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

AMBASSADOR JOHN CAMPBELL

Interviewed by: Kenneth L. Brown
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Q: Today is October 22nd, 2014. I'm Kenneth Brown of the Association of Diplomatic Studies and Training, conducting an interview with John Campbell. John, welcome, and I assume you go by John?

CAMPBELL: I do. Thank you.

Q: Let's start at the beginning. When and where were you born?

CAMPBELL: I was born in Washington DC on July 14th, 1944.

Q: Local.

CAMPBELL: That's right. My father's s family was from Pennsylvania, my mother's family from Virginia. My father was a civil servant. He rose eventually to be the Assistant Archivist of the United States, which meant he was responsible for the permanent collections in the National Archives, things like the Declaration of Independence or the Emancipation Proclamation. Before she married my father, my mother was a journalist. She did the society pages of little newspapers in Northern Virginia.

Q: Where was your father's family from and how far back do they go sort of as Americans, et cetera?

CAMPBELL: It's kind of an interesting story. My father's grandfather came from Scotland, went in the 1870s from Glasgow to Montreal, and then from Montreal to Pittsburgh because there was some kind of business relationship with Andrew Carnegie. His mother's family had all arrived in Pennsylvania before 1700 and were basically a mixture of English Quakers and Scots-Irish Presbyterians. Of those lines my father was extremely proud of his Scottish heritage. They were very strict Presbyterians. My mother's side from down in Virginia and also from the Eastern Shore of Maryland and Delaware were Episcopalians.. And my mother used to say that she and my father compromised; he became an Episcopalian and she became a Scot.

Q: (laughs) And then on your mother's side, how far back did they go?

CAMPBELL: Oh, before 1700 on both -- all the way around.

Q: That's right, you just mentioned that. So you grew up in Washington, as well as being born there?

CAMPBELL: I grew up basically in North Arlington between the country club and Chain Bridge on Glebe Road.

Q: Yes, I know that area. Did the Scottish heritage, did that carry over? Was it something that influenced your childhood and your growing up?

CAMPBELL: Oh yes. Most definitely so. And after I finished college I had a brief stay at the University of Edinburgh, and I did a PhD in British history at the University of Wisconsin-Madison.

Q: Did anybody ever talk to you about the Campbell's massacre, and the MacDonalds?

CAMPBELL: Oh, heavens yes *(laughs).*

Q: (laughs) My wife is a MacDonald.

CAMPBELL: *(laughs)* Campbells were really quite good at some things.

Q: So you really have a sense of Scottish ancestry?

CAMPBELL: Yes. Well, Scottish ancestry, but also of the variety of different elements that make up American life. For example, on my mother's side, there were lots of Huguenots. So, also French. On my father's side as well. I mean, you know, we Americans are all mongrels, and we're quite proud of it *(laughs).* yes.

Q: As you were growing up, what was the conversation around the dinner table? Was there much political interest in the family?

CAMPBELL: There was. My father, being eventually a senior civil servant meant that there was a great deal of interest in politics, but there was no partisanship. And that's continued in terms of my own outlook right on down to the present day. In other words, I don't identify with being either Democratic or Republican. It would never occur to me to think that way.

Q: Were issues of the day discussed in the family?

CAMPBELL: Oh, incessantly. Yes. Absolutely incessantly. Earliest conversation about international affairs I can remember occurred when I was about four-years-old. And my mother, wringing her hands, about the Soviet occupation of Czechoslovakia and saying, "We're going to have a war every four years."

Q: It probably seemed like that because we'd just gotten out of Korea.

CAMPBELL: Well no, we had not gone into Korea. Korea is later.

Q: Oh, I see, this wasn't the -- I'm thinking the Hungary Uprising.

CAMPBELL: No, no, no, this was '48.

Q: Yes, yes, yes, yes, OK. And then of course with the Hungarian Uprising later on.

CAMPBELL: That's right, mm-hmm.

Q: What was it like for you as a child in North Arlington at that time? In terms of -- were you free to play, ride your bike?

CAMPBELL: All that sort of thing. Close to idyllic. People didn't lock their doors. We were in and out of each other's houses all the time. Practically nobody's mother worked, which meant as children everybody got a lot of personal attention. Rode bikes everywhere. We went to the local schools. I went to first James Madison Elementary School, then, then Jamestown and then Williamsburg Junior High and then Washington-Lee High School (Yorktown High School, which now serves that area, had not yet been built.) They were all within walking distance. And notice the names of the schools. I mean there was a huge emphasis on Virginia's historical roots.

Q: At Washington-Lee did they require a major? Did you have to choose a major?

CAMPBELL: No.

Q: Were you sort of college prepped though at that point?

CAMPBELL: Well, everybody was.

Q: Everybody was.

CAMPBELL: Well, sure, more than 90% went to college.

Q: I see, I see. And which college did you choose?

CAMPBELL: The University of Virginia.

Q: University of Virginia. And had you considered other places, or you just knew you were UVA bound?

CAMPBELL: Oh no, no, I considered lots of other places. My father had gone to Princeton and I was interested in Princeton. It's interesting. He went to Princeton, but the other, the other university he applied to was the University of Virginia. This is in 1928,

1929. And I also thought about St. John's in Annapolis and William and Mary. So yes, there were a number of --

Q: What did you choose as a major at UVA?

CAMPBELL: European history with a concentration in British history.

Q: And then was it at that point that you went on to University of Edinburgh, or was this --

CAMPBELL: That was between, that was between University of Virginia and University of Wisconsin where I did a PhD in British history, specifically the Tudor-Stuart period.

Q: When you were at UVA were you active beyond the classroom? Were you, were you a student body president or head of the journalism club?

CAMPBELL: No, no, no, nothing like that at all. I was a -- I was active in the university guides, which essentially were the guides who took visitors around the Jeffersonian grounds. That's what really interested me.

Q: You graduated from UVA in what year?

CAMPBELL: 1966.

Q: '56.

CAMPBELL: '66.

Q: '56, yes, I've just aged you by 10 years.

CAMPBELL: *(laughs)*

Q: So.

CAMPBELL: So I stayed on and did an MA (Master of Arts) degree, which I finished in '67. Went to the University of Wisconsin-Madison and at Wisconsin I finished a PhD in 1970. In 1970, I went to work as an assistant professor of British and French history at Mary Baldwin College in Staunton, Virginia.

Q: But you have two doctorates?

CAMPBELL: Just one.

Q: Just one. So the one at Edinburgh was --

CAMPBELL: Oh, I was at Edinburgh for only a semester.

Q: Oh, I see, one -- for some reason I was thinking -- I guess I was thinking of Ed Brynn, you know, who was --

CAMPBELL: Yes, yes, that's right.

Q: Irish history and U.S. history.

CAMPBELL: That's right.

Q: When you were at Wisconsin, was Professor Ted Marmor in the Political Science Department, do you recall?

CAMPBELL: I do not recall, but I was in history.

Q: Right.

CAMPBELL: And further, further in European history.

Q: Right.

CAMPBELL: But from a certain perspective, those years at Wisconsin were formative. They were formative because at that time Wisconsin was at the cutting edge of African history.

Q: It's true.

CAMPBELL: And I was surrounded by people who were doing really interesting things in African history. Such as, how do you make use of oral traditions to construct an historical narrative? That was Professor Jan Vansina's thing.

Q: Yes.

CAMPBELL: Or Philip Curtain on just how big was the Atlantic slave trade and how did it work. So it was there that I really got interested in Africa.

Q: And I think one of the leading political scientists interested in Africa was at the University of Wisconsin who did politics in the Congo. And his --

CAMPBELL: That was Jan Vansina, wasn't it?

Q: No, Vansina I'm sure had some influence.

CAMPBELL: Oh, he did. Well, and he did a lot of work on Congo.

Q: Yes, I know he did, and he was an expert on the Lega people in the eastern part of the Congo.

CAMPBELL: Yes.

Q: The name will -- Crawford Young.

CAMPBELL: Oh. Indeed. Crawford Young arrived slightly after I left. I left in 1970. But I got to know him very well because after I left the Foreign Service I went to the University of Wisconsin as a visiting professor of international studies. And that was where I did the first draft of my book, Nigeria Dancing on the Brink. And Crawford Young was extraordinarily generous in reading the entire manuscript and providing lots of comments on it.

Q: And the real -- one of the early experts on the Congo, because at the time you were doing this we were doing -- African studies was still very much in kind of a nascent period, you know.

CAMPBELL: Yes. That's right.

Q: So you taught at Mary Baldwin then.

CAMPBELL: I did.

Q: History. And how long were you there?

CAMPBELL: I was there from 1970 until 1975.

Q: '75. Is that when you started thinking about the Foreign Service?

CAMPBELL: Well, I have to tell you. It doesn't do me any particular credit. Mobility in academia then, as now, was highly limited. And so after I'd been at Mary Baldwin for about three years I thought, "Well, what am I going to do?" Being from Washington, the Foreign Service was of course an alternative that I'd always known about. I mean I went to school with the children of Foreign Service officers, went to school in North Arlington with the children of European diplomats in particular as well. So, so this interest was not particularly odd. So I signed up to take the Foreign Service Exam in 1973 and it was given at the University of Virginia in Charlottesville, which is about 30 miles away from Staunton. And the night before the exam, let's just say I was at an even that was rather liquid.

Q: (laughs)

CAMPBELL: And I remember when I went to bed thinking, "Well, if I wake up in time I'll go off and take the exam and if I don't I won't." Well, I did wake up in time and I

went off and took it. And in those days, the whole entry process was weighted very heavily on the written exam.

Q: Yes.

CAMPBELL: The written exam in turn was very heavy on European and American cultural and political history.

Q: You can knock that out of the park I would think, yes.

CAMPBELL: Well, I got thoroughly engaged by one of the questions that I thought was too cute for words.

Q: (laughs) And spent too much time on it.

CAMPBELL: No. It was one of the multiple choice questions. There was a picture of the church of St. Alexander Nevsky in Sofia. And to answer the question correctly you had to know that the building was a 19th century revival building and not a Byzantine building. Well, I happen to know that. And just by happenstance. And I thought, OK, if we're going to be really cute about this, we'll see who's the cuter. So I was thoroughly engaged.

Q: Good for you. Now, I'm skipping ahead a little bit and I'll come back to the narrative, but you've had extensive experience on the academic side, experience on the practitioner's side. And sometimes there's a tension between the two groups. Sometimes there's very close cooperation, and I think the cooperation has grown in recent years. Did you find that your academic knowledge was useful as a practitioner -- obviously it would be, but to what extent were you as an insider more informed and better able to do the job than the academic who may just be writing articles for journals, et cetera?

CAMPBELL: Well, I was in academia from 1970 to 1975. I was in the Foreign Service from 1975 until 2007. So the weight was much more heavily Foreign Service that academia. Now, after I left the Foreign Service there was the year as a, as a visiting professor at, at Wisconsin. Earlier there was an academic year as a visiting fellow at the Woodrow Wilson School at Princeton. But that was a State Department assignment. And I suppose one might argue that the time I have been at the Council on Foreign Relations has an academic dimension to it, but the Council is really a policy shop; it's not really an academic institution. So the academic dimension is much smaller than the other. Much smaller.

Q: In your, in your experience.

CAMPBELL: Yes.

Q: Did you, did you -- what did you find in regard to the attitude of academics toward the practitioner? For example, I went to Yale with the possibility of getting a doctorate, but I

didn't continue the doctorate program. I passed the exam, had my MA, and went in the Foreign Service. Now, some people, some of the academics kind of look down their nose at that. Oh, he couldn't make it at Yale, he went off and did something else. Was there any kind of attitude in that regard of sort of superiority on the part of the academics toward practitioners?

CAMPBELL: No, not in those terms. I entered the Foreign Service in 1975. That was right after, literally right after the fall of Saigon, after I had been teaching for five years. While I was in graduate school, when I was also a teaching assistant, the most salient thing going on was the Vietnamese War. Plus, the Civil Rights Movement. Plus, the feminist movement. So that the tension wasn't practitioner versus academic, it was rather an extremely negative view of government versus an attitude of "my country right or wrong."

Q: Yes, you were the establishment.

CAMPBELL: But, not while I was in Graduate School. Later, yes, I came out of a period of mild radicalism and that's what my father had done. And while I was at Wisconsin, I got gassed by the police a couple times for participating in black studies demonstrations. I knew as well as anybody how you emigrated to Canada if it was necessary. And I don't know what would have happened if I had been drafted. The lottery systems was put into effect in 1968 or 1969 and my lottery number was, if I recall correctly, 349, which meant essentially, that did not become an issue.

Q: Did this activity on your part, radical as you put it, have an influence on the way the department looked at you when they were assessing whether or not you should become a Foreign Service officer?

CAMPBELL: No, I saw no evidence that --

Q: It didn't come up in the security clearance or anything like that?

CAMPBELL: Never. Part of it of course was that I never joined a formal organization like, like SDS, Students for Democratic Society. So there would have been no particular reason why I would. Also, I never participated in the drug culture. I was never arrested, either.

Q: Yes, well OK.

CAMPBELL: Yes.

Q: (laughs) You got gassed, but not arrested.

CAMPBELL: Yes.

Q: I found that when I was in the Department in African Affairs, that when professors could get a security clearance and really get actively involved in what was going on, involved in the sense of studying it, that they were rather grateful for the opportunity to see side of things that was very hard to get otherwise.

CAMPBELL: Yes, I think that's true. I know now, for example, I know the kind of information that is available to the department.

Q: Right.

CAMPBELL: Whereas somebody whose background is purely academic literally doesn't know.

Q: That's right, that's right, you don't know what's there and what's not there.

CAMPBELL: That's right.

Q: So the -- how soon after your written exam did you take the, did you take the oral?

CAMPBELL: It wasn't very long.

Q: So fairly soon.

CAMPBELL: Yes, it was fairly soon. I want to say two months, three months.

Q: Yes, that --

CAMPBELL: Now, that I think about it – it may have been longer, I really quite frankly don't really remember. Because my entry into the Foreign Service was delayed because I had already signed a contract to finish the academic year. And so the department allowed me to finish out the academic year before I actually entered. So I took the written exam in '73 and actually entered in '75.

Q: Oh, I see. Oh, I see.

CAMPBELL: So that two year -- well, it was probably a year and a half -- period, that included the security clearance stuff, medical. The department decided that I had high blood pressure. And I spent the summer of '74 in London doing research on British history. And I had to appear at the embassy once a week to have my blood pressure checked.

Q: (laughs)

CAMPBELL: So I got through that.

Q: So you took the oral in '73.

CAMPBELL: I'm not -- can't remember whether I took it in -- I think I did take it in '73.

Q: But fairly soon after the written.

CAMPBELL: Yes. The medical stuff and the security stuff all comes after the oral.

Q: Yes, yes.

CAMPBELL: So.

Q: What do you recall about your oral exam?

CAMPBELL: Oh, it was extremely pleasant. There were three or four -- three I guess -- senior Foreign Service officers. It lasted one hour and it consisted of a series of "what if" questions. Because they knew I had a background in British history, they asked me to weigh in terms of importance British entry into the EU (European Union) against the recently opened Chunnel, the Tunnel under the English Channel. So the conversation was very civilized.

Q: Do you recall any other questions? Anything that sort of --

CAMPBELL: There were, there were a certain number of consular questions. What would you do if you have a 23-year-old American citizen who is in jail and will not authorize you to tell her parents. It was that kind of thing.

Q: And it sounds like you did pretty well on the oral, that -- did they call you immediately back after the oral to give you an answer as to whether or not you'd passed?

CAMPBELL: Oh. We had, we had a session for one hour. They then said something like, "You can wait in the waiting room." Went to the waiting room, and I was preparing myself a cup of coffee and they called me back in again. So it was like five minutes.

Q: Very quickly.

CAMPBELL: Yes, maybe as much as ten minutes. Yes

Q: So you actually went in the service in '75.

CAMPBELL: I did.

Q: Do you recall what month in --

CAMPBELL: June.

Q: June.

CAMPBELL: June of ’75.

Q: How long was the A100 course at that time?

CAMPBELL: About six weeks.

Q: Six weeks, so short. Because mine was 10, I came in earlier than that but mine was 10 weeks.

CAMPBELL: It had been shortened. My class was the 119th and at some point the classes were renumbered.

Q: That’s right.

CAMPBELL: Yes.

Q: What do you recall about your A100? Did you think it was useful? I mean you came with a pretty thoroughly background. Did you think that the A100 course did what it ought to do for new officers?

CAMPBELL: In terms of what diplomats in those days were expected to do, yes. But what diplomats were expected to do in those days and what they’re expected to do now is quite different in lots of ways. There is now a much greater emphasis put on management skills, for example. Well, then a certain number of my colleagues didn't even know how to type. They wrote by hand on long yellow sheets and you handed the draft --

Q: That’s right.

CAMPBELL: -- and of course there was no word processing. There was nothing of that sort at all.

Q: No, no.

CAMPBELL: They were quite upfront about one of the purposes of A100, which was to build affiliative relationships. And of course that worked extremely well. It was basically orientation, not training. We were a large class because --

Q: How big were you?

CAMPBELL: A little over a hundred.

Q: Really? That’s a large class.

CAMPBELL: Yes, because we were the first class after the fall of Saigon. The sort of reorienting after the long period of time in which so many personnel decisions were shaped by the Vietnamese War.

Q: And did your class have sort of a variety of people who were going to do --

CAMPBELL: Yes.

Q: Was there diversity in your class?

CAMPBELL: Yes.

Q: Was this combined with USIA (United States Information Agency)?

CAMPBELL: It was combined with USIA, and there were also some AID (Agency for International Development) officers there too. But I can't remember if they were going in to AID or whether they had been in AID and were going in State. .

Q: The latter sounds a bit more likely. I had --

CAMPBELL: Well --

Q: Because the training is very different, at least now for AID folks.

CAMPBELL: Yes. Diversity. We were one of the earliest classes in which women who had previously been Foreign Service officers and forced to resign on marriage were then allowed to come back in again.

Q: Like Phyllis Oakley.

CAMPBELL: Like Phyllis Oakley. And of course they tended to be a little bit older than we were. Though the average age of entry then was I think very much what it is now, it was between 30 and 31. So almost everybody had done something else. There were a few, very few, African Americans. I think we had one or two Puerto Ricans. We had a number of military officers coming out of the Vietnamese War.
Q: Apart from the people who may have had experience in government in that class, did you have a feel for how well prepared the other students were, the other new FSOs (Foreign Service Officer)? Right now you have a lot of people coming in, as I understand it, a significant percentage who don't have an international relations background even academically. They may be as bright as they can be, but it's in science or whatever. And then they sort of have to retool. Did you have a feel for what that was like in your class?

CAMPBELL: We had a number of lawyers. We had people that had worked at a huge variety of jobs basically to keep body and soul together.

Q: Which is good training for any job I think (laughs).

CAMPBELL: Indeed. A person who was later my DCM (deputy chief of mission), if I recall correctly, worked for the IRS (Internal Revenue Service) basically going over people's tax forms. So it was a wide variety of things. But I didn't have a specifically international relations background, either.

Q: But the history background was very pertinent.

CAMPBELL: Oh, extremely pertinent. And I would maintain, history is probably the best possible preparation for the Foreign Service. But it was not international relations, it wasn't political science. I had not served in the Peace Corps, as a number in my class had. I hadn't been in the military. So.

Q: If you were advising young people today how to prepare for the Foreign Service, not only to pass the exam but how to succeed in the Foreign Service, were there particular -- is there particular guidance you would give them?

CAMPBELL: Yes. And that is to find something about which they can be enormously enthusiastic. Now, that could be first century BC Greek sculpture. That's fine. Or it could be 19th century French literature. But I mean to *really* care passionately about it.

Q: So the course then was over. Did they have a standard practice at that time of sending everybody into consular training?

CAMPBELL: Yes. It was not -- as far as I know it was not formal, but of my class practically everybody went into consular training and then into consular assignments. The few exceptions were those who for one reason or another had to remain in Washington, usually for personal reasons, wife was pregnant about to give birth, that kind of thing.

Q: Were you brought into a particular cone?

CAMPBELL: Political, yes.

Q: Political, I think.

CAMPBELL: And not only that, but the exam, the written exam, in those days was also conal.

Q: Ah-ha.

CAMPBELL: Yes, that's one of the reasons why I had all those political and historical questions on the written exam.

Q: And when it came to assignments, they gave you an opportunity to state your preference?

CAMPBELL: I'm trying to think, were we even given the opportunity?

Q: When I came in they had what were the April Fools sheet, which you'd state your preferences for three, but they didn't have the open assignments.

CAMPBELL: No, there was no open assignment system at all.

Q: Right.

CAMPBELL: Now, again, in those days, there were two or three quite senior Foreign Service officers, one I remember particularly well had been ambassador to India, who were part of the class and got to know us and they apparently had a big input into the process of whether you went to X or Y.

Q: Interesting, yes.

CAMPBELL: So, that my first assignment was a consular officer, but I was sent to Lyon. Well, to somebody who had been teaching French history, that assignment was welcome. I had already had some French language training, I think I had about a two-two in French. And so, they were concerned to put people into assignments that would lead to language training that would get them off language probation --

Q: Right.

CAMPBELL: -- as soon as possible. And that assignment was broadly congruent, with my background and interest.

Q: So you went into French training right after the consular -- or approximately soon after --

CAMPBELL: It was right after the consular training, yes.

Q: And then how long was the French course at that time?

CAMPBELL: Well, see, I had, I already had a two-two, so for me it was 11 or 12 weeks.

Q: Oh, I see, they streamlined you. They didn't put you in the regular course.

CAMPBELL: No. The way it worked then was that French was 20 weeks, not 24. And so, you were put in at where a particular class was.

Q: OK.

CAMPBELL: And of course the, the makeup of the class was changing all the time.

Q: That's interesting, I hadn't heard about them doing that. But I know when I was taking French Charlie Sylvester and I seemed to be advancing more quickly than others and so they pulled the two of us and did, did separate training for us.

CAMPBELL: Together?

Q: Together.

CAMPBELL: Well, that would make sense because normally those classes -- I was later dean of the language school. Those classes normally would only have three people in them.

Q: Yes, ours -- I'm trying to remember, ours I think had at least six. So you finished your first language. At that point you knew you were going to Lyon.

CAMPBELL: I did.

Q: So you're off to Lyon in what, '76?

CAMPBELL: Right after New Years '76. So in other words, I entered in June of '75 and I was in Leon by the second week in January of '76.

Q: And were you married at this point?

CAMPBELL: I was not.

Q: So young, single, junior officers going off to Lyon, France.

CAMPBELL: Lyon, France, absolutely, yes.

Q: Was -- Lyon was probably a very small post, wasn't it?

CAMPBELL: There were -- there was the principal officer, Jan Verschuur was his name, there was me, there were two consular assistants, one economic commercial assistant, a secretary who was French, there was a public diplomacy assistant -- I guess you'd call him an employee. He was in fact a British national, and one other public diplomacy assistant -- but the Americans, there were, there were two.

Q: Two Americans in the local staff. Now, in that situation did you have all the consular work, or did the principal officer do some of it as well?

CAMPBELL: I essentially had it all. Again, this was France, which meant that the consular work that engaged me the most tended to be welfare and whereabouts of American citizens, because the highly competent French staff basically did the visas. In those days of course communists had to be tracked and visa waivers had to be gotten for

them, and there were always a fair number of communists in France. But that was, that was an operation that just sort of ran by itself.

Q: And what did the principal officer occupy himself with?

CAMPBELL: Outreach, as did I. We both did a lot of outreach. And he also was a commercial officer so he did a lot of commercial work.

Q: Did either you or the principal officer do political reporting?

CAMPBELL: Yes. We both did. And it was a particular responsibility of mine.

Q: Did that -- would that reporting go to Paris for clearance, then go to the department, or it was sent directly to the department?

CAMPBELL: It could have been sent directly to the department as a practical matter. The relationship with the Political Section in Paris was quite close. And so we would send it to Paris. And very often Paris would add something -- add an insight, something of that sort.

Q: And these, did these tend to be telegrams? I guess we saw air grams that --

CAMPBELL: Many of them were air grams.

Q: Did you think Lyon at that point was a well-run post? Did it function the way it was supposed to function?

CAMPBELL: Yes. But we're talking about what a well-run post in those days was supposed to do. And what were we supposed to do? Outreach, American Citizen Services. Those two require a significant personal input from the American officers. Public diplomacy as well. You can't make a great big deal out of administration of a post that is that small. And by the way, we had an administrative assistant who was a fairly eccentric French woman.

Q: (laughs) In this outreach, was this difficult for you? Were there -- you talked about the number of communists in France and of course we'd just sort of come out of the Vietnam War --

CAMPBELL: Well, you know, it wasn't difficult and I'll tell you why. In those days, Lyon -- and the Lyon consular district was almost a third of France -- but it was the geographical center of the county, I mean for example Vichy was in our consular district. There were very, very few native English speakers in the region. And I let everybody know that I was perfectly happy to go anywhere and speak in English. And I had more invitations than in fact I, I could fulfill. Because every lycée wanted their students to hear a native English speaker. And I had a certain list of topics that were deliberately

controversial. For example, why the U.S. would not grant landing rights to the Concorde, that sort of thing. And so I had a really good time.

Q: So this outreach was mainly in terms of speaking engagements?

CAMPBELL: Yes.

Q: Were there a lot of sort of rotary club sort of thing?

CAMPBELL: Certain amount of that, yes.

Q: And how much of your time would you say was taken up with that kind of -- I guess including travel, there must have been a fair amount of time that was taken up just by getting to these --

CAMPBELL: Yes, there was, but you can also see things and that could make a nice air gram, you know, back to Paris.

Q: Did the air grams tend to be on local politics?

CAMPBELL: Yes, but also on social conditions and that sort of thing. I also should add, I wasn't there very long. I got there in January and that July I was moved up to Paris to be staff aide to the ambassador.

Q: Ah-ha.

CAMPBELL: So I was only in Lyon about six months.

Q: Six or seven months.

CAMPBELL: Yes, that's right.

Q: Well, that was quite a change then. And, and obviously we'll pursue that. Before we do, was there much to the relationship between your consulate Lyon and the embassy, except for your sending up the reporting? Did they keep an eye on you? Were you sort of pretty well able to operate without too much supervision?

CAMPBELL: As I recall the relationship was close and warm. And there I'm probably reflecting as well the consul general's response. Now, the consul general came from the embassy in Paris. He had been in the Economic Section there. So, there were lots of personal, personal contacts. The DCM, Sam Gammon, made a particular point of looking after junior officers. And in that six months that I was in Lyon, I think I was called up to Paris twice for the DCM's meetings with junior officers. Once or twice, I really don't remember. And he came down to Lyon at least once.

Q: Was he your reviewing officer for your efficiency report?

CAMPBELL: Yes.

Q: So the PO (principal officer) would write it and then he'd send it up.

CAMPBELL: That's right. And I, I had to look after the ambassador, Kenneth Rush, when he did a transit of Lyon at some odd time, like late Sunday afternoon. And we got on well. And I think that's probably why I was then moved up to Paris.

Q: Was that move sort of out of the blue? Did you have any inkling that that was about to happen?

CAMPBELL: It was pretty much out of the blue. Sam Gammon called me up and asked me if I would be willing to do it. And I said, sure.

Q: Your boss in Lyon must have been a bit distressed --

CAMPBELL: He was.

Q: -- to lose you quickly.

CAMPBELL: Well, they filled it -- they sent somebody down from Paris to --

Q: Oh, there was a swap?

CAMPBELL: Well, they sent somebody down from Paris until the position was filled.

Q: I see, the new person arrived.

CAMPBELL: Yes.

Q: So you moved to the big city then.

CAMPBELL: I did.

Q: So this was in July of '76.

CAMPBELL: It was, yes. Which was the bicentennial year.

Q: Bicentennial, exactly.

CAMPBELL: Yes. And I remember doing myself bicentennial events in the Lyon consular district. Of course when I ended up in Paris I was basically supporting what the ambassador was doing.

Q: So that was mainly then kind of an internal job. You weren't, you weren't going with him to demarches at the Foreign Ministry or anything like that, you were just making sure things were organized and in place?

CAMPBELL: That's right. Kenneth Rush had been Richard Nixon's law professor at Duke, he had been president of Union Carbide, he'd been ambassador to Germany, and he had been Deputy Secretary of Defense. I would guess he was 70 years of age and my job was to sit on top of paper going into him, paper coming out, overseeing travel arrangements, overseeing the calendar. By that, I mean the actual appointments were made by his secretary, but I was supposed to monitor it and make sure that he was briefed for whatever visitor was going in.

Q: Did you have to -- when you were talking about sitting on the papers going in and out -- did you sort of have to bird-dog those in the Political Section and say hey, the ambassador's expecting this --

CAMPBELL: Yes.

Q: -- or would you bounce something back on his behalf?

CAMPBELL: Oh yes, did that all the time. And we also -- we also had a tracking system. In other words, when we, when we would task something, we would track it.

Q: So for a brand new guy in the service, still rather mature, you'd had experience before the service, but a brand new guy in the service this is pretty big responsibility.

CAMPBELL: It was, but I was not by myself. There was an executive assistant who came out of the Political Section, Charlie McGee, who was -- was he a senior officer then? He would have been at least a three under the old system. So I was working for him as long as Kenneth Rush was ambassador. When Kenneth Rush left and was replaced by Art Hartman, career Foreign Service coming out of the department, it was thought it was unnecessary to have an executive assistant, and it was.

Q: So you worked for Hartman then essentially.

CAMPBELL: That's right. And doing much the same thing. But you didn't need the higher level involved.

Q: Was Hank Cohen in Paris at that time?

CAMPBELL: Was indeed. He was the political counselor in Paris and he remains a -- I regard him as a close friend. And we still work together from time to time.

Q: I would expect so, he stayed very much involved in African Affairs.

CAMPBELL: That's right, yes, and he's done things for the Council and I've done some things for him.

Q: Was Nick Murphy your Africa-Middle East watch at that point --

CAMPBELL: Yes, was indeed, mm-hmm.

Q: So the -- how long were you with Rush then?

CAMPBELL: The time I was in Paris, which was about 18 months -- again, if I'm recalling correctly it would have been about six months with Kenneth Rush, roughly six months when Sam Gammon was chargé, and then roughly six months when Art Hartman was there.

Q: So there was a six-month hiatus between --

CAMPBELL: It was a long hiatus. Again, it may have been four or five, you know.

Q: What was it like working for Gammon, and what was it like working for Hartman?

CAMPBELL: What was it like working for them? I liked working for Gammon. And of course in a sense throughout that period I worked for him, because he was DCM throughout that period.

Q: Sure, so you knew him, yes.

CAMPBELL: Yes, that's right. He was very clear. So you knew what was expected and what was wanted, which was always quite reasonable. Not emotional, so no tirades, no flaps, you know, that kind of thing. Calm. Very much in charge. And when you're brand new and you're doing essentially kind of support work I was doing, that's very important.

Q: Yes, because they can see things that you may not realize that you need to do or the way to do them.

CAMPBELL: That's exactly right.

Q: I found that I did a bit of that work for Mac Godley in the Congo and sort of had to learn as I went. Sometimes sort of on-the-job training. And then working for Hartman?

CAMPBELL: He was more self-contained than Kenneth Rush had been, and he was lower maintenance. For example, under Ambassador Rush in the winter one of my jobs was to keep the fire from going out over lunch in his office.

Q: Literally?

CAMPBELL: Literally. This would never have occurred to Ambassador Hartman to ask for. Now, in those days -- again, in winter -- firewood was delivered every morning and there was a fire lit in the ambassador's office every morning. And I don't frankly remember what Ambassador Hartman did. I guess he periodically threw a log on it if he wanted one. But I had nothing to do with it *(laughs).*

Q: Sounds like "Downton Abbey," doesn't it?

CAMPBELL: Well, in that sense a different world, yes. I mean it is a different world.

Q: With --

CAMPBELL: This is also Paris, so --

Q: Well, yes, yes, big embassy.

CAMPBELL: Well, a big embassy and also embassies take color from the country in which they find themselves. So coffee and tea on gold-crested China were always served to visitors and --

Q: Mm-hmm, mm-hmm, mm-hmm, certain amount of status to represent.

CAMPBELL: That's right.

Q: Well, with all this background that, that your first ambassador there had, he must have felt very confident in what he was doing. Did he, did he --

CAMPBELL: Ambassador Rush was confident in what he was doing.

Q: Was he good in supervising his staff in dealing with his staff?

CAMPBELL: Yes, but he was quite remote from them. For example, one of my jobs was to take him around to embassy Christmas parties the week before Christmas. And to get from point A and point B at one point we had to go across the cafeteria. And he looked at it and he said, "Oh, we have a cafeteria here?" *(laughs).*

Q: (laughs) Not the kind of guy who would go down and eat in the cafeteria.

CAMPBELL: Well, also the residence was only about a block away from the chancery. But, lunch in the embassy cafeteria t was not Ambassador Rush's thing, no.

Q: Mm-hmm.

CAMPBELL: And Ambassador Rush maintained a regular and close relationship with an absolutely has-been politician by the name of Francois Mitterrand. And went down to his

constituency, and everybody thought this was a waste of time. Turned out not to have been.

Q: Turned out not to be (laughs). So he was a bit, kind of a bit above it all I guess.

CAMPBELL: Oh yes, completely so.

Q: I was in Brussels at this time and visited Paris and just was struck by how big the embassy seemed and a bit impersonal. Was there a problem with morale in an embassy that size?

CAMPBELL: There was always said to be. And from where I sat the -- those who had poor morale tended to come out of Africa or some other awful place where Paris was supposed to be the glittering reward. And of course Paris was very hard work. And if you didn't speak French that could be difficult for people in terms of daily living. But also, except for the ambassador and the DCM basically, the French couldn't care less about you. I mean literally. They could care less. So if you were used to a certain amount of status and importance in some small place where the conditions were hard, and you suddenly end up in Paris where when you're out on the street, out on the sidewalk you're just anybody, you can throw in things like no domestic servants and, you know, that -- I saw this again in Geneva. Served in Geneva at a later time. And it was much the same phenomena. So that the people who were happiest in Paris, similar to the people who were happiest in Geneva, were people who were thoroughly engaged in the work, knew French, and thoroughly enjoyed living in Europe and all that provides. Paris was harder than Geneva, because these were also the Kissinger days, and the pace of work was quite intense. I normally worked seven days a week. Because if there were *exdis* or *nodis* cable traffic that came in I was always called about it and then have to determine whether to bother the DCM or the ambassador. Interesting anecdote there. Kenneth Rush's wife was the daughter of the Chief Surgeon at Massachusetts General Hospital. And I remember one time calling at like 1:00 in the morning because something had come in and apologizing and she in sort of a sleepy voice said, "Don't be concerned about that, you know, this has been true all my life. Don't even think twice about it," which was very gracious.

Q: Yes, it was.

CAMPBELL: Yes.

Q: Was he -- was Rush gracious and inclusive in dealing with the staff? You told the story about the cafeteria, but were there general staff meetings or --

CAMPBELL: No, no, no, no. No, nothing like that. That was all up to the DCM.

Q: And what about country team? Was there country team --

CAMPBELL: There were country team meetings, and I was present for them all. And my job was to keep track of who was there and who wasn't and why if somebody wasn't there they weren't there. Also to do a kind of checklist of issues discussed, I mean literally a checklist of say eight items that would then be circulated after the country team meetings.

Q: Were there particular issues at that time between the U.S. and France that the embassy was very preoccupied with, or were you sort of on autopilot and doing the kinds of things that embassies do?

CAMPBELL: Oh no, no, there were issues. And the cooperation between Washington and Paris was extremely close. It's much closer than --as at the present time -- it's much closer than the common perception.

Q: Really?

CAMPBELL: In those days the issues ranged from Southeast Asia, obviously, Euro Communism, there were a host of nuclear issues in which cooperation was quite close. South Africa's nuclear capabilities, for example.

Q: I guess the whole U.S.-French NATO (North Atlantic Treaty Organization) relationship --

CAMPBELL: Yes.

Q: So where -- was the scene any different then when Hartman came in? Were there different preoccupations? Did he -- he was much lower maintenance you said.

CAMPBELL: He was also much younger.

Q: Ah-ha, interesting, yes.

CAMPBELL: I, I was trying to think just how old Kenneth Rush was. He had white hair so he may have looked older than he really was, but I think he was probably in his mid-seventies. And that had an impact on, on the pace, you know, that he followed. Art Hartman was probably 20 years younger. And in terms of difference, Ambassador Hartman tried to simplify procedures and to reduce the level of protocolary stuff.

Q: So Rush left the management of the embassy pretty much to the DCM.

CAMPBELL: Yes, and leadership of it.

Q: And did that work as far as --

CAMPBELL: Yes, as far as -- I mean from, you know, from my sort of worm's eye view, yes, it did work.

Q: Where did Sam Gammon go after Paris, do you know?

CAMPBELL: Yes, he eventually got an ambassadorship I think somewhere in Indian Ocean.

Q: So Art Hartman comes in, he's much lower maintenance. What about his relationship with the staff? Did he have more of a sense of kind of an embassy family?

CAMPBELL: Yes. Yes. Although again, we're talking about what, almost 40 years ago.

Q: Yes.

CAMPBELL: So what embassy family meant then and what it means now is not the same thing. His, his wife was particularly concerned about the embassy community.

Q: Well, he had been, he had been in Brussels before that.

CAMPBELL: Well, he, he had been. Immediately before then he was assistant secretary for EUR (Bureau of European Affairs).

Q: Oh well, then Paris was sort of a reward? Does one choose one's own job --

CAMPBELL: Well, I think his appointment was probably part of a much larger set of concerns that I would not have been particularly aware of.

Q: Yes, yes, yes. But, so you were with him for six months?

CAMPBELL: Maybe six months, a little longer than that.

Q: And during that period there are no particularly dramatic moments or incidents that stand out in your mind in the relationship with the U.S. and France internal to the embassy?

CAMPBELL: No, not that I can recall. But the relationship was very close. The Carter visit to France took place under Hartman and at the time it was a big deal. And there were interesting clashes of style. For example, there was the reception at Versailles, which I was at, because I was the ambassador's bag carrier. So not only was I at it, but I was also in, as I recall it was the Salle de Guerre with all the big people as it were. President Carter's staff had insisted that it be business suits. The French wanted evening dress.

Q: Uh-huh.

CAMPBELL: And so you had these incongruous images of the Garde Republicaine (Republican Guard) holding torches on each side of the stairs going up into the palace and then these people looking like they just got off the subway *(laughs)* going, going up the steps.

Q: Yes. So that must have been toward the end of your tenure in Paris.

CAMPBELL: Yes.

Q: And did that visit go well aside from the dress code?

CAMPBELL: That was all worked out in advance, of course. It was said to have gone well, yes.

Q: So you'd been probably bidding on other jobs at this point.

CAMPBELL: I was.

Q: Yes. And how did that work out? So did you leave by the end of '77, or early '78?

CAMPBELL: I left the first or second week of January '78, exactly two years after I got there.

Q: You were sort of out of the summer cycles, weren't you? You kept getting transferred in January.

CAMPBELL: Part of that was because I had no family issues.

Q: Yes.

CAMPBELL: And the language and other training, you know, to occupy the first six months.

Q: So what did you bid on and what did you get?

CAMPBELL: Well, of course I didn't know -- I was bidding blind because --

Q: It was that time.

CAMPBELL: And also you just don't know what, know what the words mean. And so I talked to people. At that point I was very concerned, having been basically on call for seven days a week, I was very concerned to get weekends and holidays back. And there was a vacancy for the INR (Bureau of Intelligence and Research) analyst that did the UK (United Kingdom), Canada, and Ireland. So I bid on it and I got it.

Q: Well, yes, I would think with your background you would be a good choice. So you came back to INR in January of '78. Did you get any home leave?

CAMPBELL: Yes. Not very much. But again, I didn't really need it because I'm from here, you know, so.

Q: That's right, you weren't going to travel to Montana.

CAMPBELL: I wasn't going to travel to Montana or something. I used home leave basically to find an apartment off of Dupont Circle that I bought. So --

Q: And you kept that for a long time?

CAMPBELL: No, but I have owned property in Washington ever since. And whenever junior officers ask me, I always suggest to them that they should get something here as soon as they can afford it because it's where they are always coming back.

Q: That was the exact advice that Hank Cohen gave me. That led to the purchase of our first.

CAMPBELL: Yep, yep, that's right.

Q: So what were your duties in INR?

CAMPBELL: Oh. Very interesting. Not terribly different from what I do now. It was essentially reviewing all of the official traffic, deciding what was of importance to policymakers, writing it up in a variety of different forms. There was a daily intelligence summary in which you would take something and distill it down into one paragraph or so. And it would get printed. And there were longer things called IRs, intelligence reports, on bigger issues. I remember doing one for example on Quebecois separatism. But the job was to identify what was importance, what terribly busy people really needed to know and understand.

Q: And you made that decision and recommended it to your office director?

CAMPBELL: Yes. And what I would do is I'd write it up and I'd send it through to him.

Q: That's very good training for making your writing concise.

CAMPBELL: That's right, absolutely. Yes sir.

Q: Good training, good training. Did any of those reports go to the White House, did they go to the secretary? Do you know what your distribution was?

CAMPBELL: Some did go to the White House and to the secretary, and I know that because I was told so. But what the actual distribution mechanisms were, I don't know.

Q: Did you have any relations with the Operations Center or the secretariat in terms of moving things along?

CAMPBELL: Yes. There was of course certain types of traffic that could be reviewed only in the Operations Center. So as I recall I went to the Operations Center every day usually around nine or 9:15.

Q: With your longer reports, these IR, was that sort of the longest one did, or were there other --

CAMPBELL: No, that was the longest one did.

Q: And who, who was your audience for those pieces?

CAMPBELL: Always classified, always went through a fairly extensive editorial process. In other words, there was -- there were one or two people who basically edited. So there was a certain amount of uniformity. The Council works the same way. And there was a regular distribution list for the IR's, which included everybody you ever heard of. But of course the principals didn't necessarily read them; it would be their staffers who might.

Q: Did you get a feel for how extensively they were read and whether or not they did influence the people who needed that policy?

CAMPBELL: I don't know about influence, but I know they were read. But I was very lucky. I was lucky because I was doing the UK, Canada, Ireland. These are subjects that are of intrinsic interest to practically everybody in the State Department no matter what they're working on. And further, I could really add value -- particularly in terms of context. So I was told most of the time I had the second largest readership for INR products. In other words, people were interested in a by-election in London, not necessarily because of policy but just because they were interested.

Q: How evenly was your work divided between the three countries?

CAMPBELL: It depended on what was going on. So the Callahan government fell while I was there. And that was of great interest. But so too was the Quebec referendum on independence. And, and then there was the uproar in Northern Ireland. So it would depend on what was going on.

Q: Did INR-RCI exist at that time?

CAMPBELL: What does RCI stand for?

Q: Call it Current Intelligence?

CAMPBELL: Yes, it did.

Q: And did you have a relationship with them so you could take account of --

CAMPBELL: Oh yes, absolutely. In fact we talked all the time. They often would do so-called "front of the book" items and we would do "back of the book" items, which would be maybe three paragraphs.

Q: Right, little bit longer. And did -- there were how many analysts in your section? This is I guess the European Section?

CAMPBELL: West European Section.

Q: Of INR, yes.

CAMPBELL: I want to say seven or eight. We had somebody who did France, somebody did Italy, somebody did Germany, somebody who did Benelux, somebody who did Scandinavia.

Q: What was the percentage of Foreign Service officers as compared to Civil Service?

CAMPBELL: About half and half.

Q: About half and half.

CAMPBELL: Yes.

Q: Did -- in your view was -- in your view was there an effect of the turnover of Foreign Service people? Was there a value to having the civil servants who were there long term?

CAMPBELL: Yes.

Q: Or was it better to have infusion of new blood?

CAMPBELL: No, they -- at that time, and given the way the department was structured and the concerns that it had, the mixture was just about right. For example, the French analyst was a career civil servant who'd been working France for 40 years. This was the Euro Communist period. He had a depth of understanding about it that we Foreign Service officers simply did not.

Q: Well, could that have been said of the UK though? I mean here you're the UK guy, could there have been a civil servant who would have had that depth of understanding that the new FSO didn't have?

CAMPBELL: Could have. But of course I went into that job with considerable UK experience.

Q: In your case it definitely would work. What about somebody else though who comes in maybe as a Canada expert and doesn't have a clue about the UK?

CAMPBELL: For the UK less of a problem than for Ireland.

Q: Ah yes.

CAMPBELL: I mean Ireland would be -- because the strong U.S. domestic dimensions to the issues and the fact that there's a huge amount of prejudice on Irish issues and very little knowledge or understanding of them, that could be --

Q: Yes, I could understand that very much being influenced by policy.

CAMPBELL: But if you took somebody like Ed Brynn --

Q: Yes.

CAMPBELL: -- he could do it beautifully.

Q: Absolutely, absolutely, yes.

CAMPBELL: But I've heard of people who came in without background and sort of felt boy, I really -- I had really -- I have to retool very quickly.

Q: No doubt that would be true. I have the impression that INR these days is pretty heavily Civil Service.

CAMPBELL: I think -- that's my impression as well, but I can't --

Q: I think one hears that of the Civil Service jobs they tend to be in functional bureaus.

CAMPBELL: Yes.

Q: And I mean I know one fellow who's been doing one part of Africa for years and years, and he's terrific at it and it would probably be a mistake to replace him. But there's always this tension between a creep in the number of jobs that used to be Foreign Service that aren't Foreign Service anymore.

CAMPBELL: That's right, and my office director and the deputy office director in those days, they were both civil servants. The INR director was Foreign Service.

Q: Who was that?

CAMPBELL: Spires.

Q: I know Ron Spires.

CAMPBELL: Yes. And I think the DASs (deputy assistant secretary) were all Foreign Service as well.

Q: Did that work from -- was there a good team effort between the Foreign Service management and the staff, which was at least probably half or more Civil Service?

CAMPBELL: Again, from my really limited perspective, yes, it did work.

Q: And was it a well-run bureau? Was the West European shop well-run?

CAMPBELL: Yes. Again though, we're talking about a long time ago.

Q: Right.

CAMPBELL: Take something as basic as office space. INR in those days was in the old Department of War part of the State Department building. Not only as an FS -- I guess I was promoted to 0-5 in the old system -- not only did I have a window, I had masonry walls and you could close the door. You know, I mean --

Q: Mm-hmm, mm-hmm. Well, you moved fairly quickly if you were a five at this point. You started out as an eight?

CAMPBELL: Seven.

Q: Oh, you started out as a seven.

CAMPBELL: I was promoted to six in Paris and then I was promoted to five in INR.

Q: Sounds like sort of back-to-back at that point, or do we say longer --

CAMPBELL: No, the promotions there were quite fast. I mean I think it was roughly -- at one stage it was roughly every two years. Then it slowed down *(laughs).*

Q: Yes. One reaches that stage.

CAMPBELL: Yes.

Q: Did you feel at all that INR was a backwater? Did you feel, no, we're very much engaged. What we do is --

CAMPBELL: I certainly didn't think it was backwater, no. The work was interesting. And I went from being the British analyst in INR directly to the British Desk.

Q: That's a good transition.

CAMPBELL: Yes, so.

Q: That's a string of assignments that makes a lot of sense. You know, sometimes they don't make that much sense.

CAMPBELL: Hey, you know, looking at the whole 32 years or whatever it was, I had no complaints at all about the assignments that I had, zero. I mean not in terms of process or in terms of where I ended up.

Q: Did you take an approach of I want to do sort of what feels good, in the sense of I'm going to be comfortable at it, I'm going to be good at it, this is going to interest me? Or did you -- and I think I know the answer to this question -- sort of calculate in career terms. Say, you know, well if I do this then I can move to here and then I will take that track.

CAMPBELL: It wasn't quite that way. Obviously there are elements of both. I mean nobody's solely one direction or the other. I went to the British Desk where of course I was the most junior person on the British Desk.

Q: How many people were there?

CAMPBELL: Well, nominally there were three. Most of the time there were two. And for a significant amount of time there was one, that was me.

Q: (laughs) But you went there as three and sometimes served as one?

CAMPBELL: Well, there were three positions but they weren't always filled.

Q: I see.

CAMPBELL: The senior desk officer was, again using the old system, was I think a three, so that would have been the equivalent of a one now. And then there was me and then in theory that was another, but that was almost never filled.

Q: You were going in as number two.

CAMPBELL: I was --

Q: But you said you were the most junior guy.

CAMPBELL: I was, and I think I went in as number three.

Q: OK, I see.

CAMPBELL: And we also had an officer that did Ireland and Northern Ireland, but also I think it was Iceland, some weird combination. And so we didn't do Ireland all by ourselves in other words. In other words, we didn't do Northern Ireland all by ourselves.

Q: No, that was really kind of a special case.

CAMPBELL: But to get to your point, the office director in -- it was in EUR-NE (Bureau of European and Eurasian Affairs-Northern European), Robert Funseth, moved to refugee programs and recruited me to go and work in that bureau. That was Vietnamese refugees, particularly. So there I was taking an assignment because I liked working for a particular individual.

Q: So how long were you on the desk then?

CAMPBELL: About two years.

Q: Oh, two years on the desk.

CAMPBELL: Mm-hmm.

Q: And that's a job you requested?

CAMPBELL: I bid on, yes.

Q: Well, you certainly had good background for it. At that time were there issues of paramount importance, things that gobbled up most of your time on the job?

CAMPBELL: Northern Ireland.

Q: Northern Ireland.

CAMPBELL: Yes, Northern Ireland.

Q: And what was your role, feeding the Front Office?

CAMPBELL: Feeding the Front Office. Policy is often driven by the drafting of press guidance.

Q: True (laughs). Yes, you know, I was in the Press Office, I was as the associate spokesman for a while.

CAMPBELL: OK. Yes Bob Funseth's approach was that press guidance was a vehicle for moving policy forward.

Q: He'd been spokesman.

CAMPBELL: He'd been under Kissinger.

Q: Yes.

CAMPBELL: Yes.

Q: So he had a real feel for it.

CAMPBELL: That's right. Well, the first draft of the press guidance on a country of my responsibility would be done by me, and then it could undergo any number of iterations, particularly as it moved up the chain. Then there are appointments, for example, there's a constant flow of visitors from the UK, constant writing of briefing papers for department people going to the UK, where there the issues by and large were not bilateral so what you were doing was tasking out to other parts of the department for background and talking points on issue X, and then packaging it together.

Q: Was the assistant secretary sort of on your case all the time? You had bureaus where assistant secretary's kind of the desk officer. Of course sometimes you have the president as the desk officer.

CAMPBELL: You do, yes.

Q: But how closely -- I guess maybe independence isn't the right word, but how much leeway did you have in doing what you were there to, I mean the office, the office of where you were desk officer.

CAMPBELL: My impression is that a fair amount of leeway, but part of that is Funseth had a very powerful personality and had been on very close terms with the most senior level of management in the department.

Q: So he was office director.

CAMPBELL: He was office director.

Q: The full two years you were there.

CAMPBELL: The full two years I was there. And then from there I went to Refugees --

Q: That's when Funseth moved over?

CAMPBELL: That's when he moved over. From Refugees I went to P (Political) as a P staffer. And then from there to Geneva working again on Vietnamese refugees.

Q: Interesting.

CAMPBELL: So in other words, it's all coherent.

Q: Oh yes, yes.

Yes

Q: No, it's a string of assignments, as I said, that makes sense. So you went in this would have been what, 1980 that you went from the UK desk to Refugee --

CAMPBELL: Well, let's see. '76 to '78 was Paris. '78 to '80 was INR. '80 to '82 --

Q: Yes, I'm two years behind, yes.

CAMPBELL: -- was the British Desk.

Q: Then went over to Refugees.

CAMPBELL: Then '82 to '84 was the -- Refugee Bureau. '85 was -- it was a year-long assignment. That was P. And then from P to Geneva, '85 to '88. And then in '88 in Geneva the director general called me up on the phone. I of course never met the director general. And he strongly suggested that I should go to Lagos as political counselor because there'd suddenly been a vacancy there. Political counselor had been moved to Johannesburg as consul general.

Q: That was in what year?

CAMPBELL: That would have been '88.

Q: OK, because I was consul general in Johannesburg from '84 to '87.

CAMPBELL: OK, and your successor was?

Q: First of all it's a guy named Jim -- I can't remember, but he didn't stay long for family reasons, and then it was --

CAMPBELL: He was over here at National Defense University for a long time.

Q: Yes. Yes.

CAMPBELL: And he is the one that got transferred to Johannesburg.

Q: OK, yes. And yes, that's because the other fellow, Jim -- I can't remember his name right now, but anyway, didn't stay long. And then fellow with a Hispanic name came in.

CAMPBELL: Chavez, Pete Chavez.

Q: Pete Chavez, Pete Chavez, and he later was ambassador to Sierra Leone, as I --

CAMPBELL: That's right.

Q: So you went to Refugee Affairs (1982-84)and all a sudden were dealing with a continent that probably you hadn't even set foot on, had you?

CAMPBELL: No. I hadn't set foot on it. But what you were really dealing with was UNHCR (United Nations High Commission for Refugees) and INS. In other words, it was not Southeast Asia specific.

Q: It was refugees.

CAMPBELL: Well, and it was basically international organizations.

Q: Mm-hmm. And what was your role there? Funseth was what, office director or was he --

CAMPBELL: No, he was the deputy to --

Q: So he was a DAS.

CAMPBELL: He was a PDAS.

Q: PDAS. And what was your job?

CAMPBELL: Well, in theory the title of it was I was Director of the Office of Regulations and Correspondence What Funseth did is he made that office into a kind of policy shop. So on the one hand the correspondence part was basically casework. So in other words, when is Auntie going to get to come to the United States? And that was handled by refugee officers.

Q: Interesting, yes.

CAMPBELL: Then there was the development of policies and procedures. And the office did that as well. And then we supported Funseth and company in the interactions with INS on the one hand and also with the Vietnamese government on the other. So that I went along with Funseth on numerous negotiating sessions with the Vietnamese in Geneva. Essentially as the bag carrier.

Q: Were you the director of this office?

CAMPBELL: Mm-hmm.

Q: And did you have staff?

CAMPBELL: Oh yes, big staff.

Q: And how many would you, would you say?

CAMPBELL: I guess it would be eight or nine?

Q: That many?

CAMPBELL: A big office, because this was the period of the boat people and the huge influx of, of refugees, intense congressional interest.

Q: So your first role as a boss? Getting some management challenges that you hadn't had otherwise?

CAMPBELL: yes I guess it was.

Q: Some of the old criticisms of the service, at least the Foreign Service, used to be that one could be very expert substantively and get to a point where you had to manage an officer or be a supervisor and not having had any experience or training for that.

CAMPBELL: Well, I certainly had no training for it. In fact, I had very little training throughout my whole career, except for language and the year at Princeton, which was something different. What gets lost in all of this is the Foreign Service is pretty tribal. That meant actually everybody really was kind of supporting everybody else. In other words, OK, I had this staff but they weren't fighting me and I certainly wasn't fighting them.

Q: You didn't have any staff issues?

CAMPBELL: Oh yes, there were staff issues, but they were all manageable.

Q: Did you have a deputy office director who helped you in this regard?

CAMPBELL: Don't think there was anybody with that formal title. But there were of section chiefs.

Q: Mm-hmm. I remember when I was office director we had, we called them secretaries at that time, were literally at each other's throats and I had to sort that one out. And when I was in the press office I had a lady who had an alcohol problem that was hidden. So sometimes these personnel issues can take up a certain amount of time. So what were your basic responsibilities then? You had this essentially policy function?

CAMPBELL: The policy function and then the correspondence function, which in turn meant a congressional dimensions. I mean we did a huge number of congress --

Q: I would imagine, yes. What effect did kind of the policy role have? You would be kind of a think tank and then that would go to Funseth and Funseth would deal with it or not deal with it, maybe move it on to a higher level?

CAMPBELL: That was a dimension of it. But there was also a dimension whereby you looked at what the law said and what conditions in Vietnam were. In terms of categories of people who were eligible for refugee admission. OK. That's over here. Over here, refugees resettled in the United States were -- that was done basically by American NGOs (non-governmental organization). The office, not me directly though often indirectly, the office was the link to those NGOs. And that operated on a variety of different levels. For example, those NGOs often had a contractual relationship, which meant they were receiving money from the government for refugee settlement.

Q: What kind of numbers are we talking here in terms of people who actually then resettled in the U.S.?

CAMPBELL: Thousands each year.

Q: Thousands each year.

CAMPBELL: It didn't last that long, but --

Q: How long did it last?

CAMPBELL: It really ran up about the time I got there. And my impression is that after the establishment of the orderly departure program, which I also worked on, the boat people issue largely went away because what we did was we determined eligibility for refugee admission to the U.S. in Saigon. So people would apply in Saigon for refugee admission. And this meant there was an element of cooperation with the Vietnamese government. The Vietnamese government allowed refugee officers to fly into Saigon and then fly out at the end of the day.

Q: Were the Vietnamese on the government side, were they flexible? Were they forthcoming? Did they do this grudgingly? How generous were they in allowing people to leave?

CAMPBELL: Depended. Some categories they wanted to get out, wanted to get them out. It was often said, for example, that they looked to encourage Vietnamese of Chinese origin to leave.

Q: Really?

CAMPBELL: Yes.

Q: What about people they had regarded kind of as collaborators back in the day? Did they --

CAMPBELL: Well, they had often been through reeducation camp before they were allowed to apply to leave the country as refugees.

Q: That's interesting maybe dealing -- I would think perhaps the Vietnamese would think well, the reeducation didn't take (laughs), you know, they still want to leave. Was the system fair in your view?

CAMPBELL: Yes. Yes, it was fair. Now, obviously you're talking about -- talk about a situation in which you might look at the evidence and I might look at it, we might draw different conclusions, but it was fair in the sense that there was a real genuine effort made to do a just and fair determination.

Q: Mm-hmm, mm-hmm.

CAMPBELL: We were often critical of INS officers on the ground as not having sufficient subtlety of understanding and therefore saying no too often. And there was a certain degree of friction between State Department officers dealing with refugee issues, and INS officers.

Q: How was that friction dealt with? Or was it dealt with?

CAMPBELL: You see, INS ultimately had the say, but I know that, that Funseth and the head of INS had a pretty good relationship and they tried to manage the issues. I mean, for example, just to take an example, does the fact that you're a Roman Catholic automatically entitle you to refugee status?

Q: Really?

CAMPBELL: Well, sure, because the Roman Catholic Church in Vietnam at that time was actively being persecuted.

Q: I wonder if you had any conversions.

CAMPBELL: *(laughs)* Well, except in carrying that a little bit further, Roman Catholics in Vietnam are likely to have been, or more likely to have been, associated with the former regime.

Q: Yes.

Q: But these were all Vietnamese. You didn't get into Cambodians or --

CAMPBELL: Yes, we did.

Q: Oh, you did.

CAMPBELL: We did, Cambodians and Lao.

Q: Oh really?

CAMPBELL: Mm-hmm.

Q: So you had the three countries. And was the system the same for all three?

CAMPBELL: Mm-hmm, essentially.

Q: And how forthcoming were the Laos and Cambodians in terms of letting people leave?

CAMPBELL: My impression, and this is now almost 30 years later --

Q: Yes.

CAMPBELL: -- is less so, but still there was.

Q: The overwhelming number presumably were from Vietnam.

CAMPBELL: They were.

Q: What proportions would you say there were, Vietnamese, Laos, and Cambodian, do you remember?

CAMPBELL: I don't remember. But towards the end of my time there the -- a large proportion of those in refugee camps, particularly in Thailand, were Cambodian.

Q: Interesting.

CAMPBELL: So that because we had the orderly departure program from Vietnam.

Q: Yes.

CAMPBELL: But there was not an equivalent.

Q: Yes.

CAMPBELL: I mean the idea was, if, if a person is eligible for refugee admission, what you want to do is process them in-country so they don't take to the little boats and drown.

Q: Yes, yes.

CAMPBELL: And that's the --

Q: Did you have issues in that regard, people taking little boats and drowning?

CAMPBELL: Well, that was the whole reason for setting up the orderly departure program was to preclude that. I mean the humanitarian drive for this was of enormous importance. Not only were people in little boats subject to drowning, they were subject to pirate attacks.

Q: Yes, and the -- but that was the not the way it was handled in Cambodia in Laos in terms of there was no orderly departure.

CAMPBELL: Not on my watch that I recall. There must have been some kind of arrangement subsequently, because we don't have Cambodians in refugee camps anymore.

Q: So you were there for how long?

CAMPBELL: Let's see. Let's see. '80 to '82 on the British Desk. I would have been there from roughly '82 to '84.

Q: '84. And '84 you moved on where?

CAMPBELL: To P.

Q: OK, and that's right, the Undersecretary for Political Affairs.

CAMPBELL: Yes.

Q: Why don't we stop here? Before we do, is there anything looking back over that assignment or previous assignments that you want to add, now a certain something? You can add later if you wish.

CAMPBELL: Well, from my perspective the assignments were all plausible and I certainly had input in them. I never had -- actually throughout my career -- I never had an assignment that I thought was sort of jammed down my throat. In those days, there was virtually no formal training at all except for language training. So you know, there was no leadership and management courses or anything, anything remotely, remotely along those lines.

Q: When we get to your term as dean of the SLS in FSI we can talk -- I'd like to talk more about training issues.

CAMPBELL: Yes. If we think about it, I went to Geneva in 1985, so the first 10 years I was in the Foreign Service the only overseas assignment I had was in Paris. All the rest were department.

Q: Your 60/40 wasn't working in your case.

CAMPBELL: Yes, wasn't working then. But over my career as a whole it was close.

Q: Yes, over time.

CAMPBELL: Yes.

Q: Let me make sure I'm doing this right here. This is October 23rd, we're resuming the oral history interview with Ambassador John Campbell. John, you were about to change assignments and go to the Office of the Undersecretary for Political Affairs.

CAMPBELL: That's right.

Q: Tell me about that assignment and what the responsibilities were and what the major preoccupations of the office were.

CAMPBELL: The undersecretary in those days was Michael Armacost *(sneezes)* -- excuse me. He had been ambassador to the Philippines, he subsequently was ambassador to Japan.

Q: And had been an academic.

CAMPBELL: Had indeed been an academic, that's right. The staff was fairly large. The deputy to the undersecretary was Miles Pendleton, who went by the name of Kim Pendleton and who had been the deputy director of EUR-NE, which would have been the Northern European part of EUR, when I was on the British Desk. That was the link. I had gone from that assignment to Refugees. But when he became the chief of staff to the undersecretary he recruited me to go to the undersecretary's office. And I was there for a year. I was a speechwriter for the undersecretary. I also had substantive responsibility for certain issues like refugees. But speechwriting was the most, most time consuming thing that I did. For me, it was frustrating. It's very difficult to be a speechwriter for somebody whom you don't know very well. And the P staff was large. The undersecretary's style was relatively self-contained and so I would be given a topic to write a speech on, but I would have to try to divine what the undersecretary wanted to say.

Q: He didn't provide you with guidance?

CAMPBELL: Not much, no. So what would happen is there would be a topic -- I would go off around the building and talk to people about what might be said in such a speech. I drew up a draft, send it in to him, and it would come back out again. And we would sort of toss the ball back and forth. And then the day before, the night before, he essentially would rewrite it *(laughs).*

Q: (laughs)

CAMPBELL: He was a very nice person.

Q: Well, were you getting positive feedback from him before he decided to rewrite? What was he sort of telling you about your drafts?

CAMPBELL: Not much.

Q: I see.

CAMPBELL: You see, that is part of the issue. Part of it is any speechwriter thinks that his speech is a lot more important than it really is. And he -- the undersecretary had other things to be concerned about.

Q: How many speeches would you say you wrote during that time?

CAMPBELL: There were a lot. Because it wasn't just speeches, it was also remarks, you know, the kind of five or 10-minute thing.

Q: Right. Did you get involved in the substance of press clearance or sort of photo ops (opportunities) that he might be about to do?

CAMPBELL: Oh yes. Absolutely.

Q: Do you recall the sort of major issues that you were called upon to deal with?

CAMPBELL: Let's see. The issues were sort of all over the map. It was whatever was of moment at the time. He had a particular interest in, in East Asia obviously. Will Itoh, who you may know, was the staffer who covered East Asia. And in terms of speechwriting I would of course talk to the staffer who had had responsibility for that particular area. I also reviewed the intelligence for the undersecretary him each morning, stuff that came in, and would indicate what I thought he should take a look at.

Q: What -- now beyond that you said you were involved with refugees and what other subjects beyond the speechwriting?

CAMPBELL: It would move around, it would vary. Seems to me I did -- well, Will Itoh did East Asia. Mike Ranneberger did Africa. Susan Johnston was also on the P staff then. Bill Courtney did essentially the Soviet and national security portfolio. And that's why what I did tended to be sort of cats and dogs. Kim Pendleton as chief of staff was the one who worked with the undersecretary directly on the whole host of personnel issues that any undersecretary is responsible for.

Q: How does the -- how does that system work, or at least how did it work at that time where you have an undersecretary at a level above the assistant secretaries? Does the undersecretary do -- is there a systematic way in which the assistant secretaries report to the undersecretary? How does that system -- how did that system work and how was it defined as to what the undersecretary would particularly focus on?

CAMPBELL: I don't know. There were regular meetings and consultations between the undersecretary and the assistant secretaries. The undersecretary was the boss, as it were, of all of the assistant secretaries, responsible for geographic bureaus.

Q: Yes.

CAMPBELL: Now, in those days there were many fewer bureaus than there are now so the geographical bureaus, relatively speaking, were perhaps more important than they are now.

Q: Was Armacost undersecretary when there was the shoot down of the Iranian airline, do you recall?

CAMPBELL: I don't think so.

Q: There was a question of compensation.

CAMPBELL: I was in Geneva at the time, or rather in Lagos at the time so it must have been later.

Q: OK. Because I think we -- I mean I'm, I'm diverting the conversation here a bit, but I think we eventually did pay compensation for that.

CAMPBELL: I think we did, yes.

Q: I'm not sure there was an apology.

CAMPBELL: But, Yes I think we did, yes.

Q: So the year in the undersecretary's office was not your happiest time.

CAMPBELL: No, but it was very interesting, and you actually got to see how the department worked at the highest level.

Q: Did you have contact with Armacost beyond the speechwriting? Were these Refugee Affairs or other things that you dealt with, was that something you would interact with him directly? Did you have any impression of how he did things?

CAMPBELL: Very rarely. For example, when he would have meetings on a particular subject, normally the note taker would come not from his own staff but from whatever bureau was involved. Now, staffers often sat in on those meetings, but, but did not serve as note takers. So that somebody like Bill Courtney or Will Itoh would have had a great deal more exposure. I am forgetting who did the Middle East at the time. That may have been Susan Johnston.

Q: Yes, yes. But was it a bureau that -- or not a bureau, but was it an office that you felt the people there felt fully engaged, they weren't, they weren't feeling that, you know, hey, the regional bureau is -- this regional bureau or this regional bureau, other regional bureau was outdoing things that they're not clearing with us or --

CAMPBELL: No, that wasn't that sense at all, no, no.

Q: And I would think Armacost would be somebody who would be fairly firmly in control.

CAMPBELL: Well, he was fairly firmly in control, yes, that's right.

Q: So you did that for a year.

CAMPBELL: Did that for a year. And then a vacancy opened up in Geneva.

Q: This is what year?

CAMPBELL: This would have been 1985.

Q: '85. And you're what grade at this point?

CAMPBELL: At this point I was a two on the new system.

Q: New system, OK.

CAMPBELL: New system. Vacancy opened up in Geneva in the Refugee Office. The office of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees is in Geneva. So I bid on the position, which was part of the, the U.S. Mission to the European Offices of the United Nations. And of course my previous boss, Bob Funseth, was at that time -- I think at that point he was actually director of RP. And so he, he supported my bid to go to Geneva.

Q: And you had good background.

CAMPBELL: I did, yes. In the Refugee Office in Geneva, yet again I was the most junior member of it. And there was a, there was a director, Beauveau ('Beau')Nalle. There was a number two, Jim Lassiter was his name, a number three whose name I've forgotten, and myself. And we had two secretaries. My particular responsibility was Vietnamese refugees, which again was a pretty big issue because it was when I was in Geneva that the orderly departure program from Vietnam was finally negotiated. And Bob Funseth came to Geneva several times and met with the Vietnamese delegation.

Q: So what was your role then? Was this pretty well defined for you?

CAMPBELL: I had a pretty clear-cut portfolio. And of course I had worked with Bob Funseth before. The two sort of biggest areas were Vietnamese refugees and African refugee issues.

Q: Did Nalle have the ambassadorial title?

CAMPBELL: No.

Q: I see.

CAMPBELL: Mm-hmm.

Q: So he would report to then?

CAMPBELL: He reported within the mission to the ambassador.

Q: I see, I see.

CAMPBELL: The ambassador in Geneva. And he was also -- he reported in the department to the Bureau for Refugee Programs.

Q: Who would you interact with outside the mission? Did you have --

CAMPBELL: Oh, I had a whole set of contacts.

Q: Yes.

CAMPBELL: Those contacts were with the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees. And then with people who did refugee issues at all the other missions in Geneva. And of course in those days refugees was a major preoccupation of the British, the French, the Australians, the Canadians, the Thais, and so forth.

Q: So you reported back to essentially the people in Washington who were overseeing what you did too in Refugee Affairs.

CAMPBELL: That's right.

Q: What about IO? Did IO have a role in this?

CAMPBELL: Well, yes, because Geneva was an IO mission and most of the reports we did would go both to the Refugee Bureau and IO. Subsequently I served in the IO Bureau.

Q: Yes, yes, I know you did.

CAMPBELL: Yes.

Q: You were Director of IOUNP, weren't you?

CAMPBELL: I was, yes, 1991-93.

Q: So how operational was the Geneva assignment? Did you sort of really get involved in --

CAMPBELL: It was quite operational, yes, it was quite operational. Now, operational from the perspective of management of political issues associated with refugees.

Q: Yes.

CAMPBELL: In other words, I didn't have anything to do with how you set up a refugee camp or the mechanics of refugee resettlement. And in fact, I did eventually visit a refugee camp in Southeast Asia. But, as I recall, only once. I mean it was a, a straight -- in a sense a straight multilateral political job with a particular focus on one issue, which was refugees.

Q: Did you have a sense of accomplishment or did you feel that --

CAMPBELL: Oh yes.

Q: -- what was needed to get done was getting done?

CAMPBELL: Yes, indeed, yes and in fact the assignment in Geneva, and an assignment in South Africa were probably my two most satisfactory, personally satisfactory.

Q: That's something I want to come back to toward the end of the interview, the question of sort of what was most satisfying, what was most successful, and maybe, maybe the opposite of that. But we'll talk about that later.

CAMPBELL: Mm-hmm.

Q: What was life like in Geneva itself? Because the city is pretty well divided, isn't it? Between where the folks live and where the international people live?

CAMPBELL: Well, I lived in Nyon, which was about five or six miles up the lake from Geneva.

Q: How do you spell that?

CAMPBELL: N-Y-O-N.

Q: N-Y-O-N.

CAMPBELL: And it was about a mile from the French border. The apartment that I had was on the top floor of an 18th century textile factory, so it had l been renovated. The lower floors were offices and there were two floors on the top floor and a -- the other

apartment on the top floor was occupied by a young man who worked for another federal agency. And with whom I've had some contact ever since. When I was inspecting our mission in Mexico, where I was heading his agency's office there *(laughs).*

Q: Oh, really? He got around.

CAMPBELL: And so, so there were these spectacular beams, a walk-in fireplace, and one window focused on the chateau in the living room. The other living room window looked *straight* across the lake. And you could watch, you could watch Mont Blanc in the winter turn pink as the sun set. So I mean, you know, life was sweet.

Q: Sounds fabulous.

CAMPBELL: Life was sweet in lots of ways. The, the office was *very*, very congenial. Beau Nalle knew how to build a team. I still have close friends from, from those days, people like Ted Strickler, for example, who was head of the administration within the mission. And it was much easier to achieve a work-life balance there than in practically any other assignment I had. Part of that is because Europeans won't work on weekends *(laughs).*

Q: Was it kind of nine to five or did you have --

CAMPBELL: Yes, and you did not have to go in the office on weekends and you didn't have to go on holidays, and that was the first State Department assignment I ever had where that was, where that was true.

Q: Did Beau Nalle or others in the office, including yourself, have representational responsibilities?

CAMPBELL: Yes, and he was extremely good at that. And I had representation too. And enough rep funds to do what I needed to do.

Q: You would entertain people sort of in the administration that dealt with refugee issues?

CAMPBELL: That's right, yes. Most of what I did was at lunch.

Q: Yes.

CAMPBELL: Europeans don't much like doing dinners.

Q: Yes, they like to go home and have their quiet time. I found that in Belgium. Did --

CAMPBELL: I should note that Nalle -- but also the DCM, Ron Flack -- they were both particularly good about including people like me in their own representational events.

Q: Who was ambassador and who was DCM at that time?

CAMPBELL: The ambassador was Jerry Carmen who played a role in delivering New Hampshire to Ronald Reagan.

Q: (laughs) I see.

CAMPBELL: And was a tire manufacturer, or dealer I guess. The DCM was Ron Flank who was career.

Q: This, this tire manufacturing background doesn't seem to bode well for diplomacy. How did it work out?

CAMPBELL: Well, indeed it didn't bode well. He was I think by far the weakest ambassador I ever worked for.

Q: But he didn't --

CAMPBELL: He had -- he was perplexed by the fact that in the mission there were all these foreigners.

Q: (laughs) Did he rely on his professional staff though? Did he understand that there were things he might not know and they did know?

CAMPBELL: On refugees, which is really the only thing I'm competent to speak about, the answer is yes. Because refugee matters are complex. The legal aspects of them are not necessarily intuitive. And he, so far as I am aware, he certainly never gave me any trouble and I don't think he gave, he gave the section any particular problems.

Q: And he would look to the DCM to manage the embassy and the mission?

CAMPBELL: Well, from what I could see, and after all my picture is incomplete, it was rather a case of dropping in and dropping out, and that's not very easy to deal with.

Q: So you were actually in the same building as the rest of the mission?

CAMPBELL: Oh yes.

Q: And you mentioned that the DCM would include the lower level officers in events.

CAMPBELL: I was -- for example, I was at any number of dinners that he gave.

Q: Ah-ha, I see, I see. So they would -- he would have a good overview handle on what the various officers were doing in Refugee Affairs.

CAMPBELL: Oh yes. Oh, he was quite strong, yes. Quite strong. And his wife, who was a French woman, was also extraordinarily good, both, both with respect to the community, but also with respect to the strictly diplomatic side.

Q: So from that point of view it seems that the mission was probably pretty well managed.

CAMPBELL: Yes, I think it was.

Q: And the ambassador, how long did he last? Was he there for the full time you were there?

CAMPBELL: No. He was not. He left six or nine months before I did. And his successor, whose name I've forgotten, was very personable.

Q: Another political appointee.

CAMPBELL: Oh yes. But very personable and very well liked, both within the mission and also within the larger community.

Q: But still reliant to this very competent DCM? Reliant on him --

CAMPBELL: Well, the DCM left as well.

Q: Oh, left as well.

CAMPBELL: That's right. And it'll come to me who his successor was. His successor I later worked with when I was in IO.

Q: What about your contacts with the Swiss? Did you, did that -- sort of beyond the office did you have those sort of contacts?

CAMPBELL: Hardly at all. Switzerland of course is not part of the UN system.

Q: Yes.

CAMPBELL: And the -- those doing UN work, I mean it's a huge community. Interesting to me, at the time I spoke quite good French, but my days were entirely carried out in English. Part of that was because the Latin American delegations would not normally speak French, they would normally speak English. That meant that meetings were normally conducted in English.

Q: Were there a lot of meetings? Was this bringing in the various nationalities?

CAMPBELL: Yes, there were lots of -- the whole UN modus operandi revolves around --

Q: Meetings.

CAMPBELL: Meetings, yes.

Q: And you would be the -- you attended a lot of these many?

CAMPBELL: Oh, many, many.

Q: Were there times in which -- as happened in the previous assignment -- you ended up sort of being the primary spokesman at that, at a given meeting? Where you're sitting next to some high-level folk person from another country and, and you're lower level but still speaking at that same level?

CAMPBELL: That would tend to happen only in a highly informal setting.

Q: I see.

CAMPBELL: UN meetings are -- have an important ceremonial quality to them? So that normally only the head of delegation actually speaks. Do a lot of note passing and that sort of thing.

Q: But you thought this part of the UN system was working, it was doing what it was supposed to be doing.

CAMPBELL: Up to a point. We were more critical then of how the High Commission for Refugees worked then I would be now. I now have a better understanding of, of the constraints that operate within the UN system.

Q: You were in that job for how long?

CAMPBELL: Three years.

Q: Three years?

CAMPBELL: Almost three years, yes. Not quite three. I like to say I'm one of the few people to have ever curtailed Geneva to go to Lagos.

Q: (laughs)

CAMPBELL: And that happened as a result of course the --

Q: Peter Chavez moving on.

CAMPBELL: Right, but it happened directly because of the intervention of the director general. I mean there was a director general on the phone and -- actually, I think he was acting director general. And --

Q: They knew about your Nigeria background, is that the reason they tapped you, or?

CAMPBELL: Well, I didn't have a Nigeria background.

Q: But academically you did, didn't --

CAMPBELL: Not really.

Q: I thought you'd done a significant study of Nigeria?

CAMPBELL: No, that was much later.

Q: That was later.

CAMPBELL: Oh, much later.

Q: Oh, I see. Yes, OK.

CAMPBELL: Oh no, no. When I -- I mean, he called me up on the phone and he said, "You know, John, I don't want you to say no until you've heard me out."

Q: (laughs)

CAMPBELL: And I remember thinking, "Look, anybody who has served in Lyon, Paris, Geneva, and Washington, I don't have a leg to stand on," *(laughs)*. And there were no family requirements that prevented -- so I said yes. But I insisted on African area studies. I didn't know anything about Africa at all, except what I'd learned drinking beer at the University of Wisconsin, you know. Not quite the same thing.

Q: So that's, there's two weeks at FSI.

CAMPBELL: That's right.

Q: For area studies. That became your --

CAMPBELL: That was it, yes. That's right.

Q: Did you get some home leave, or did you get --

CAMPBELL: No.

Q: -- ostensibly two weeks pretty much directly --

CAMPBELL: No, it was pretty direct. I had a couple of weeks leave over Christmas, which was in Washington of course because that's where my family was. And I did some

consultation as well. I'm trying to think. I think I packed out before Christmas. And so I went directly from area studies to Lagos in January.

Q: Another January transfer (laughs).

CAMPBELL: Yes, that's right.

Q: Yes.

CAMPBELL: So I got to post roughly four or five weeks after the conversation with the director general.

Q: You hadn't been to Africa at all.

CAMPBELL: Never. Well, not quite. When I was on the British Desk I was part of the team that was involved with Secretary Hague's effort to negotiate a settlement between the British and the Argentines over the Falklands. That meant a lot of flying back and forth between Buenos Aires and London where we would often have to refuel in Dakar. That was my full exposure.

Q: That was your full Africa experience.

CAMPBELL: *(laughs)*

Q: Well, Geneva to Lagos must have been a big of a jolt.

CAMPBELL: It was startling. Yes.

Q: And Lagos is teaming with activity and traffic jams and --

CAMPBELL: Chaos.

Q: Chaos, that's right.

CAMPBELL: And I remember the, the plane landed and suddenly everything went dark because the electricity failed. It came back on again.

Q: (laughs) So this is in what, '87?

CAMPBELL: No, I was in Geneva from '85 to '88.

Q: Oh, OK.

CAMPBELL: And then I was in Lagos from January of '88 to August of 1990. So in other words, about two and a half years.

Q: Yes, that's a very long stretch there. So this non-Africanist arrives.

CAMPBELL: Does indeed.

Q: Were you sort of plunged into any particularly active scene? Were there, were there issues that you really had to get a quick handle on?

CAMPBELL: Well, let me see. I was arriving there as political counselor. That meant when I got there I was the head of an office that had some experienced people in it who knew what they were doing, and of course was working for a superb ambassador.

Q: Who was the ambassador?

CAMPBELL: It was Princeton Lyman.

Q: Yes.

CAMPBELL: And it was the first time I had worked for him.

Q: I visited Lagos during that time.

CAMPBELL: Did you?

Q: I was the DAS and I stayed in that big house of his.

CAMPBELL: Mm-hmm. Yes.

Q: Go ahead.

CAMPBELL: Well, and he also had a very good DCM, David Blakemore. So again, if you'd like, there were similarities to Geneva in that you had this very coherent, very sort of supportive community of people. And, the department actually was quite supportive as well so that yes, you know, the environment's chaotic. But we were quite comfortable. Conditions were much better then than they were when I was ambassador, or certainly than they are now. Crime was much less. It was a military government, but Babangida was essentially working on a pretty coherent plan for the restoration of civilian democracy in which we all believed. There was also an economic reform program underway in which we all believed. I think we now see the limitations of that better than we did then. So, it was the right trajectory, and that created a sense of optimism.

Q: Who were your staff? Who made up your Political Section staff?

CAMPBELL: There was a relatively senior officer who I think under the old system was a two. I was a one. I had been promoted to one in Geneva and he was a two or he may have been a one. There was a junior officer and then there was a junior midlevel officer.

Q: Was Robin Sanders there?

CAMPBELL: Later.

Q: Later.

CAMPBELL: Yes.

Q: Was Abuja under construction at this time?

CAMPBELL: Yes. It was. But it was aspirational. A group of us -- it's kind of incredible as I think about it -- a group of us chartered the only air-conditioned sleeping car on Nigerian railways and we took it to Minna. It took something like 30 hours to get there. And a little van came over from what was then the Noga Hilton, which was this incredibly luxurious five-star hotel in the middle of absolutely nowhere. The national mosque had been built. There were a couple of buildings under construction. There was an airport by then. But it was aspirational. That changed with the 1990 Orkar coup when the coup plotters got one room away from Babangida. And Babangida then pretty abruptly moved the capital to Abuja.

Q: What did that mean for you trying to divide yourself between Lagos and Abuja?

CAMPBELL: Well, that happened just before I left.

Q: I see.

CAMPBELL: So it didn't impact on me at all.

Q: I see, I see.

CAMPBELL: But it sure did impact on the embassy for the next two, three, four years.

Q: And then with the eventual move to Abuja from, by the embassy.

CAMPBELL: That's right. But the move was in many respects I think quite ragged. And my impression is that, is that the move was way under-resourced. And the issue of course was, was even finding buildings.

Q: Yes, carving a nation in the desert, or in the wilderness.

CAMPBELL: That's right.

Q: The -- now, this -- did this coup take place, the coup that you mentioned, did it take place while you were still there?

CAMPBELL: Yes, indeed. Only I wasn't. I was in Paris for a conference organized by another federal agency. And I remember getting on the phone -- remarkably the calls went through, but they did -- to the DCM who said, "No, you don't have to go back any earlier than you planned, because it's all over." And of course it was all over, it's true.

Q: Failed attempt.

CAMPBELL: That's right, and over within like 20 hours. And the long-term consequences of it, which were quite dire, but we certainly couldn't see them at the time, and I think we only see them now. It was the beginning of the approach by Babangida and all of his successors right up to the present time essentially to starve the military for resources. Which is one reason why the military is such a mess now in the conflict with Boko Haram. It was started in the aftermath of the Orkar coup.

Q: What happened to the coup plotters?

CAMPBELL: Oh, they were all shot, they were tried and shot.

Q: They were tried and shot.

CAMPBELL: Mm-hmm. And actually they were shot while I was there, shortly before I left.

Q: Was this kind of thing sort of -- while Babangida was president and while you were there, was this sort of always in the background? Was this kind of thing --

CAMPBELL: Yes. We were always concerned about the possibility of military coups. The concern was the fear that if there was a military coup that the political and economic reform agendas would be sidetracked.

Q: Mm-hmm. Within the context of this political-economic reform agenda, what, sort of what was going on in terms of what your section was particularly interested in and how did you interact with the Nigerians in trying to get the, a real good picture of --

CAMPBELL: Well, it's a huge country.

Q: Yes, it is.

CAMPBELL: Now, my policy was that an officer in the Political Section would be on the road at all times. And I myself visited almost all of the states in the federation over that two and a half year period. So we were on the road a lot and I think we were remarkably well-informed about what was actually going on in the country. Because we were able to get out so much. And it was a military government, but the military government sat on top of a civilian administration and that civilian administration tended to be quite accessible. So that, for example, I would go some place, I would always call on the mayor, the Anglican and Roman Catholic bishops, academics, press people. And the only

thing, the only barrier to that was simply the physical difficulties of getting around the country, the infrastructure.

Q: Yes, yes.

CAMPBELL: But on the other hand, the Nigerians were very welcoming and so you could often get something set up without advance_ notice.

Q: Did Princeton Lyman have good access to the military leadership?

CAMPBELL: I think he always thought his access could have been better. His access was probably better than anybody else's. I mean the armed forces ruling council were inward looking. Didn't have much interest in the outside world. Foreign minister was almost -- I think was always a civilian. And he was the one who was supposed to basically take care of the foreigners.

Q: You had several constituent posts at this time in Nigeria, didn't you?

CAMPBELL: We did. Had a constituent post in Kaduna and there was a USIA office in Ibadan, which had a single officer in it. And I think most of us who watched Nigeria now would argue that the closing of Kaduna was a huge mistake. It was closed when the embassy moved to, to Abuja, which is only about three or four hours by road from Kaduna.

Q: Was Brook Holmes up in --

CAMPBELL: He was. He was the consul general then. And then the USIA office at Ibadan was I think immensely important in terms of fostering contacts with people who over a long period of time have a lot to say about the direction that Nigeria was going to go in.

Q: Because of the university there.

CAMPBELL: The university there, yes. Also, Ibadan is the principle city in Yorubaland.

Q: Yes, yes. Well, prior to that there had been other constituent posts. There'd been one what, in Enugu?

CAMPBELL: There'd been on in Enugu. That was closed during the Biafran War.

Q: And Kano? Wasn't there one at Kano?

CAMPBELL: there was, and an international airport in Kano. They were all, they were closed by the time I got there.

Q: You know, about 10 years ago I participated in a session organized by some think tank here, sort of what was Nigeria's future and what, you know, people trying to predict what would happen. There were some people predicting it was going to fly apart or whatever. I think all I was predicting was will there be another military coup at some point. But what was the dynamic at that time? Were the military pretty well in control? Was the administration running things pretty well?

CAMPBELL: Yes.

Q: But still the prospect of a coup kind of lurking --

CAMPBELL: That's right, that's right. And there were false alarms about coups absolutely all the time. We would get highly agitated communications from the department, which would have heard from somebody who'd heard from somebody else there'd been a coup. But we would also get those from other embassies in Abuja, because it was generally recognized in the diplomatic community that we knew more about what was going on than anybody else. And it was true. It was we and the British that knew the most.

Q: Did you think that -- did you have -- did Kaduna and Ibadan contribute to your reporting back to the department?

CAMPBELL: Yes, they did indeed. And Kaduna particularly was an important platform. I visited Kaduna quite frequently and Brook would facilitate meetings. For example, it was at that time that I met Zakzaky, the now ultra radical Islamist leader who I think now will have no contact with westerners at all.

Q: Did you have any feel for where he might go in terms --

CAMPBELL: No, heavens no. I mean part of it is the kind of radical Islamism we are seeing now came about only after the ending of military rule. I mean it's a fairly new thing. It was not present. Intellectual roots of it were certainly there, but in any kind of organized way. That came about only after the military left and the lid was taken off, as it were.

Q: You indicated you were getting good support from the department, AFW was -- you were --

CAMPBELL: Mm-hmm, Francis Cook was the office director.

Q: Francis Cook was the office director, yes, I was going to -- that's when I was the DAS. Francis was of course very dynamic and forward leaning in a lot of ways.

CAMPBELL: And came out at least a couple of times.

Q: Did you have a sense that people beyond AFW were reading your reporting?

CAMPBELL: Yes.

Q: I know we had a system when I was a DAS that the office directors would report to me, and I know -- so Francis certainly always kept me informed of what was going on, particularly in important countries like Nigeria.

CAMPBELL: Francis had me do an exercise that I quite liked. She had me do what amounted to a letter once a month looking at the Nigerian political economy and where it was going, so that you sort of stood back and tried to look at what was of long term significance and what was less so. I was the drafter of it. I would get a good deal of input from the economic counselor, and then it was cleared by the DCM. But it was, it was an effort to produce something which if you read only one thing from Nigeria each month, that could sort of bring you up to speed.

Q: How would you categorize the overall state of U.S.-Nigeria relations during this period?

CAMPBELL: They were good. Far better than they were later. This is before the Abacha coup, before the hanging of Ken Saro-Wiwa, before the sort of grotesque human rights abuses of the Abacha regime, not too dissimilar from what we're seeing now. Lots of ways there's similarities. But that's before all that.

Q: When we came to your period of time as ambassador we can discuss things like Abacha and the Abacha coup and others. So you were in Lagos a fairly long -- how long were you in Lagos?

CAMPBELL: About two and a half years.

Q: Two and a half years.

CAMPBELL: Mm-hmm.

Q: And what happened next? Where did you go?

CAMPBELL: From '88 to '90 I was in Lagos. '90 to '91 I was at the Woodrow Wilson School at Princeton. And I don't know whether the department still does this or not, but essentially the department said, "I can do whatever I want."

Q: And you hadn't requested this assignment?

CAMPBELL: Let's see. You were chosen for these and it was Princeton, Stanford, Harvard, and a couple of think tanks. And --

Q: One person to each of those places.

CAMPBELL: And you selected which one you wanted to go to. You had to apply for admission, and I remember being bemused by having to dig up my old graduate record scores *(laughs).* And I -- but I did, and I was admitted. The department then paid, paid all the university expenses. But no living expenses because you're in the U.S., you know, the department doesn't pay expenses. The university provided essentially junior faculty housing, which wasn't terribly expensive. And so what I did was I thought about where I was weak and so I focused on disease, which has proven enormously background, it's where the background I have on something like Ebola comes from. Disease, Germany, the Soviet Union, because I hadn't done work on the Soviet Union. Those were the three areas, plus Nigeria.

Q: You chose courses?

CAMPBELL: I chose courses and I also did a, a fourth area was, was Africa. And I did a paper, long paper, 50 or 60 pages, on, on Nigeria that later, not word for word, but it later contributed to the book that I wrote, you know --

Q: That's what I was thinking of earlier, yes.

CAMPBELL: But at least, that's at least 10 years later.

Q: So you could -- now were you kind of an auditor in these classes?

CAMPBELL: No, I took them for grades.

Q: So you got grades. So you got academic credit.

CAMPBELL: I got straight A's *(laughs)!*

Q: And how did you sort of fit into the university culture, university life? Were you sort of an accepted student along with everybody else, or did they sort of look at you and say well, this is a government guy and he's not one of us?

CAMPBELL: Well, at the Woodrow Wilson School there were a lot of people in the same situation I am.

Q: I see.

CAMPBELL: The -- this was called the mid-career program at the State Department. But there was, there were similar programs for local government officials. Most of these were foreign, but not all. There was a good-sized military contingent. I got to know, for example, the governor of Dartmoor Prison.

Q: Really (laughs)?

CAMPBELL: But it's extraordinarily interesting. What do I know about prisons, you know?

Q: Of course.

CAMPBELL: And you know, this chap was very smart. I mean he was really trying to figure out…

Q: Was John Wolf there when you were there?

CAMPBELL: No, I later worked for John in IO.

Q: So that was a different time. So it sounds like this was a very beneficial what, nine months of academic year?

CAMPBELL: Yes.

Q: Yes? Maybe sort of taking advantage of learning opportunities that you wouldn't otherwise have had.

CAMPBELL: That's right. Oh yes, I mean absolutely. Because there you are, you know you areas of intellectual weakness. And I mean here was an opportunity to address them.

Q: And this is at the graduate level?

CAMPBELL: Mm-hmm.

Q: So during this time was when you got the call about SS?

CAMPBELL: No, and in fact I was getting the chronology off. I went from Princeton to IO, and that was when I was director of UN Political Affairs.

Q: OK, OK.

CAMPBELL: And then from, from there I went to South Africa. It was when I was in South Africa that I got the call to go to -- yes.

Q: So how long were you in IOUNP?

CAMPBELL: Two years.

Q: Two years. Who was --

CAMPBELL: John Wolf was the person I worked for.

Q: Was he a DAS at --

CAMPBELL: Yes.
Q: I was in IOUNP about 10 years before that. One of our preoccupations at the time was Namibia. What sort of consumed your time in IONUP?

CAMPBELL: Overwhelmingly Iraq and issues associated with the fall of the Soviet Union. But it was much more than that. It was -- that was the period when there was an explosion of UN peacekeeping activities all around the world. And IOUNP, I think at one point I had, I had 15 or 16 officers. It was a huge operation.

Q: Yes, bigger than when I was there.

CAMPBELL: Oh, much bigger, because it also included what later became the Peacekeeping Office.

Q: I see.

CAMPBELL: You see. Because those functions were relatively new.

Q: Who were your deputies? Who were your deputy-directors?

CAMPBELL: Well, Jim Moriarty was one. I had two. Will Embry was another. A third, retired shortly thereafter and I haven't kept up with him and I'm forgetting his name.

Q: They would have you divided in a way that they would have sort of -- one part of the office's responsibility would be under one deputy, another would -- he would have oversight for another part of the operations.

CAMPBELL: That's right.

Q: Did you still have Puerto Rico at that time?

CAMPBELL: No.

Q: Who took over Puerto Rico?

CAMPBELL: No idea, but Puerto Rico never --

Q: That's interesting because --

CAMPBELL: I don't think I ever heard the word Puerto Rico.

Q: That was one of my jobs was to --

CAMPBELL: Was to do Puerto Rico?

Q: Well, I was a deputy director, and I had a, a, an officer under me who among other things was very much involved in Puerto Rico, the whole independence issue and --

CAMPBELL: I got there I had a single lower midlevel officer, Rob Hughes was his name, who did UN peacekeeping, the whole thing *(laughs)!* But the time I left we had about 10 people doing peacekeeping *(laughs).*

Q: So during the UNGA and Security Council sessions you were very much involved with back and forth with the missions, sending instructions and --

CAMPBELL: Were indeed, yes, that's right. From my perspective, we Americans all way over-manage our delegation in New York. I think the British are far more effective than we are, in part because they give so much more latitude to their, to their mission in New York, which makes them much more nimble. We, we tended to get thoroughly hung up on essentially a legalistic approach to, particularly Security Council resolutions, even though we had a perfectly competent lawyer in New York. And the clearance process was agonizing, absolutely agonizing.

Q: I'm sure it was. Did this sort of control from the department vary a lot depending on who was ambassador in New York?

CAMPBELL: Well, it was Thomas Pickering.

Q: Oh yes, well --

CAMPBELL: *(laughs)*

Q: -- Tom must have had his views and if you call him up and say, "Tom, I want you to vote this way" --

CAMPBELL: *(laughs)* The department was part of the problem, but it was much broader than that, because you had, you had fundamental distrust I think by the Department of Defense about what State was going to get them into.

Q: You talked about the clearance process. I remember it'd be 7:00 at night and we're trying to get another bureau's clearance for some instruction we're about to send.

CAMPBELL: Oh, the hours were murderous. Many, many times we would leave at 10 and I would fill my -- I had a garage space in the basement and I'd fill my car up with my own officers and drop them off, you know, on the way -- most of them lived not terribly far from where I did. But what -- how do you get home at, you know, at 10:00? And every weekend, every holiday, you know.

Q: Yes, it wasn't quite that bad when I was there. I didn't have Middle East. Mel Levitsky had Middle East; I had Africa. And it was busier on the Middle East, except for the

Namibia issue. Because at that time IO was -- had the lead on Namibia. Now, when Chet Crocker came in as, as assistant secretary for Africa he said --

CAMPBELL: *(laughs)*

Q: -- "I'm pulling this back."

CAMPBELL: Yes.

Q: Aside from Middle East, were there other things that you had to --

CAMPBELL: Well, these were the days when Soviet Union collapsed.

Q: Oh yes.

CAMPBELL: And there was at the time, to my mind, the quite fascinating question of what was the appropriate successor state in the UN universe to the Soviet Union? Because of course all the legal documents from 1945 on, it was the Soviet Union. Well, that didn't exist anymore.

Q: When you were talking about the legalistic approach from the department, how much did this affect what you were actually able to get done.

CAMPBELL: A lot, oh yes, a lot. Sure. I mean our, our reluctance to make use of highly competent people on the ground, that's a general principle, diminishes what we're able to do in foreign affairs. And it is the converse amongst the British and the French that enables them to be so effective, even, even when there's so little behind them.

Q: Did this legalistic approach involve excessive clearing?

CAMPBELL: Excessive clearing, excessive wordsmithing.

Q: Yes, yes, yes. A lot of wordsmithing when dealing with the UN.

CAMPBELL: A lot of it, yes, a lot of it, sure, yes.

Q: Were there any things that you felt particularly gratified about being able to accomplish during that time?

CAMPBELL: Yes. For example, we managed to get repealed the General Assembly resolution that Zionism was racism. Now, that was a huge effort.

Q: Yes, indeed.

CAMPBELL: Because, you know, scrambling around and getting votes for that --

Q: How were you able to do that? Because the --

CAMPBELL: One demarche after another, yes.

Q: Chip away.

CAMPBELL: Just chip away, mm-hmm.

Q: Were there subjects on which you were very disappointed that you weren't able to do more? Not necessarily as regarding as a failure, but not, not a success.

CAMPBELL: You know, I don't think we even thought in those kinds of terms. There's a huge amount of just putting out fires.

Q: Yes.

CAMPBELL: As opposed to any kind of long term stuff. Management of the dissolution of the Soviet Union, but that actually went pretty well if you think about it. The Zionism's racism thing. All of that effort spent on Iraq of course became essentially irrelevant when the war started.

Q: You mentioned about the expansion of peacekeeping activities.

CAMPBELL: Yes.

Q: How much of that took place on your watch?

CAMPBELL: A great deal of it.

Q: A great deal of it.

CAMPBELL: Great deal of it.

Q: And what did that involve for you, besides having to ramp up staffing I assume?

CAMPBELL: We had to ramp up, we had to ramp up staffing. Fortunately, those were the days when Bolton was the assistant secretary. Bolton had a much more transparent relationship with Congress than has been my usual experience. The result was we could actually talk to congressional staffers about various proposals for UN peacekeeping. Actually had a dialogue which reduced their suspicion of what the administration was doing.

Q: That was because who we had in the White House as well in terms of Bolton's civility to deal with Congress? The fact that you had Republicans who --

CAMPBELL: I think it's mostly his own temperament.

Q: I see it's --

CAMPBELL: It was just Bolton. I mean he's a person with enormous self-assurance and so, you know, for example, he even let us bring staffers down to the department. We'd get them in the IO conference room and brief them on this peacekeeping operation versus that.

Q: Smart thing to do.

CAMPBELL: Very smart thing to do. Very smart. The staffers tend to be young, open, and not know much. So if you made it clear you were taking them seriously they would listen very carefully to what you had to say.

Q: What was it like working for Bolton?

CAMPBELL: For me, completely satisfactory. He was very clear about what he wanted, within his own construct it was perfectly rational.

Q: But did --

CAMPBELL: Drove other people crazy, like Tom Pickering, and you'd actually see it sometimes.

Q: Well, the view of Bolton is of someone having very little regard for the UN. And how did that affect what you did? Or did it affect what you did?

CAMPBELL: Well, not, not the particular kind of work I was doing. The -- when you say Bolton had very little regard for the UN --

Q: That's sort of the public reputation.

CAMPBELL: It is indeed. Bolton was highly critical of the gross mismanagement of so much of the UN and the exceedingly poor quality of much of its personnel, many of whom were people dumped by their governments there to get them out of, to get them out of the capital, as it were. And of course we were paying for it. You know, I mean at that point the percentage of the budget that was paid for by the U.S. was much higher than it is now. I think it was more than 50%.

Q: So you felt these criticisms from the administration point of view, management point of view, quality personnel point of view were justified.

CAMPBELL: Yes, indeed.

Q: Did that have an impact on what you were able to do, or was it mainly just the mission? You went to the mission, the mission did whatever they're going to do dealing with other missions. But the administration or the management of the --

CAMPBELL: Well, there was an office within IO which simply dealt with only administrative issues and UN reform, and then there was an ambassador in New York working for Pickering who did the same thing. And as a matter of fact, his successor by many, many, is a colleague of mine at the Council now. She's about to leave the Council to take that job.

Q: Really?

CAMPBELL: Yes.

Q: And what was it like to deal with Pickering?

CAMPBELL: Didn't deal much with him. Dealt with him some, but that was mostly done by John Wolf, who was the office --

Q: He would be making the call.

CAMPBELL: Yes, he was always making the call.

Q: Yes. And then would you deal with people below Pickering's level in direct conversation?

CAMPBELL: Particularly the political counselor.

Q: Yes. Who was the political counselor at that time, do you recall?

CAMPBELL: What was his name? It'll occur to me, I don't remember right now.

Q: Well, we've come up about on our hour. Where do you -- where do you go from IOUNP?

CAMPBELL: From IOUNP, I saw that there was a vacancy to be political counselor in South Africa. The ambassador to South Africa was Princeton Lyman, so I called him up and I said, you know, "Gee, I'd be sort of interested in that."

And he said, "Well, do you want to be a political counselor again? Don't you want to be a DCM?" And I thought sure, I'd like to be a DCM, but South Africa was an intrinsically fascinating country.

Q: Yes, indeed.

CAMPBELL: That I would love to go there. And, and then I knew exactly who I'd be working for.

Q: So how long were you in IOUNP?

CAMPBELL: I was in IOUNP for two years.

Q: OK, so -- and then you got the job in Pretoria.

CAMPBELL: I got the job in Pretoria.

Q: OK.

CAMPBELL: And I was there for three years, and from there went to SS.

Q: When did you arrive in Pretoria?

CAMPBELL: Let's see. I arrived in Pretoria in 1993, a year before the transition, and left in 1996.

Q: Interesting time. Well, let's save that until next time.

Q: We are resuming the interview with Ambassador John Campbell. This is November 6th, 2014. John, you moved to Pretoria in 1993 in 1993. You were there until 1996.

CAMPBELL: That's right.

Q: Really arriving on the cusp of a new era.

CAMPBELL: Was indeed.

Q: And please give us a brief historical setting and then tell us how your new job fit into that.

CAMPBELL: It was a, it was a unique time in South Africa's history. Most of apartheid had been already dismantled by the time I got there, dismantled by a series of court decisions as well as decisions made by the Botha and De Klerk governments. What remained most salient of apartheid was the continued existence of the so-called or self-governing homelands. They were still there. And each of, each of them had an embassy in Pretoria, most of them not very far from our own embassy. Nelson Mandela had been released from prison some years earlier. The ANC (African National Congress) had been unbanned, as had been the South African Communist Party. The liberation movements were involved in negotiations with the government, which of course was controlled by the National Party, at Kempton Park, which was a conference center near the Johannesburg Airport. Those negotiations focused essentially on a transitional constitution and were the occasion whereby the architecture for a nonracial South Africa

was created. Nonracial here may require a little exposition. What does the term mean? Under apartheid there were separate voter registers for whites, coloreds, and Indians. None for blacks, though they were 80% of the population. Nonracial simply referred to a voter registration that did not 0include a racial breakdown.

We covered the negotiations closely. Normally one or two officers from the Political Section would go down to Kempton Park every day. And we knew most of the players. At that particular point in time all elements, pretty much all elements of the South African political world wanted to, or was willing, to talk to the Americans. So our access was rather extraordinary. That had not been true in the past and is certainly not true now. This was a particular moment in time in which the Americans were seeing as playing a generally constructive role in the process. And indeed, in programs that deserve to be better known than they are, we did things like providing constitutional experts. I remember there was one group from Columbia University who were there simply as resources. The negotiations were exceptionally interesting and particularly from the standpoint of some 20 years later. The process by which the country became a nonracial democracy is often seen now as essentially inevitable and as reflecting a fundamental shift in the balance of power, as it were, from the old nationalists to the new liberationists. Far from it. At the time it was by no means clear the process was going to work. There were lots of people quite prepared to derail it, starting with Mangosuthu Buthelezi and its Inkatha Freedom Party, but also including many of the far white right, or the PAC, the Pan-African Congress that continued to be involved in various terrorist episodes.

Secondly, and I think this is particularly important, the national government retained complete control over the state apparatus, the police, the military, and the liberation moments had, had not won a military victory of any sort. In fact, at best they could do for short periods of time was make some of the townships ungovernable. They did not necessarily have, have a, the upper hand. The result was a genuine negotiation. But the times for it were ripe. The Soviet Union had collapsed. The collapse of the Soviet Union meant funding for the liberation movements had dried up. The collapse of the Soviet Union also meant that the old National party justification for apartheid, that it was a European Christian barrier against, against Soviet Marxism in Africa, that no longer made any sense either. Further, from the perspective of the nationalists the economy was in the doldrums. Rates of economic growth were extremely slow. And sanctions were starting to bite. In my view the sanctions that mattered were not the economic sanctions. In fact, the South Africans were remarkably clever about getting around them. And it's the sanctions period that led to the creation of the South African arms industry, which at present is a major player. The sanctions that bit were the sporting sanctions, particularly among white South Africans. The inability to compete internationally brought home to them I think in a particular way the extent to which apartheid South Africa had become a pariah.

Q: Let's expand a bit on the sanctions issue, because certainly I think kind of the basic understanding of that era in the sanctions was that the economic sanctions did bite, that yes, the South Africans were very sports oriented and really smarted over not being able

to go to the Olympics and do other things. But was that enough really for them to feel the pinch? Didn't the economic sanctions convince the financial community and the government that there was just no future viable for South Africa under those circumstances?

CAMPBELL: It's hard to know. Obviously it probably made a contribution, but I think there were other factors that were considerably more important. What had South Africa done? It had entered into an extensive and clandestine relationship with Israel, for example, that played an extremely important role in South Africa's own development of its own nuclear capability. And of course South Africa remains the only country in Africa with a nuclear power industry. It also had extensive arrangements up until at least 1979 with Iran. And so the various petroleum sanctions had relatively little impact. The other thing the sanctions did was it made a good many Afrikaners extremely rich. Because as countries withdrew from South Africa they sold off their assets at fire sale prices. Well, the people who had capital and who could require them were the beneficiaries of the apartheid regime.

Q: That's very interesting. Do you have a view as a result of the experience there overall to generalize about sanctions, sanctions effective, not effective, not only in South Africa but elsewhere? Because there are a lot of push for sanctions in different cases.

CAMPBELL: There are. And I think the sanctions that actually work, and I think most of the time they don't work, but I think the sanctions that do work are the ones that are highly targeted. For example, I think the sanctions against the specific individuals in Zimbabwe has an impact. It's a -- it limits the ability of the Zimbabwe ruling class to enjoy the fleshpots of Beverly Hills, for example. And that has, and that has an impact. The great things about sanctions is for the country that's levying them there's the immense satisfaction that comes from actually being able to do something, even if doing something doesn't have very much impact on, on, on the target country.

Q: When we were in Johannesburg from '84 to '87 and the sanctions really started being pushed, we saw local organizations, nonprofits in the black community who suffered because they were getting their funds from Kodak or other companies.

CAMPBELL: Yes, absolutely.

Q: So they just sort of shriveled up. So on a personal level we saw that kind of downside of things.

CAMPBELL: Yes, oh yes. And when I was there, and I was there only a few years later, you heard lots of stories like that. The other thing was that by and large, and even before the era of the Sullivan Principles, American employers tend to be much better than South African employers in terms of wages, health benefits, and so forth.

Q: You talked about how when one looks back on that period of time when this conference was taking place, and I guess the new constitution was too soon to be drawn up --

CAMPBELL: Well, what they did -- they did something that was really quite clever. First of all, the conference lasted four years with ups and downs. What they did was they developed an interim constitution that enshrined certain principles that the final constitution had to include, mostly having to do with human rights and nonracial governance structures. And they formed a federalism. They also created a constitutional court and it is the constitutional court that ruled on or determined whether the final constitution accorded to the principles that had been enshrined in the interim constitution. That constitutional court continues to exist, and it is the -- a major bulwark against any efforts to modify or change the current constitution, which most people think is probably amongst the best in the world, certainly with respect to protection of human rights. So they're really quite clever about that.

Q: So looking backward people think -- some people think at least, maybe in general -- that this transition to nonracial government was inevitable, as you said. But there were all these other factors, the PAC doing what they were doing, the Afrikaners from doing what they were doing --

CAMPBELL: And all kinds of potential for accidents. For example, the assassination of Chris Hani. Well, I mean that could not necessarily have been predicted. That sort of dropped out of the sky as it were. And it certainly derailed the negotiations for a period of time, and it could have been the match that set off a major conflagration. Didn't, but it could have.

Q: So in terms of alternative scenarios, is it this major conflagration or something bringing about a major conflagration that might have happened? I mean do you see a scenario that might have unfolded?

CAMPBELL: Well, lots and lots of South Africans thought that it could happen and it was the near universal view that it *had to be* forestalled or avoided. That was an important spur towards actually making a deal.

Q: At that point was Buthelezi influential enough where he was having a major impact?

CAMPBELL: Yes. There was what amounted to essentially a civil war going on in KwaZulu-Natal between Buthelezi and the IFP and the ANC. And one estimate is that between 1990, and the date of Mandela's release, and the elections in late April 1994, some 14,000 people were killed. The transition was not nearly as bloodless as myth holds. Now, it was a lot less bloody than it might have been. But still, 14,000 people is a significant number of people.

Q: Indeed.

CAMPBELL: To be killed. And overwhelmingly that's -- those deaths occurred in KwaZulu-Natal. There were a few other places as well, but it was mostly KwaZulu-Natal. Further, the ANC was convinced, parts of it were convinced that Buthelezi was in cahoots with the white right. And the two together, many in the ANC got really quite paranoid over what potentially they might do.

Q: What brought the PAC around? You talked about them continuing to create violent acts? At some point I guess they got on board.

CAMPBELL: Kind of. And in fact the PAC's in parliament now. So it continues, it continues to exist. What happened to PAC grassroots support? I think the short answer is basically Nelson Mandela and the really highly talented ANC leadership. That sucked the oxygen out of the PAC.

Q: What was the embassy's relationship with Mandela, and did you have any interface with him?

CAMPBELL: Oh yes. I met him three times, but the ambassador saw him considerably more frequently than that. Midlevel political officers had quite remarkable access to the ANC leadership. For example, our labor officer who was maybe an FS-5 at the time, when the ANC government was installed, he knew something like six cabinet members because they had all come out of the trade union movement and, and, and, and he knew them all. When he, when he was transferred out and we had a little party for him with wine and cheese and that sort of thing, we had six cabinet members in my office.

Q: Yes, I found when I was there and the labor officer was in Johannesburg at that time, I don't know if he was Pretoria later, that that was often the source of our best contact. Now, did the embassy have a role beyond the reporting and analysis role where you're in there influencing, were there programs you were using to gain access and gain influence?

CAMPBELL: There were. And they have been -- it's a very interesting book that was published about six months ago at the State University of New York in Stony Brook which collects together stories and examples of particularly what the Public Affairs Office did, as it were to outsmart apartheid over the years. The author is Daniel Whitman. The title is *Outsmarting Apartheid*. Message was fairly consistent. The message was: nonviolence, nonracial democracy, negotiations, and what can we do to help.

Q: And my wife's interview is in that book. Excerpts from my wife's interview are in that book.

CAMPBELL: What's your wife's name?

Q: Bonnie Brown. She was -- this was done by Dan Whitman?

CAMPBELL: Yes.

Q: Yes.

CAMPBELL: Mm-hmm.

Q: In your own role, you're obviously heading up this reporting and analysis team, you're getting out there to talk to these people, you've got good access. Did your role go beyond that? Were there any other elements beyond sort of the standard what a political officer's expected to do?

CAMPBELL: No, not really. In other words, in other words we were not having, at least I was not having cozy little chats with Nelson Mandela about what the future of South Africa ought to look like. To start with, as I'm sure you would agree, South Africa is a highly sophisticated place. And that was true of the liberation movement people as well as the government people.

Q: What was your relationship and what were your contacts with the white community? I assume there was some politically influential and their views need to be heard.

CAMPBELL: Many, many, sure. Many, many. I mean as I say the two sides at Kempton Park were remarkably evenly matched.

Q: I see.

CAMPBELL: But we have to be careful. Yes, the National government was overwhelmingly white, but the ANC was not monolithically black. I mean it had whites in it, it had, it had a significant number of Asians, and then you had the wild card with Buthelezi. So sure, we were talking to whites all the time. In the Political Section there was an officer who basically did white politics and one who basically did black politics, and one who did essentially international relations.

Q: Right, right. How was the atmosphere, by atmosphere I mean kind of the physical atmosphere, changing in regard to Pretoria and Johannesburg? Were the squatters moving in or was that later?

CAMPBELL: No, that's all later.

Q: That all took place later.

CAMPBELL: That's all later. And I go back to South Africa fairly often. And I think as a phenomena they can be way over exaggerated. It looks to me in many respects remarkably unchanged. Downtown Pretoria has become an African city, but on the other hand in places like Menlyn or Waterkloof it's absolutely unchanged.

Q: So de facto segregation?

CAMPBELL: Oh, very much so, yes. It's very much -- it -- to me the similarities with the American south are very striking, where you have now a certain degree of racial integration at the top, but, but below that there is remarkably little. And what there is is mostly in the workplace, not, it's not social.

Q: You did have, and we saw this even as we were leaving, the growth of a class among the black South Africans --

CAMPBELL: Yes.

Q: -- who were becoming wealthy who had these business ties, et cetera, and they were moving in to Houghton and places that had been restricted.

CAMPBELL: That's right.

Q: Did you see a tension there between the haves and havenots as how the Africans who were sort of subject to -- black Africans who were sort of subject to de facto segregation. Was there any resentment of this new class?

CAMPBELL: We wouldn't have seen it as -- we would now. For one thing, we would not have been coming into contact with them very much. And even if we did, they would have been highly unlikely to complain to the American embassy about the behavior of black South Africans.

Q: Interesting, yes. So your black politics who no doubt went into the townships. At that point was Pretoria covering Soweto, or was that still covered by Johannesburg.

CAMPBELL: That was still covered by Johannesburg, yes.

Q: Did you have any reason or occasion to go into the townships?

CAMPBELL: Frequently, frequently. Usually, usually the occasion was some kind of public outreach effort. In those days there was still an absolutely superb American library in Soweto. The dismantling of those I think is one of the more stupid things we have done over the past 20 or 30 years.

Q: I agree with that. The --

CAMPBELL: And by the way, when went into townships the welcome was always very warm.

Q: Yes, that's what we always found as well. Now, the embassy itself, you had your constituent post. You still had Durban, Johannesburg, Cape Town. And I assume the embassy was being split between Pretoria and Cape Town at that time.

CAMPBELL: I had a house in both places.

Q: Yes, yes. Well, you were the ones who went back and forth. Fortunately in Johannesburg we didn't have to move. How much did this complicate things? Was the embassy well run? I would imagine Princeton would have his hand well on things in terms of management?

CAMPBELL: All of that true. And yes, I think in the embassy was well run. The DCM was Priscilla Clap.

Q: Yes.

CAMPBELL: And I had oversight of the political reporting from the consulates. That didn't amount to very much in that I was not clearing the political reporting that they did. What I did do was coordinate the disposition of embassy sources for covering elections in, in 1994.

Q: So Johannesburg, for example, if they were doing a political report to Washington, perhaps clearing it with you or not clearing it with you --

CAMPBELL: Or more likely, particularly if it was significant, with the DCM or ambassador.

Q: I see. How did Princeton work it? Did he leave sort of day-to-day management to the DCM, or did he get pretty much involved in that?

CAMPBELL: He was involved with it, yes. I don't think it's possible based on my own experience for a chief of mission to divorce himself from the day-to-day management of an embassy. A chief of mission is amongst other things the head of an American community and that means managerial issues end up on his desk.

Q: I agree with that. In my own case I never felt comfortable with the idea that the DCM would care of things --

CAMPBELL: That's right.

Q: -- just really the important stuff.

CAMPBELL: That's right, exactly.

Q: I never wanted to have some problem creep up on me when it was kind of too late to do something about it.

CAMPBELL: Yes. Which makes the relationship between the ambassador and the DCM absolutely crucial. And if the relationship is not good then the cost can be very high.

Q: Yes, my own approach was what I knew my DCM knew unless there was some, you know, very highly restricted reason that couldn't happen. And when we come back to your own ambassadorships I'd like to have more on your philosophy of being a chief of mission. Is there anything you want to add regarding South Africa before we move on to the next assignment?

CAMPBELL: What to say? There's a lot to be said. First, in so many ways South Africa in those days reminded me of the American South. You can even start with the single matter of accent. Where there's a huge range of accents in South African English and therefore accent doesn't matter. Accent is not a class marker or social marker, nor is it here, in the United States. Very different in the UK. The, the relationship between the races was also I think considerably more complex than conventional wisdom allows for. I can remember as a child in segregated Washington being rude to black people would get you spanked faster than almost anything else. Same is true in South Africa. So the whole relationship between race and class and behavior was really quite complicated.

Q: You mentioned the townships, or not the townships, the homelands earlier.

CAMPBELL: Yes, we visited those too.

Q: Was there great progress made while you were there on sort of breaking down the homeland system and integrating them into South Africa?

CAMPBELL: Well, that all happened coming out of negotiations, and the homelands collapsed remarkably quickly. It was amazing how fast they just simply disappeared. Interesting though how many homeland politicians have had political careers after the collapse of the homelands.

Q: At the national level.

CAMPBELL: Mm-hmm.

Q: Interesting. What about the advantage that the homelands were giving financially? You'd have a Taiwanese company in --
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CAMPBELL: That's right.

Q: -- using cheap labor and producing something. Did those relationships continue, do you know?

CAMPBELL: My impression, nothing more than that, my impression is that when they did it was the result of the particular circumstances as opposed to any kind of overarching strategy. And the homelands remain very poor.

Q: Yes. But at least people aren't forced to live there.

CAMPBELL: That's right. Well, not forced to live there. In the homelands the chiefs retained substantial authority, Zuma very much uses the chiefs to bolster his own particular position, and there have been some extremely interesting clashes that have made it to the constitutional court over gender issues where the constitution is quite clear. And that is very different from African traditional practices.

Q: Interesting.

CAMPBELL: Also have the question of land. In many homelands, the chiefs control the land. The land does not exist in any infeasible ownership. So that while legally it's perfectly true, you can't be compelled to live in a homeland, there are all kinds of actors at play that can make it difficult to leave.

Q: I wonder if whether the victims of black spot removal --

CAMPBELL: Yes.

Q: -- when they were forced to leave their land, if there was ever any return to the land, compensations.

CAMPBELL: Extraordinarily interesting. Absolutely, yes. The -- that was written into the constitution. And there's a book that has just come out about four months ago and I had the author give a session here at the council who described exactly how the process of compensation worked. The title of the book is *We Want What is Ours*, and the author is Bernadette Atuahene. First of all, of those compensated more than 90% took money as opposed to the land. That makes perfectly good sense because particularly in rural areas if you've never been a farmer what are you going to do with 20 acres of, of land? Also seems fairly clear that the government was extremely conscientious in terms of accepting evidence that the land had indeed belonged to somebody and had been seized by the government. But here time makes a difference. You're talking about expropriations that often took place 50 years ago. That means the compensation is divided by heirs. And so what an individual will get may be extremely small.

Q: Did the people -- I don't know if you know the answer to this -- but the people who got sent to some of these awful places through black spot removal, just these sort of --

CAMPBELL: Yes.

Q: -- I wonder if they're still living there. Those places are still inhabited even though it's thorn, bush, and lack of water, that sort of thing.

CAMPBELL: Well, that's the origin of a lot of the townships, Khayelitsha, for example. And so yes, indeed, they're right there.

Q: Stayed on.

CAMPBELL: Yes.

Q: You mentioned that one of your officers was responsible in the section for international reporting. Were there particular issues that preoccupied you? Was it relations with the surrounding states?

CAMPBELL: It was that -- and you know, the UN generates an enormous number of demarches on, on any number of issues. South African wasn't in the UN. But it had an observer mission in New York and so it was, it was important to make clear what the American position was on issue X or Y.

Q: So what was your Foreign Service grade at that point where you were in South Africa?

CAMPBELL: I was promoted to OC when I left Nigeria. So I would have been an OC.

Q: So you were moving up quickly.

CAMPBELL: Yes, an OC.

Q: So 1996 you left Pretoria. Where did you go from there?

CAMPBELL: I went to SS as it was called, the Executive Secretariat. And I was one of the three deputy executive secretaries working for Bill Burns as executive secretary.

Q: That must have been an experience in itself. Tell us about your job there.

CAMPBELL: Well, what the Executive Secretariat does essentially is it sits on top of paper going into the secretary and paper coming out from the secretary. That includes making sure that the secretary has been briefed for meetings. We deputy secretaries were also responsible for the secretary's travel. Basically one of my colleagues did Europe and the Soviet Union, , and I did the rest. The third was responsible for overseeing the SS operation in Washington.

Q: So you didn't have to go though too much of the position papers and things like that. It was just --

CAMPBELL: Oh, yes I did. Oh yes. Oh sure. We also had geographical responsibilities. For example, I had Africa.

Q: And did you in regard to this, having to travel with the secretary, did you get to go on the trips?

CAMPBELL: Oh yes, mm-hmm.

Q: And you sort of staffed an office that the local embassy would stay in touch with?

CAMPBELL: Oh, absolutely. We essentially took our office with us. I mean you could be 10 people, 15 people, including communications press. Quite serious.

Q: Those jobs tend to be known as ones in which the incumbent gets a good overview of how the department works. Did you find that?

CAMPBELL: How the department works. You get an extremely good overview of the minutia.

Q: (laughs)

CAMPBELL: But that's not basically how decisions are made or policy is made. The proce3ss reflects very much the personality of who the principles were at any given time. I mean if we're talking about how policy's being made very often policy is made essentially by press guidance. I mean you draft press guidance, you clear it around, that's the policy, you see. Well, that doesn't particularly involve SS *(laughs)*. Might. And particularly if the press guidance required the approval of the secretary, it would.

Q: Yes, yes. Well, were you involved in clearing memos before they went to the secretary?

CAMPBELL: Yes.

Q: So the Africa Bureau, for example --

CAMPBELL: Yes.

Q: You would take a look at -- now, how much did that involve for you substantively? Would you go through the substance of say hey, this is something that's been left out, or would you mainly check whether or not it's the proper form?

CAMPBELL: It was more, it was more just does this answer the question, does this do the job that it's supposed to do? WE did not set ourselves up as subject matter experts.

Q: And did you find complaints from the bureau, hey, you're bouncing this back on a very nitpicky point here. You should have overlooked that. Or, hey, time is of the essence?

CAMPBELL: Oh sure, lots of that. But much more -- what's the word I want -- a much greater generator of anxiety was a memo to the secretary might go to a bureau's front office at say, two p.m. It could then sit there until six, for probably a good reason. That might make SS by seven or eight. Then be sent back and it's nine. And then it's 10 before the process is finally finished.

Q: What did that imply for you in terms of work hours?

CAMPBELL: Oh, they were awful, absolutely awful. And it included most weekends, most holidays. Sure.

Q: So you're kind of working 50/60 hour weeks?

CAMPBELL: Oh yes, easily.

Q: Mm-hmm.

CAMPBELL: Yes. Same is true in certain other bureaus too. When I was director of UN political affairs, for example, the hours were similar to that.

Q: Did the -- at your level in SS did your hours rotate or were you always on the same shift?

CAMPBELL: No, they were always on the same shift.

Q: Just very --

CAMPBELL: Actually they weren't shifts. Shifts imply that you start at eight and leave at four *(laughs)*. Well, no.

Q: It's in essence a 24-hour operation?

CAMPBELL: It's covered, yes, because of the Operations Center. The Operations Center falls under SS.

Q: So how much did you get involved within the operations of the Operations Center?

CAMPBELL: Not much, but another deputy executive secretary did that.

Q: Essentially overseeing what they did.

CAMPBELL: Yes, mm-hmm.

Q: Maybe this isn't -- there's no typical day, but could you give us an idea of what a day would be like in SS for someone at your level? Or maybe even for everybody at any level?

CAMPBELL: Well, the mornings revolve around a series of set meetings, usually involving the secretary, which means going through what has come in overnight that the secretary needs to, to, to know about. Then there is the movement of paper in, the movement of paper out. There may or may not be a coordination of meetings with the secretary, though of course the secretary had his own staff, or her own staff, S. So there was a good deal of work between S, SS, and the Operations Center. I mean it's a fairly complex operation.

Q: So you would have to clear these papers in time for -- at least moved in time for the meetings.

CAMPBELL: Yes.

Q: OK, so beyond the morning was it mainly putting out fires or --

CAMPBELL: Yes.

Q: -- the papers that --

CAMPBELL: Putting out fires, yes.

Q: Did you get involved in managing things at any other level, at the undersecretary's for example?

CAMPBELL: Well, when I was in P I did, yes.

Q: But not in SS. SS is just for the secretary?

CAMPBELL: It's just for the secretary, yes. To a certain extent for the deputy secretary.

Q: For the deputy secretary.

CAMPBELL: Yes.

Q: So the undersecretaries would have their own staff who would handle things. Did it get complicated or tricky in terms of a relationship with S? Were the lines clear enough? Was everybody one happy or --

CAMPBELL: No. No. It very much depended on the personalities of the people who were involved, starting with the personality of the secretary. So that Christopher was quite good at that and the best of all was Powell. But it very much depended on the personalities involved. Lots of jostling for position. You had -- in general those jobs attract very driven people who were extremely ambitious and for whom it's everything.

Q: So you worked for more secretary doing tenure there? Who was secretary while you were there?

CAMPBELL: Let's see. When I went there it was Christopher and then I worked for Albright, and the two together, it was a little more than a year. My own view looking back on it is that those positions ought to turn over when the secretary changes. Because the way things are done is so much tied up with whoever the secretary is at the time that it's just better if an incoming secretary brings in her own people.

Q: How long were you there while Albright was there?

CAMPBELL: Four or five months.

Q: OK, so big chunks, both Christopher and --

CAMPBELL: Yes.

Q: Are there any observations you'd like to make on their secretaryships or even comparing them with themselves, management style, relations with staff, you know, circling the wagons, inner circle? Any observations in those regards?

CAMPBELL: Both of them, like I suppose many or most secretaries, were most comfortable working with people that they had worked with before, which meant the circle around them was, was fairly small. Neither of them had had extensive managerial experience, unlike say Shultz in private industry, or Powell in the, in the military. I mean one was a lawyer, the other was an academic. And I think, I think that colored probably their approach to the job. It would be interesting to see and know how Secretary Kerry does it, because of course he comes out of the Senate. Again, where you typically work with a very small staff.

Q: It seems that a certain number of career FSOs sort of make their career in staff jobs.

CAMPBELL: They do.

Q: You know, the, the, the young gal who works for the secretary finds herself sitting down, talking to the secretary, "saying, "What can I do for you?"

CAMPBELL: That's right..

Q: And then the ambassadorship comes much earlier than if that person had come up through the trenches. You in general find this to be the case, that those kind of jobs if you do a good job tend to pay off in career terms?

CAMPBELL: I think it's exaggerated. I think in some cases yes, but I think it's -- I think it is exaggerated. Because there's so many other factors that come into play. We can talk about -- when we start talking about how it was that I ended up going to Nigeria we can we can talk about that. The long and the short of it is that the Africa Bureau was hardly consulted at all and I was sent to Nigeria essentially by the undersecretary for management based on the work I had done on the director general's office, with respect to certain African issues. And in fact, he told me -- he said, "You're going to be the ambassador to Nigeria. Go down and tell the acting secretary for AF." And so I did.

And he smiled and said, "Oh well, you would have been on our short list anyway," *(laughs).*

Q: Well, the undersecretary was bypassing the Deputy's Committee then. I mean we'll --

CAMPBELL: Essentially, yes, in a sense, uh-huh. Because eventually I went before the Deputy's Committee, sure, yes.

Q: But was that -- we are jumping ahead, but was this a question of sort of having to go put out some fires in managing the embassy?

CAMPBELL: Mm-hmm.

Q: So I could see where they there.

CAMPBELL: I had been sent out there in the first place by the director general of the Foreign Service because of reports that were coming back about difficulties.

Q: Mm-hmm. Well, that's going to make for an interesting conversation as we move on. Looking at your experience in SS, not only at your level but what the, the lower level officers were going through, what would be your advice to an officer at any level in terms of aspiring to one of those positions?

CAMPBELL: The advice I would have is necessity for setting for yourself very clear boundaries. Because in those positions essentially the system will eat up anybody that it can. This is not because the system is intrinsically evil. It's because the system itself is under so much stress and so much pressure that that gets translated right down the line, as it were.

Q: Was a -- was there any sense of -- well, let me back it up. Did power go to the heads of those in SS and S, the staffers? Were they sort of taking on the color of whatever the boss did?

CAMPBELL: Power did go to their heads. But that makes it sound much more deliberate than in fact it was. It was rather the desperate necessity to get X done by Y that would lead to orders being barked at in some cases some really quite distinguished people, like assistant secretaries *(laughs)*, you know.

Q: Was the phrase ever used gratuitously, "The secretary wants this" or --

CAMPBELL: Used all the time. Absolutely all the time.

Q: Whether or not it was directed --

CAMPBELL: Well, except very often it was. Yes, I mean secretary's are as human as anybody else and again the time deadlines, the role of the media, not a lot of time now for reflection or deliberation.

Q: That's true, that's true particularly of the 24-hour news cycle.

CAMPBELL: Well, and that was well in place then. And how much time does the secretary have to read anything? Well, that means get it down to 200 words.

Q: So you would go back to the people who wrote it and said reduce this --

CAMPBELL: Oh yes.

Q: -- or did you have a staff that --

CAMPBELL: No, no, no, we would do it.

Q: And --

CAMPBELL: Looking back on it we were grossly understaffed. I mean if I look back at the department basically starting with the Reagan years it has been consistently under resourced, and in fact it's gotten worse. And that has led to a whole lot of the dysfunctionalities that you can see. There's too few people doing too much.

Q: Interesting.

CAMPBELL: And because it's too few people doing too much, trust gets eroded because mistakes get made. And that sends up the impatience quota.

Q: So the experts are getting pushed to the side, people who --

CAMPBELL: Sure, yes.

Q: That's the story of John F. Kennedy being his own desk officer and that sort of thing.

CAMPBELL: That's right, yes. An interesting question is, nowadays how do you define what an expert is.

Q: But did you find during the course of your career that really important things, really important policies were decided by a very small group that may or may not have been informed by the expertise that --

CAMPBELL: Oh, absolutely, happened all the time. Sure, happened all the time. Because the U.S. federal government probably has greater expertise on almost anything than any other institution in the world. The trouble is, how do you get at it? How do you translate it? And how do you get it to the policymakers within a time frame that it can be useful?

Q: I think that latter part is the key, time. Well, under Secretary Rice -- here again we're diverting a bit from your role in SS, but under Secretary Rice there was this move to sort of more involvement of our diplomacy in programs, in management, and in getting away

from -- or an implicit getting away from the tradition roles and representation and reporting. But you're not going to have expertise that could be drawn on if you don't have the representation and reporting.

CAMPBELL: Of course you can't, that's right. And besides that, I think that particular initiative was all wrapped up in essentially the crisis connected with the Iraq War, that that was very much of a particular time and place. And a particular strategy. I remember that whole of government approach? I was co-leader of the IG (inspector general) inspection of the embassy in Baghdad.

Q: You did?

CAMPBELL: I did. I was called back to do that. And saw what a mess that was.

Q: I'd like to get to that later.

CAMPBELL: But in terms of timing I retired from the Foreign Service when my period in Nigeria was over, that was 2007. The 2007/2008 academic year I was at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. In 2008 I was asked to come back to the OIG (Office of Inspector General) and lead the inspections of Mexico and Iraq, the latter which I did with Richard Hecklinger. We were co team leaders.

Q: Is the pendulum swinging back in terms of appreciating some of the traditional functions of the Foreign Service?

CAMPBELL: I don't know. I would have no way of knowing because I've been out of the department for so long. On an area that I know something about, Nigeria. I am startled at the lack of knowledge and expertise, I'm really quite shocked by it. It's a big country and an important country and one that's currently going down the tubes. Much of what I do now at the Council is for the intelligence community, the Department of Defense, and State because they don't have any independent expertise.

Q: Really?

CAMPBELL: So for example, I'm down here this week because I was asked to give a lecture by the DNI to intelligence analysts, which I did.

Q: Are they just too busy processing these --

CAMPBELL: No, no, it's not that, no, it's not that. It is -- first of all, there's a constant turnover among them. It's absolutely constant. And secondly, there is -- they go into positions with no background. So you know, you're reinventing the wheel.

Q: Well, this seems to argue a bit in favor of having INR for example predominantly staffed by Civil Service people.

CAMPBELL: I have served in INR, and the difficulty with that is that Civil Service people often do not understand what the policymakers actually need, so that what they're providing answers to the wrong questions. I think the best arrangement, which obtained when I was there, is half and half.

Q: Well, I think on this issue of very important decisions being made by a small group of high-level people, perhaps without the benefit of expertise is a very important one.

CAMPBELL: And not much background.

Q: Yes. If you look at when we started the Iraq War, key people not knowing the difference between Sunnis and Shias.

CAMPBELL: Absolutely, absolutely, yes. Yes, that's right.

Q: And I think that whole Cuban Missile Crisis was a very small group of people who were deciding whether --

CAMPBELL: No, no, that's right, I mean -- but again, back to resources. Much of this is a result of the institution having been starved of resources for 30 years and that's not just shortage of people, but for example, shortage of training available to people.

Q: And the shortage of people having to do or being tied in with the lack of training because these people are going to get sent --

CAMPBELL: Absolutely.

Q: -- without the training.

CAMPBELL: Absolutely.

Q: You have posts overseas and I think particularly in Africa with the majority of the stuff are people who've been in the service for very little time, relatively.

CAMPBELL: Well, OK. While I was ambassador to Nigeria there were somewhere between -- a bit up from 220 Americans, between, between Abuja and Lagos. Of those 220 there were three who were senior officers. I was one of them, the DCM was another, and the public affairs officer was the third, not the consul general in Lagos.

Q: Interesting, yes, yes.

CAMPBELL: So the political counselor was a two, as I recall. This is Nigeria, 177 million people.

Q: Yes, yes. And you have some stories that are even worse than that, you know, in terms of some of these smaller posts.

CAMPBELL: In all this as well is the erosion of lines of authority of these federal agencies too. So there's a huge amount of time and energy spent in -- to call, to call it bureaucratic infighting is, is misleading. It's more complicated than that. It's because the lines -- just

Q: Checking one of our lights has gone off. You move on in 1997?

CAMPBELL: Let's see. I was in South Africa '93 to '96. I was in SS from '96 to '97. I then went to Oceans and Environment as essentially a kind of senior advisor. This was during the time of the Kyoto protocols, negotiations.

Q: So went to OES (Office of Environmental and Scientific Affairs) in '97.

CAMPBELL: Yes.

Q: And I was there for less than a year, and the moved to FSI as dean of the language school.

CAMPBELL: That's when I got to know you.

Q: So tell us about your role in OES. Were you heavily involved in the Kyoto protocol?

CAMPBELL: Yes. Basically what I was a senior advisor to the then acting head, Melinda Kimble, whom I had known for some time and so she asked me if I would like to do that. And at that point I was more than ready to leave SS. So --

Q: Heaving a sigh of relief, wanting a more normal life.

CAMPBELL: Exactly, yes.

Q: So the hours were a bit more regular in OES.

CAMPBELL: Yes, but again they were really interesting, interesting issues there. That was a bureau which had been a stepchild for a very long time. And the resource constraints there had led to all kinds of work-arounds that were not particularly functional.

Q: Were we short of people?

CAMPBELL: We were short of people, short of money, short of office space.

Q: As a senior advisor did you sort of have a problem knowing what your place was, or was it pretty clear-cut?

CAMPBELL: No, my place was basically to do what Melinda asked me to do. And the senior personnel in the bureau were not difficult.

Q: Were there other issues besides the protocol that you got involved in?

CAMPBELL: There's a huge number of them, mostly having to do with the environment. And it meant a pretty fast learning curve for me, I didn't know about anything about such things, didn't know the agencies were very involved in it. And I wasn't there very long.

Q: Was the sort of overall lack of success of Kyoto a big disappointment for you and for --

CAMPBELL: Yes. It still is.

Q: And what do you see there as the major shortfall? Why wasn't it a success?

CAMPBELL: Basically the political ground for it was not sufficiently prepared in the U.S.

Q: So some real --

CAMPBELL: It's still an issue. I mean do you protect the environment or do you develop jobs?

Q: Yes, yes.

CAMPBELL: I mean, you know, it's not so simple.

Q: (laughs)

CAMPBELL: It's not simple.

Q: As each Election Day shows.

CAMPBELL: That's right.

Q: So you were there less than a year in --

CAMPBELL: Oh yes, much less than a year.

Q: So you arrived in '97, did you leave in '97?

CAMPBELL: I think it was '98 that I left.

Q: '98 you left, OK. Is there anything you'd like to add about OES before we move on?

CAMPBELL: Not really. I liked the work. I particularly enjoyed the people. The people were so much better than the structure in which they found themselves. One of the places where I may have been able to have some value was being able to suggest the way an issue looked to the seventh floor, or for people from a Foreign Service background. So for example, I could say, "Look, we've got a window of a couple of hours to get our particular position in front of Assistant Secretary X. And if we don't do that, that opportunity's lost forever."

Q: Yes.

CAMPBELL: So you know, we either get the memo done now and out, or we just don't do it.

Q: Your SS training served you well.

CAMPBELL: In that area. And as I said, they're bright people. They got it, you know. And they understood that the perfect could be the enemy of the good.

Q: Yes, yes. Well, would you like to stop here before we move on to FSI, or would you like to move on to FSI? Just depends on how you're feeling, how your time is running?

CAMPBELL: I'm fine. Are you fine?

Q: Sure, yes. So in '98 you become the dean of the School of Language Studies at FSI. Did you request that or were you tapped, how did that work?

CAMPBELL: I certainly wanted it, and I didn't know Ruth Davis. So it was one of the very few assignments that I actually went after. You know, I went to see her, I -- trying to make my case.

Q: Who was deputy director when you were there?

CAMPBELL: Ruth Whiteside.

Q: OK.

CAMPBELL: Whom I didn't know either.

Q: Is that right?

CAMPBELL: Uh-huh, didn't know her either. And I count both of them now as close friends.

Q: Yes, yes. They were there -- Ruth was the director when I arrived there with ADST. Did you have background that made you feel that you could have an impact at SLS (School of Language Studies)? Was it --

CAMPBELL: Yes.

Q: Was this a challenging position that attracted you?

CAMPBELL: Yes. It was a challenging position and I had spent five years as an academic, and I even had tenure. So I knew something about what the environment would be like. I also thought that having a PhD would give me some credibility with the linguists. And it did. It was very helpful to be able to be Dr. Campbell with them.

Q: That mattered.

CAMPBELL: Oh yes, mm-hmm. Yes, they tended to be very much concerned about that kind of thing.

Q: Interesting.

CAMPBELL: Mm-hmm.

Q: And you hadn't had an ambassadorship at this time.

CAMPBELL: Oh, I -- mm-mm.

Q: Because a lot of the deans tend to come in having had ambassadorships.

CAMPBELL: That's right, yes, that's right. Management problems are just fascinating. It remains in some respects my favorite Foreign Service assignment. What did you have? Intellectually you have the question of how do you teach 40-year-olds foreign languages? Now, the British don't have this problem because they bring people in to their service at age 22 or 23. So they're not married, you can ship them off to some farm outside of Pretoria to learn Afrikaans. But we don't have those options because, you know, you've got wives, you've got children, and you -- it's, it's different. There is also the awkward reality that the ability to learn languages declines as you get older. You can never admit that because it violates various federal statutes having to do with aging --

Q: (laughs)

CAMPBELL: -- but it's true. OK, so what do you end up with? You end up with students who are very often middle aged, often have done rather well, and are now being reduced to being infants in a language learning situation. This makes the language teacher of crucial importance. The teachers are all native speakers, so they are not American. They also will bring with them all kinds of interesting baggage. They're supervised by language-training supervisors who are linguist, who are all American. And for a variety of reasons when I got there morale was rock bottom, both amongst the teachers and among the language training supervisors, and therefore among the students.

Q: You say various reasons. Could you isolate a couple of the most important reasons that morale was so low?

CAMPBELL: I'm willing to do so only in very general terms.

Q: OK.

CAMPBELL: It had to do with personalities of people who'd been involved in management, to frequent reorganizations, and again, resource constraints. Put it all together and --

Q: You mention the instructors bringing with them a certain amount of baggage.

CAMPBELL: Oh yes.

Q: By this you mean cultural differences, accommodation or --

CAMPBELL: Cultural differences can be, can be everything from very different views as to what gender relationships are, from what Americans have, to some of the Arabic teachers and some of the Israeli teachers putting up little signs on each other's doors.

Q: How did you deal with issues like that?

CAMPBELL: It has to be very hands on. Constantly. You're constantly talking, you're constantly moving around. I would give over the whole afternoon at least one day a week to literally walking around and showing up in, in teachers' officers unannounced.

Q: And what would you do when you arrived?

CAMPBELL: How are you? How are things going? What's going on? Tell me about something really interesting that's happened this week. I mean, and then once you've got their confidence then you can go on to more substantive things. And you get to know them all.

Q: When these issues came up, personnel issues, behavioral issues, performance issues, did you tend to go through your language supervisors or did you have a certain amount of hands on as a result of these contacts that you had?

CAMPBELL: It was both. And sometimes the language advising supervisors thought that I was too much concerned with the teachers.

Q: How did they react to that? Did they tell you that? Did they --

CAMPBELL: Mm-hmm, mm-hmm. I was friends with them too, so they'd be pretty open about it.

Q: Well, did they not want you visiting the classrooms?

CAMPBELL: No, no, no, they didn't mind that at all. And also, it wasn't their classrooms that I would visit; it was their offices.

Q: Their offices.

CAMPBELL: Yes. I never visited their classrooms, or did so only rarely and when I was invited. Because a classroom is a very private thing. I mean, you know, what the dynamics are within that classroom between the teachers and the students, that dynamic is going to be destroyed when you let someone like me show up there. So.

Q: What was the relationship between SLS and the other schools?

CAMPBELL: Or quite good. Again, it was all personal, we all knew each other, liked each other. Ruth Davis and Bruce Whiteside were very good at community building, team building.

Q: You didn't feel that there was micromanagement from the top and --

CAMPBELL: No, I did not. I know some people have thought so.. But certainly I never felt that. To the contrary, in fact, the initiative was all on my side. I would go to them and I would say X, Y, and Z, you know, does this look like this might be possible?

Q: Were there instances in which you felt there should have been more coordination between your school and other schools?

CAMPBELL: No. I mean, what are we doing? We're trying to get people to a three-three in a foreign language, a situation that's pretty stressful for many for the students. Not all of them, but for many of them. And I mean our job was absolutely as clear as it could be. Much harder is something like the School of Leadership and Management. When you've got to determine what is leadership and what is management. You've got to start there.

Q: (laughs) That's right.

CAMPBELL: You know.

Q: Yes, yes.

CAMPBELL: I mean conjugating French verbs is easy in comparison.

Q: Yes. Were there issues of resources in terms of space and enough teachers to do the job?

CAMPBELL: Not much, no. Occasionally there were, but it was managed pretty well.

Q: Got into a period of sort of hot bunking the teachers.

CAMPBELL: I know they did. But that was, that again is tied up with the Iraq War and the sudden need for huge numbers of Arabic speakers.

Q: Were there particular issues that you felt confronted your school while you were there that were kind of exceptional, or was it --

CAMPBELL: Oh, some of them were really quite funny. For example, the French section was a hotbed of hatred and intrigue. The French teachers were divided into three groups. You had the French teachers from, generally, the 16th arrrondissement, who were often very often spouses of Foreign Service officers and it looked like they had wandered in from the Champs-Élyséees. All right, that's this group over here. Over here you had the teachers mostly from Algeria in their torn dungarees and with their red star on their shirt and the revolution is now. Then you had the Africans, and also the Haitians, who were very, very sweet and kind, which meant they weren't too good at criticizing what the students were doing. And the three groups all hated each other. With the ladies from the 16th arrondissement dismissing the others as not really speaking French, and of course most of the, of the assignments that are French designated now are in Africa, which meant that my favorite group tended to be the Africans, because they in effect got across an awful lot of cultural information to students without anybody really realizing that it was being transmitted.

Q: How does one handle something like that, or did you just, did you not handle it?

CAMPBELL: Oh no, you did. Talk, talk, talk. Yes.

Q: Do you think you made any progress in reconciling the factions?

CAMPBELL: Yes. In the sense that the behavior improved, yes.

Q: Bang a few heads?

CAMPBELL: No! Well, some of that, but not much. I did things like I had them all come to my house for a party, that kind of thing.

Q: Mm-hmm, mm-hmm. What was the relationship between the staff and the teachers and the contractors, the contract teachers? Was that an apparent divide?

CAMPBELL: Handled much better than one might have thought. Because most contract teachers became eventually staff. So it was a kind of progression.

Q: Do you recall the Cox Language Awards? Did that cause any division, any competition among the staff people? I know one hears occasionally about how one teacher would sort of campaign for it and, you know, get his or her to nominate and

others who just sort of set back and let things happened. Was there anything of note when you were there?

CAMPBELL: Not that I recall, no. And I don't recall it being particularly a contentious --

Q: I know there was some concern about management that sometimes the world languages would get overlooked in the competition. Oh, it's always going to be the guy who speaks Pashto or Chinese, whereas the excellent Spanish teacher doesn't get recognized. Overall I think that balances out.

CAMPBELL: Yes, I don't recall it being a particular issue, no. I had a principal deputy who was responsible for instruction, I had another deputy who was responsible for management, by that I mean particularly financial management, and then a third who was responsible for the overseas schools. We had a branch of FSI (Foreign Service Institute) at Tunis, we had one in Taiwan, one in Korea, one in Japan, and then we also taught students for the second year in Beijing. And I would visit all those schools, usually once a year.

Q: There's a lot more move toward online instructions. Had that started when you were there?

CAMPBELL: Yes, it had. At that point I was essentially voluntary. We developed while I was there an interactive program in survival Russian, for example, interactive in that you did it online but it was issues like how do you do the subway, that kind of thing, I mean how do you survive.

Q: Practicalities.

CAMPBELL: Very much so, yeas.

Q: Did you get involved at all in sort of the theory in teaching of languages, the --

CAMPBELL: There was an office at -- under me that did that, yes. And it was headed by a rather eccentric lady whom, whom I quite liked. And they were indeed trying to figure out what strategies worked best in teaching, in teaching Americans foreign languages.

Q: Mm-hmm. That sort of thing kind of teaches over time. You know, one decade there will be one approach, another decade --

CAMPBELL: That's right, that's exactly right, yes.

Q: -- You're will be another approach. In your time there was there time set aside in the language training for cultural awareness?

CAMPBELL: There was, yes. It was one afternoon a week I think it was.

Q: One afternoon a week?

CAMPBELL: Yes, they would go off and do area studies.

Q: But otherwise it was pretty intensive on the language.

CAMPBELL: That's right. Can't take leave. Six hours a day. Basically instructors change every hour, class no bigger than three.

Q: Oh really?

CAMPBELL: Yes. Two hours of let's call it lab work, wasn't often that. So six hours of classroom, two hours lab work, and then two hours homework, so 10 hours.

Q: Yes, that's the way I remember it (laughs), yes. But our class --

CAMPBELL: But it works, I mean it really does work. It works remarkably well.

Q: Did it tend to be -- maybe this would vary from language to language -- learning dialogues, learning pattern sentences?

CAMPBELL: It was then, yes. And whether it's that way now --

Q: Yes, I'm not sure either, but as I say the theories come and go.

CAMPBELL: Yes, "Bonjour Janine" all that sort of thing.

Q: You remember "Bonjour Janine."

CAMPBELL: That's right.

Q: Do you know who Janine Courtios was originally?

CAMPBELL: No.

Q: It was Suzanne Cohen, Hank Cohen's wife.

CAMPBELL: You're kidding. Isn't that interesting?

Q: If you go back to French I, the blue covered book they had.

CAMPBELL: Right, right.

Q: And the photos, there's --

CAMPBELL: There she is.

Q: There she is.

CAMPBELL: And it's her voice --

Q: On the tapes.

CAMPBELL: On the original tape. Interesting.

Q: So when I see her I always call her Mademoiselle Courtois.

CAMPBELL: *(laughs)*

Q: You were at --

CAMPBELL: Before we move on --

Q: No, we don't need to move on, I would like you to add anything you'd like to add.

CAMPBELL: Well, before we move on I would, I would say that in comparison with what other countries do, and I know the British best in terms of language training, we do a really good job, we really do, in the sense that you're starting with a population which historically never learns foreign languages. We at any one time were teaching 60 languages and we could teach up to 160 with sufficient notice. In those days at least most people who went out to language designated posts had at least some, in many cases the full requirement.

Q: In terms of your management issues were you faced with instructors who didn't feel they were getting their due or somebody you had to, to energize because they'd been there too long and weren't really doing their job anymore? Did you get involved at that level?

CAMPBELL: That could happen and it did occasionally happen, yes. But again we have to keep it in perspective. For most of the language teachers, and I would say for perhaps *all* of the LTSs, language training supervisors, they really loved what they did. And with the teachers of course they're all foreign born, which meant they had -- they didn't have unreasonable expectations about, about, about where they were.

Q: Was there much turnover?

CAMPBELL: Yes, there was.

Q: I guess particularly if spouses --

CAMPBELL: Yes, there were, yes. Spouses as a percentage went down.

Q: Was there much looking to the outside in terms of trying to look at best practices for teaching Arabic or how do you teach an adult learner or --

CAMPBELL: Oh yes, oh yes, yes. This office that was concerned with language training and innovation was the, was a particular focus of that.

Q: So they would have relationships with educational institutions and --

CAMPBELL: And so would I, I mean I would go out and visit the language school at Monterey or the British Foreign Office facility in London or the language school at you name it. Sure.

Q: What about the universities?

CAMPBELL: Timing is different. I mean the ideal is to get people to a three-three in French in 20 to 24 weeks. Well, universities operate on a much longer time frame.

Q: Indeed, yes, the difference of the intensiveness in how much time can go in.

CAMPBELL: Well, and we never teach writing because you have available at post native language secretaries. It's only reading and speaking.

Q: I guess emersion is definitely important for such certain languages. That's why I guess you have the language schools overseas.

CAMPBELL: That's right, yes.

Q: Though I think they've cut back. I think they've eliminated at least one of the Arab language schools. I'm not certain. But you did get over there and inspect.

CAMPBELL: Oh yes, at least once a year.

Q: And your impression was that they were doing what they were supposed to be doing?

CAMPBELL: Absolutely. Absolutely. Now, Korean, Japanese, Chinese, and Arabic are the so-called super hard languages. They are difficult for 40-year-olds to learn. And the success rates are often around 50%.

Q: Fifty percent. That's like going like getting to a two plus or so.

CAMPBELL: Or two, yes. But that's after two years. And it is immensely expensive.

Q: Two years, yes. Particularly if you're in a special school, paying your lodging and everything.

CAMPBELL: Well, that's right. Yes, that's right.

Q: Well, recently there's been a lot of emphasis on Pashto and the languages of the areas in which we have some special interests. Is there anything -- I'm sorry --

CAMPBELL: Distortions, I mean the thing about French, Spanish, Russian, Portuguese is that you can use them through an entire career. And they're always going -- there's always going to be the need for them. Pashto I'm not so sure.

Q: Yes, if you devote a significant amount of your time to Pashto and you go over for a one-year tour and, you know --

CAMPBELL: Mm-hmm, it's like Urdu or Yoruba_ or Ibo.

Q: Yes, I kept asking for Swahili training and they kept offering me Amhari training. And I said, "Well, I might make one tour in Ethiopia, but I" --

CAMPBELL: That's right, that's right. Did you ever get Swahili training?

Q: They never gave it to me because they said I had to have an onward assignments.

CAMPBELL: They did say that, yes. It's too bad because Swahili is one of the languages that's quite easy to learn.

Q: And also used --

CAMPBELL: Oh, all over the place! Absolutely all over the place, yes.

Q: Yes. So is there anything else you would like to add about your time at FSI?

CAMPBELL: The facilities were new when I got there. They were absolutely first-rate. It was one of the very few State Department environments I've been in that was not under resourced to the point where it impacted on operations.

Q: They do have a significant space issue now.

CAMPBELL: Well, they kept -- they added space too.

Q: They added a wing to the main building, but they're now going to lease 60,000 square feet over in Roslyn or in Boston.

CAMPBELL: *Really?*

Q: Yes. And they've put in a request for new construction, but that if it gets approved will be some years down the line.

CAMPBELL: But what is all that space going to be used for? Why is it so crowded?

Q: Classrooms, offices, the officers are -- office -- instructors for example are sort of doubled up. I think it has mostly to do with classrooms though.

CAMPBELL: Is it for language?

Q: Language and other things. But of course the overwhelming number of students there are the language students.

CAMPBELL: They always were, yes.

Q: Yes.

CAMPBELL: Is ADST still in that little house --

Q: Yes, we are. ADST is still there, still doing things to support, to support FSI, including some funds for the International Language Round Table.

CAMPBELL: Yes.

Q: That was going on when you were there.

CAMPBELL: It was, yes.

Q: And I take it that is, mainly gives an opportunity for various institutions to get together and talk about things linguistic.

CAMPBELL: Oh, it's extremely interesting, yes. I always enjoy them very much.

Q: So you left FSI in what?

CAMPBELL: Well, I left FSI when Ruth Davis left, because she asked me to be her, her DAS (deputy assistant secretary) when she moved over to be director general. She asked Ruth Whiteside to be her PDAS (principal deputy assistant secretary).

Q: Ah, OK.

CAMPBELL: So she in a sense took with her *(laughs)*, her FSI team.

Q: Yes, OK, so you went as a DAS to CG's (consul general) office, I mean the DG's (director general) office.

CAMPBELL: DG's office.

Q: And that was in what, 2000? 2001.

CAMPBELL: 2001.

Q: 2001. Because I arrived in 2001.

CAMPBELL: Yes. And there I had responsibility for performance evaluation, the promotion boards, and discipline.

Q: Discipline. Without getting into names, can you talk a bit about what sort of discipline issues appear in the Foreign Service that has to come to the attention of the DG?

CAMPBELL: It wasn't just, it wasn't just Foreign Service. It was also the Civil Service.

Q: Because they're the DG for the Civil Service as well.

CAMPBELL: Well, absolutely, yes. And if you were going to bumper stickerize it, as it were, it basically had to do with sex and money.

Q: Really? People canoodling outside marriage and that sort of thing?

CAMPBELL: The canoodling outside of marriage is not the issue, it's canoodling within the chain of command that was the issue.

Q: Ah-ha, supervisor and subordinate.

CAMPBELL: Yes, that's right. And Colin Powell was secretary then and Grant Green was in charge of management, and I think their position was that when you're talking about chain of command there's no such thing as an equal relationship.

Q: Well, would these usually come to your attention because one party was mad at the other party?

CAMPBELL: Yes, but the way this sort of thing works is there would be a complaint, something would come to the attention of say, the, the Civil Rights Office, having to do with racial discrimination, or, or a bureau. There would be an investigation carried out normally by DS. A part of the DG's office would then propose discipline of X. That proposal could then be appealed to me, and for that matter under certain circumstances could be appealed higher, could be appealed to the DG or even the undersecretary for management.

Q: Was a lot of this as a result of whistle blowing? Another member staff member saying, "Hey, that's not right," and then letting you know, or did you tend --

CAMPBELL: Well, see, they wouldn't let us know directly. It would be rather the office that was involved. So for example, unauthorized use of government supplied cell phones. There were a number of cases there where essentially an employee handed over a government supplied cell phone to one of their children who would then run up massive

charges *(laughs)*, which of course would then -- the bill would be presented to the bureau, which is how they would know, you know --

Q: In that case does it get presented to the individual and they have to pay?

CAMPBELL: Well, yes, but that's, that's sort of the least of it. I mean there would usually be some kind of discipline on top of that, usually a suspension over a certain period of time.

Q: An authorized use and --

CAMPBELL: That's right, yes.

Q: Well, I know there had been cases of, particularly in regard to travel, people seeking reimbursement for something they really should --

CAMPBELL: That did go on, too.

Q: -- make the expenditures for.

CAMPBELL: But there's a rule of reason in here and you might claim a travel expense of X and it not be allowed, but that's not a matter of discipline. It's just not allowed. So.

Q: What about sex in the workplace? Did you have any issues in that regard?

CAMPBELL: Oh yes.

Q: I'm told there's a seventh and a half floor, that there is a floor actually between seven and eight that was probably used for, I don't know, utility lines or something like that. But, I guess tall enough to stand up in.

CAMPBELL: I've been up there.

Q: You have been?

CAMPBELL: Yes, I've been --

Q: Well, years ago apparently they found that it had sometimes been used for unofficial purposes.

CAMPBELL: I don't doubt it, yes. It's now used, or at least when I was there it was being used basically by the building's management people. And it's active space.

Q: You mean like for offices?

CAMPBELL: And storage, yes. But there are no windows on it.

Q: Yes. Well, apparently it had been used for other purposes at one time or another.

CAMPBELL: One time a bureau threw a Christmas party up there.

Q: Is that right.

CAMPBELL: Yes. So yes, so now, the disciplinary stuff is also heavily, heavily legal so that I was always being advised by a State Department lawyer. Very often the person that was appealing the proposed discipline would have a lawyer.

Q: What was your role in grievances?

CAMPBELL: Well, grievances were separate, there's a separate grievance staff that --

Q: So you didn't get involved in that.

CAMPBELL: No, no.

Q: The --

CAMPBELL: In fact, the grievance staff is supervised by another staff in the director general's office.

Q: What about EEO complaints, issues?

CAMPBELL: Well, that went to the EEO office.

Q: And that, you didn't have supervision over that.

CAMPBELL: No. I don't know where that office is now.

Q: You also oversaw evaluations?

CAMPBELL: Mm-hmm.

Q: And what did that involve?

CAMPBELL: Well, I was responsible for promotion boards, responsible for EERs (employee evaluation report), that whole side of the process.

Q: How were you responsible for that promotion board? Did you assemble, did you designate people?

CAMPBELL: There were people under me who did that, yes.

Q: So they're going to designate FSO-4 from some place who's going to come and sit on the board.

CAMPBELL: That's quite complicated because those boards have to have sufficient ethnic, gender, and other balance. So, and then the people have to be available to do it and in a time in which the number of people available is shrinking, you know, that was actually a fairly big job.

Q: So you had some people doing the organizing part of it. What was your job in regard to evaluations?

CAMPBELL: Well, personally simply supervising those that were doing it.

Q: Mm-hmm.

CAMPBELL: I mean I wasn't actually assembling the boards. I was accountable for the boards being assembled.

Q: Now, you mentioned, you say you mentioned evaluations, you mentioned discipline, I think there's at least one other.

CAMPBELL: Promotions, evaluations --

Q: Promotions.

CAMPBELL: Yes.

Q: Ah-ha, promotions, OK, what was your role in promotions, that could have gotten sticky.

CAMPBELL: Well, the same. Eventually there would be X number of promotion numbers available, promotion boards would meet, promotion boards ranked ordered, and that's how the system worked. We were also responsible for of course selection out.

Q: Does selection out really work? Does that --

CAMPBELL: I don't think so, no. I don't.

Q: Did you have cases where people actually left the service for cause?

CAMPBELL: Oh yes.

Q: A very big percentage?

CAMPBELL: No, not large percentage, but it did happen. My problem with selection out is that as a practical matter the distinction between those just above the line and those just below the line becomes to my mind essentially arbitrary and a matter of chance.

Q: And a lot of grievances in this regard.

CAMPBELL: A lot of grievances.

Q: Now did you get involved in TICs (time in class) that people felt were unfair?

CAMPBELL: Could, yes.

Q: You know, I didn't know until recently that there is a TIS as well, "time in service."

CAMPBELL: There is indeed, yes.

Q: Yes. And I didn't even know that. And it seems to me that you could really use some very good people through that process. Maybe you can through TICs as well.

CAMPBELL: Well, my impression is that there's a conversation going on now about the whole time in class issue and whether this is really quite the best way to --

Q: Is there a conversation as well about cones, advisability thereof and --

CAMPBELL: There certainly was when I was around, whether it's going around now I don't know. I've always been fairly conservative about it. It seems to me that you need political officers, you need economic officers, you need admin officers, and you need consular officers. And particularly upper midlevel and senior officers need to have a sort of depth of experience in a particular cone.

Q: Looking at discipline from a little bit different angle, sort of service discipline. I mean I was always one to think, "I signed up for worldwide availability and if you sign me some place unless there's a really good reason for me not to go there I salute and I go." Was that the approach taken in the DG's office?

CAMPBELL: Well, it was eroding and I -- some of this is a generational thing because my reaction was always just as you'd annunciated it, you know, I signed up for this, it's part of the deal, and unless there is a really, really big reason you salute and you go do it. But there are all kinds of cross pressures now. For example, the emphasis being put on family friendly policies makes it much, much more complicated. I mean in the era that you were talking about, which was actually true even when I came into the service, I came in 1975, the officer went where he was told to go, so did his spouse! I mean, you know, and she didn't have a whole lot to say about it, as a practical matter.

Q: And yes, that seems definitely to have eroded. Was the DG's office fairly amenable in this regard?

CAMPBELL: It was more so, it -- yes. Within the context of the time, it was more sympathetic to that than certainly I was. But again, what's DG's office concerned about? It's concerned about all the issues we've been talking about, it's also concerned about racial diversity, gender diversity, family friendly policies. Concerned about recruitment, attrition, I mean there's a whole host of factors here that were at play and the DG essentially had to balance them all.

Q: What about tandem couple issues? Did you get involved in those?

CAMPBELL: Yes, we all did in one form or another, sure. I mean how do you make that work?

Q: How does it work? Does it work?

CAMPBELL: There's several different answers here. Does it work? Mechanically, yes at the lower levels and in big embassies, because you have enough positions say for somebody that's an FS-4 that you can assign two people to the same mission. Let's throw into your mix disabilities or health issues as well. When I was in the DG's office one of my jobs was to chair an appeals board for people who were turned down for medical clearances. OK. Being HIV positive was a big issue then. And my view at the time was if you were HIV positive, no, you could not get a medical clearance and no, you could not come into the Foreign Service, because yes, you could serve in Toronto, London, or Paris, but it also means that somebody else can't serve there because the position is now occupied.

Q: Yes, worldwide availability.

CAMPBELL: Yes, exactly. And so you're restricting worldwide availability. Well, that eventually was thrown out by the courts and people who were HIV positive can come in, now.

Q: So we can't bring in, so we really can't adhere to the worldwide availability requirement anymore.

CAMPBELL: *(sighs)* As a practical matter.

Q: Because if you have someone -- well, maybe I should back up and ask the question. What are the rules regarding hiring people with disabilities? I remember one officer who was blind and --

CAMPBELL: I was his supervisor, in South Africa.

Q: Did that person come in blind or --

CAMPBELL: Yes, absolutely blind. And it was extremely difficult. . And one of the issues that I had to deal with is if he was unhappy he didn't come to me and he didn't necessarily go to the ambassador. He went to the congressman.

Q: (laughs)

Q: Well, the officer I was thinking about, and of course this is some years earlier, there was somebody who you had to be with him all the time to read cables to him and --

CAMPBELL: They now have machines that do that.

Q: They do now, yes.

CAMPBELL: Or did even then. So --

Q: This fellow went blind in the service, so that's a different sort of thing.

CAMPBELL: That to my mind that's very different.

Q: I agree, yes.

CAMPBELL: And the principle always was if you came in worldwide available and then something happened that meant you no longer were, the system accommodated you.

Q: I think we should do worldwide available and subject to, subject to service discipline.

CAMPBELL: Me too. And I think myself that, yes, service needs to be family friendly. But where you have to do a balance of factors, we probably should put a little more weight on service leads.

Q: Go or resign.

CAMPBELL: Well, what do you do about, the biggest problem I think we had when I was in the DG's office, which is spousal employment. I mean what do you do about it? I mean Foreign Service people first of all are now -- as many are as women as are men, which means spouses are the same. Foreign Service people marry people just like themselves, that means they have career ambitions, and no, they don't want to go sit by the swimming pool. How do you accommodate this?

Q: Well, we were talking about tandem couples and big embassies. There have been cases I guess where you try to get something in a nearby embassy like someone in Brazzaville, someone in Kinshasa.

CAMPBELL: Mm-hmm.

Q: Or one of the spouses takes a leave of absence for a while, leave without pay.

CAMPBELL: All those strategies happen. Yes. You send somebody to Amsterdam and somebody to Brussels, and they live happily in between.

Q: Are there major reforms that you see need to be made in our system?

CAMPBELL: Well, I think we have to do something about spousal employment. And I would pay more attention than perhaps we have to what the intelligence community does.

Q: What do they do?

CAMPBELL: Well, essentially they guarantee spousal employment as employment of last resort.

Q: Isn't that difficult though with -- I mean what if there's no job available or nothing to be done?

CAMPBELL: Well, or there are always jobs available but they can be very low level. I mean they can be the metaphorical equivalent of filing visa applications. So it's not really a solution, but I think we ought to take a look at it, we ought to also look a bit more sharply at what the Scandinavians do and, and what the Brits do.

Q: How are their systems different in terms of -- well, you mentioned -- of course you were talking about the British service, you were talking about language, but how did the Scandinavian and the British services differ from ours?

CAMPBELL: I don't know, but I know that spousal employment is not the issue to them that it is to us. So I don't know what they're doing.

Q: The, the, the issue of happy families, which is sort of what we're going to, also I guess affects the divorce rate. Do you have an impression of whether the service has a high divorce rate?

CAMPBELL: I tried to get that information when I was in the DG's office and I couldn't. And I was told that really the only way you could get it would be to run some kind of computer program that looked at changes in allowances.

Q: Did --

CAMPBELL: So no, I don't know.

Q: That's interesting. You'd think the department would know --

CAMPBELL: It does not.

Q: Is that a privacy --

CAMPBELL: I suspect so, but I don't know.

Q: Were you confronted with problems among personnel who had, you know, who were alcoholic, who had substance abuse? Did that come to your attention?

CAMPBELL: Sure, oh sure. But again, the department's quite good about that.

Q: Steer them more toward the medical people.

CAMPBELL: That's right, that's where it goes. And there's Chit Chat Farm up in Pennsylvania. There are facilities that exist, you know, to deal with this. Department does a good job with that.

Q: Yes, you can see where it would be a real hazard. The other things, were there other issues that you were concerned with that we haven't discussed? We talk about evaluation, we talk about promotion, we talked about discipline. Was there anything else in your portfolio?

CAMPBELL: There were always cats and dogs. But those are, those are the big ones.

Q: Was it the DG or maybe did you get in this too, where people come knocking at the door and say hey, it's time for me to me be an ambassador? Lot of lobbying?

CAMPBELL: Oh yes, sure. Less so for me than for the DG, but yes.

Q: Does lobbying work? Of course maybe you weren't in a good position to see if the DG, you know, went along with the proposal or not?

CAMPBELL: The issue becomes is the person selected because of lobbying, or is he selected for a host of other reasons? And I tend to think that the importance of lobbying and the significance of it is overestimated. If that makes sense.

Q: I know when I was in the Africa Bureau the system for ambassadorial appointments usually stuck pretty close to the model, you know, go -- the bureau presents a list of preferred people, goes to the DCM, I mean goes to the Deputy's Committee. And unless there was a political appointee who was interested, the rate of our getting the people we asked for was pretty high. Now, maybe that was because we were Africa and --

CAMPBELL: Well, but I think it was. I mean what do we have now? We have a political appointee in Mauritius, one in South Africa, and one oddly in Tanzania. That's it.

Q: Yes. Well, you know, at one point we had a political appointee in, in -- why am I having a -- not San Tome, but the other island country.

CAMPBELL: Oh, in Equatorial Guinea?

Q: Yes, we had a political appointee in Equatorial Guinea.

CAMPBELL: Well, we had one in Nigeria once too.

Q: Well, some of the big posts though you could see would be challenging and, and interesting. I guess we can move on to your next assignment. Why don't we mention what that is and then get ready for that next time?

CAMPBELL: OK. Well after the DG's office I went to Nigeria.

Q: As ambassador.

CAMPBELL: Mm-hmm.

Q: OK. So actually, since we've already started talking about it, why don't you tell me a little bit about that process with the undersecretary for management tells you you're going to go to Nigeria. Did this come out of the blue?

CAMPBELL: Not totally. A, there was a candidate to be ambassador to Nigeria that had gone through the process and was on track to go. He developed a health issue.

Q: Oh.

CAMPBELL: So he could not. So that meant that the process essentially had to be reopened. Grant Green knew that I did work in, that I had served in Nigeria before, that the DG had sent me out there to look at a particular issue, and so he asked me for a list of names of people who might be, might be good as ambassador to Nigeria. I came up with such a list, gave it to him. And he said, "Well, your name isn't on this."

And I said, "No, because I've never been an ambassador before and Nigeria is a very large country and I would think you would want somebody with more experience." At that time I was supposed to go off to be ambassador to Namibia. And I had been through the --

Q: So you had been picked --

CAMPBELL: I'd been picked for Namibia and that was all on track.

Q: Do you have any after thoughts about which one you would rather have had?

CAMPBELL: No, I made no beans about it. I said, "Of course I'd rather go to Nigeria. It's a vastly more important country, it's one I know, and sure."

Q: You mentioned going out there on a special assignment for the DG to look into some issues. Was it those issues that the undersecretary for management wanted you to address as going out as ambassador?

CAMPBELL: In general, yes.

Q: In general yes.

CAMPBELL: Yes.

Q: But had your earlier trip sort of led to the resolution of issues with the incumbent?

CAMPBELL: I'm awfully careful about cause and effect there *(laughs)*, you know.

Q: Perhaps you don't want to discuss this very much, but is there anything you can tell us about that particular assignment and what was involved, what you had to do? Perhaps without naming names?

CAMPBELL: General issues of morale, internal coordination. The situation was extraordinarily difficult. The embassy had been moved abruptly because the Nigerian government required it. From Lagos to Abuja the physical conditions were hopeless. So a mixture, mixture --

Q: Hopeless in Abuja or hopeless in Lagos?

CAMPBELL: Hopeless in Abuja. I mean --

Q: Because there's just not enough space.

CAMPBELL: There's just not enough space. I mean it was a collection of villas that were rented, you know, on the fly.

Q: And had very high prices.

CAMPBELL: Very high prices. And you know, housing was bad and --

Q: You had to live in an apartment, didn't you?

CAMPBELL: No, my predecessor did. You know, by the time I got there it was an utterly inappropriate 20,000 square foot marble palace on top of a hill with marble floors everywhere and it was owned by northern al-Haji. This place had a total of four bedrooms.

Q: (laughs)

CAMPBELL: One for the al-Haji, one for his two wives, and then the third bedroom was for the wife in training.

Q: (laughs)

CAMPBELL: These were -- I mean it was, let's just say it was at the opposite of extreme from a Shaker sensibility.

Q: (laughs)

CAMPBELL: We lease it, happily, we don't own it, thank goodness.

Q: But that's where you lived.

CAMPBELL: That's where I lived.

Q: I saw that house from the outside. It hadn't been occupied yet, but --

CAMPBELL: You did see it.

Q: Yes, I saw it. So this -- so you had -- anyway, you had perhaps some effect on helping straighten out the issues that existed.

CAMPBELL: Let's just say managed them.

Q: Managed them.

CAMPBELL: As opposed to --

Q: Managed them. And when you got there had the transition taken place to Abuja or --

CAMPBELL: No, that had taken place, that had -- and while I was there the new chancellery was built, it was finished. It was under construction when I got there. And that, that took care, at least at the time. The office difficulties continued for people like AID, CDC particularly, they had to be -- sort of speak off campus because there wasn't space enough for them. But for most those issues had largely been resolved.

Q: You'd had a good-sized AID program there.

CAMPBELL: Yes, indeed.

Q: And what was that focused on?

CAMPBELL: Well, increasingly it was focused on PEPFAR (President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief).

Q: On PEPFAR.

CAMPBELL: PEPFAR was introduced when I was there.

Q: Was Dawn Liberi there when --

CAMPBELL: She was indeed, she was my first AID mission director.

Q: Well John, let's stop here.

CAMPBELL: By the way, we got on extremely well.

Q: Yes. Well, Dawn's an old friend of mine. Don was deputy director for AID in, in Accra when I was there.

CAMPBELL: Oh, was she?

Q: She's quite a character. When I visited her in Abuja she had on one of her tables there a photo was taken of her and me together where we were at a Halloween party and I was Dracula and she was swooning as I was about to bite her neck.

CAMPBELL: *(laughs)*

Q: Anyway, so --

CAMPBELL: Dawn did very well in Nigeria.

Q: She did very well in Accra. And of course she's gone on to do some important --

CAMPBELL: She's ambassador somewhere now, isn't she?

Q: Pardon me?

CAMPBELL: Isn't she an ambassador?

Q: Yes, she's ambassador to Burundi.

CAMPBELL: Yes, well.

Q: Yes. And of course she had those tours in Iraq and Afghanistan.

CAMPBELL: I know, yes.

Q: So you went to, you went to Abuja in what year?

CAMPBELL: Went to Abuja in 2004.

Q: 2004.

CAMPBELL: Got there in May 2004. And left in August 2007.

Q: 2007, OK.

CAMPBELL: AF asked me to stay a fourth year, but at that point I declined to do it, I was ready to do something else.

Q: OK, well let's -- when we resume we'll talk about your embassy and your life as ambassador in Abuja.

CAMPBELL: And we will have to arrange the dates, which I can't do yet. I leave on Monday to go to Djibouti and Stuttgart --

Q: Today is December 2nd, 2014. We are resuming the oral history interview with Ambassador John Campbell. John, I think the last time we talked you were about to go to Nigeria as ambassador. Please tell us about the situation when you arrived and what were your challenges there.

CAMPBELL: When I arrived the embassy was housed in what I call five squalid little villas surrounded by a chain-link fence. A proper chancellery was under construction and in fact was finished about a year later. The ambassador's residence, which was leased -- thankfully we didn't buy it -- was a 20,000-square-foot marble palace on top of a hill that had a total of four bedrooms, two for the al-Hajjis' wives, one for the wife in training, and one for the al-Haji himself. In addition there was a guesthouse where over time, as housing got tighter and tighter. I put people like my drivers and my bodyguards who literally were having trouble finding, finding a place to live. When I got there about a third of the positions within the embassy were vacant. And the only senior officers present in the embassy -- and by embassy I'm also including the consulate in Lagos -- was myself, public affairs officer, and the DCM. So positions were routinely filled by officers in one or two grade stretches. There was almost no middle management at all. This meant that very junior officers were forced to assume responsibilities for which in many cases they were not yet equipped, without adequate supervision. Things got better. By the time I left, some three years later, most of the positions were filled. But they were still filled way under grade. By contrast, our sister agencies tended to ensure that not only were their positions filled but they were filled at grade. Therefore, very often other agencies had stronger personnel than State did. A particular area of weakness had to do with the administrative function where there was considerable turnover and in fact the first year I was there I think I had three TDY (temporary duty) admin counselors, who by the way were extremely could. If they hadn't have been, we would have had a major problem.

Morale was a big problem both in Lagos and in Abuja. The poor morale reflected the fact that for some years Abuja had been essentially betwixt and between. In other words, the

move of the embassy from Lagos to Abuja had been quite ragged. And even by the time I got there the Economic Section was still in Lagos. For much of this I fault the department. But not all of it. Part of the issue was the Nigerian government quite abruptly decided to require diplomatic missions to move to Abuja with very little advanced notice or planning. And in fact, the site reserved for the American embassy with virtually no consultation with the Americans was completely inadequate, it was far too small, didn't meet the security requirements. And sorting that out took a period of time before I ever got there.

Q: How did you deal with these internal management issues in the embassy?

CAMPBELL: Talk, talk, talk. I am a great believer in leadership by walking around. And I did a lot of walking. I had of course country team meetings, that goes without saying, but I also had regular meetings, like sometimes twice a day, with the defense attaché, the political counselor, the DCM, and with the leadership of other relevant agencies, particularly when things were getting hot. Junior officer morale was more difficult to deal with. It took some months before the DCM situation was sorted out. He took the lead there and I think did a good job. When I say it took some months to sort out, when I arrived in Abuja there was a DCM who was there whom I liked and whom I intended to keep on, but he developed a health issue and the department required him to leave, to my regret. That meant I had to find a recruit a DCM to come.

Q: How long was the gap?

CAMPBELL: I want to say three months, but I'm not really remembering very clearly.

Q: Did you pull some up from the staff as acting DCM?

CAMPBELL: Yes, yes, the public affairs officer, the only other senior officer in the mission. Lagos morale was somewhat different. Morale was equally bad, but the causes were more complex. Lagos is a city now with some 22 million people. Then it was presumably smaller. But choking traffic, virtually no infrastructure, sky-high crime rates, which reduced the ability of people to move around. Further, Lagos is cut off from basically the rest of Africa by a thick belt of jungle something like 100 miles wide. That means that when you're there it's very difficult to go anyplace else. Or rather, if you're going to go someplace else you have to fly. And that's, that's relatively expensive. A couple of other factors that in hindsight were interesting. One is if you were serving in a post that was once a embassy and now no longer is, there is a certain stepchild quality. A stepchild quality that, again, in retrospect I wish I'd paid more attention to.

Q: How did that manifest itself? Was it sort of internal struggles between people in embassy and people in the consulate general?

CAMPBELL: There was some of that, yes. But there was, there were other sorts of dysfunctional behavior. More so than when I had served there in, in the late 1980s.

Q: Now, the principal officer was a senior --

CAMPBELL: No, by no means. He was if I remember correctly a two.

Q: Really?

CAMPBELL: May have been a one, but I think he was a two.

Q: You mentioned security issues, aside from making sure that personnel took the normal precautions in a situation like that. What were you able to do, felt you had to do in Lagos and in Abuja in terms of security?

CAMPBELL: Well, in Lagos in those days, the security issues were much worse than in Abuja. For example, embassy officers for a long time could not travel on the mainland without specific arrangements being made with the RSO. Then there were the recurrent issues of -- don't laugh -- alarms. In fact, the single greatest deterrent to house invasions is a functioning alarm. The difficulty is how do you get people to turn them on? Big problem. And actually, not a superficial one. Because of course if you turn on an alarm and somebody moves around in the middle of the night for whatever reason, it sets it off.

Q: And the motion detector.

CAMPBELL: And the motion detector. This includes cats and dogs. So it's -- it was an issue of -- I think the technology is considerably better now than it was then. Most people, both in Lagos and in Abuja, lived in compounds. On balance, that was probably a good thing giving the fact that moving around was difficult. It meant people had a kind of built-in community. In a situation like that one of the key people is the CLO, the community liaison officer. Again, the number of people available to serve as CLO is more limited than one might think. One of the issues we had was actually keeping spouses at post. Very often they would arrive, but after six weeks of sitting around the pool they'd had it and they would go back to the United States. Particularly if there were no children.

Q: Were there any really nasty security incidents when you were there involving Americans?

CAMPBELL: No, not when I was there. There were before and there were subsequently, but not while I was there.

Q: Did you have other constituent posts?

CAMPBELL: No, that was it.

Q: Been reduced.

CAMPBELL: It'd been reduced to the two. Great mistake. We're still paying for it. When Abuja was established as the national capital, the consulate in Kaduna was closed. The point about the consulate in Kaduna was it was our window on the north, but it was also our window on Sahelian Islam. This is a very different function from what an embassy does, and an extremely important one. Further, since the embassy in Abuja did not process non-immigrant visas, northerners had to travel to Lagos to apply for a visa.

Q: Going back just a bit in terms of internal management, what's your overall view of the best way to establish relationships with the DCM and to use the DCM? And what did you actually do at your post?

CAMPBELL: His office was immediately adjacent to mine, both in the five squalid villas, and also in the new chancellery. I gave him the option to attend *all* of my meetings. I made it a matter of principle that there were no secrets. The other thing I did was I hope I empowered him by giving him significant responsibility without micromanaging. The other thing I did is praise him in front of the other members of the staff. Now, I was helped there because the -- my DCM, the one that eventually arrived, I had known for 20 years and knew and liked. I hadn't known him terribly well. He and his wife had been in my house probably twice and I had been in theirs twice in the course of 20 years. But still, he was by no means an unknown quantity. At that time I was not married and his wife was very good at community kinds of issues.

Q: In terms of this significant amount of responsibility that you gave him, was this primarily in terms of management or did he serve reporting functions?

CAMPBELL: It was primarily management. Because again, you've got to empower the political counselor and the economic counselor. You have to do that. So, so that was where the responsibility for oversight of the reporting rested. I also did not follow the policy that some ambassadors do of inquiring all embassy reporting to pass under my eyes.

Q: How did you make that distinction?

CAMPBELL: Basically by the seat of the pants, what the subject was. I also did a lot of the reporting myself. I did that mostly in first person cables. And then in addition, ever Saturday I drafted what I called a letter from Abuja, which was unclassified and was sent to a list of addressees that I selected. In other words, these were if I recall correctly faxed, so it was not a case of 150 copies of it going all over the department.

Q: Reporting that you did not see, did that go through the DCM before it went to Washington?

CAMPBELL: Yes, mm-hmm.

Q: So somebody at a senior level did see it.

CAMPBELL: Mm-hmm.

Q: What about reporting out of Lagos? Did that go directly to Washington?

CAMPBELL: It could. Most of the time the sensitive reporting would be sent up to Abuja first. It could, though.

Q: Did you -- how did you deal with this issue of keeping track of Sahelian Islam?

CAMPBELL: You didn't much. It had to be basically catch as catch can. The last couple of years I was there I was very fortunate in that I had as a junior officer an Arabic speaking practicing Muslim who was a graduate of Barnard and was a Foreign Service officer. Now a first tour officer, mind you. But she made some 50 different trips to the north and her religion for her northern interlocutors trumped her gender. And the result was that we had a channel into northern Islam that we had not had before, and I don't think we had afterwards she left.

Q: Were you getting pretty good reporting from neighboring posts, Niamey, N'Djamena?

CAMPBELL: No, not particularly. And not that there would have been necessarily anything wrong with it, but just that it wasn't particularly relevant. Again, we the federal government, including myself, were largely unaware of the Sahelian and trans-Saharan issues. What did we do? We dealt essentially bilaterally with states. Now, the fact that these states were largely artificial and that their, their governments commanded very little confidence from their own people, was not a reality that we particularly addressed?

Q: What were the issues that you needed to be primarily concerned with in regard to Nigeria-U.S. relations?

CAMPBELL: You could cluster them into two. The first was, it was a matter of U.S. policy that we were to do everything we could to support the process of democratization, that particularly meant elections. The other was the then-President of Nigeria, Olusegun Obasanjo, was extremely active in the AU (African Union), in ECOWAS(Economic Community of West African States), and also at the UN (United Nations) on dealing with regional conflicts. And in fact, it was during this period that Nigeria intervened, quite positively in Sierra Leone, in Cote d'Ivoire, and ultimately in Liberia where his willingness to accept Charles Taylor became a major lynchpin in the ending of the civil war there.

Q: And these were measures that you were including the Nigerians to take.

CAMPBELL: That's right. With respect to Charles Taylor, a change of secretary changed that. And largely because of congressional pressure, increasingly we were asked to press the Nigerians to turn Charles Taylor over to the international criminal court. This Obasanjo refused to do. He refused to do it on the basis that he was shown no evidence that Charles Taylor was violating the terms of his exile in Nigeria, and secondly, that the

fact Charles Taylor was in Nigeria at all was the result of an agreement made by a number of states. And therefore, one that he felt he could not break unilaterally. This over time became quite a contentious issue, particularly as congressional pressure on the department increased to do something about Charles Taylor.

Q: How did that story unfold in regards to Taylor and his ultimately being handed over?

CAMPBELL: Essentially what happened -- well, Obasanjo kept insisting that he needed evidence. There was evidence. The trouble was it was all classified and in forms that could not be shared with a foreign government. Eventually Charles Taylor sealed his own fate. What he did was he bolted, headed north towards the Cameroonian border with a female companion and I think it was 50 or 60,000 dollars in greenbacks. He was apprehended by the Nigerian Border Police. At precisely that moment Obasanjo was going to the U.S. And what was said was that a meeting with the president would be jeopardized if in fact Charles Taylor was not handed over to the international criminal court. Well, the fact that Taylor had bolted made it much easier for the Nigerians to do it, though they still didn't like it.

Q: What instruments of leverage did you have with the Nigerians, not only in this case but sort of broadly in trying to pursue your policy goals?

CAMPBELL: Not a whole lot. At that point we were buying a million barrels of oil a day from Nigeria. More to the point, Nigeria was providing large numbers of peacekeepers for UN and other peacekeeping operations where the administration either could not or would not provide peacekeepers. Peacekeepers were really as important as oil. Further, the Nigerians were quite active in a generally positive way at the UN or at the AU or in ECOWAS. In other words, arguably we needed the Nigerians more than they needed us. Balancing that somewhat was the fact that the United States is, and has been for a long time, quite popular in Nigeria, especially, especially in the south, which was Obasanjo's basic constituency. We see this still where a president, Goodluck Jonathan, tries to associate himself with President Obama because his Evangelical and Pentecostal base is very pro-American.

Q: Was Obasanjo president the entire time you were there?

CAMPBELL: He was.

Q: Did --

CAMPBELL: Well, up until about six months before -- seven months before I left. In other words, I was there for Yar'Adua's inauguration, got to know him a bit, and even had some contact with Goodluck Jonathan, who was then vice president.

Q: You mentioned democratization, these other issues we talked about. Was there any other big thing in U.S.-Nigerian relations that you had to deal with?

CAMPBELL: The biggest thing probably was Obasanjo's efforts to change the constitution that would enable him to run for a third term. Now, in Nigeria incumbents always win. So that if in fact he had managed to change the constitution, he in effect would have been set up for -- as president for a very long time, if not for life. Bush administration policy was quite clear, and that was to respect term limits. But it's tricky. It's tricky because of course any country has a right to change its constitution. My response was yes, but it depends how you change the constitution. If it's done transparently and following normal legal processes, that's one thing. If it's done through intimidation and by the back door, that is something else.

Q: How did you convey this message to the Nigerians and to --

CAMPBELL: Usually in speeches. Obasanjo never, ever acknowledged any efforts to try to change the constitution. Quite a shrewd move on his part, because the issue never came up. It also meant that, say, President Bush never had a opening to raise the issue.

Q: What about issues of corruption, diversion of oil money, you know, the plight of the people in the delta, et cetera? How did that play in our relationship and your role?

CAMPBELL: Not much. Awareness of how extensive corruption was was probably not as deep as it is now. Further, you're talking essentially about internal Nigerian matters. And after all, from the perspective of the U.S. interests, peacekeepers, oil, credible elections, were the kinds of things that the U.S. government could be concerned with, as opposed to what share of the oil pie goes to which particular region of the country.

Q: Did you get down to Enugu-Port Harcourt --

CAMPBELL: Oh yes, all the time. I traveled more or less constantly. And you could do that then.

Q: The Igbos always bending your ear about --

CAMPBELL: Oh yes.

Q: -- what's going on up north.

CAMPBELL: Oh, well what the Igbos were bending my ear about was to get the U.S. to establish a consulate in Enugu. That's what they want.

Q: And we used to have one.

CAMPBELL: We did indeed.

Q: I used to go. What position did you take on that?

CAMPBELL: That essentially the budget precluded it.

Q: That was just the fact.

CAMPBELL: That was fact, yes. I also think it would have been a bad idea, but I didn't go into that particularly.

Q: You did think it was a --

CAMPBELL: Yes, it'd be a bad idea. Yes. I mean where do you stop? I mean at one time we also had a consul in Ibadan.

Q: I remember.

CAMPBELL: And of course we had one in Kano.

Q: Yes.

CAMPBELL: We had one in Kaduna.

Q: Would you have been in favor of reopening a post in the north?

CAMPBELL: Well, yes, very much so. I thought that the closure of Kaduna was a mistake.

Q: A mistake.

CAMPBELL: I wouldn't, by the way, have reopened it in Kaduna. I would have reopened it in Kano. Kano's a much bigger city, much more important. And of course there's a proposal that Secretary Clinton approved for reopening the consulate in Kano. It's gone all the way through the interagency process, basically hasn't happened because of the immense costs involved for security. Then Benghazi, and now Boko Haram.

Q: Yes, I would expect that would really --

CAMPBELL: Yes.

Q: -- put some cold water on the idea.

CAMPBELL: Though in the Council Special Report that we issued last year and that I drafted, I include that as a recommendation and argue that if you can have a functioning consulate in Karachi or Peshawar, you can have one in Kano.

Q: Had Boko Haram or, or similar raised their heads while you were there?

CAMPBELL: They had. But in rather different form. Boko Haram, or what became Boko Haram, was essentially a commune adjacent to the railroad mosque in Maiduguri. And

the leader of it was Mohammed Yusuf, a charismatic mallam. But all the while I was there it eschewed violence. In other words, the tenets of Boko Haram, western education is evil, secularism is bad, the Nigerian state is fundamentally evil, you should have as little to do with it as possible, and as for Americans we all have horns and a tail. All of that was there, but not the violence. Boko Haram turned violent couple of years after I left, and it turned violent largely because of police brutality. There was a demonstration, the police then killed 800 members of Boko Haram, including Mohammed Yusuf. And in the case of Mohammed Yusuf's murder, which took place in 2009, it was captured on a cell phone camera that went viral over Al-Jazeera. You can still find the video. You don't actually see him being shot. What you see is him surrounded by police walking around with no shirt on. Then there's a cut and you see his body lying on the ground.

Q: Does that -- how much of that accounts for how virulent the movement has become?

CAMPBELL: Very much.

Q: And how really vicious it has --

CAMPBELL: Very much. And in fact, security service abuses and viciousness continue right up to the present time. Both Secretary Kerry and President Obama have raised it with Jonathan, to no effect. But at Giwa Bartsvkd in the north, Boko Haram broke into the barracks, rescued some of the people, told the other eight or nine hundred to -- who were being detailed there but not charged with anything, told them to go home. Well, the army, the police, the local militia came in, rounded them all up, and shot at least 800 of them.

Q: That was it. That's 800 in addition to the earlier --

CAMPBELL: Oh yes. We figure that using the Nigerian security tracker that the security services killed about a third as many as, as Boko Haram has.

Q: Do I understand correctly that there are factions of Boko Haram? It's not a unified movement?

CAMPBELL: That's right. What it has in common is this fairly weird salafist theology. Not just the sort of Saudi salafism, but rather theology associated with a 13th century imam whose blood thirstiness was in part stimulated by the Mongol invasion of Iraq. So you know, substitute the British and the Americans and the secular government in Abuja for the Mongols, and it all starts to sort of make sense.

Q: Do you have different groups? Is there a main body and then sort of some offshoots elsewhere?

CAMPBELL: Probably, but we know remarkably little about Boko Haram. Abubakar Shekau periodically issues videos and therefore he is the figure that is best known. But increasingly Boko Haram is essentially a grassroots rebellion against the Nigerian

political economy, hook, line, and sinker. And therefore, it tends to have strongly local origins, strongly local grievances. So that in some places, for example, they will kill any Christian they can find. In other places they seem much less interested in Christians and *instead* will kill Muslims who have sold out to the secular state.

Q: Is there any hope for resolution for northern Nigeria?

CAMPBELL: Yes, but it will take years. It will take a decade or so. It essentially would involve the conversion of a counterterrorism strategy into a counterinsurgency strategy with a particular focus on education, health, infrastructure, and so forth. That takes years.

Q: But to be implemented by whom?

CAMPBELL: Precisely. In theory, Nigeria is a federal system -- it isn't really -- but in theory it is. So that it's easy for people in the south to say, "Oh, Boko Haram is a responsibility of those corrupt northern governors who are part of the opposition anyway."

Q: I remember riding in a taxi one day with a Nigerian from southern Nigeria, he's an Igbo and a Christian, and there was violence going on. This was before you heard about Boko Haram itself, but still, you know, Muslims killing Muslims.

CAMPBELL: Yes.

Q: And his attitude was, "Let 'em do it. Let them kill each other off."

CAMPBELL: Absolutely, it's very common. Yes. The other thing is it's not all one-sided. In the center of the country -- and this was going on when I was there -- the area around Jos. Essentially you have a collision of Muslim-Fulani herdsmen with indigenous Christian Berom farmers. And a government, which is basically controlled by the Christian Berom. A consequence has been something approaching ethnic cleansing and at some periods of time the numbers killed in that area had been greater than those killed in the north. It gets almost no international attention at all.

Q: Doesn't sound like the Nigerian government is taking a very effective approach to this.

CAMPBELL: The Nigerian government is extremely weak.

Q: What can they do? Particularly in the face of, you know, these big headlining events like the kidnapping of the girls and --

CAMPBELL: Not much. And of course they don't do much. With respect to the Chibok girls, I think it's important to remember that kidnapping goes on continuously and that the only thing really special about the Chibok girls was their sheer number. So that when the Nigerian government is criticized for not responding to Chibok, the context is massive amounts of kidnapping going on all the time that they had been unable to

respond to. Chibok is interesting to me because Chibok in a sense reflects an American or European reading of something that was Nigerian. It occurred at the time of Mother's Day and of popular revulsion at what the Pakistanis were doing to limit female education. That was the optic of Chibok. If you're a Nigerian, your optic is quite different. Your optic is kidnapping is an ongoing aspect of the war in the north. Kidnapping, by the way, exists all over the country, especially in the south and in Lagos. But in the south it is purely mercenary. It's purely for ransom. And all kinds of people had been kidnapped. The mother of Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala, the finance minister, for example was kidnapped last year, kept in appalling conditions, was released presumably after her family paid a large ransom. Though everybody denies ever paying ransoms.

Q: So there's no real hope for the Chibok girls ever to --

CAMPBELL: No.

Q: -- get back.

CAMPBELL: No, not now.

Q: But you hear occasional announcements from the government, oh, we've reached a deal or there's a ceasefire or we're going to get them back, or we've got some of them back. Is that all for sure?

CAMPBELL: Some of it's show, some of it's confusion, some of it is the result of Boko Haram being highly diffuse, by which it is no means clear who has the power to negotiate about what. About two years ago former President Obasanjo tried to open a dialogue with alleged Boko Haram leaders. The following day the ostensible Boko Haram negotiators were both murdered—by Boko Haram!. So I tend to -- cynics tend to say that this latest round of negotiations was all invented in Abuja primarily for short-term political advantage looking towards the elections of February 2015. I myself think that's too cynical. I think the people on the government side really thought they were talking to Boko Haram. But they weren't.

Q: Well, this counterinsurgency strategy that you talked about doesn't seem to be very likely very soon.

CAMPBELL: Well, a really quite good counterinsurgency strategy was unveiled by the national security advisor – Sambo Dasuki is his name -- last April. And here and there there are signs of the beginnings of its implementation. Trouble is it takes a long time and it's not clear to me that Dasuki has the weight of the Jonathan administration behind him. Dasuki himself is a northern Muslim. He's not part of Jonathan's inner circle. The other thing about a counterinsurgency strategy is it costs a lot of money and there are not at least immediately the skimming off possibilities that a military operation has.

Q: In light of the extreme views, approaches, ideology of the people who do these really terrible things up in north -- even with the counterinsurgency strategy, wouldn't you be

faced with a situation where the people -- people who have perhaps more moderate views or who could be persuaded this isn't the way to go, situation where they could just be overwhelmed by the bad guys?

CAMPBELL: Possible. The central mosque in Kano was, was attacked last week, and something like 140 or 150 worshippers were murdered. It was a mixture of using bombs and, and also rifle fire. The central mosque in Kano is one of the iconic buildings of northern Nigerian Islam. And it immediately adjoins the palace of the emir of Kano who is normally ranked number two in the Islamic hierarchy. The emir of Kano is Lamido Sanusi, who was the governor of the central bank until he was fired by Jonathan after he said either 10 billion or 20 billion or 50 billion of U.S. dollars in oil revenue was missing from the treasury. Sanusi the day after the bombing in Kano essentially delivered a sermon in the mosque, which had been trashed, in which he said, "We Muslims cannot be forced to give up our religion." And what that does is it puts in stark relief the fact that among other things, Boko Haram is a manifestation of a civil war *within* Islam in the north. Because Dasuki is saying his Islam is the real Islam. Boko Haram is saying our Islam is the real Islam, and that *you* are all a bunch of infidels. And because you're infidels you deserve to die.

Q: So this is essentially a Muslim on Muslim --

CAMPBELL: Muslim, yes.

Q: And that's the solution. The moderates have to overwhelm the extremists at some point.

CAMPBELL: Not so easy.

Q: Oh no.

CAMPBELL: To be a moderate. Well, Boko Haram has quite deliberately killed emirs, mallams, and imams in areas which they have occupied and where people from those groups were seen as hostile to Boko Haram. It's interesting, the Shehu of Borno and the governor of Borno now live in Abuja.

Q: How much of the Boko Haram balance is directly against Christians?

CAMPBELL: Again, variably. There is a splinter group called Ansaru, which has recently resurfaced. It split from, for want of a better term, mainstream Boko Haram. Because it argued too many innocent Muslims were being killed. And in fact, it resurfaced about three days ago when it issued a letter of condolence to the victims of the central mosque attack. Because they're all Muslims of course. Ansaru is particularly vicious toward Christians. So for Ansaru the primary victims should be government officials, people associated with the government, because the government is evil, Christians, and secondarily, southerners who very often are Christians. For Shekau's Boko Haram, the targets are government officials because government is evil. But

secondly, infidel Muslims, Muslims who have sold out, and Christians come down the line.

Q: You mentioned the areas being occupied by --

CAMPBELL: Yes, about 20% of the territory of Nigeria is now under the control of Boko Haram.

Q: Well, that's fairly well identified so if there was a, was a movement by government forces they'd know where to go, they'd know who to attack. I mean it's not the sort of people sort of shifting around in the jungle or anything.

CAMPBELL: But that presumes that there is a military and that now hardly exists. The military routinely flee any fighting. They routinely are issued 30 bullets for a firefight, and when the bullets are gone they run. This, mind you, in a country where the defense budget is about six billion U.S. dollars. In terms of numbers, maybe 25,000 -- government says 60 to 70,000, but maybe 25,000. So you don't have a military in the sense that you had when I was ambassador there. Further, the U.S. had a very modest training program for Nigerians, mostly for peacekeepers. Extended a bit after the Chibok kidnapping. But the Leahy amendment precluded training of most elements of the Nigerian military because they rotated through the north and get involved in human rights abuses, which are never looked at by the Nigerian government. So the U.S. started training a new unit not tainted by Leahy. The Nigerian government, day before yesterday, ended that program abruptly and unilaterally.

Q: What is the religious and ethnic makeup of the military?

CAMPBELL: We don't really know. When I was there the military still was dominated by northern Muslims, as it had been in the late colonial period.

Q: Yes.

CAMPBELL: Under Obasanjo and then later Jonathan the upper reaches have almost entirely turned over and are now southern Christians.

Q: Would that not indicate there would be a little more dedication of the troops if they went up there, or are the enlisted men still Muslim?

CAMPBELL: The enlisted men are drawn from all over the country and there are any number of problems associated with that. You can start with the fact that they often are not paid.

Q: Is there a danger or likelihood that Boko Haram could move south, and I mean really south beyond this area they control?

CAMPBELL: Or south of Abuja. There have been, there have been a number of Boko Haram operations in Abuja, including one in a shopping center that I regularly patronize. In other words, right in the heart of official Abuja. Only a single episode in Lagos and it's hard to imagine a place where it'd be easier to blow up a building than in Lagos. And so the fact that they have not would indicate to me that they just aren't very interested in, in Lagos.

Q: Are they interested in sort of overwhelming the capital? Going after Abuja?

CAMPBELL: They are interested in destroying the government, in establishing a pure Islamic state in the north. How extensive that would be, they -- the rhetoric varies. Sometimes they talk about all of Nigeria. Other times they talk about much more limited goals. There is no Boko Haram manifesto. There's no political program. The only thing they have ever said in terms of goals is that their goal is the establishment of God's kingdom on earth through justice for the poor, by rigid implementation of sharia (Islamic law)_. Now, I would suggest that that's a religious formula; that's not a political formula.

Q: Tell me about your interaction with the department, other Washington agencies, while you were ambassador and what your role was in the policy? Not only in regard to extremism, but in general.

CAMPBELL: Now remember, when I was there extremism was not a particular issue. I left in 2007. The extremism becomes an issue really with the murder of Mohammed Yusuf in 2009. So that really wasn't an issue. The issues were credibility of elections, third term, and then cooperation with the Nigerians on broader African security issues.

Q: Did you set the pace in this or were you -- lot of people back in Washington very interested --

CAMPBELL: Set the pace implies a greater degree of interest in what was going on in Nigeria than in fact there was. In other words, the fact that when I got there it was -- a third of the positions were vacant, the buildings were temporary, they were a reflection of the fact that Nigeria simply wasn't very important in Washington's scheme of things. And of course that accelerated with the Iraq and Afghanistan wars.

Q: Was Washington really looking to you to tell us how important Nigeria was or wasn't?

CAMPBELL: No. I was looking to me to emphasize to Washington how important Nigeria was. And in fact, that is the whole point of the book I wrote. Nigeria is of strategic importance to the United States, it's in a bad way, we're not paying much attention to it. And that was a kind of theme of the time I was there. One assistant secretary for Africa always insisted on seeing me every time I was in Washington for at least an hour or hour and a half. Her successor not at all. So it varied, it varied tremendously, largely I think based on the personalities of the people involved more than any kind of deep seated policy issues.

Q: Apart from these conversations, was there sort of ongoing contact either through email or phone calls?

CAMPBELL: Oh yes. Oh yes.

Q: Did you feel that you were operating sort of under the umbrella of the general policy which allowed you to -- a lot of leeway to sort of take actions and tell Washington what you did?

CAMPBELL: Yes. Well, I should say yes and no. I never cleared speeches with Washington and I never got my wrist slapped for that. On the other hand, at least one individual at the National Security Council fussed at my DCM when he thought that I had gone too far on third term, even though all I had done was restate standard administration policy about respecting term lots.

Q: Why didn't he fuss at you instead of fussing at the DCM?

CAMPBELL: I don't know. I don't know. I mean I took that as a kind of intellectual cowardice.

Q: So there weren't any other incidents of your actions reproach being fussed with?

CAMPBELL: No. No.

Q: I would assume that, you know, the rule of ambassador's going to very much -- according to the interest in Washington, certainly -- it was certainly the case in my ambassadorships. Overall, how do you see the role of the ambassador in terms of managing policy, developing policy --

CAMPBELL: It's going to vary according to circumstance.

Q: Yes.

CAMPBELL: I mean, again, I need to reiterate. Washington did not regard Nigeria as not very important between 2004 and 2007, except as a source of peacekeepers and oil. On the other hand, Nigeria was big. Altogether there were something like 230 American positions between Lagos and Abuja. There was the thought that there was the potential for more economic links. This, by the way, is pre-Ebola, obviously. On my watch we introduced PEPFAR. PEPFAR absorbed an enormous amount of energy from the embassy because, though nobody really knew it at the time, in effect what PEPFAR required was rebuilding aspects of the Nigerian medical system. I mean public health had long since collapsed in Nigeria. So if you were going to embark on an extensive program to counter HIV/AIDS, you essentially had to create the indigenous institutions that will do it, both the Federal Ministry of Health but also the Nigerian NGOs. That includes things like teaching NGOs how to do double-entry bookkeeping.

Q: Did you have a sizeable AID mission there?

CAMPBELL: By the time I left, yes. Greatly increased by PEPFAR, huge CDC presence for example.

Q: Did -- you mentioned that when you arrived the representatives in the embassy from other agencies tended to be sort of at grade or certainly more senior --

CAMPBELL: Yes.

Q: -- than your staff.

CAMPBELL: I think they were all at grade.

Q: Did that present a problem for you?

CAMPBELL: No, not really, or only up to a point. And that is, I made it very clear to them and they responded very well, that they were mine. You know, they worked for me, they didn't work for anybody else. And so, because they worked for me I could make use of their abilities and talents to advance the particular agenda that we were pursuing. So not really. And I put a huge emphasis on collegiality, which meant everybody was talking to everybody else. And there was constant information sharing going on. So problem, no.

Q: And no problem in regard to their home offices sort of getting in the way of what you want to do?

CAMPBELL: No. You only have problems in my view with that if an ambassador is either not assertive or not clear. But if an ambassador is clear my, my experience was that other agencies fall right in step. I never had any trouble with the DoD for example.

Q: Was your DAO effective?

CAMPBELL: Yes, extremely effective. Her name was Sue Ann Sandusky. And she's a legend in West Africa. She'd been a DAO in a number of different places, including Liberia. Later ended up as dean of the Language School at Monterey and is now retired pursuing a PhD.

Q: Is there anything else that you'd like to reflect on about your time in Nigeria before we move on? And they'll be other opportunities.

CAMPBELL: I'm trying to think of how to summarize it. The first, the first is the shortage of resources colored everything. Not just budget, but particularly human resources. That colored everything, colored everything. And the other was the necessity for constantly harping on the importance of Nigeria and the need for Washington to pay attention to it.

Q: Would you care to speculate about the future of Nigeria as a nation, rival country?

CAMPBELL: Some of the issues that Nigeria has are shared by other African countries. One is a weak sense of national identity and a sense of national identity that is actually in decline, so that there's -- it's less now than, than was true when I first served there in the 1980s. What does this mean? I don't think it means that we can anticipate more Biafras or more South Sudans. It seems more likely what we can anticipate are more Kinshasas. In other words, a -- countries that remain as entities on a map, but one in which the central government and the central authority becomes increasingly less important and power shifts, in the case of Nigeria essentially, to states. Now, big difference. Shell used to game out what the future of Nigeria might be, and one of their scenarios was called "the road to Kinshasa." But there's a big difference. Nigeria doesn't have a Uganda or a Rwanda on the edge meddling in its internal arrangements. So I am not positing something as dire as what we've seen in the, in Eastern Congo. But I think that the general deterioration of, of, of governance, a shift in terms of internal travel from roads, which are declining, or seem to be declining everywhere, to air travel, but benefits only the elite. So there is -- what this tends to do is promote more localism if you like that I think was true over the past 20 years.

Q: Do cell phones have any role though in sort of pulling the country together?

CAMPBELL: I'm not sure. The figure, figure in Nigeria is that there are some 90 million cell phones. But what exactly does that mean? And I mean finally, how much fundamental impact have cell phones had on the United States? What have they *actually* changed? I mean yes, it's far easier to make telephone calls. But so what? Now, maybe quite a bit of what, I'm not sure. But it's, it's not self-evident it seems to me that they are transformative in the way, in the way say email is.

Q: I was thinking in terms of ease of communication, the guy up in the northwest talking to a relative down in the southeast.

CAMPBELL: But what happens if because people don't move around you don't have any relatives.

Q: So there's nobody to call (laughs)?

CAMPBELL: Yes.

Q: Good point. What about the role of the military in Nigeria and its future?

CAMPBELL: Well, what Nigerians are really frightened of, so much so that they won't even talk about it, is a junior officer coup. Because a junior officer coup would start out as a mutiny and it would almost by definition be extremely bloody. You know, Ghana's Flt. Lt. Rawlings_ and stakes on the beach, that kind of thing. They're really frightened of that possibility. And part of it is that nobody would know when it was going to come.

Q: Would they be in a position to take over in Abuja fairly quickly?

CAMPBELL: Junior officers? Who knows? Or you could take it over, but what does it mean to take over? I mean it used to be in the grand ol' days you could take over the radio and television station and you didn't need much else *(laughs).*

Q: Yes. So in 2007 you left Abuja. Where did you go next?

CAMPBELL: The University of Wisconsin as a visiting professor in international relations with a particular focus on Africa.

Q: This was not a diplomat in residence position.

CAMPBELL: No, because I had left the State Department at that point. I'd retired from State.

Q: Oh, you retired. Well, OK. Let's back up then. So you retired in 2007.

CAMPBELL: That's right, and then went to Wisconsin about a month later.

Q: So that was kind of in the works before you left.

CAMPBELL: Yes. The terms were I was paid half of the salary of a full professor and during the two semesters I was asked to teach one course in one of the two semesters. And that was a seminar on Nigeria. And while I was at Wisconsin, that's when I did the first draft of my book, Dancing on the Brink.

Q: Was this at the undergraduate level or graduate level?

CAMPBELL: Graduate level.

Q: Graduate seminar on Nigeria. This was just sort of an overall view, or did you focus on particular problems in Nigeria?

CAMPBELL: It was the -- the basic focus was on Nigeria since 1960. And it was essentially political developments.

Q: Political developments.

CAMPBELL: That's right. And I used it as a way of trying out a lot of the ideas that were in my book.

Q: Put your graduate students to work as assistants for the research in your book.

CAMPBELL: I had one that was paid for by the university, and that was his job was to, was to serve as a research assistant.

Q: So part of the expectation of the university was that you would produce this book?

CAMPBELL: No.

Q: It wasn't?

CAMPBELL: IT was not, no. It was something I did. The university's expectations were the one course, and then to be available for a resources for other classes. And I would be asked to appear in another class maybe once every two weeks or so, and then to talk informally to students about the Foreign Service and about international affairs. So I had regular office hours for that purpose.

Q: They were exploiting your experience as a Foreign Service officer.

CAMPBELL: As well, mm-hmm.

Q: And you had students come in and talk about a career in the --

CAMPBELL: Oh, absolutely. Yes.

Q: Did you do any formal presentations?

CAMPBELL: Yes, I did, a couple of them.

Q: So a little bit of a DIR role there.

CAMPBELL: But without reference to the State Department.

Q: Right, yes, yes, yes. You were there for a year?

CAMPBELL: I was there for nine months and I was then asked by the Office of the Inspector General to come back as a WAE to be a senior inspector.

Q: He sought you out at Wisconsin?

CAMPBELL: Well, I guess. But we had been talking -- I'd been talking to that office since the days I was a DAS in, in the director general's office.

Q: And you had some experience in inspections.

CAMPBELL: I did, yes.

Q: SO you came back to Washington to set up household and --

CAMPBELL: Well, I had retained my house in Old Town while I was at Wisconsin, yes. And so I led the inspection of Mexico City, actually of Mexico City and all the consulates there, and then with Dick Hecklinger did the inspection of Baghdad.

Q: Oh Lord (laughs). That must have been a challenge.

CAMPBELL: It was. It was. Never have I seen a place so badly managed.

Q: To the extent that you can let's talk about what you found, what recommendations were made, how things were done and should have been done or shouldn't have been done?

CAMPBELL: With respect to Baghdad?

Q: Respect to Baghdad.

CAMPBELL: Let's start with --

Q: Unless you want to start with Mexico City.

CAMPBELL: Well, with Mexico City there were far fewer problems. Actually, under the circumstances I thought the whole mission of Mexico was well run. What was really interesting about Mexico was that something like 20% of all junior Foreign Service officer past through Mexico.

Q: Is that right?

CAMPBELL: Because the visa demand is so huge, you see.

Q: What's the percent?

CAMPBELL: Twenty.

Q: Twenty percent?

CAMPBELL: Twenty percent. So that institutionally the mission in Mexico was very important *(laughs)* and what an absolutely magnificent country it is.

Q: Did the embassy and I guess the constituent posts have a policy or a conscious attitude toward dealing with these young people, that having their first experience, moving on --

CAMPBELL: Oh yes, junior officer mentoring was a very important dimension of what they're doing. Spearheaded of course by the DCM, but she got the message across to the constituent posts. And remarkably little discontent amongst junior officers.

Q: So you had high morale there.

CAMPBELL: Mm-hmm. Again, an intensely interesting country. Under the circumstances, well-resourced, certainly far better resourced than Nigeria had been. So that you, you had people who were able to keep, keep fairly reasonable hours. It was a good place.

Q: What was the approach of the OIG at that point? That you go in friendly and helpful --

CAMPBELL: That was the idea, yes.

Q: People didn't feel menaced or --

CAMPBELL: No, that was the idea. Yes, that's right, mm-hmm.

Q: And did you kind of take to this? I know you'd had the earlier experience inspecting in Nigeria. But this is something that you enjoyed and found challenging and --

CAMPBELL: Very much so. And I would have stayed, except that work is WAE (when actually employed). Whereas when the Consul asked me to apply, the position paid a fulltime salary, and it's fulltime work.

Q: Yes, I know how that goes. So onto Baghdad. Was this right after your inspection in Mexico City?

CAMPBELL: About three months after, yes, yes that's right. Well, in other words, we came back, wrote up the inspection report, and then began the reparations to go to Baghdad.

Q: OK, so in Baghdad -- now, this is well beyond the day s of the CPA and all this. You have an embassy set up there and --

CAMPBELL: Well, yes and no. It was in the middle of the policy debate in Washington over what our presence in Iraq over the long term was to be. You know, how many consulates were there going to be, would there be a permanent military presence. All of those questions were unanswered because they were still being thrashed out here. Ambassador Crocker left while we were there, returned to Washington because essentially health issues, you know, so his DCM was chargé.

Q: Who was his DCM, do you recall?

CAMPBELL: I don't recall. She later became ambassador to Sri Lanka.

Q: Oh, OK. Well, that must have been very, very difficult for the embassy itself to be in that kind of an anomalistic situation.

CAMPBELL: Well, it was, it was very difficult for it. And -- how to articulate it. There were, if I remember correctly, 70 armored vehicles sitting in a parking lot and nobody really knew who ordered them or what they were to be used for. Now, mind you, in Nigeria I think we had two and we had to scramble to get them, you know? In other words, the -- it, wasn't waste exactly, certainly nothing, nothing seriously was being stolen. It's not that kind of thing. It was rather the sort of chaos that characterized so much of what we did in Iraq. You remember the whole of government approach? That meant you had offices in Baghdad from domestic agencies. Those people had never served abroad before, they didn't really know what an ambassador did. Then there was the physical hardship, which was in my view far worse than it needed to be, gross overcrowding. We were in -- they had finished blocks of apartments, basically one-bedroom apartments. And we inspectors were -- well, Dick and I had one apartment. I slept in the living room, he had the bedroom. Some of the other inspectors it was four to the apartment, and many of the personnel were four to an apartment, two each room.

Q: One pictures the green zone as sort of being more luxurious than that.

CAMPBELL: Not remotely.

Q: No.

CAMPBELL: Yes, not remotely.

Q: Were there any security threats at that point, or were they well past that?

CAMPBELL: Not well past. I think the previous one had been maybe three or four months before we got there.

Q: How much of this problem -- certainly, you know, the uncertainty and the lack of resolution must have been very, very difficult. But how much of it was turnover in personnel?

CAMPBELL: There was that. There was also far too much personnel, which meant people were tripping over each other. And the relationship between the military and the civilians, I don't think has ever really been addressed in any sort of lessons learned way. The myth at the time was that State and Defense got along beautifully. Well, in fact, Crocker and Petraeus did get along beautifully, but when you got below that it rapidly deteriorated. Differences in style. This huge, gigantic military presence. That meant if you were briefing the general, there would be four or five different military types involved in the process of producing the note card for the briefing. Each one of whom would be reverting back to the State political officer. He was going over the same material eight times, or seven times, and exhausted, of course.

Q: So you were looking at this from the point of view of the state political officer, you weren't inspecting the military side --

CAMPBELL: No, because we had no authority over the military.

Q: No, no. Did you have -- you mentioned there were too many people in each other's way.

CAMPBELL: Far too many.

Q: Did they not have enough to do?

CAMPBELL: They didn't have enough meaningful work, but they were wildly over tasked with stuff, basically reflecting the anxieties in Washington. I mean I've forgotten what it was, it was either every Wednesday or ever Friday, Ambassador Crocker would have a phone call with President Bush.

Q: Really?

CAMPBELL: Mm-hmm.

Q: Did the -- in terms of what we were doing, did you, did you take a look at sort of the assistance effort beyond the embassy, the provincial reconstruction team --

CAMPBELL: We did.

Q: Oh you did, did you? You would go out and you took a look at what they were doing?

CAMPBELL: Well, we had a large inspection team and our inspectors visited five or six of them if I recall correctly?

Q: Who was the head of the team?

CAMPBELL: Dick Hecklinger and I were co-heads.

Q: Co-directors, I see. What was your impression of the utility of having these efforts like the PRTs (provincial reconstruction team)? Have you seen the book <u>We Meant Well</u>?

CAMPBELL: No. I should take a look at that, yes.

Q: Take a look at it, because it's a cynical but I think rather insightful view of the efforts there.

CAMPBELL: I will take a look -- I'd be, I'd be interested. By the way, our inspection report is right online, anybody can look at it. You know, I mean -- what did I think about PRTs? Basically that they were a response to a generation of running down AID.

Q: Really?

CAMPBELL: Yes. That in other words, a fully functioning AID, an AID that had the resources to do what it's supposed to do would in effect have managed what PRTs did, probably done it better.

Q: Had real issues there of course between the role of civilians, the role of the military, the security issues as to how --

CAMPBELL: Right.

Q: -- travel and the interaction with the local populations. What about the -- you talked about this chaos in general. What about the actual operating of the embassy itself? I mean Crocker's a very experienced, talented officer.

CAMPBELL: But ill at the time.

Q: He was sick at that time.

CAMPBELL: Yes.

Q: How was that going in terms of managing the embassy?

CAMPBELL: Well, the question leads out the elephant in the living room. And the elephant in the living room was the military presence, which was huge. Multiple times that of the civilian presence. The military provided the water, the electricity, even the food. The dining halls were all, were, were all military. Food was quite high quality by the way.

Q: (laughs) Kellogg Brown and all those folks.

CAMPBELL: Yes, that's right, that's exactly right, yes. And then the sort of dark side, that is to say contractors warehousing third-world labor for use with sort of cutouts, in other words State would have a contract with DoD, DoD would contract with Contractor A who had a contract with Contractor B who would be involved in labor practices that would not pass muster. But State's contact was with DoD, and that was fine.

Q: Well, any of our readers can take a look at that inspection report.

CAMPBELL: They can.

Q: Do you recall in particular any recommendations that emerged?

CAMPBELL: Looking back on it, the recommendations -- I think this is often the case with inspection reports -- the recommendations are too technical and not broad enough. In other words, when you have a team that goes in and looks at an embassy operation, sure, there are concrete suggestions to be made about how the budget and fiscal office

works. Fine. But it will also be a great opportunity to take a look at the extent to which a diplomatic mission is actually advancing U.S. interests. You know, take a broader view. The closest you get to that I think is evaluation of the ambassador.

Q: IS there anything else you'd like to say about that time of inspecting Baghdad?

CAMPBELL: That I found the work *very* satisfactory.

Q: How long were you there?

CAMPBELL: Interminably, like six weeks. It may have been four. It was shorter than --

Q: So you came back from Baghdad and at some point the council made an offer you couldn't refuse?

CAMPBELL: Mm-hmm.

Q: Tell me about that. How did that come about?

CAMPBELL: The number of people who follow Nigeria is fairly small and one of them is a council member up in New York and she said, "The council's having real trouble filling the t he Ralph Bunche _ chair. Why don't you go ahead and apply?" And I did. And the director of studies then was a person whom I had hosted in Abuja when he came out to monitor elections. And I'd known him before as well. And I was asked to submit a resume, but I was also asked to submit the first draft of my book, which went to Richard Haass the director. And he liked it. And so, I came.

Q: So this is what, 2008, 2009?

CAMPBELL: This would have been -- I've been here now five years, 2009.

Q: 2009. How did they lay out your responsibilities in this position?

CAMPBELL: The how is a contract letter, which is issued every year. You have no secure of tenure at the council. You can leave on two-weeks notice and they can fire you on two-weeks notice.

Q: (laughs) I see.

CAMPBELL: And my responsibilities haven't changed much. Four round tables a year, availability to the press. This is a lot of presswork, I've done three interviews this morning, for example.

Q: Really?

CAMPBELL: Yes. BBC World Service, a couple of journalists. You make yourself available for, for public speaking. You write articles. You always have to have a book in process. My current one is on South Africa. I do the daily blog, but I started that after I'd been here about a year, so that wasn't part of the original stuff. Things like the security tracker.

Q: So your mandate is all of Africa?

CAMPBELL: Yes. So what I do is I do Nigeria and South Africa. And then I will put out fires. For example, I will turn myself into an expert on Mali. I knew something about Mali. I refused to turn myself into an expert on CAR (Central African Republic), because I don't know anything about it. I don't. I mean I don't know anything about it at all.

Q: If the council wanted to do something on Kenya or do something on CAR would they then temporarily bring in somebody to --

CAMPBELL: Yes, that's what usually happens. And they do that fairly often. Not particularly on Africa, but on other subjects.

Q: Your agreement from the beginning would be -- was Nigeria and South Africa?

CAMPBELL: No, never defined that way. The Council is very old-fashioned in lots of ways. So there are not really the equivalent of a work requirement statement. I mean sort of is, with the, the four, the four roundtables a year and that kind of thing. But the language is very general.

Q: Is there an evaluation? Formal evaluation?

CAMPBELL: Yes and no. There is an activities report that you submit every six months and you meet with the director of studies over it. But you draft the activities report, which in my own case, it basically is drawn from my calendar. So you can break down these press interviews, these speeches, these seminars, that kind of thing, and then a list of what you published.

Q: You got a pretty full schedule, particularly dividing your time between New York and Washington.

CAMPBELL: That's not really much of an issue.

Q: Not a problem?

CAMPBELL: No. I usually go to New York on Sunday afternoon at 1:00 after church. I'm am a communicant of a parishioner in downtown Washington. I get to New York at about four. I come back to Washington depending on what council obligations I have back here. But I try to keep them basically to Thursdays or Fridays.

Q: Are many of your colleagues former Foreign Service people?

CAMPBELL: No, they're not. And in fact, now there's not one.

Q: Really?

CAMPBELL: Not out of the 70 or so I have met.
Q: Seventy?

CAMPBELL: Yes, there's not one. There are some political appointee types. But Foreign Service no. And one senior official at the Council one time told me that Foreign Service officers did not do well at the council.

Q: Really? Maybe it's because of the, sort of the publishing requirement perhaps. Well, the -- how do you evaluate the role of the council? If the council weren't around would somebody else be doing it? Do you fill an important gap?

CAMPBELL: Yes, and in fact, there are plenty of them around. There's CSIS (Center for Strategic and International Studies), there's USIP (United States Institute of Peace), which of course has government funding. The great advantage the Council has over its rival think tanks is that it's forbidden to take any money from the federal government at all. No contracts of any sort. That gives us immense credibility in dealing with the federal government.

Q: Why is it that -- maybe it's not true anymore, but over time I think it's been true that you have certain elements in our body politic that views the council with great suspicion and somehow manipulative of our policies and our future behind the scenes. Why is that?

CAMPBELL: Well, I think part of that is the Council's origins. It was founded by the Rockefeller family in 1921 basically to counter American isolationists. And the Rockefellers established the council at the same time they were restoring the cathedral Reims from war damage and the Palace of Versailles. So the internationalist agenda has been there from the very beginning. Then in the 1930s the council functioned more or less -- had many of the same functions of policy planning than it does now, for the State Department. But again, a completely informal arrangement because the council accepts no money from the federal government. The existential crisis in the council's history was the Vietnamese War, which it sort of ripped it apart. Rockefeller money still is important, but the sources of funding are broader. Lots of corporations are members. There are eight or 900 private citizens who are members. Its journal, Foreign Affairs, actually makes a profit, which is interesting. The absolutely magnificent facilities in New York are regularly rented out for things like bar mitzvahs or weddings or whatever. I mean there's a real revenue stream there.

Q: You mentioned ripped it apart. Do you want to elaborate on that?

CAMPBELL: I don't know very much about it, but I know that it was very bitter. And I presumed it paralleled what was going on in the State Department at the time.

Q: The individuals that are members, eight or 900 individuals, what do they get out of it?

CAMPBELL: Access to round tables, the journal, access to speakers. That's it primarily.

Q: You never hear much about the Trilateral Commission anymore, do you?

CAMPBELL: No, but sometimes it's identified with the Council.

Q: Yes, I was wondering about that too. I take it without justification. It's often viewed with suspicion.

CAMPBELL: Yes, that's right.

Q: Well, it seems you fit very well -- even though there's a dearth of absence of Foreign Service people, what is the role of the political appointees that you mentioned? Are they doing the same kind of thing that you're doing?

CAMPBELL: Mm-hmm. For example, Tim Geithner left Treasury, went to the council, did his book while he was there.

Q: I see. These tend to be more looking at, you know, substantive issues rather than area issues.

CAMPBELL: That's right.

Q: Not the area issues, but substantive --

CAMPBELL: And of course right across the hall is Elliot Abrams, for example.

Q: Ah, I see, OK, so you're moving -- it's an elite company.

CAMPBELL: Or at one time elite company.

Q: The -- you seem to be having a good time at the council.

CAMPBELL: Oh yes, I like it.

Q: So you'd like to continue doing this for a while.

CAMPBELL: Yes.

Q: Do you envisage sort of a third career? Academics it seems would fit right in. Go back to the role of the professor and get some patches on your elbows and smoke a pipe?

CAMPBELL: Yes, yes. If I were going to do that I'd rather do historic preservation.

Q: Here in the U.S.

CAMPBELL: Here in the U.S., yes. I'm restoring a house that was built in 1770 in Old Town. It's three blocks from Christ Church, diagonally across from the Carlisle House. My house was at one point the Bank of Virginia *until* the Bank of Virginia built a purpose built building also diagonally across the street in about 1816. And you can see, you can see in the basement wall where the wall was knocked out to get the vault out of the basement of my house into the new, the new bank. And also, I think material, material evidences of the past are extremely important. I think they're extremely important to a sense of national rootedness and identity.

Q: Well, would this involve your participation in organizations that forward this, so there's of course the Trust for Historic Preservations --

CAMPBELL: Oh, I do participate in those.

Q: Oh, you do?

CAMPBELL: Oh yes. The Colonial Williamsburg Foundation.

Q: Well, a very worthy third career.

CAMPBELL: Well, again, it depends what you mean by third career. I would not anticipate when I leave the council being salaried in anything.

Q: Well, still putting a significant amount of energy into it.
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CAMPBELL: You might find, you might find this interesting. I have really had only three employers in my life. The first was Mary Baldwin College, the second was the State Department, and the third is the council. At the college and in the State Department all matters of salary are absolutely transparent. Not the Council.

Q: Well John, looking back at your time0 in diplomacy and I guess certainly you're still involved in diplomacy with your new book on Nigeria for example and the impact that can have on policy, how would you say from the time you entered maybe up to the present day diplomacy has changed, the way we go about it, the --

CAMPBELL: More bureaucratized.

Q: More bureaucratized.

CAMPBELL: More bureaucratized, much less focus on substantive knowledge, a great deal more focus on administrative and management skills and issues, a significant erosion

of in the -- how to put it -- in the notion of diplomats as a profession with strong similarities to law, medicine, and the clergy. And an evolution into being essentially more bureaucratic, and, and diplomats being bureaucrats.

Q: What about diplomats being managers? You mentioned management, but it's one thing to make sure the motor pool's running, but another thing to go out and manage programs. I think that really came to the fore under Condoleezza Rice. Reporting is less important than getting out there and implementing and managing.

CAMPBELL: Yes, but you see my problem is that is what does that actually mean? And too much of managing programs is essentially fulfilling the program's bureaucratic requirements, which are related primarily to budgetary issues. IN other words, in other words, say you're running an American corner in Kano. Well, we had one there. Rightly, I think, we used a local academic to run it. That American corner never takes place of regular and frequent visits by embassy officers to the second largest city in the country.

Q: Really?

CAMPBELL: Not if you really want to understand what's going on and not if you really want to have some impact on how, on how things -- on what happens.

Q: You mentioned the erosion of professionalization. What role is there for political appointees, and how does --

CAMPBELL: I'm going to be very heretical. Not much.

Q: Not much.

CAMPBELL: Not much.

Q: Self-inflected wounds we're talking about?

CAMPBELL: Yes. I mean -- and here I'll review carefully the transcript, what I'm about to say.

Q: Yes, yes.

CAMPBELL: Well, I mean many of these people are friends of mine and I don't mean to be deliberately insulting. But I cannot say that I ever worked for an effective political ambassador.

Q: Really?

CAMPBELL: No. I mean many of them were perfectly nice people, there were lots of work-arounds. With the exception of one, they weren't abuses. One was. The -- I mean I know all about the argument that a political ambassador has access to the White House.

Wrong, it's not true. In, in, in practically all cases. I think the model that the British follow, and to a certain extent the French do, where at most there's one or two political appointees is about right.

Q: One of the concerns about the people who are talking now about professionalization or sort of getting back on track is that sometimes the political appointees at a lower level, not at the ambassadorial level, come in as non-career but end up getting to convert into positions that keep them in the department for a long time. So that's a problem as well.

CAMPBELL: It is a problem as well.

Q: Do you see any solutions here? CAMPBELL: I think over time, yes. I see a direct, a direct parallel with the professionalization with the British military where, you know, in the 1820s you could buy a commission and be virtually anything. Well, by the 1870s, no. I mean the Crimean War took care of that. And I think there's a somewhat similar process underway now. It'll just take a while.

Q: In terms of changes in diplomacy during your time. What about the role of communication? Had sort of the 24-hour news cycle taken over already, or how did this, email, all of those factors play a role?

CAMPBELL: Oh, I think, I think the problem with the 24-hour news cycle, which burst upon us about 20 years ago with CNN?

Q: Yes, that's --

CAMPBELL: About 20 years ago, don't you think? So I would have been in the service for a bit more than 30 -- or bit more than 10 years at that point. What that did was it accelerated the shortening of time spans for everything.

Q: Yes.

CAMPBELL: Now, we're already, we were already heavily in that direction because we're Americans and it's a very American thing. You can talk about the congressional, every two years you have an election. So, but I think the 24-hour news cycle has accelerated that process.

Q: Well, in view of the critique of where we are in terms of bureaucratization, et cetera, what is to be done? Is there a way of turning this around?

CAMPBELL: Yes, or at least ways of improving it.

Q: Is there a bit of a swing back to reporting?

CAMPBELL: Again, I've been out of the State Department since 2007 or 2009. So I don't really know. What I would do if I had a magic wand is I would rethink the, the

recruitment and examination function. I don't think the current recruitment and examination process got us the right people and I think it just needs a rethink from top to bottom. I think we probably also need to rethink the promotion system, which I was in charge of at some point. So some of those sins are my own.

Q: Security issues have become more important --

CAMPBELL: They have.

Q: -- the last 10 years or so, maybe even longer. More unaccompanied posts --

CAMPBELL: Many more. With all the implications for family life and so forth. And then the whole, the whole transformation of gender relationships where spouses of Foreign Service officers, be they male or female, continually have professional aspirations that are the same as their spouse and remarkably little opportunity to develop them.

Q: In your time how was one best able to sort of achieve the right work/life balance?

CAMPBELL: Well, I think few of us did. Very few of us did. Certainly I didn't.

Q: And how did this have an effect on others, you or your work life -- I guess you were working more than you were living.

CAMPBELL: That's right. Yes. Or as a friend of mine, both he and his spouse are friends of mine. And one time in my hearing she said to him, "I get so Goddamn tired of playing second fiddle to the Department of State, I don't know what to do." Well *(laughs)*, you know, I, I can sort of see that.

Q: What would you advise an aspirant to the Foreign Service, somebody, maybe one of these students at Wisconsin or others who are thinking of coming in? Would you advocate, would you -- what would you tell them about life in the Foreign Service that they needed to know to succeed? Or maybe not go in, maybe that might be the advice --

CAMPBELL: No, no. No, I found it, I found it a thoroughly satisfactory career. I would never advise against going in. Set boundaries, first point. Second point, don't be consumed by careerism. That be very careful over making assignment choices based on what's going to get you promoted fastest. I would also advise them to, to buy a place in Washington as soon as they can afford it. I mean really, I mean this is where you're going to be, so.

Q: Good advice. Well, overall John, as we draw this oral history to a close, is there anything you'd like to add about your own career, about diplomacy, about any of the issues that you worked with?

CAMPBELL: To me public service is very satisfying. I'm quite happy to have spent my professional life doing it. My criticisms of the system are that it too often gets in the way

of us doing, doing our very best work. Again, if I could wave a magic wand it would be to engender a greater culture of trust than we presently have. We had a lot more of it 30 years ago than we do now. And I think that decline, which is characteristic I think of American society in general, and is much more litigious, much more concerned about, about rights as opposed to obligations. But it impacts on the service.

Q: What about the way America is viewed now and --

CAMPBELL: Vastly more negative than was the case 30 years ago. And one might say rightly so. I mean there's, you know, there was Vietnam, Iraq, Afghanistan. And things that are major achievements, the Civil Rights revolution, changes in gender relations, the sheer, the sheer freedom that Americans have, are not the sort of things that become immediately apparent to people who are living overseas.

Q: And we've done things which I think undercut the view of the Americans abroad, and I think maybe even inside the U.S. I was watching a film the other night in which Denzel Washington has the opportunity to make this speech about how Americans don't torture and if we, if we did the other guys would have won, you know?

CAMPBELL: Well, of course we did torture.

Q: Well, we did. I hope we never do again. John, thank you very much.

CAMPBELL: Thank you very much.

End of interview