another complicating factor at this time was our decision about retiring from the Foreign Service. I was 54 years old with 29 years of service, and I had visions of a nice, easy retirement working at something not too strenuous to augment the significant pension I would receive. I had visions of going to the ball game whenever I wanted, and we both wanted to be close to the children, all who by now had left, and the grandchildren. Fran had followed me around the world for many years and she also deserved retirement.

Of course, it is never an easy decision after such a long, enjoyable career. The Department had called me asking whether I would consider Ambassadorial assignments in Santiago, Chile, San Salvador, or Bogota, Colombia. While all had some advantages, especially Santiago, all also had disadvantages. There was too much need for security and protection in Colombia, I had served in Honduras, which could have complicated matters in El Salvador, and I was concerned that the Chileans would still remember the grape decree. In any case, regardless of the Post I might have been assigned to, we were both leaning toward coming home to San Francisco and settling down permanently in one place, once and for all. When I said no to the above three postings, the Department graciously asked what else I might desire and offered me an immediate policy-making position in the meantime in Latin American Affairs.

The last thing I wanted was to be was in Washington walking the halls of the State Department awaiting another Diplomatic Mission. I knew several ex-Ambassadors who ended up for years in make-work tasks in offices little larger than closets, always expecting that the next change or telegram would bring them their next Ambassadorial Post. So, a bit facetiously, I told the Department I would only stick around if I had a commitment to be sent as Ambassador to Mexico. They responded just as facetiously that that possibility was not in the cards.

One other offer almost changed my mind. One of the major US agencies in Washington offered me a very good, high-level position dealing with Latin America. I actually had an employment appointment scheduled and I canceled it the night before, when we decided definitively to retire and leave Washington. I later heard that the position was mine and the interview was only for form. But, I didn't regret the rejection of the decision.

So the decision was made and we retired and returned to San Francisco and the family. Today, five years later, I am convinced it was the right decision. We have settled down; the kids and grandchildren are close, and there are lots of ball games. As I tell audiences frequently, the Foreign Service was a great career, one that I recommend, and one where I would change nothing had I to do it over again.

This is billed as my oral history, but it is really our oral history, both Fran's and mine. In few other careers is the spouse so important. Fran was a great support everyday of the twenty eight

years, always taking care of the family matters, supervising the raising of the children, finding the houses, managing the staff, in sum, permitting me the time to do the job at the office. The spouse is the unpaid half of the team, and the US Government and taxpayer benefit tremendously. Often the spirit of sacrifice and hardship is greater for the spouse, and he or she is always in the background as far as the public is concerned. Fran was a great representative of what Americans really are, she put on wonderful parties, and she was always a positive factor for Embassy morale, as well as mine. I mentioned her several times in the narrative, but those occasions were only a minute part of what she contributed to the team. Fran should have received some of those awards which came to me; after all, she made them possible.

End of Reader