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

# AMBASSADOR JAMES F. CREAGAN

*Interviewed by: Charles Stuart Kennedy*
*Initial interview date: May 2, 2013*


## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Peruvian Way to Socialism
Military Tensions
Intra-Embassy Activity
Civilians vs Military

Naples, Italy 1977-1980
Consul for Political/Economic/Commercial
Christian Democrats & Communists
Red Brigades
The Camorra
US Navy and Naples

Department of State, Washington, DC 1980-1982
Italian & Vatican Desk Officer
Creating US Embassy Vatican
Secretary Haig and White House
State Visits/Close Relations

Lisbon, Portugal 1982-1986
Political Counselor
Old Terrorism
New Embassy
Lajes Base Agreement
Portuguese Diplomacy
Presidential Visits

Brasilia, Brazil 1986-1988
Political Counselor
Diplomatic Life in the New city
Transition from Military Rule
New Constitution
Drugs

Holy See, Vatican City (Italy) 1988-1990
Deputy Chief of Mission
The Pope and the Collapse of USSR
Central America & Issues
Mediation of Mozambique Civil War
Presidential & Other Visits
Noriega Case

Sao Paulo, Brazil 1991-1992
Consul General
Gulf War I
American Chamber

Brazil Politics & Lula
Vice Presidential & CODEL Visits

New York, USA 1992
USUN Senior Advisor for Latin America

Rome, Italy 1993-1996
Chargé & Deputy Chief of Mission
Somalia
New Ambassador for New President
Embassy Management
Dealing with Berlusconi & Others
Cooperation with Italy on Third Countries
Bosnia
Presidential Visits

Tegucigalpa, Honduras 1996-1999
Ambassador
Economic & AID Issues
Hurricane Mitch
US Effort to Save Lives & Future
Interagency & NGO Cooperation
US Military Role
Presidential Visits
Retirement

Rome, Italy 1999-2005
University President
Running a US/Italian Institution
Work with Three US Embassies in Rome

San Antonio, Texas, USA 2006-2016
Professor at the University of the Incarnate Word
Professor at St. Mary's University
"Represent" US Foreign Service in Community Work

La Paz, Bolivia 2009
Chief of Mission/ Chargé
Back on duty
Leading Embassy after Ambassador PNG & DEA Expelled
Evo Morales & Team

**INTERVIEW**

*Q: Okay, today is the 2nd of May 2013 with James F. Creagan, C-R-E-A-G-A-N. What does the F stand for Jim?*

CREAGAN: Francis

*Q: Francis. This is being done on behalf of the Association for Diplomatic Studies and Training and I am Charles Stuart Kennedy. Jim and I are old friends having served together in Naples back in the late '70s early '80s. Well Jim let's start at the beginning when and where were you born?*

CREAGAN: I don't remember, but it is great being here with you Stu. I was born in Elyria, Ohio, and raised in Lorain, Ohio. So the first 18 years of my life were lived in Lorain, Ohio, i.e. Steel Town, U.S.A. It's on Lake Erie, west of Cleveland. The local Lorain High School song had lyrics that went something like, 'On the shores of old Lake Erie, where the coal and iron meet.' That is because we had coal coming by rail from the Pennsylvania coal yards, and the iron ore coming down by the big ore boats from Minnesota thru the Great Lakes to our massive steel mills.

*Q: Let's take it first on your father's side. Where did the Creagans come from what do you know about them?*

CREAGAN: Creagans were "lace curtain" Irish or so they say – meaning that they came over before they had to and before the great famine of the 1840s. They came thru New York. Some of them became indentured servants to fine families up the Hudson River and some then made their way West to Southern Michigan. Michigan had just become a state not too many years prior and was good open territory good for farming.

*Q: Do you happen to know where the Creagans came from in Ireland?*

CREAGAN: They sailed out of Cork, so we think, and there is a James Creagan whom I called when I was over there a few years ago in Limerick; so it is that Limerick area, South Western Ireland. Then they sailed from there and then, as I say, became farmers in Southern Michigan. There are still Creagans in places like Decatur, Michigan and a cousin, another James Creagan, runs the bank there. That's the one side of the family. On my Grandmother's side, the name was Denise, it was the same area of southern Michigan. Towns like Paw Paw. One of my uncles and Dad's cousin, Malcolm Denise, later became Vice President of Ford for Labor relations. He was the person who negotiated with the autoworkers union (UAW) and Walter Reuther. My granddad, one of 14 children, became a pharmacist and moved to Grand Rapids where my Dad was born in 1911. He grew up in Grand Rapids. He went to school there and a fellow schoolmate was Gerald Ford, later congressman from Grand Rapids and US President. I remember talking with President Ford about his growing up in GR. Football was important, and while we were sitting in the Raphael rooms of the Vatican in the late 1980's, we discussed playing football and our respective knee injuries and all that. Both Dad and Ford went off to the University of Michigan. My dad was a 1933 honors graduate in Mechanical and Electrical engineering. It was the depth of the Depression, but Dad got a job at US Steel

in Lorain, Ohio. He noted that when he arrived in Lorain he had 50 cents or so left to his name; so he walked the five miles from bus station to plant to report to work at the Mill. One reason I always say the mill is because it was central to life in Lorain. It had up to 15 thousand workers, and we always said it was the largest pipe mill in the free world – meaning I guess that there was a bigger one in the USSR. So that's the Creagan side. Farm to city. Depression to World War II.

*Q: And on your mother's side?*

CREAGAN: Then on my mother's side the family proudly was from Alsace Lorraine. That land had bounced back and forth from France to Germany. Mom was proud of speaking French. She was very artistic and she had gone to Oberlin College and acted in theater. She graduated from Marygrove College in Michigan. Her family name was Traxler, and on the mom's side it was Jungbluth or "Youngblood" as seemed to be preferred in the Lorain of the 1940s. Lorain was a steel town but the area was farm country and the Jungbluths had a good farm. Uncle Barney would come around every week to deliver milk from the farm. Grandma and he would speak German. Jungbluth is very German. Traxler can be German but works across cultures. I knew an Italian Ambassador, Vieri Traxler; so the name is widespread in Europe. But now that I look back at the 1940s, I would guess the family minimized their German heritage.

*Q: Well also people particularly in the United States picked up the French side of Alsace Lorraine when it became more politically acceptable than the German side of it.*

CREAGAN: Yes, of course, as I think back the town I grew up in for 18 years was called Lorain for a reason, obviously from Lorraine.

*Q: Yes.*

CREAGAN: So that is the settlement of that place, the place I grew up in.

*Q: Alright your father was in management I take it?*

CREAGAN: He was management, yes.

*Q: What was it like growing up as a kid in Lorain? I'm talking about as really young kids?*

CREAGAN: Yes. Well it was really ethnic. That is how I remember it. Management, labor, doctors and lawyers all grew up more or less in town just blocks apart. This was in the years before suburbs. My dad had a car, a 1940 Ford. Now they didn't build cars during the war but he – Dad – had a 40 Ford. Many of the neighbors' dads, even after the War, didn't have cars. They got on the bus, the bus took them to the steel mill, they worked their shifts and they came home. You could walk most places.

I remember hearing on the radio the announcement that Franklin Roosevelt had died. I remember running up and down the block telling Randy Miller and Billy Banning and everybody else that Roosevelt was dead. We were little kids but sure knew it was important. In that period – I am talking about the 1940s – the town was very ethnic. I am sure it was the mill that drew the immigrants. We had the Slovaks, the Slovenians, the Polish, the Italians, Serbians, Croatians, etc. Now most everybody that I remember was Catholic, but son-of-a-gun if they didn't have their own church. So you had the Italian Church and then a block away the Slovak Church and a block away the Polish Church and so forth; they all had what they would call the homes, or clubs. There would be a Croatian club and by God they wouldn't mix with the Serbian Club or the Slovak club. That was hard for an Irish/German kid to figure out. We even had some onion dome churches for Russian Orthodox and Ukrainian "Uniates" and so forth. I remember that kind of ethnic mix. Oh, I also remember getting beaten up going home – but not by the Eastern European guys. It was that damn Terry O'Keefe; so there were some really tough Irish kids on the blocks. There was a famous Thanksgiving pick up football match at City Field. It was advertised as "Polocks vs Dagos". City Field was only 3 blocks away just over the tracks, but I was rather afraid to go. I might be picked out as neither of the above. There were African-Americans, and I grew up perhaps 10 blocks from Toni Morrison. I only knew her as an assistant at the public library when I was in grade school and she was high school. I didn't know she would be the great writer. Many years later, in the 1990's we met in Milan, Italy and talked about our childhood in Lorain. Perhaps being the industrial town it was, and proud of being the so-called "melting pot" in America, we agreed that there was not the kind of overt racism felt in so much of America. We had only one public high school and that was thoroughly integrated in classes and I think sports as well.

*Q: Where did you fit in this, were you Catholic?*

CREAGAN: Yes. I went to St. Mary's grade school. And then the St. Mary's High School. It was small, but many of the ethnic grade schools from ethnic parishes fed into St. Mary's. This was in the years before Catholic Central High. We were small with only several hundred students, but we won state championships. So we were tough. One of my buddies, a tackle, had come over after the Hungarian Revolution in '56. We graduated in '58. There was Sam Rossi, a big guy, and Joe Zima, great back. And the Bellissimo twins. And Jim Hoenig. We really regaled in the ethnicity; although I have to admit to you being Irish I never thought I was ethnic. The other guys were ethnic. As kids, our big game was baseball. You went around the neighborhood and picked up games. Some of the guys were really good. And a couple of them got contracts with minor league baseball teams. So, we had time, we played baseball, we hung around Lake Erie with its beaches and parks. As teenagers we went up and down Broadway in somebody else's car and looked for girls.

*Q: Was your team the Cleveland Indians?*

CREAGAN: Our team was the Cleveland Indians, and my older brother and I would take the bus from Lorain thirty miles into Cleveland. We saw the 1948 Cleveland Indians

play. Sat in the bleachers. Great players. By the way, everybody knows about Jackie Robinson and his #42 and the integration of the major league. But we had in Cleveland that same year, Larry Doby. And Cleveland had several African Americans on the teams –Luke Easter and Harry Simpson, not to mention the great Satchel Paige, at that time in his career a relief pitcher. He was a unique phenomenon because he was very old, he had played for us and played in the Negro Leagues and maybe he was over 40 years old and pitching and winning. But baseball was it. Now, around the neighborhood I couldn't have Cleveland as my team, because my older brother had appropriated it. So I cheered for the Detroit Tigers. It was a big brother and neighborhood thing. You chose or were assigned teams to support.

*Q: Well there are a couple of things. In the first place looking back on it how religious was your family?*

CREAGAN: My mother would have been, we used to say, scrupulous in the sense very religious but it didn't mean she went to church. She also had problems of depression and so she didn't necessarily do the outer manifestations of religion, which would be attendance at Mass, confession and so forth. Yet she was very, very religious indeed with focus on lives of the saints. My dad was kind of non-emotional but practical in religion -- just like his dad. You go to mass and you do your thing but you are neither overly enthusiastic about all that nor does the priest have the last word as an authority figure.

*Q: Well what about you? Were you an altar boy and all that?*

CREAGAN: I was an altar boy as my buddies all were. But not all that serious about it.

*Q: How big was your family by the way?*

CREAGAN: There were four of us, four kids. So my older brother, three years older than me was born in '38 and I was born at the end of 1940, then a sister born in 1944 and a brother – who by the way came into the Foreign Service and was terrific at it – David. He was born in 1954. Later Dave joined the Foreign Service and was George Shultz' aide at State, but that's another story. It includes summers spent with us when he was in high school, college and graduate school – in Mexico, Rome and Naples. Anyway, there were four kids. The three of us grew up together and David came later. The three of us were kids in the 1940s and 1950s. People hadn't yet moved out to the suburbs, and we walked to school, walked through the snow. We had a coal bin in the basement – you know where they came and shoveled in the coal. The milk man from the Lorain Creamery came by in a horse-drawn carriage. America was still in that transition phase. We even had an ice house up the street — with real ice for people's ice boxes I guess.

*Q: Where did your family fall politically?*

CREAGAN: Politically, my dad could have been what the Foreign Service officers sometimes pretend to be – non-partisan. It is a little hard to tell. In this sense – as a member of US Steel management he had to be Republican, and he had to contribute to

the Republican Party. At home I would hear him saying that he was outraged by Senator McCarthy and later the Army/McCarthy hearings. Dad was a man who was just dedicated to what is fair, what is right and to a sense of equality in all of that. So when I came down one morning and heard on the radio that sat above the refrigerator that Truman had defeated Dewey instead of Dewey defeating Truman I saw my dad was pretty happy about that. He didn't like wealth and privilege to be manifested. My Granddad, who had a drugstore and then three, was very clear. He seemed to me to be a Roosevelt Democrat of the first order. I would always have political conversations with my granddad around the big table – with all the meat and potatoes. He was very, very outspoken. One of the things he underlined was the value of public schools. They must be maintained by all. If you go off to a Catholic school (we did even when living with him) that's fine but your dad needs to pay for it. Granddad's view was that we should never have public money going to support Catholic or other private schools, because that undermines the Republic. I remember my granddad really ferocious on that one. The other thing that he was ferocious about was having good dinner table arguments on politics. Of course he would say, "Young man you talk like you know something. I've forgotten more than you'll ever know" He was right there too.

*Q: Were you much of a reader?*

CREAGAN: Yes, my Mom, who studied at Liberal Arts Colleges Oberlin and Marygrove, had us reading from about age two; reading to us and having us read. My Dad was the same. Whenever he got a chance he would read history and in particular, American History. One of my earliest memories was the detailed discussions and the reading of books on the French and Indian War. Dad was very interested in European history as well. I think at one time U.S. Steel was going to assign him to Spain—perhaps even during the War but he couldn't go.

*Q: How about do you recall any types of books that you particularly enjoyed and were influential?*

CREAGAN: Oh boy, the Joseph Altsheler series. Again what I really loved and what I guess I would imagine myself being back in 1756, 1760, the creation of what became the American nation. So that kind of American history, the Colonial period, early on put into novels. Then later I would read works like those of Hugh Thomas on the Spanish Civil War. By the way, a little note, when I was a kid we lived on 10th Street and I would walk down 9th Street to the park about four blocks away. There was the Lorain Public Library--a great place to go. The Carnegie building was set in the middle of a public park.

*Q: The Carnegie Building was a wonderful gift.*

CREAGAN: It was amazing, absolutely amazing. And who was the student librarian there? Toni Morrison – who later, of course, became the great author. In Milan in the 1990's, Toni M. and I met and we talked about high school in Lorain. The teachers had an interest in individual students. She noted a teacher that had focused on and encouraged

her writing. Another of her teachers was my next door neighbor, Mr. Mills. Of course, in Lorain, as everywhere, there were racist attitudes and, you might call it the ethnic pride of all those who were some hyphenated Americans. At the same time we prided ourselves on what would now be called "diversity". We saw ourselves as the melting pot and the melting pot image worked great because we were a "steel town" with the big steel mill. Indicative of that — a favorite thing was to watch the molten slag being dumped down the slope of the Black River behind the mill. It was a lava wonder. I think it hit the water and sizzled.

*Q: What about Blacks during the time you were there?*

CREAGAN: Again, everybody went to the same schools. We had Lorain High School and the Catholic one, St. Mary's High. I don't know the percentage of African Americans in the high school but there were few at St. Mary's. As Catholic we were very much the school for ethnics of Eastern European, Italian and Irish background. There were a few Mexicans, but really very few. Those families had come up in the twenties I think and were well absorbed. Dad worked with Mexican foremen at the plant, which means they had been working there some time. There were lots of Puerto Ricans as well, who had come up to Lorain during the War (WWII). As the young men from town went off to fight, Puerto Ricans came up to work in the mill. It was said that we had the number two Puerto Rican population in the U.S. --after New York City. Some African Americans came to work in the mill as well, and later we had the auto plants –Ford was big in the 1950's. My own good friendship with a Lorain African American was first Year College. I don't remember clashes among the groups, though we had an annual grudge-Thanksgiving weekend I think -athletic contest at City Field between the "Polocks and the Dagos". The Irish stayed out of that.

*Q: In elementary school were they run by nuns?*

CREAGAN: Nuns.

*Q: There are all sorts of stories about nuns, the strictness of nuns and all that - how did you find this?*

CREAGAN: Mine were very supportive in the first years of school. In Third or Fourth grade I had the mean Sister Josepha. She would whack your hand with a ruler. I don't remember why. Maybe she liked to discipline us. Now, we did not have pre-K like we now have in San Antonio. We didn't have pre-K or even kindergarten. I got started in first grade at age five. I remember those early years, first grade, second grade; really supportive, wonderful nuns that seemed to love children and got what they could out of us. I remember it as a very positive experience. Then, of course, it may just be the nuns, the really mean, mean nuns waited for kids to reach the third and fourth grade. Not nice. Lots of things we didn't like. Then later on the nuns got tougher as we got into junior high. We also had men lay teachers and coaches, and they were really tough.

*Q: What was discipline like in the…was there when looking back on it were you an unruly group or not?*

CREAGAN: No, I don't think so. I think they had a pretty good hold; somehow they got you early and had a pretty good hold. You have to remember that Catholic School could kick you out. My younger brother (later a FSO and George Shultz's aide) almost got kicked out, for hiding out in the choir loft and probably being a smart ass. Bored in class I guess. I remember once when I was home on home leave from the Foreign Service, the truant officer came to our house after him because he had been in the choir loft during Mass, then sent home for that. I told the truant officer to get lost. Who knows, the nuns were probably afraid that they could lose control, so they were tough. But we were tough too. We were athletic. Our High School was State Champ in football my senior year. I played kind of substitute tackle and linebacker. Oh, my younger brother then went to Lorain High School, did very well, went on to Notre Dame and University of Chicago and Virginia Law School.

*Q: Where did you get your food?*

CREAGAN: Well in earlier years in grade school I'd run home and open up a can and have Vienna sausages or something. Or maybe do a quick peanut butter and jelly sandwich and then run back to school. In later years, since our school had no cafeteria and was about one block from the main downtown area of Broadway, we would go up to the 8th St. diner and grab toasted cheese sandwiches or chili or whatever and then make our way back to school. You could get in trouble on those ventures, and some kids would get into a little bit of trouble shoplifting at the dime store. That is about the most serious stuff. One guy had a homemade gun in his locker. Don't know if it worked. I think he got caught and kicked out. He was older than me.

*Q: Were movies a big deal or not?*

CREAGAN: Movies? Yeah, we had within walking distance of my house three movie theaters: the Tivoli, the Palace and the Ohio. Top run movies. However, my mom had a list from the diocese newspaper, the Catholic Universe Bulletin. There was a list of movies that would be objectionable, objectionable in part or OK. It was kind of like listings out there now – R or PG-13 or whatever. So we couldn't go to the objectionable ones, but some kids would be able to sneak in.

*Q: I was going to say that sounds like the road to, like you said; oh I shouldn't see that one.*

CREAGAN: That's one we wanted to see. So we would get in there sometimes. Movies for us did not have starting times or any that meant anything to us. You paid, went in and there was the action. The old saying "That's where I came in…" must come from that. If you came in the middle then you left when it came around. The movies played continuously and you only had to pay once. I know my dad had to come a couple times to pull me out of the theater. I had stayed as the movie played several times.

*Q: Oh yeah, I did it all the time.*

CREAGAN: The same thing. So anyway we did that. One of my favorites was called "Broken Arrow" with Jeff Chandler. There is this U.S. Cavalry guy, who however has a good heart; so he doesn't just kill the Indians. He falls in love, obviously, with an Indian maid. Others in the movie were Cochise, the chief. Then there is the guy who went bad from the outrages of the cavalry. He declared, "From now on my name is Geronimo", and he became Geronimo. He fought the cavalry as long as possible. Anyway, I empathized with the Indians. One habit they had was to rub buffalo grease on their arms, and I think that did lots of good things. Maybe it kept away biting insects. We had no buffalo, but I used the pork grease from a roast one day at home. Well, I got in trouble.

*Q: What about at home? You mentioned talking to your grandfather; did you sit around and talk much about world events and all of that?*

CREAGAN: Yes, yes. And the context would be his table. Now they lived in Grand Rapids so this wasn't constant at home. If I think about family, where we lived in Ohio, well there was on my mom's side Uncle Frank. Uncle Frank would go to the steel mill and work and then come home and nap; so there wasn't really a lot of conversation going on there. Then there was some visiting to the farms, but what I looked forward to was the real and highly political conversations at Grandpa Creagan's place. We were always there for Thanksgiving and Christmas. And in the summers my brother and I would always spend June to September with the grandparents in Grand Rapids. So I'm just observing and observing highly political stuff. One uncle was back from the war in 1945-46 and there were lots of discussions about the war. I listened. One of my uncle's favorite stories, Uncle Chuck's story, was that he was in North Africa and General Eisenhower was in charge of the troops there. Chuck had snuck in to the army at age 17. Lied about age; grandma not at all happy. Anyway, he was in North Africa, and Eisenhower comes by on a white horse reviewing the troops. One of Uncle Chuck's buddies yells out "Hi O Silver." Silver, of course, was the horse of the Lone Ranger. Eisenhower looks over, but keeps going. My uncle said that the next day the guy was gone – and he never saw him again. But we had discussions. My uncle was in the Fifth Army so went from North Africa, to Sicily and then to Italy. He was in the landing in Salerno. He described going ashore in the LSTs. He said they were coming into Salerno, and they were told there were no Germans. The Germans had been wiped from the skies. Italians had quit the war; so the way was clear. He said, "Our landing ships were going in and we looked up and we saw these little things in the sky and then stuff was coming out and oh my God it was chaos. Guys were being killed, our landing ship reversed and went back and didn't know which way to go; it was terrible. We got onto the shore and fought our way and he had his friends killed, Germans had parachuted in and were shot. It was a mess." Then he says he saw General Clark come ashore. It was filmed and Clark looked pretty great and confident and safe. Chuck told me that, "I told myself that's the guy I want to be with." So he was able to become a telephone operator (he had worked for the Bell Company in Michigan) for the general. Remember the Caserta Palace?

*Q: Oh God yes that's where Clark set himself up.*

CREAGAN: Exactly and my uncle was there then. He said, "We loved to drive the jeeps up the stairs of the palace into Caserta Palace." And he said, "You know I never fired a shot in anger or any other way ever again during the War-- maybe just plunking a bottle or two." So I had those conversations, which you can imagine for a kid like me were vital. I was five, six, seven, and eight. And there were many heated political discussions at the dinner table. Of course the center of things was granddad. Everybody argued. The uncles verbally fought – one uncle was quite Republican and the other one probably Democrat; and so they had loud discussions. Now my dad, the older brother, was more the quiet voice of reason, while the younger brothers of my granddad would really go at it. It was fun.

*Q: Well as a kid were you getting your news from anyplace?*

CREAGAN: Oh gosh, obviously radio and as I think back it was CBS, NBC, and the news came on every hour with Paul Harvey, concluding the broadcast with a "Good Day"! Radio was king, but around 1950 we got TV. Then, it was always the NBC or the CBS news; the news which then became Huntley-Brinkley, Walter Cronkite and like that. There were morning shows – the Today Show for example. The shows are really fluffy now, but I recall a serious Dave Garroway. There was news; there was discussion. The centerpiece of news was the newspaper.

*Q: The Cleveland Plain Dealer?*

CREAGAN: Yes, The Cleveland Plain Dealer. We always had The Cleveland Plain Dealer. I became a paperboy for them at age 8 or so. In addition there was the Lorain Journal. So, you had a morning paper, the Plain Dealer and an afternoon paper, the Lorain Journal. Nobody could read them until my Dad did.

*Q: Did you get any feel for the politics around Ohio particularly in Lorain?*

CREAGAN: We were pretty much in a neighborhood and a city that was solidly Democratic. This was steel town USA. Think trade unions, workers issues, and politics. Now my dad again was kind of ambivalent because he was for the unions and the solid wages and benefits for workers. I also think he resented having to contribute to the Republican Party. US Steel management was expected to do that. He would tell me how valuable the unions are, but I don't think he appreciated the massive strikes. They would shut down the "plant", and my dad, being management, would have to get to work riding in a U.S. postal service truck. I think he rode in the back of the truck. It was probably not exactly legal, right? Who knows? That's what they used to do in those days. So he would go and the managers would get into the plant, and that's how you got through the picket line. Or so I imagined. Anyway, he seemed to really be very favorable to what the unions were able to do and were doing; so no doubt about that. When it became time and when I was getting my first big job coming out of high school, I had to be vetted by the Democratic Party. The way I got the job was via a neighbor who was a lawyer and with

approval of the Lorain County Democratic Party chairman. That's how you got a job. If he didn't okay you or bless you, then goodbye job. I remember he was skeptical about my Dad's Democratic Party bona fides. But I got a job working on the roads with the Ohio State Highway Department. Ohio politics was a combination of what they now call blue and red. If you went thirty miles south of where we lived – the parallel of Cleveland, Canton, Akron, Lorain and west to Toledo – kind of the industrial belt – then you got into rural Ohio. That was solidly Republican through Columbus and all the way down to the river at Cincinnati. There you had the Taft families and something quite different from blue collar Lorain.

*Q: In high school did you get involved in…in the first place was this a Catholic high school you went to?*

CREAGAN: Yes, the same one, St. Mary's, all the way from first grade to twelfth grade.

*Q: How did you find it there? Were brothers running it?*

CREAGAN: Sisters.

*Q: Sisters were running it?*

CREAGAN: Believe it or not all the way through. By high school they could be quite intellectual. I had one, Sister Grazia was her name, I can't remember her real name but it was Sister Grazia. She was intellectual and superior in attitude. She would constantly give me trouble. Telling me that I was capable of much more. She would make me redo written work until satisfied.

*Q: They were really pushing you.*

CREAGAN: Really pushing, really pushing. She'd say, "Sorry you think this is good, it could be an A but not with me because I know you can do better. You are not doing your best."

*Q: It's interesting because I've had people talk about particularly the nuns that many of them were recruited when they were quite young so they really didn't get a full education before they were turned into the educational training themselves.*

CREAGAN: Yeah, interesting, and that could have been the case; who would know in grade school? But maybe the difference is that these were IHM, Immaculate Heart of Mary. As I had said, my mom had gone to their college. They had a college, good in Liberal Arts, near Detroit, Michigan: Marygrove. Maybe that's why they had top education. This one, Grazia I think, had also gone to the Ivy League somewhere. She had an air of "class" about her, superiority. I mean you could tell she was of another class, a bit above other nuns. In my case, she made me work. I mean some of us had to do forty page papers. By the way, I was into everything – class president, football team, marching band and orchestra, choir. During football season, I did not march at half time with the

bass drum. But at other times I played clarinet or beat the bass drum. Oh, this Sister Grazia kind of disapproved of me wasting time with football.

*Q: Were they pushing you toward priesthood at all or did you…?*

CREAGAN: It's possible but I don't remember it; so it obviously had no effect. Some of those kids down the block, like the cousin of Tommy Camera did go into the seminary at about the ninth grade. I don't think any of them went through to priesthood, and I think there were some things they didn't like in the Seminary. Who knows what all was going on at that time. But with me I remember none of that. I do remember being pushed by Sister Grazia to go right to a university of quality. If you had certain talents, you needed to use them by going to university. And a Catholic University is where they went. Now, St. Mary's was a Parish School, and the pastor, Monsignor James J. Duffy, ran things. Duffy was something else. Tough. I understand that my older brother was applying to Ohio State, but Duffy would not release his high school transcripts because OSU was a secular institution. My Dad had to go down and demand that the transcript be released or sent. Tom did go to Kent State then. In my case, there were a few Lorain kids who were at law school at Notre Dame. I drove out there with a friend from Lorain High, Joe Novello (now a top psychiatrist in DC, author and great guy). Anyway, we liked Notre Dame, and we went there. I never thought – and nobody ever suggested – Harvard, Yale, Princeton or other kind of sissy places on the East Coast. You could go to Michigan, and the University of Michigan was good. My Dad had graduated from there. If considering law, Michigan would be good and far better than the East Coast schools — or so my lawyer neighbor told me.

*Q: What about in high school dating? What was the sort of thing?*

CREAGAN: We were coed so you dated; you had girls readymade right there. Then there were, of course, others in town. So yeah we dated, some got married or had to get married, or whatever it is they say, right out of senior year.

*Q: Do you feel you could go out with Protestant girls or not?*

CREAGAN: Probably. That's a good question. I think it just happened because socially we were mixing with Lorain High students. But most couples were from same class and same high school. The times were changing, but in the early 1950's one did not go to another church, except maybe an ethnic Catholic one. That was fine. You would not go to a Congregational or a Synagogue or Lutheran or other. By the way, the feeling was reciprocated.

*Q: I remember I was warned not to go with Catholic girls because if I went with a Catholic girl we might get married and then our children would be raised Catholic and that would be the end of the world.*

CREAGAN: That would be the end of the world, that's right. So we were at least as much reacting to those kinds of attitudes as having them ourselves. It seemed that the Knights of Columbus was set up in reaction to the Masons who had their own anti-Catholic and/or anti – clerical club. Some of those things broke down in the 1950's. By the way, the Knights of Columbus was much more than a religious organization. It was Democratic Party people – for workers. It was very Italian and Irish. In sum, the coed school was a good idea for the parish. You had readymade Catholic girls. Of course, I remember the distractions. In spite of school uniforms, certain girls were very sexy. Then we'd have weekend parties at girls' houses and so …

*Q: I was wondering, did you pick up a language at the time?*

CREAGAN: None for me personally, other than Latin. I took one, two, and maybe three years of Latin. That was a surprisingly good base for language learning, I think. At least they always told you that. In addition to the east European languages — and Italian dialects – Spanish was spoken in Lorain. We had a lot of Puerto Ricans who still spoke Spanish. They had come to Lorain during the war and replaced steel workers off to fight in Europe and the Pacific. I think it is sad to consider ethnic Ohio today. We are into the third generation and all language is lost – from the Slovenians and the Slovaks and the Polish and the Italians. But in those years, in the '40s when I was growing up certainly some of the parents had just come over and the grandparents always spoke another language. That was intriguing to us. We would go to people's houses and a lot of ethnic ceremony took place. You asked about the importance of church and so on? Well. it was of social importance as well. We'd go to midnight mass, and after mass we would go over to friends' houses. There would be the grandmothers, and they were speaking Slovak or Polish. Or we would go to the Italian grandmother's house. The old folks were all speaking the language, and that was very intriguing to us. The food we ate was always traditional Christmas Eve fare. Different and ethnic. Lots of sweets, marzipan and the like. Oh, we used to crash Polish weddings; we loved to do that. We would pretend we were guests, or maybe we were in a sense. The languages were interesting, dancing was the norm and there was even access to booze. I can't say that we tried to learn a language; that came in college.

*Q: Did you find you got involved in any sort of gangs, Irish gangs, or something?*

CREAGAN: We played with it, my gang was the Falcons. Boy, pretty rinky-dink but we did get jackets and we saw ourselves as somehow opposed to the Cavaliers. This other guy Joe Novello, well, he was with the Cavaliers. I think he had these kid gloves that he could slap you across the face with or whatever; I remember him doing it. But not deadly or really serious stuff. We lived in the north of town near Lake Erie. In other parts of town-- the closer you got to the steel mill there was what we called South Lorain. South Lorain was mostly south of the Steel mill. I now get the difference. The prevailing winds came across Lake Erie from the North, and it blew all the smoke and sulfur dioxide across South Lorain. It would peel the paint off the houses. Not an ideal place to live. There were the recent immigrants. Ukrainians and Puerto Ricans and some African

Americans—though they lived closer to where we were. There were some real tough gangs in that area. Every other building was a bar; so that was a tough place.

*Q: So you had to watch where you went?*

CREAGAN: Yeah, that's right. We didn't go out there; we didn't go to that area much. After we had cars we would drive through, but rarely stopped.

*Q: Were drug stores a place where you got sodas and things like that?*

CREAGAN: Yes.

*Q: Is that kind of where you went with dates and that sort of thing?*

CREAGAN: Yeah, you know it was just coming in. By the time I went to high school, some of the kids had cars. Junior Dodson had his 1949 Ford and Dougie Tomlin had a chopped and Frenched 1950 Mercury. The first drive-ins were opening; and so we would go to the drive-in and hang out or go to Lake Erie; we had a parking lot at Lake Erie where you could go with a girl and watch the waves. There was a beach and you could hang out there. We'd go watch submarine races or whatever. I don't remember drug stores except for my Grand Rapids experience of the soda fountain at my grandad's drug store.

*Q: This is when you were going to your grandparents?*

CREAGAN: I spent summers with the grandparents in the late '40s basically and early '50s too. This is before CVS and all that. We had Creagan Drug Stores. There were one, two, three Creagan Drug Stores and I would get to work at them. It was great. In the 1940s one of my jobs was taking home all the new comic books that were delivered to the store and reviewing them and then putting them on the magazine rack the next day. A great job. I also would stock and sell the cigarettes. Lots of brands and, in the aftermath of World War II, it seemed that most adults smoked. We had, I guess, thirty different brands of cigarettes you know so I would sell those and then do the soda fountain.

*Q: You were a soda fountain jerk?*

CREAGAN: Soda jerk, that's right. I got in trouble once. A guy came in and what was I, eight or nine, and he whispered to me – because I was at the soda fountain – that he needed a pack of Trojans. So I said, "Granddad, a pack of Trojans, please." That guy left the store fast. It was the late '40s. My granddad said, "Come back here I want to talk to you." So I learned to keep my mouth shut if someone asked for Trojans. I had good odd jobs at the store. The best one was "managing" the walk-in freezer and cooler. That is where they kept all the beer and soda. So my brother and I would go in there in the summers and we would sit on the beer cases and read comics.

*Q: Yeah.*

CREAGAN: And get away from it. But that is my soda fountain experience.

*Q: Well then you went to where, Notre Dame? And you were at Notre Dame from '58 to…?*

CREAGAN: From '58-'62 and then I went to Ohio State during a summer and had some other experiences like that.

*Q: What was it like when you went to Notre Dame?*

CREAGAN: A different university in the sense that it was all men. Anyway, no women. It was tough, academically and otherwise, I certainly remember that. As freshmen they still were in the era of discipline, and we as freshmen had to be in the rooms at 10:00 p.m. for some kind of check – five days a week, Saturday check was midnight and like that. Maybe Sunday would be 11:00 p.m. or something. At 11:00 p.m. they would cut the power with the idea being, I guess, that you are not supposed to be studying or anything. It was bed at 11:00PM – or use a flashlight. In any case, the power was cut, but they did have some power out in the halls because you had to have some safety factors there. Some of my buddies were engineering students and proud of their ability to cross wires; so that the room had power coming from the wires in the hall. Then you had three days a week morning check. At 7:00 a.m. you had to appear outside the chapel to sign in. Now you didn't have to go to mass but you had to sign in outside of the chapel and there was a priest or rector there. So that's the kind of thing it was. Women, well you really had to be active to look for them. We had across the lake…

*Q: St. Mary's?*

CREAGAN: Yes, St. Mary's. We were maybe a little over seven thousand students total –all men of course. It's only a little over eight thousand undergraduates now. St. Mary's had maybe a thousand. Actually, I doubt that there were even a thousand. Eight to one ration is a problem right there. So we would do lots of things like hitchhike to Chicago all the time. There were women's colleges in Chicago. Often we would hitchhike to universities in Ohio like Bowling Green State University or to schools in Michigan. I had a girlfriend in Grand Rapids, and I could go up and stay with my uncle. So, you had to work at it. But it also meant, of course, that during the week you had less distraction and had to focus on academics and sports.

*Q: What courses were you taking?*

CREAGAN: Well I majored in history. Lots of U.S. History, and then I concentrated on Latin American history. One of my professors was particularly good and was experienced in Latin America; his wife was Chilean. He made colonial history and then more contemporary history very interesting. One of my professors, John Jay Kennedy, had been a Foreign Service officer in Argentina at the time of Peron. His tales were fascinating. That's how I got interested in something that I had never thought about – the

Foreign Service. But it started with history. Oh, my Russian History professor was a Pole. You can imagine the angle he put on that study. I think his grandfather was tied to railroad tracks in Russian Poland. I remember the outcome as not good. At Notre Dame I had some outstanding professors. In those days it was a lot of performance in lectures. So, professors are important. I had a fascinating Spanish professor who wore no tie (the others taught in suit and tie) and he wore a suede sports coat and boots. He inspired the Spanish class to learn languages. It's funny that things which would seem meaningless can nudge you in a particular direction.

Then we had, of course, philosophy and if you are going into a place as a freshman you are getting the philosophy, you are getting the logic, you are getting really I think important tools and skills for later learning. Because this was very personal, the professor was there, the professor was working with you. Uncomfortable at times. One of my literature professors was from the East, from Amherst I think. Anyway, on the first day of freshman year he asked, "Where are you from?" I said, "Lorain, Ohio." "Lorain, Ohio? You sir are a Philistine from the great American wasteland." I still remember it. Pissed me off. I got mad and determined that I would show him how erudite we could be – great American wasteland indeed!

But the freshman year was really valuable. We were writing, writing, writing. Getting critiqued and writing some more. Maybe some of us weren't great in producing poetry or prose, but it brought out some talents. There was an important thing about Notre Dame, we had no fraternities. They were not allowed. ND determined that the reality of fraternities with some being excluded, others being included, was not good. Instead, we had random assignment to residence halls; all freshmen and most upperclassmen had to be in residence halls. That built up a real camaraderie. Fifty years later I still have the friends from those days. We had a common "enemy", the priest who was the rector of the hall. He would enforce – more or less – the rules, including a check on alcohol and girls in rooms. I think the residency hall experience was healthy. We would move each year and have a different residence hall and that built a new camaraderie. So if I had a thousand guys in my class, I knew most of them at the end. It was a big fraternity, but without all those negatives of fraternities.

*Q: One has to ask what was the role of football when you were there?*

CREAGAN: Big and disappointing. Notre Dame had had the years of national championships, but not my years. We liked football, football is a great thing. Football also worked to bring women on campus. You could get a girl, who maybe wasn't particularly sure she was interested in you because she had other suitors, but would love being invited to football weekend. Notre Dame vs Michigan or Michigan State. Good games to get girls down for the weekend. Football was important but it didn't take away in any way from the academics. That is what we focused on all week. Football players were not separate in those years. They lived in the same dorms and we were all buddies together. By the way, none of this "week over on Thursday" stuff. We even had class Saturday mornings – and then the football game in the afternoon. Saturday morning class was early and then later in the morning it became crazy on campus. There were parties

and crowds and it was off to the stadium. It was just great. We would cheer like crazy. My years were not good, but ND came back with new coaches and returned to national championships.

Football is important for a place like Notre Dame. With the NBC TV contracts and all that, they can pump millions into other sports for men and women. In spite of the fact that football in many ways made Notre Dame, it is not a football school. That conjures up less emphasis on the academic. Instead, there was heavy emphasis on the academic and on community service and work with what are now called NGO's. Kennedy comes in, there's a Catholic president. The Peace Corps is formed, and the first to be trained for Latin America are at Notre Dame.

*Q: Did the Kennedy coming in inspire you or not?*

CREAGAN: Yes, I think that is why I joined the Foreign Service to tell you the truth. Latin America was where the action was – in the aftermath of the Cuban Revolution. It was "reform or revolution" and "twilight of the tyrants" (military governments). I was more and more interested in Latin America. I had spent a summer studying at the University of Guanajuato. I had spent time in Mexico City; I had stayed with friends in Guatemala – in fact they were with the American Friends Service Committee. Yeah, there is no doubt that Kennedy coming in made me feel I should do something to help in development, democracy and lifting people up. National security for the U.S. meant development and human progress. Good combination of God, Country and Notre Dame and "Ask not what your country can do for you…"

*Q: You mentioned these excursions into Latin America; let's talk about them. Where was the first place you went to?*

CREAGAN: Okay, now I'm a kid who grew up 18 years in northern Ohio and then off to Notre Dame, so this is quite different. This isn't the existence of, well, say our own kids where parents are moving them around. I think as far away as we got would have been during the War on a boat on the Great Lakes – a ferry boat from Cleveland to Detroit and passing thru Canadian waters on the way. Or when I was 12 and went to a canoeing summer camp in northern Minnesota's Lake of the Woods. We canoed into Canada. At Notre Dame there was the possibility of a summer study abroad in Austria I think it was. However, I never thought of study abroad, because we worked in the summers. That was what you did the summer — work on the roads or at the steel plant if you could get a job. To give you an idea of the culture, my buddies thought it was kind of stupid to go to university when you could go directly from high school to U.S. Steel and earn 20 thousand bucks.

*Q: That was big money.*

CREAGAN: Money and security and in that you worked eight hours. Then you go to B&B's Bar and Grill and get your 15 cent schooner of beer and pickles. Talk and games. Union contract. Considered a "job for life". For those of us at university, summer was for

going home and working – not for study abroad. By senior year at ND I was ready for the next step. I thought about law school, perhaps at Michigan. Or graduate school in History or International relations. With university teaching or Foreign Service as goal.
I first thought of Princeton. Not sure why.

*Q: This was visiting Princeton?*

CREAGAN: Princeton had a new Master of Public Affairs – two years and internship in the summer. I was interested and got an interview with the illustrious professors. They didn't have a doctorate program but had this new Master of Public Affairs. I thought – I am going to do something in government or perhaps teach International Relations. So I interviewed with Professor Black, a great professor there, and I looked at Princeton. Then I reconsidered. Princeton was about as cold as ND, and perhaps I needed a PhD. And I knew I needed money to go to school. I was not going to graduate school or law school unless I got some money. Then somehow I went to the University of Virginia to interview with them. They offered me what seemed like lots of money. I received two excellent fellowships and even decided that it was too much — so I returned one (Philip Francis DuPont) to the university so another person could get it. I had plenty for tuition, room, board and lots left over to buy a car. So I went for a doctorate at UVA. Oh, another aspect in my decision was that Charlottesville was the South. Goodbye to South Bend snows. Then I would be a professor or something. I did not think too much about the Foreign Service but that was a possibility.

In preparation for graduate school and a concentration on Latin America (this was the time of great focus in U.S. Foreign Policy on Latin America), I decided to "hitchhike" to Mexico to study. I found a guy from Cleveland who wanted to go to Mexico. He had a little VW car. We drove through San Antonio, which I thought had some kind of charm and then on to Mexico City. Then I took a local bus to Guanajuato and enrolled at the university. I spent the summer there studying Spanish and Mexican history. It was a great experience — and there were coeds too. In September I entered the University of Virginia and concluded that I would write and focus on Mexico. So I went to Mexico and Guatemala summers after that and then wrote my dissertation on Mexico and its unique political system including opposition parties – all of which were part of the ruling party sphere of influence. So that's how I got involved abroad, researching in Mexico in 1962 and1964. In the summer of 1963 I worked at AID in Washington on a desk in the office of "Equal Employment Opportunity". I had the great privilege of Marching on Washington in August of 1963. I was at the Reflecting Pool when Martin Luther King gave his "I have a dream" speech. Not knowing that the speech would be famous my colleagues and I were attracted to and felt deeply the songs and lyrics of Peter, Paul and Mary and "We shall overcome". We also looked for girls. At that time, when I thought of the March, I thought of the great organization of Walter Reuther of the auto workers (UAW) and Asa Philip Randolph of the Sleeping Car Porters (AFL-CIO). I remember some concern with violence at the March, and government workers got leave.

*Q: Did you get involved at all on any or sample the student movements in Mexico?*

CREAGAN: No, in those years no, in so far as they were developing I was a foreigner. When I was in Mexico City researching at the UNAM, Universidad Nacional Autonoma de Mexico, I stayed with a family of Simon Tapia y Coleman. He was the head of the conservatory so it was a very interesting family. He lived in the area of Mexico City near the San Angel Inn and the major thoroughfare, Insurgentes. Luis Echeverria, then Sub Secretario de Gobernacion and later President of Mexico, came to the house. His name will always be associated with the government crackdown on the student movement in 1968. But in 1964, the students related to the university. Student strikes would shut it down, but it was not a broad societal issue. Later on, when I was assigned to our embassy in Mexico City, there were the student movements of 1968 and the night – the Noche Triste – was a kind of culmination of student protest prior to the 1968 Olympic Games in Mexico. On that night as a young political officer in the embassy, I found that I was marching with the students down the Reforma and past the U.S. Embassy. There were many thousands of students who had gathered in Chapultepec Park and then marched. The Embassy was protected by Mexican armored vehicles and students shouted some anti-American epithets as they went by. I may have gestured myself, thinking about the embassy hierarchy from the point of a junior officer. I dropped off the march and went back to the embassy. Later that evening of October 3, 1968, and working in the embassy with other officers – Bob Service – and a couple others, we heard sirens and then reports of what came to be known as the Massacre of Tlatelolco or the Plaza of Three Cultures. So by chance I was not with the students when this massacre happened. We guessed that the casualties were in the hundreds. That was not really ever fully clarified.

*Q: When did you graduate from Notre Dame?*

CREAGAN: So, graduated Notre Dame in 1962 and then I went right to the University of Virginia. My major professor was named J.J. Kennedy. John Jay Kennedy had been a Foreign Service officer in Argentina, and he had been a professor at Notre Dame at some other time. He was now a professor at Virginia. I remember that years later he went back to Notre Dame. It was fascinating sitting in graduate seminars with J.J. Kennedy and talking about Peron and the embassy and Kennedy's work there. So I was in residence at UVA for three years. I skipped the masters and did three years for my PhD. You got it or failed out with nothing. A risk. I wrote my dissertation with great discipline, while living in quarters that Jefferson built. My "neighbor" was Edgar Allen Poe. He was not currently in residence. And so in 1965 I got my doctorate from the University and was maybe the youngest since I don't know when. I was 24 years old. I then decided to go off and be a professor.

*Q: Okay you had had this chance but so many people I've interviewed have said that they've served the academic thing and then they took a look at it and said they really didn't want to teach. How about you?*

CREAGAN: Yeah. Well, I enjoyed teaching. But because of the influence of J.J. Kennedy, and another guy, Alex Baldwin who had been ambassador to Malaya (I don't think it was Malaysia yet). Baldwin was "Ambassador-in-Residence" at the University of

Virginia. He gave talks. He, along with a professor, Foster Dulles, at Ohio State, and one at Notre Dame got me interested in the Foreign Service. Also, I'm coming up to the State Department for graduate research. In the 60's you just walked in to State to use the library. So I'm getting a little bit acquainted with the State Department, with my Congressman, with Washington. In 1963 I got a job in the summer with AID. It was Equal Employment Opportunity Commission; I wouldn't have even thought that it existed back in '63 but there it was – put in by Kennedy and looking at those issues, integration and all of that. So Washington was becoming magic for me, just a great place for a student to be – and there were paying jobs.

Let me digress a second because this also is the fairness thing. I had this job and whatever, won this job fair and square and had been given this job. I drove to Washington in my old car, got here, went to AID and they said, "Well the job is no longer here. We gave it somebody else, family connections or whatever." So remembering my granddad and my dad, and standing up, not conceding, I got in my little car and drove up to Capitol Hill. I marched into my Ohio Senator's office, Stephen Young, and I told him what had happened to me. He talked to his staff and I was told, "Go home to Ohio and we'll see." I went home to Ohio and then got a call two days later telling me that the Senator "assures you that you have your job; they can't take it away from you. Come back to Washington." I thought, "Oh, my God, it is like Mr. Smith Goes to Washington, Young is Mr. Smith! I just went into my Senator's office and I got the stolen job back fair and square". So then I spent the summer in Washington, feeling good about fairness in government. And that was the summer of the March on Washington.

In any case, I came up often from Virginia because of action in Washington. I worked a summer in DC, studied at the State Department; I met desk officers. Because of this I thought the Foreign Service could be interesting. So I took the exam in Chicago and failed. Took it again and passed. Then there was an oral and I did that. The only thing I remember about the oral is they tried to catch you off guard. You could not do it that way now. The three panelists offered me a cigarette and I lit the cigarette. I don't really smoke but was kind of nervous. I lit the cigarette and discovered there were no ashtrays; I guess they wanted to see what I would do. I put the ashes into my cuff and then I stubbed the cigarette out on my heel. I was a bit distracted. At the end of the exam, they said well, you passed and we will put you on the list. I'm thinking that I don't know if I want Foreign Service or do I want college teaching. By the way, if you graduated with a PhD in 1965 you had jobs all over the place. I had potential jobs in Southern California, I had a job at Gonzaga, at the new U. Cal. Santa Cruz, at Cal State Fullerton, etc. I didn't seek jobs East of the Mississippi. Our universities were growing and they wanted professors in these fields, which were kind of like national security fields. I looked at San Antonio, Texas, and I said, "You know, I see that they are opening up a Latin American studies program and on border issues. I said, "Maybe I could do something which will really also be somehow helpful to the peoples of the border region." I guess a sort of Peace Corps kind of feeling. I said, "I'm going to take the offer at St. Mary's University, in San Antonio, where I will have the Latin American program." So I went there and I actually loved teaching and, best of all, I met Gwyn. She was a student, but not mine.

Then the Foreign Service came through and said, "You must decide by next June of '66 if you are going to come in or not," because I think then I would fall off the list. So I knew Gwyn six months, got married and then I said, "Gosh, I think I can come back to teaching, there are lots of jobs here." But I'm told if I grab this I've got to grab it now so let's go to the Foreign Service." "What the heck is the Foreign Service?" she said, "The Foreign Legion?" But anyway, she was willing to go. The idea was not that teaching was boring, but that here was this opportunity that you took or dropped. Then I thought that someday I will be a better professor of U.S. foreign policy or international law if I have been a practitioner. I thought I would go off to the Foreign Service, be a practitioner maybe five years and then teach again. Oh, an interesting note about USG agencies. Out of the blue, in the spring of '66 and after I had accepted entering the FSO class of June 1966, I got a call from the CIA. This guy asks me to go up to Austin to see him. I think you would prefer our agency, he noted. The next thing I know I'm flying up to Langley, I got cash for the flight and per diem and so I went and spent a day with them. In the end there was something that I didn't like, so I did not accept the CIA approach.

*Q: Also, they are poaching.*

CREAGAN: They love it, it is very interesting, I didn't think of it as poaching then but it is very interesting. So I took the money and flew up to Langley. When we were to do the polygraph, I was thinking (maybe kind of like George Shultz did later concerning being tested for drugs), I'll do it once and then quit – like how dare you polygraph me; of course we tell the truth. So in any case, I didn't join the CIA; instead stayed with the Foreign Service. In June 1966, we packed up our few things and drove from San Antonio to Washington. In those days when you came in you got no per diem, no nothing. I remember driving into Falls Church, Virginia, desperate to find a place for five bucks, ten bucks. Remember?

*Q: Oh yeah, when I came in we took the oath and about half my class went running down to the credit union and got some money.*

CREAGAN: Exactly.

*Q: I had a bride and I had to pay for a room.*

CREAGAN: Yeah, there was nothing, no sustenance. These days they don't understand that. But that's another story. We had a great group.

*Q: Just before we take off I'd like to ask do you recall any of the questions that you were asked during your oral?*

CREAGAN: I really don't. There were some economic questions and I remember being up at the board talking about trade with Europe. I would have known more about Latin America. I thought I was an expert on Mexico by then; I'd interviewed a lot of people in Mexico, the trade unions, the political leaders from the Left. I don't remember, but I

think there were questions on development. I felt as if I did okay answering them. What sticks in my mind is the cigarette, not the question.

*Q: Yeah. Well… Did the Peace Corps ever intrigue you?*

CREAGAN: Yeah, I thought about the Peace Corps and, as I remember, the first Peace Corps volunteers for Latin America were training on the Notre Dame campus in 1962 or so. I thought about that. But then I thought, well I have these fellowships to the University of Virginia, I can go there, and I'm confident I can get the PhD. I decided to stick with grad school.

*Q: Yeah.*

CREAGAN: Whereas the Peace Corps was going to pull me out of that track. I would have gone from Notre Dame to the Peace Corps.

*Q: That's for two years.*

*Q: Okay, so we will hold up now and we will start again after lunch and we will start you off when you are off to coming into the Foreign Service.*

*Q: This is the second tranche of this day's interview; it is still April the 2nd, 2013 with Jim Creagan. Jim, in the first place you mentioned you got married. We have your wife here but can you explain a little bit of Gwyn's background.*

CREAGAN: Okay, well I had gone to Texas and accepted this position developing Latin American Affairs at St. Mary's University in San Antonio, Texas. In those years, this is 1965; there were no state universities in most all of South Texas, except the Valley. So you had in San Antonio St. Mary's University, which was coed and acted in some sense as the University for South Texas. It had a law school and so forth. I had gone there and I think in my first week just by chance, university people, lawyers and civic folks, did a reception for the new professor (me). The head of the brand new LBJ's poverty program for South Texas, Jose (Pepe) Lucero came to the reception. He brought with him a student who had been staying with him and his wife (a kind of au pair arrangement), as she went to university in San Antonio. That student was Gwyn. Well, I was cool and had a red convertible, and we fell in love and were married six months later. I, of course, did not elaborate on the possibility that we might be going off to the Foreign Service the next year. But so we did. I think we were married in January and in June came to Washington for the Foreign Service. Gwyn wondered why anyone would want to leave Texas, but it turned out we not only left Texas but we spent most of the next 34 years in the Foreign Service and outside the U.S. I had a career of 34 years in which two were in Washington. Gwyn had lived in Mexico as a child in Cuatro Cienegas, Coahuila. Our first assignment was Mexico; so we were not so far from where she grew up, at least in culture.

*Q: I will be interviewing Gwyn later but I like to get a little here.*

CREAGAN: She can tell you much more, but she is from a town called Crystal City. It is right down on the border near Piedras Negras/Eagle Pass. Gwyn grew up both in town and on a farm or ranch right on the Nueces River – which had been the U.S./Mexican border before the War of 1848. Her town could just as well be on the border, and in some ways was just like part of Mexico. In 1962 there was a "revolt" of the Mexican population led by certain youths who had been in school with Gwyn. The rather newly self-designated "Chicanos" threw out the Anglo administration of the town. Anglos were about 10 percent of the town population. About 90 percent were Mexican or Chicano's as the youth said. So it was an interesting political time in South Texas. The formation of La Raza Unida. As I said before, Gwyn lived part of her childhood in Mexico itself, in a town called Cuarto Cienegas de Carranza. It was, and is, a classic beautiful little Mexican town. Gwyn's teacher was the niece of the famous revolutionary hero Venustiano Carranza. So, she had a deep experience, and enjoyed living (she tells us) in a town without electricity except for a couple of hours a day – and with water from the well. So Gwyn, while not being out of Texas so to speak when we went into the Foreign Service, had already had foreign experience growing up in Mexico itself and growing up in a culture which was Hispanic. She understood as well dimensions of poverty and race. During the war (WWII of course), her town was the site of the largest internment camp for Japanese and Japanese Americans (and Japanese Peruvians and others) in the U.S. In the camp there were some Italians and Germans as well. After the war, the very small dwellings of the Japanese were opened up to residents of Crystal City and Gwyn's family moved into one. Cramped and hot to say the least.

*Q: Now let's put you back in a foreign environment and that is the Foreign Service. When did you go into the A-100 course?*

CREAGAN: It turned out that the class that either I was chosen for, I can't remember, or accepted, was June 1966. We were the 73rd class, whatever that means because I'm sure it rolls over many times.

*Q: I was in class one of that club.*

CREAGAN: Class one, fantastic. So that was a couple years prior because we were only doing how many classes a year?

*Q: About three or four.*

CREAGAN: About three or four, yeah, so 73rd class. Well here you are you are coming in from everywhere and you are exposed to this new experience and I had mentioned you and I were talking before about the shock of driving into Washington from wherever and maybe ten bucks in your pocket and the Foreign Service, of course, providing no per diem, no adjustment kind of allowances or anything, you just sort of came in and made your way. So we found ourselves in Falls Church and desperately were looking for somewhere to stay along Highway 7; found a hotel that I think was $12 a night or something like that. So we knew we could stay just a few nights there. We ended up then finding an apartment to rent month by month. We could be there six months; that would

be the junior officer experience and you might get sent out after six months. But who knew? What is really special about the Foreign Service are the friendships, the relationships that one develops as Junior Officers. We quickly got to know the people who themselves had found their way into Falls Church. We got to know one another, and we had an important car pool. We took turns driving and went in every day. On the way we would bitch about the Foreign Service guys or the policies—about the Undersecretary U. Alexis Johnson and Vietnam and all sorts of things. Our carpool team consisted of Arnie Raphel, who was later Ambassador to Pakistan and was killed in a plane crash with the ruler, General Zia. Arnie was a good friend as was Dick Faulk, Bob Carr, David Dunford and me. Carpools really form some kind of a special friendship.

*Q: What was your class like?*

CREAGAN: A good class we had - I'm not sure exactly what you mean but in terms of background we were everything.

*Q: Sort of as a mix of male and female, ethnic, etc.*

CREAGAN: Let's say we were diverse alright, diverse in the ways of 1966. So one of the things that I remember is a personnel officer whom I was working with early on had said to me, "Well, we don't have and don't need many people from Ohio." So I think there was still an East Coast prejudice at the time. We were diverse, and I think diverse then meant coming from Notre Dame and not the Ivy League. I may have been one of the first from Notre Dame, and I think I was the first ambassador from Notre Dame as the years went by. Mid-West was different. Then there was the personnel guy who said to me, "You know you have a PhD; you may be too much educated for the Foreign Service." I said, "Oh great, thanks." We were both male and female in the class. I'm not going to say a third female by any means but maybe twenty percent. Of course, women understood that when they came in that if they married they would have to resign. Hard to believe such was accepted as normal.

*Q: The early '70s was when it changed.*

CREAGAN: Yeah, 1972 I think. We know that some of the women in the class did get married and did have to resign; some of them could come back later after the policy changed. Others didn't get married and stayed in and competed to the top. Then we were from all universities across the country. So my buddies…Arnie had gone to college in Northern New York State (Hamilton, I think) and Dave Dunford was another one of our group. He had come in out of California and Arizona, so we were diverse in that sense. I don't believe there was one African-American. I don't remember Hispanics either; so that's the kind of diversity that one had. One of us had no college education, but most were law school grads or had some grad school. Most of us were in our later 20's I think. One kid, Tom Forbord, was 21 and just out of college. Ours was a class chosen prior to the Vietnam surge, if you will. Even though, of course, if we think militarily, it was mid-1965 when Johnson had ramped up the troops in Vietnam, and as a professor in 1965/1966, I had to deal with students who, if they did not get A or B were subject to the

draft and almost certain duty in Vietnam. So those are different kinds of dilemmas. But coming into the Foreign Service, there was not yet full internal focus on Vietnam. In fact, we were focused on the Cold War world, and probably more on Latin America than anywhere else. This was post-Castro with fear of revolutions in Latin America, as well as 1960s kind of terrorism. The U.S. was concerned with the export, if you will, of the Cuban model. Remember that in 1965, LBJ sent troops to the Dominican Republic. Fear of "another Castro".

So we didn't think while we were there in class and then looking for assignments we didn't think oh, we are all going to have to learn Vietnamese and go to Vietnam. No, it was the world, it was Africa. Arnie Raphel I know went off to Isfahan, Iran, and Dave Dunford went off to Ecuador and me, I was assigned to Montevideo, Uruguay. Gwyn and I had our stuff ready to go, the car to ship, the goods to go in December. So June to December was the junior FSO Washington experience. It included language training, if a Romance language. We must have been assigned in summer. I'm not sure exactly how that worked, but off I was to go to Montevideo. First, there was Spanish language training. Now, I had had Spanish because I lived some in Mexico during graduate school. The Foreign Service is always about change and change we got quickly. Before we could go to Uruguay (where, by the way, the terrorists of the 1960's –Tupamaros-operated). I was called in to the Department of Labor where they said, "We think you are the kind of guy that we want to be a labor attaché so we would like to pull you out of that junior officer experience. They said that the State Department had agreed to send me to Harvard for a semester in what they call the Trade Union Program in order to learn about trade unions. I said, "Well that's kind of stupid because I come from a steel town, and I know all about trade unions, steel workers unions, auto worker unions." But I said, "Well, it sounds kind of intriguing, I'll do it." So they stopped the assignment to Montevideo and Gwyn and I got in our car and drove up to Harvard in the middle of snow storms and winter. That was quite an experience which I can talk about separately or not. The idea was that in June of '67, after a semester at the Harvard Business School I would go to Mexico City to be Assistant Labor Attaché to replace veteran diplomat John Dougherty.

*Q: Okay let's talk about Harvard at the time. In the first place was the anti-Vietnam business permeating where you were at all by that time?*

CREAGAN: Not at all and I guess here's why. First, I remember the big demonstrations were in from 1968 on. I was at Harvard – and Harvard business School in the spring of 1967. The horrors and assassinations of 1968 were yet to come. And the Harvard Business School was really in one sense removed from any undergraduate turmoil. We lived in Cambridge, walked up to the university, the student body was a bit older because they're in business, and our particular group was fascinating. What they did at Harvard was take trade union leaders from other countries, from Europe, Africa, the Arab world, from Latin America and from the U.S. meat packers union, service employees international union; they would get like the vice presidents and mid-career and up – plus four Foreign Service officers; Jack Binns was one, I'm another and John Gwynn a third. We did training with guys who were both labor and business. It was fun. Harvard would set up these sessions whereby the trade union leaders would become the CEOs and these

guys who were training to be CEO played labor leaders. We had a kind of War College, experience with strike scenarios instead of international conflict. We were playing with computers almost before computers were going. We had terrific professors like John Dunlop, who become Secretary of Labor afterwards.

*Q: Well did they use the case method?*

CREAGAN: We did, we used the case method with Professors Cox and Bob Livernash. What I found really terrific was the alternate role playing; so it was vigorous and intellectually stimulating in a way. What also was very interesting was you built personal relationships with these different trade union leaders and got to understand the foreign trade unions. Now Gwyn was there with me and she can talk about that. There was even a threat on her life, and we had to move. That was an interesting little experience of Harvard.

After a semester at Harvard the Foreign Service officers went off to their posts. So Jack Binns went to El Salvador, another one went to Bolivia and another to Costa Rica. I went to Mexico. We were stalled in moving because the June '67 War broke out in the Middle East. That froze all assignments in the Foreign Service; so we were trapped in Washington for some weeks in a rather rundown hotel just across from the State Department. I think it was called the Governor Sheppard. So we were trapped there for weeks, until I guess there was enough perceived resolution of that Six Day War in order that assignments could go forward. Gwyn and I jumped in the car we had just bought at Koon's Ford right in Falls Church, VA, and drove from Washington to Mexico City. We arrived July 3 just in time for the July 4th reception. The Ambassador, Tony Freeman, held the big traditional reception, and we went through the line. I thought I was very cool, I had a moustache, was sort of fit and there was my young wife, probably 21 years old then. The ambassador said, "Oh, you have your daughter with you." I guess Gwyn looked even younger, or perhaps the mustache put years on me. I was 26. Then off we went into a fascinating assignment in labor/ political affairs. All was colored by the Cold War.

*Q: Did you feel the heavy hand of labor leaders …. I wouldn't say Silverthorn or…*

CREAGAN: Good questions. Jay Lovestone. You are probably thinking about the international head of the AFL/CIO who at one time had been leader of the Communist Party USA and then, of course, as good converts in religion sometimes become, he was very attentive to condemn anything that might smack of Communism or "pinkism" or anything else. There was the Jay Lovestone side of things. I did feel the hand of big labor. It was because of the U.S. pluralist democracy of those years – big business and big labor. Big labor, especially the AFL/CIO in the Kennedy and the Lyndon Johnson administrations was very powerful. Labor felt that it had authority, power and a big voice. The labor leaders, who visited Mexico a lot, used to always tell me that they were a countervailing force to business. They represented the worker, and our government must meet the needs of labor. Now that meant working abroad toward free democratic trade unions, toward labor getting its share of the pie, in Mexico and around the world. Labor costs could not go to the floor in foreign countries, if you had good solid trade

unions that demanded their share. Strong unions everywhere would help balance things in the U.S. as well. And it kept the Communists at bay. There was a lot of interesting interaction when U.S. labor leaders would come to Mexico. Mexico was essentially a one party state and the official trade unions were a part of that. The PRI ran things. And the Mexican labor unions were run by a guy named Fidel Velasquez, who led from the 1930's to the 1990s, if you can believe, running the Confederation of Mexican Workers(CTM). The unions were a key block of the PRI, and had significant influence even as to who became president of Mexico. We had a parade of big time labor leaders coming down; so that was always fascinating. The head of the textile workers, Jacob Potofsky, David Dubinsky of the International Ladies Garment Workers union, and others important in our U.S. Democratic Party came to Mexico. So we would be dealing with them and we would be dealing with the Mexican trade unions.

One of my tasks as Assistant Labor Attaché was to go up to the border from Mexico City. They were just beginning to develop what was an agreement between the U.S. President Lyndon Johnson and the Mexican President Diaz Ordaz and were emphasizing border development and border industrialization. So I would go up to Matamoros, up to Nuevo Laredo, go up to Ciudad Juarez, across from El Paso, and check on a program involving a special provision of the Tariff Act, the section 301, that permitted import into the U.S. of finished articles with a tax or tariff only on the so-called "value added" of the labor. Assembly plants or *maquilas* were set up on the Mexican side of the border and factories moved from places like Ohio and North Carolina (textiles) to have final assembly in Mexico. U.S. semi-finished products plus Mexican labor was good business. The expansion of *maquilas* would build up the Mexican border, bring jobs to places like Matamoros and at the same time would provide some jobs in Brownsville. It would develop Laredo, it would develop other cities like El Paso on the U.S. side. I remember one of our jobs as Labor Attaché was to convince U.S. labor and specifically Texas labor that this was good for the United States. So here I am a young labor attaché. I went to Austin, Texas, and sat there with the head of the Texas AFL/CIO, a man named Hank Brown, and his Secretary General Roy Evans. I tried to talk to them about the benefits for U.S. labor of this industrialization on the Mexican-U.S. border. I remember Hank Brown's skepticism about benefits for workers was expressed in a colorful phrase or two. Whatever happened, happened. (A few years later, Hank Brown became my sister's father-in-law. Made for interesting family get-togethers!) Many years later you see huge development on both sides, for good and ill, and population increases in Ciudad Juarez, in Nuevo Laredo, in Matamoros and other places. So the industrialization went forth. The labor component and the trade union aspects, however, were not so much protected.

You asked about big labor, American labor and the influence. Here's just a little anecdote. We tried to be helpful, as you do for U.S. citizens in an embassy. So very important was not just the AFL/CIO and Lovestone but also and more directly, their AID arm. It was called the American Institute for Free Labor Development, AIFLD. So AID funded millions for AIFLD in programs for developing free trade unions and democracy and so forth abroad. Ninety percent of a special fund was AID funds (public), ten percent was U.S. labor and business too. So it was kind of mixed. Anyway, we would help them. Bill Doherty was the head of it. So Big Bill Doherty would come down to Mexico, and

one time I was getting air tickets for them. So working through our embassy people I did their plane tickets and gave them to Bill Doherty in the training center of the inter-American labor unions in Cuernavaca, Mexico, a beautiful place for a training center. I gave him the tickets and he looked at the tickets and they were coach. He said, "Creagan, if there is one thing you better learn, and you better learn now – American labor goes first class." I said, "Well sir, we have our government vouchers and they are for us and you. We all fly coach, that's the way it has to be. It is the U.S. government…" He said, "No, the American Labor Movement goes first class. So do what I say and get first class tickets." I got first class for them. Foreign Service got coach, of course. Now, Doherty told me his tickets came from the ten percent of AIFLD funds supplied by AFL-CIO. O.K. Now, AIFLD was doing really very interesting things. I observed sessions of training for labor leaders in Latin America to learn how to do collective bargaining with management – and how to fight off Communist unions. Labor had influence at home and abroad. It was the Lyndon Johnson government. Lots of influence for Big Labor – and mostly for good.

*Q: Did you cover Irving Brown and his operations in Europe?*

CREAGAN: Not really. By the time I got to Europe, the political situation had evolved from postwar.

*Q: I was wondering when you were…*

CREAGAN: …in Mexico.

*Q: So when you were at Harvard were they an influence?*

CREAGAN: Oh, well we certainly would look at them in a historic context, yeah. But again Harvard was a little different because it was academic training with some of it economic and some of it is negotiations but not so much in that Cold War context.

*Q: I assume that most of your members of your classes were from management weren't they?*

CREAGAN*:* At Harvard?

*Q: Yeah.*

CREAGAN: Yeah, you had management and then you had these trade union leaders from the different countries; so probably it was a mix. Four of us were Foreign Service.

*Q: Well then…*

CREAGAN: Because the whole idea was a trade union program inside the Harvard Business School.

*Q: Well I was wondering whether everybody sort of played their appointed roles. In other words trade union leaders and cases?*

CREAGAN: Yeah, the most interesting part was when the executives or the business side played as trade union leaders and trade union leaders played as business. That was the most fun, because as a Foreign Service officer you are kind of stepping back and observing the scene. I found that the trade union leaders, with relish, fired people or would break a strike and again the business people enjoyed asserting their role as the oppressed labor group. So it was kind of fun to see roles reversed. Harvard did well in that. But then we studied international economics and other things so it wasn't highly political in terms of the Jay Lovestone or Irving Brown "School". I don't remember that kind of influence as much in Latin America where you had good trade union leaders and bad trade union leaders, the bad being those affiliated with the WFTU, or the Communist side. There was a third group of Christian Democratic and Catholic trade unions which were considered kind of green on outside but red on inside. Not to be encouraged. Later when I went to Rome on assignment as the assistant labor attaché in Rome and then doing some time as the labor attaché, we were dealing with that highly political post-World War II struggle between democratic, in that case Catholic, trade unions, the CISL, and the Communist trade unions, the GGIL. By the way we could not meet with the CGIL. If I, for example, had met with leaders of the CGIL, such as Luciano Lama, my career would have taken a major hit. The ambassador would get a message from Jay Lovestone's AFL-CIO basically saying "fire this guy for talking with the Communists or being with the Communists". This was complicated because the "good guys" of the Christian Democrat and the Socialist party trade unions were in a triangular agreement with the Communist trade unions. A new game of the 1960's and 1970's. But if we talked to the Communist trade unionists, then the AFL-CIO leaders considered that undermining the good guys and the special U.S. relationship with them. So there was kind of a policy of don't meet them and in some sense "pretend" that the Christian Democratic leaders were not in their unity pact with the Communist unions. So, in that sense we isolated ourselves from the political trends.

*Q: Okay, now back to Mexico. You were in Mexico from when to when?*

CREAGAN: 1967-1969 so that was a two-year tour.

*Q: Who was your number one man in labor?*

CREAGAN: The labor attaché in Mexico, the number one? I replaced John Dougherty, who was the assistant. The number one was Irving Salert. Irving came out of the trade unions, I think garment workers, and he was classic, classic New York kind of tough trade union fellow. His role was, I think, to keep American labor happy with what we were doing in Mexico. He understood U.S. Labor and I would guess was considered a kind of conduit for American labor into the U.S. government. We Foreign Service officers felt we certainly did not work for American labor. We understand and greatly appreciated the essential role of trade unions in our pluralist democracy but we did not work for them. We clearly worked for the ambassador and the Department of State. We

understood the importance of labor but never paid obeisance to it. I never saw myself as the voice, if you will, of the AFL/CIO, whereas if you came from the AFL/CIO you might consider that you represented that point of view within government. Irving was more in that latter school. He was a character. Oh, the little things you remember. We would go in his car. Now, there were embassy cars and drivers, but sometimes Irving would just jump in his car and go. We'd drive in Mexico City, a car-choked, teeming city, and we would drive up to the trade union headquarters in a very crowded area near the Monument to the Revolution. Irving would park right in the middle of the street, and we would walk off to see the great labor leader, Fidel Velasquez. I'm a young Foreign Service Officer and I'm following the boss. Police would invariably run up to the car--because it's parked in the middle of the street at the Monument to the Revolution – and they would shout that you can't park here. "Move your car, move your car." Irving Salert would turn to the cop, point his finger to the license plate and say, "Diplo, diplo, diplo – I park where I want to park – diplo." I always remembered that. Probably because I was embarrassed. But that was my boss, a tough guy talking like New York and asserting his right as a diplomat to put that car where he wished to put it.

Then he left and a great guy came in, a man who had been developing Honduran trade unions. On the surface a union would seem to be against the interests of the banana companies. It was actually in the long-term interest of the workers, the U.S. banana companies and Honduras. Jack O'Grady was attaché in Bogota after Honduras, and then Mexico. A wonderful guy. He saw himself identifying with the up and coming workers of the country. So, those were the two labor attachés – Jack from the career service and Irving more the trade union roots. I think much good came out of that U.S. role working to build unions to give workers a voice on working conditions, on wages and all the rest. It was the building of pluralism and for democracy.

In Mexico I was part of the political section; so we were very much attuned to the internal political workings of Mexico --who was running Mexico then, who was likely to be running it in the future. We did a lot of writing. I dealt with the PRI Youth Wing, with the *campesino* groups, of course, and with the trade unions. We wanted to know what made them tick. I would go to places like Sinaloa, where nobody goes today — the land of Chapo Guzman, the Cartel leader. I would go many different places around the country at trade union rallies, at trade union meetings. It was fascinating to watch the union leaders shape and organize workers in the interest of the dominant political party, the PRI. So that was a fascinating time. We served two years there.

Then we had a direct transfer, as they say, without going through Washington, from Mexico to San Salvador. Of course, in those days you just jumped into your car and you drove from Mexico City through the highlands of Chiapas, through Guatemala – where already there was guerrilla warfare going on but what did I know. I had a young wife, baby and my sister in the car. Then down to El Salvador. We arrived there about three weeks before war broke out between El Salvador and Honduras. It was July 1969.

*Q: How heavy was the hand of the PRI?*

CREAGAN: The PRI? It was in control; so it didn't have to be such a heavy hand. They had over the decades, since really the 1920's, effected the Consolidation of the Revolution. After all the PRI was the Party of Revolutionary Institutions or the Institutionalized Party of the Revolution; however you want to say it. But power was centralized and the PRI had the power. If you wanted to be anything, do anything, get anywhere you dealt with the PRI and its apparatus. I had written my doctoral dissertation on Mexico, completing the PhD in 1965. So, it was pretty neat being sent back to the place I had studied. I focused some on the so-called opposition parties and especially the PAN, which in recent years of course, actually took the presidency and is very important in the Congress. They have lost the presidency again but they had it from 2000 until this last election in 2012. There was another party called the Party of the Authentic Mexican Revolution, PARM. And another on the socialist left led by the great old Marxist, Vicente Lombardo Toledano. He had been a follower of Stalin and a leader of the CTM labor movement in the early days – with Fidel Velasquez. He was later marginalized. When I wrote about him and had seen him in 1964, he led the small Popular Socialist Party, or PPS. Their color was pink. There was the party of National Action (PAN), the party which became real opposition and from which came the 21st century Mexican presidents, Vicente Fox and Felipe Calderon. Its colors were blue and white like the virgin. You had the Authentic Party of the Mexican Revolution (PARM), its colors, of course, red and white and then you had the PRI. Its colors were the flag. They used to have a saying in Mexico, "*El PRI es el PRI* (the PRI is the PRI), *el PAN es el PRI* (so the National Action Party is the PRI), *el PARM es el PRI*, Finally, *el PPS (the Socialist Party) es el PRI.*" Everything was well organized. The PRI wanted an opposition so that it would look like there was opposition. According to electoral laws the opposition got ten percent of the Congress. So it didn't have to be heavy-handed. It was all about control. It became more heavy-handed when you had the student riots and the crackdown before the Olympics of 1968. We were there. Then the PRI was heavy-handed later in the years of Luis Echeverria but it was a well-oiled machine for most of the 1960s. We left for El Salvador in 1969. An entirely different place.

*Q: Did you get any feel from the figures and the leadership of the trade union movement, were they looking ahead seeing where things might go or did they have a pretty good thing going and want to keep it that way?*

CREAGAN: They were concerned with the current and next generation of workers and also keeping them, of course, within the orbit of the PRI. They were in favor of industrialization projects along the border which would provide new jobs for Mexico. They also fought for guest worker programs. We had had what we called the Bracero Program – Mexican workers, about 400 thousand, were coming into the United States and working in the United States under a bilateral agreement between our Department of Labor and the Mexican Department of Labor. So these workers, mainly agricultural workers, had a contract pursuant to a bilateral agreement. Much, even blankets, were covered in the agreement. There was always some fraud, but it was a pretty well controlled program. The trade union movement in Mexico thought that was important and it was also a good source of political influence and control because they could choose who got the jobs; they brought money back from the U.S. which was good for Mexico

and produced what we now call remittances. Then there was a U.S. ground swell of opinion against the Bracero Program, on human rights grounds, including separation of families during the crop season. The agricultural interests in California and Texas liked the program. However, on the U.S. side – and significantly including trade unions – there was the idea that these people were taking jobs from Americans, or these people were being mistreated, or these are single men up in the U.S. and that's not good for families. All kinds of reasons. There was opposition in the U.S. to the program and it ended in 1964. In sum, the Mexican trade unions were in favor of it as it provided jobs and influence. On the U.S. side these years were the beginning of agricultural worker organizations. Cesar Chavez was organizing the farm workers. The Mexican trade union leader Fidel Velasquez of the CTM would say to me, "What is wrong with this guy named Chavez? His name is Cesar Chavez; he's a Mexican, why is he opposing Mexican workers going to the United States?" I would say, "Well, he is protecting his membership. If the Mexican workers go up there they will take away the jobs of his workers or they will undercut them so they can't fight for their good salaries and so forth." "Well," Velasquez would say, "he's not a good Mexican." Well that's a different point of view; one is Mexican-Mexican and the other is trade union-trade union. Fidel Velasquez was the Mexican labor movement. In 1967-69, he was in his sixties and a real powerful figure. Others did not mess with him. He had incredible staying power — and genes. Velasquez went on to lead the trade unions in the '70s, in the '80s, until the '90s. I think he died at age 94 or 95 and with his boots on so to speak. So that is a look at what I did in a very anecdotal way and with focus on the trade unions.

*Q: Why don't we do El Salvador?*

CREAGAN: So this is 1969, June…

*Q: By the way are you picking up reverberations from Vietnam in your…*

CREAGAN: Yes and no. If you look at some of the political activity and student turmoil in Mexico then that relates to ideological perceptions of U.S. imperialism in Vietnam. The student movement had Marxist elements — and, remember, there was a world-wide opposition of youth to the war, with protests in the U.S. increasing and fueling the protests world-wide. However, in Mexico the PRI was disciplined enough so that on the broad level they were not playing the Vietnam issue. Naturally the poor *campesino* or urban worker had no idea of Vietnam. But in the student movements, those at the National University and elsewhere, you are getting these reverberations. Of course we were feeling it in the Foreign Service. Many of the FSOs were very skeptical of the war. Then there were the incredibly dramatic times of turmoil from the Tet offensive. So now we are moving into 1968 with things happening in Vietnam, things affecting the U.S. The assassinations had a great impact on all of us. I remember at one point thinking that history was being made in the U.S. and that one should not be, let's say, in Mexico in Foreign Service when there was so much to be done back in the United States. I even thought about – well, trying to join the campaign of Bobby Kennedy to help change the U.S.

By the way, one little personal note or an anecdote on what happened concerning the war and our electoral scene. Hubert Humphrey had come down to Mexico City on a visit as vice president. It was the end of March 1968. Of course he was the Vice President, so Ambassador Fulton Freeman and the senior officers were dealing with him. But at some point the guy who was running the show, our administrative counselor Tan Baber, said, "Creagan, I want you to be there at Humphrey's heel in case he needs anything." I said, "Okay". Now, I am a junior officer. I'm the assistant labor attaché. I thought, "Okay, that's great." So then I went along and accompanied Humphrey to the Anthropological Museum and other places. I happened to be there. There was a dinner with the Ambassador and the president of Mexico and I don't know who the others were but I was there in the outer rooms for the dinner. President Johnson was going to give a speech and Vice President Humphrey said, "Let's go into the study and listen to the speech." This is before Internet or anything else. President Diaz Ordaz said, "No, we can get that later." Humphrey said, "No, I would like to listen to the speech." So all I remember is they ended doing that and at the end of his speech Johnson made his famous "I will not run…" announcement. Maybe he had already told Humphrey he might say something. In any case it was not said until it was said. LBJ stated, "I shall not seek and I will not accept the nomination of my party for another term as president." Just like that, he was stepping down. What a surprise! Out comes Humphrey from the study. And we are told, "Organize the embassy. The Vice President is going to give a talk tomorrow morning at the embassy." So back to the Embassy people went. Now, I wasn't the main organizer of the rally, but I was there as history was made. The first campaign address of Hubert Humphrey in 1968 was at the American Embassy, Mexico. Then back to the U.S. he went and, of course, we had the tumult at the Chicago convention, the campaign and the loss to Richard Nixon.

When Bobby Kennedy was assassinated, there was grief and unease among us younger officers. I remember standing up at the Country Team Meeting and making some emotional statements in response to the Ambassador's words that seemed critical of Bobby. He did not react or throw me out, perhaps sensing the generational divide and the deep feeling. It was a year of turmoil in the U.S. Vietnam was going bad and the assassinations of Martin Luther King and Bobby.

*Q: You were there during the Olympics?*

CREAGAN: Yes.

*Q: Want to talk about the Olympics? I think you talked about it before.*

CREAGAN: Well, a little bit. Of course the student movement was building; the PRI, the government, was very much concerned with stability and very much concerned that there not be outrages as they were considered outrages at the Olympics. They wanted these Olympics to run smoothly and to show off Mexico to the world. The student movement was really screwing that up, it was building, the marches, the strikes, this and that. So one evening, it may have been October 2, I don't remember exactly, but what came to be known as "the sad night", *La Noche Triste*. Tens of thousands – maybe more – students

gathered in Chapultepec Park of Mexico City and then marched down this main thoroughfare, I mean it's your grand European style thoroughfare of Mexico City on the French model. Down the Reforma they marched and passed by the American embassy. As a young eager political officer and the guy who dealt with labor youth and had dealings with the student group as well, I decided to go out and observe the student march. So I went out and marched with the students past the embassy, which was protected by Mexican tanks (they were smaller tanks than we think of when we think Abrams). So the students didn't attack the embassy; they kept moving by but with lots of shouts and lots of epithets thrown. I remember having a little secret fun throwing an epithet or two myself. As the march continued, I dropped off and went back to the embassy to do reporting. The students and demonstrators went to the main plaza, the Zocalo, and then over to what they called the Tlatelolco, the Plaza of Three Cultures. There the student group found itself surrounded by military with a stated purpose of crowd control. Somewhere a shot rang out from one of the buildings. A sniper perhaps. Who was the sniper? After the shot rang out and hell broke loose, the military lowered their weapons and shot into the crowd. If they were there for crowd control they did just what you don't do. They had the crowd encircled, instead of leaving a way out. It was a massacre. We did not know how many were killed, but we estimated as many as two hundred or even more. The military had far lower figures. The general's name was Barragan. Luis Echeveria was *Ministro de Gobernacion,* and he later became president. It was alleged for years that the government meant to stop the student protests by any means and stop unrest before the Olympics. A very sad night, a massacre. We thought it was stupidity or even intended by the government. Or maybe a subversive group decided to shoot into the crowd and set off the massacre. The student movement was squelched with force. The Olympics took place and they were peaceful. I remember the Olympics and being there when U.S. athletes Tommy Smith and Juan Carlos won their events and raised the Black Power salute. A shock with repercussions in the U.S. and beyond.

*Q: Yeah.*

CREAGAN: That act of course was very controversial in the context of the times and the Olympics. I remember many calling for their expulsion from Mexico. The Olympics must be above politics. The Olympic Committees met and our own embassy got involved. They left. But I don't believe Mexico itself took any action like deportation. But the Olympics themselves were fun and beautiful, if marred by what took place in the weeks before. That was '68. Life went on, and especially the personal. One of our boys was born (Kevin) and we had the fun of care and feeding (breast milk so no bottles to prepare). In summer of 1969 we were transferred to El Salvador. We drove down.

*Q: Okay, we will pick this up in '60…*

CREAGAN: In '69.

*Q: In '69, we will go to El Salvador again as…by the way during this time did you get the feeling that the labor attachés and the labor movement from the American point of view was riding pretty high within embassy circles?*

CREAGAN: Do you mean in terms of respect or power?

*Q: I mean in prestige or money or whatever.*

CREAGAN: Yeah, certainly there was some power there and some money there. The labor attaché corps as such was never as accepted in a broad way as the commercial attaché. The commercial area was one of the universally accepted tasks of the U.S. Government — and was the same for most governments and embassies. But I think the labor attaché was often seen as a political interference of big labor in diplomacy.

*Q: One sort of had the feeling it really wasn't in the hands of the State Department it was more in the hands of the AFL/CIO.*

CREAGAN: Yes, the AFL/CIO because you couldn't say it was in the hands of the Labor Department. Let's face it: the Labor Department was in the hands of the AFL/CIO. For me it was very interesting indeed, also from a political science point of view. It was fascinating to go to my first post, not as a vice consul dealing with visas, but instead being sent to Harvard, then as Assistant Labor Attaché in Mexico. I never did the visa line. There I was dealing in these very interesting political issues. If I thought long-term about the labor attaché corps or labor attaché as a Foreign Service specialty I think there was some question that it would be too narrow. But it was very, very interesting as we went along. And we were doing good in terms of improving lives of workers and competing with the Marxists at the same time. In El Salvador, for example, I was the labor attaché and political officer. There were a couple of us in the Political Section. Jack Binns was running that section for a time, and he had been the labor attaché. I took his place as the labor attaché and he led the section. We did analysis, reporting and the tasks of political officers such as representation and the interaction with Foreign Ministry. I had taught a course in U.S. Foreign Policy at a university in Mexico City and considered doing something like that in San Salvador. However, the students were rather radicalized and I was not very welcome at the university.

I had money because I was also called the "AID Labor Officer". We had AID funds for labor and trade union training and projects. I worked closely with and became a good friend of the American Institute for Free Labor Development representative in El Salvador, Mike Hammer. Gwyn and I were close with Mike and his wife, a Madrilena, Magdalena. Mike and I collaborated on most things in the labor/campesino area. AIFLD was managed by the U.S. Labor Movement, essentially the AFL-CIO, and had funding from U.S. business sector as well. Yet, a good 90% of its funding came from the USG. It was AID money. It is just interesting how academic writing about the AIFLD invariably linked AIFLD with the CIA. In fact, AIFLD programs were open AID-funded programs; there was State and U.S. Mission control as well. So, I was the AID labor officer as well as Labor Attaché in El Salvador, and I had a responsibility for the AIFLD budget and its fulfillment, all under the Ambassador, Bill Bowdler. Mike was the Director of the nominally private AIFLD. It was Mike and his AIFLD that proposed and supervised projects and programs. Mike and I would travel to the countryside and meet with

*campesino* leaders. One project might be a small bridge. Something totally non-controversial, and we would have community leaders at our ribbon-cutting ceremonies. Other activities included building and funding Coops, so that *campesinos* could have equipment and seed and work in common, in order to escape total dependence on the landlord, whose land they worked and upon whom they had depended for tractors, tools and seed. We worked to build something called the *Union Comunal Salvadorena* (Union of Salvadoran Cooperatives). It would give some power to oppressed and landless peasants. Remember that El Salvador was famously the country of the *"catorce"* or fourteen families and the 14 family descendants, the *"catorcitos".* With this cooperative project, AID monies would go into a cooperative fund that could be used by the campesino members. Instead of having to pay the landlord for the use of a tractor, this cooperative could buy the tractors. The *campesinos* would then have some control over use and costs. Soon they would be able to have some independence and to build a better life for the peasants. This AIFLD and AID activity did not thrill the landed class - nor the military government that collaborated with that group of landowners. I remember the Labor Minister, a Colonel in the armed forces (the government was a military government headed by President and General Fidel Sanchez), expressed his disaccord clearly. He told me something like, "Creagan, I know what you are doing out there, you are building unions and unions are illegal in Salvador." I said, "No, we have this contract that you signed – our bilateral agreement on AID programs". He was not mollified and noted that he still knew what we were doing. The Minister was about right in his concerns, because we were building coops, that would become in effect rural labor organizations and whose strategic purpose in our minds was to be one of the building blocks of pluralism and of democracy. The individuals would no longer owe their very existence to the landlord but with the Coops would have some independence. That would affect everything, even performance at a ballot box. So we were doing good things. The labor attaché was an interesting and even vital position.

Mike Hammer and his wife and Gwyn and I (we both had little boys) would go down to the Pacific beaches and have picnics on Sunday and have Spanish tortilla and all of that. Mike was later (1980) murdered in Salvador by those who were the hired thugs of military governments which deeply opposed labor and the development of rural cooperatives and unions. Mike was brutally murdered. His child, the little kid that played with our Kevin on the beach, grew up to join the Foreign Service. Mike Hammer has been our spokesman at the State Department. He has been at the NSC and Ambassador to Chile. It's interesting how he followed his dad in many ways. Oh, Mike Hammer and I did good in El Salvador. Therefore, to your question: The Labor Attaché had a certain power and had some valuable AID money to use.

When I arrived with wife, child and my sister, it was barely three weeks before the outbreak of the so-called "soccer war". It's crazy because just coming from Mexico I was observing what's going on and saw more than a little bit of "clientitis". From both embassies. Now, being in San Salvador, I thought the embassy in Tegucigalpa was worse. Embassy Salvador was reporting on and empathizing with the Salvadoran situation – there were many Salvadorans in Honduras being expelled. The yellow journalism from TV to press exacerbated the situation. It was said that Salvadoran

women were being raped and breasts cut off by Hondurans in the process of driving Salvadorans out of their country. Hondurans were described as a brutal people. In Honduras obviously countercharges were made and it was said that Salvadorans took jobs belonging to Hondurans and undermining the livelihood of Hondurans. You may remember that the two countries were in preparation for the World Cup and played soccer games in the respective capitals. They played in Tegucigalpa, Honduras, and the Hondurans won. When they had a repeat match in San Salvador, the Salvadorans won. Now I remember the Salvadorans kept the Honduran team awake the night before the game by banging pots and pans outside the hotel. And so when war broke out it was the *"Guerra del Futbol"* because of soccer rivalry. Actually it was a classic kind of war with a base in migratory patterns and resentments and a prejudice based on almost nothing, but which builds up in response to irresponsible media and leadership. Each side wanted to protect itself against a possible preemptive strike by the other. The Salvadorans acted first. They flew over Tegucigalpa one night and dropped bombs from a DC3. They hit a little bit of the airport, and I was told that they hit the American school as well. It was night; so nobody was killed at the school. The Hondurans swiftly reacted. I remember being in the embassy when cables came in saying that planes had taken off from Toncontin Airport and, well, since it was 45 minutes to Salvador sure enough in come the planes. It was very strange because the Hondurans had Navy Corsairs, World War II Navy Corsairs. That is a kind of heavy plane.

*Q: A big plane.*

CREAGAN: And they came over San Salvador and started bombing the airport and elsewhere. The Salvadorans sent up their P51 Mustangs. This was the last time World War II aircraft were in war and in dog fights – Corsairs vs Mustangs. Just amazing. I think the Salvadorans had 12 P51s and the Hondurans had about 15 of the Naval Corsairs. Then we counted the ones lost. One P51 made its way into Guatemala and then it was downed. Then in Nicaragua another was downed. One went out over the sea and crashed. Other bad things were happening. I'm sitting in my embassy office the morning of the first attack and I get a call from the ESSO Oil refinery guy and he said, "I'm here at the oil refinery, oh my God…" Kaboom. The Navy Corsair had come in dropped bombs and hit his oil tanks and blew the hell out of the oil. "Where are you," I said. "Oh, I'm under the desk." "Okay." There was devastation. People lost lives; thousands were lost. What did the embassies do? We worked to stop the fighting. So we communicated back and forth, acting as go-betweens to the parties in conflict. It was "tell President Sanchez this, or President Lopez says that if President Sanchez will do the other". We tried to get the war stopped. Bill Bowdler was our ambassador. Over in Honduras there was a chargé d'affairs. I think it was Jean Wilkowski. Bill Bowdler was terrific. We worked to get the OAS (Organization of American States) quickly involved and to stop that war. I feel proud that we were able to stop that war within 48 hours, because real people were being killed. Thousands were being killed by stupidity. The Salvadorans invaded a corner of Honduras and then get got stuck. So with the Organization of American States and its observers at the border, we were able to stop that one. I think the OAS did good.

Another thing that was strange in its way. We had our MILGROUP training military in that Cold War context to fend off, I don't know what – a Soviet invasion perhaps – and to make the military more professional. It is complicated, since these were military governments and we were pushing for democratization in some ways. That is another story. In any case our MILGROUP was experienced in dealing with the military officers and the troops. However, when war with the neighbor broke out, the U.S. needed to, if anything, restrain. You can't go to see how your boys are doing. I remember a Colonel who was involved too much with the Salvadorans in war readiness. Let's say he wanted to see how "their guys" were doing on the front. Imagine the issue. And there are troops on the other side also trained by the U.S. Not a good picture. Our Ambassador had to step in and send the Colonel home, back to the U.S. He did that. I was always proud to serve with Ambassador Bill Bowdler.

Bowdler also is responsible for my continuing in the Foreign Service after 1970. (I served until 1999). We were in El Salvador in 1969 and 1970. Lots of things were happening in the summer of 1970, also personally. Gwyn had a tragedy in the family. Her younger brother, not even 18 years old, crashed a plane with another young boy. They died. That was devastating for the mom and for the family. So we thought maybe we should be back in Texas to help out. And then there were political views and feelings on Vietnam. Nixon had invaded Cambodia; there were killings by National Guard at Kent State (near my home town). Turmoil in the States. I was of the feeling that a year after the destructive war between Salvador and Honduras and with stagnation in the political and economic areas, how much can one really be doing here in El Salvador when the action is in the States. I thought I could do more for everyone back at the university. I applied for and got a job as tenure track assistant professor at Texas A&M. So I told Bill Bowdler I'm leaving the Foreign Service, I'm going back to academia; I love teaching and I have some experience. The action is in the U.S. Oh, I remember that the university job paid more for nine months than the Foreign Service did for twelve. Bowdler said, "Well let's get this approved by Washington." I said, "No, I'm leaving." Bowler said, "Look, don't leave, let's do this. Agree to go on leave without pay. It costs you nothing but keeps you on the rolls. I will tell Washington that's what they need to do with you." I think I was about to be assigned to Bogota, which would have been fun. Bogota, Columbia would have been fun but I had to do the university. So Bowler says, "Don't quit, ask for leave and I'll make sure you get leave without pay and then after a year at the university you can decide what to do." I said, "Well, okay." So that is what I did. I went back and taught at Texas A&M. I discovered that I really wanted to be the foreign affairs practitioner before I returned to academia. (It was a bit boring at A&M). Bowdler was right. After a year I said, "I really want to be in the Foreign Service." Then I played a game with the Foreign Service Personnel. Personnel said "You can come back and we have this great place for you. It is provincial adviser in the Mekong Delta," or something like that. I said, "Great, can I bring my wife?" "No you can't bring her." "Well I don't want that." So then we had a little fight and it was to be resolved by the Director General. My personnel officer stopped me before what might have been an argument with the DG and asked, "How about Laos?" I said, "Okay, I'll go to Laos." "Well actually, he said, "we don't have any place in Laos. So let us think. We will call you in a couple of days. I was at my father's house in Ohio with wife and child when they called. OK, we have we have three

possibilities. If you come back into the Foreign Service we will send you to Addis Ababa as labor attaché, or we will send you to Lagos, Nigeria, or we will send you to Rome, Italy." "I said, "Give me the weekend to think about it." Well, then I told my wife about the three possibilities and she said, "You go right back and get on that telephone and you tell them Rome, Italy." I said, "No, but Addis Ababa sounds like fun." Well, I did call them back and took her advice. So, we left Salvador in 1970, taught at Texas A&M the academic year of 1970 and 1971 and then came back into the Foreign Service in the fall of 1971. We were sent to Italy.

*Q: Before we leave this what turned you off or didn't turn you on about Texas A&M teaching?*

CREAGAN: Okay, well one thing that turned me off was the town. We drove all the way back from San Salvador to the States by the way and then I drove up to Texas A&M. It is in Bryan/ College Station Texas. Love the Aggies. I left Gwyn in San Antonio. When I called her from Texas A&M, about 130 miles north-east of San Antonio, I said, "I just want you to know that Texas A&M is a lot further away from San Antonio than San Salvador or Mexico is from South Texas. The culture is totally different." Bryan was totally Anglo in those years, this was1970. I'm talking about the university and the townspeople. One neighbor's comment was, "You're a Yankee and you are always going to be a Yankee and you will never be one of us." OK neighbor. There was discrimination against Hispanics and obviously Blacks, I would say for sure. My wife, who looked Latin, actually felt some anti–Hispanic discrimination when we lived there. The town was a small town and, by the way, a dry town; you had to go to the next county for the liquor store if that's important. But the university was a good, solid, strong university, still all male in 1970 – just going coed – and about 15 to 18 thousand students. The President was a General, as had been the case. It was a different culture from what you experience today, with a university bursting at the seams with 45 thousand or so students, more than half of them women. So I didn't see Aggieland, Bryan, Texas, as the place that I would want to develop an academic career. In fact, had I stayed in academia I would have worked hard to go to UT in Austin, where they had a big Latin American program and where it would have been more in keeping with my interests. You know Texas is big and there are serval Texas's. I like the San Antonio of South Texas.

*Q: Okay, well let me make my announcement. Today is the 30th of May 2013 an interview with Jim Creagan. Jim, you were off to Rome at some time in the 1970s.*

CREAGAN: Right, okay.

*Q: When did you go and how long did you serve there? Then we will…*

CREAGAN: Okay. Well that was a break because I had taken a year in academia as a professor at Texas A&M. Then the assignment was Rome as assistant labor attaché. That would have been the end of 1971 when I went to Washington to take some Italian to do a kind of FSI transfer course from Spanish to Italian. So I took some weeks there in DC. It

was tough because I had no per diem. There was no daycare; so Gwyn could not accompany to class. I had to fight with landlords and get cheap diggings at month to month rate. The landlords did not like Foreign Service people.

*Q: Oh yeah.*

CREAGAN: If they knew you weren't going to stay a year, they had no interest in making things work. We stayed at a place called Larchmont Village, but everybody called it "Roachmont". Police were regularly called and one person in a nearby apartment was shot while we were there. Lots of loose guns around even in the 1970's. We were in the apartment from September till January, I think, after which we went to Rome. It was February of 1972. Kevin was then three years old. He was born in Mexico and was a Mexican citizen — as well as U.S. of course. You might say, no, a child born of diplomats is not a citizen of the country in which he is born (Vienna Convention). Mexico however, did not abide by the Vienna Convention. So if you are born in Mexico, you are a Mexican citizen, like it or not, which brings up interesting aspects for diplomatic immunity affecting the parents having a kid born in Mexico. In any case it was mostly ok to have a Mexican passport for the little baby — in addition to the U.S. Diplomatic passport.

In February we flew to Rome. My boss met us at the airport, and off I went to work. Gwyn is very good at languages so picked up Italian. We had a small embassy apartment for temporary use in the Parioli section of Rome, the Via Caroncini. Gwyn spent her days walking up and down the streets of Rome looking for the signs that would show an apartment for rent. We found one, and we moved in on the north side of town above the Milvian Bridge, the Ponte Milvio, on what they called the Cassia Antica. The rent was very reasonable (you had to pay for your apartments in those days out of an allowance), but the "charge for curtains" took more than our housing allowance. You can be sure that the landlord paid his taxes based solely on the basic rent he charged.

So I then began to get into the labor business. It was the middle of the Cold War, and we were working with the Christian Democratic trade unions and the Social Democratic trade unions. The unions, like everything else in Italy then, were divided based on political party. There were two television stations, for example, one Christian Democratic and one Socialist. Later a third, for the Communist Party, came on.

The ambassador was Graham Martin. My boss was a professional, a wonderful guy – Tom Bowie. Tom had been a traditional labor attaché and before that, of course, was in the army in the war. He had long been involved with Italy and knew the intricacies of the trade union movement. The Italians were advanced in trade union influence and action. The Italian economic miracle had taken place in the 1960's as Italy went from a post-war disaster caused by devastation of war. Also it had been a highly agricultural country. With the miracle of the late '50s and '60s, the North of Italy in particular was booming. So the trade unions fought to get their share of the growing economic pie. Strikes were rampant. There were many kinds of strikes and some very creative methods. It was fascinating to go to Milan, to go to Turin to see how the metal workers operated. The

*sciopero a singhiozzo* or "hiccup strikes" were an interesting phenomenon used by the metal workers of the three trade unions. It was a moving strike that would paralyze a plant but the worker might stop only for 15 minutes each along an assembly line. The plant was down; the workers got docked for 15 minutes of strike. The unions were causing us political headaches. While the Communists were kept out of government, in the unions the Christian Democratic Union, the Social Democratic Union and the Communist Union moved forward with a unity pact. Since we would not talk to the Communist unions, we had an interesting dance to do. So lots of fascinating things were going on which got you into, of course, the domestic U.S. political scene as well.

*Q: Let's talk about this at some length. What about in the first place did you feel the heavy hand of the American AFL/CIO on the direction of your reporting or what you should be doing or all?*

CREAGAN: Yeah, there was a heavy hand. Western Europe was the primary zone of post war and Cold War contention. So when you think AFL/CIO you think of those struggles. Jay Lovestone who had been a founder of the Communist Party U.S.A. completely flipped and became a virulent, if that is the word, anti-communist. When I was in the embassy in Italy, Lovestone headed the International relations Department of the AFL-CIO. His sidekick was Irving Brown. And as I say, far more than Mexico and El Salvador Western Europe was the real zone of contention, especially for Lovestone and Brown. So AFL/CIO was very much involved and in Italy from the 1940s on, trying to ensure that the Communists did not prevail. Now the Communists had the largest trade unions in Italy; so were powerful both economically and politically. The AFL/CIO was working with and through the U.S. government (open and clandestine) to try and build up these democratic trade unions – Christian Democratic and Social Democratic. The AFL-CIO presence was always there in what we did. My boss, Labor Attaché Tom Bowie felt the pressures a lot more than me. I was the young Foreign Service officer just looking out there to report things as they were. We had unwritten orders not be in touch with the CGIL (Communist Trade Union Confederation) guys. Now the head of the metal workers was very interesting. Bruno Trentin, with whom I then dealt in later years. He was tough, innovative and working very closely with the Christian Democrat and Social Democrat trade unions. By not talking with him we tied our hands in both the information area and in any good influence. Trentin graduated from Cornell, as I recall, and he really had an American experience. And there he was – the very clever head of the Communist Metal Workers Union and we had our hands tied by the "no-contact" policy. We made open contact with Communist Party people only in the late 70's when I did so myself in Naples. To your question, the AFL-CIO had a great deal of influence over the USG and practically determined our labor policy at the State Department and, of course, the Department of Labor. The Secretary of State's Labor Advisor was a direct conduit from the AFL-CIO to the Secretary. Of course the AFL-CIO had other two-way channels with the CIA. That is for someone else to chronicle.

So, the Labor Adviser to the Secretary of State was very much in line with the AFL/CIO position – and took the Administration position back to "Big Labor". We had no problem with that. By the way, the Christian Democrat metalworker unions, headed by the radical

Pierre Carniti, were more action oriented than the communist unions. So you had a real militancy in the Christian Democrats, as I think they tried to beat the Communists. They were quicker to call for strikes. And they developed those creative strikes, whereby the worker could strike for 15 minutes and then "pass it on" so that the assembly line was shut down the whole day as everybody does their fifteen minutes. I remember the metal workers trade unions exported to Brazil. I remember years later talking with Lula in Brazil (he was a trade union leader in Sao Paulo before becoming president of Brazil). He had been working with the Italian trade unions on such creative things. I remember his offices had posters from the FIM-CISL (Christian Democrats) on the wall. So I guess to answer your question, yes, the AFL/CIO was very important in both USG labor policy and in the actions of the U.S. diplomats abroad. Call it pluralism at work in our democracy.

*Q: How about the ambassador? What was his role on that sort of thing?*

CREAGAN: He was a character. Graham Martin, a real "Nixonian" professional. I think he had been out in Thailand, and as you recall he was the last ambassador in Vietnam in 1975 and carried the flag off the roof of the embassy. He got the Rome job because Nixon had come to know him. His approach was to favor the back channel; a conspiratorial kind of guy. During his tenure there were several so-called right wing scandals, even involving supposed "coup" plots and the like. I will not go into those. I remember that the right and even "neo-fascists" had political influence among Italians. I once went to a campaign rally of the leader of the "Italian Social Movement" the MSI. The leader was Giorgio Almirante, who had been a member of Mussolini's Salo Republic cabinet. The rally was in the Piazza Navona, and the piazza was absolutely jammed. I felt pushed and squeezed by a crowd too big for the piazza. It is good that there was no violence. In any case that was the time — 1972 and 1973 – in Rome. In working with Washington, I think Martin went around the Secretary of State, William Rogers, and back channeled to the White House. He liked to get briefed by us. He once said to me to write a particular report to him, and he would take care of informing Washington. One always had the impression that he really had the inside knowledge but did not reveal anything. An interesting fellow indeed. He once asked me, "Why did you bother learning Italian? I mean they are dealing with us, we are the big power and we speak English." He said, "It works for me." That bothered me because I was very proud of having studied hard and learned Italian. I worked every day in Italian. Most of the labor leaders I dealt with did not speak English, with the exception of the aforementioned communist leader — with whom we could not talk. As I think back, Martin was playing with me, but that was his style. Different and distant. He was replaced by John Volpe.

*Q: Yeah.*

CREAGAN: John was, of course, a real character, a basic fellow. He had Volpe Construction Company and had been governor of Massachusetts as well as Nixon's Secretary of Transportation. Volpe loved being Ambassador and spent a lot of time with U.S. political figures, and especially the old Massachusetts group. He spoke an Italian that was a derivative, I would think, of the Abruzzese dialect, Abruzzo being the region

where he was born. He was kind of hard to understand when he spoke Italian, actually very hard to understand. I remember once taking the Socialist metal worker leader, Giorgio Benvenuto, to see Volpe. Volpe offered us cranberry juice. After all, he had been governor of Massachusetts. Now, Benvenuto was cutting edge metal worker leader with lots of rank and file support. He was very sophisticated, and as I recall he wore a cape. Not your rough style U.S. labor leader. We talked a while. Not sure if everybody understood everybody. As we walked back to the elevator Benvenuto says to me, "Tell me Creagan, are there no Italians in the U.S. from Milan?" Well, that was pretty direct criticism of the U.S. approach of naming an Italo-American as Ambassador.

*Q: Yeah. Well you were there in Italy at that time between when and when?*

CREAGAN: That would have been I think from February '72 to the summer of 1974. I was then assigned to Peru as Labor Attaché and deputy of the Political Section. In 1973, Tom Bowie was transferred and I was Acting Labor Attaché until 1974, I think. Then Ernie Nagy, a great guy, came in. I stayed with him for some months and was then reassigned. I was '74 -'77 in Peru and, if I recall, I just direct transferred to get there. I can't remember when I did the home leave, later I think, for sure later.

*Q: Well now looking at the political scene how interested were your contacts and labor unions and elsewhere in you? I mean were they in the United States.*

CREAGAN: Are we talking about Rome, Italy?

*Q: Well were they interested in having good contacts with the American Embassy?*

CREAGAN: They were. And we were out there every day working on different things. Of course, as you recall, you do things like attend labor congresses and lots of meetings, highly political meetings. There was lots of reporting; so I was an integral part of the political section (and I attended all meetings of the economic section as well, doing economic reporting on the impact of labor and the economy) Washington was very interested in what was going on in Italy. The Cold War, of course, was on and there were significant fears that the Communist Party, linked to Moscow, could take the government — and by using the vote itself. It would be the first time in the world that a Communist Party would be voted into office by means of free and fair elections. Washington feared that Italy could go the way of Eastern Europe. So a lot of concern back in Washington as to how things were going. Again, as I mentioned, the Christian Democrat trade unions and the Social Democrat trade unions, which were close to us, at the same time were building a unity pact with the Communist trade unions in order to increase labor's bargaining power for better wages and working conditions. Ideologically and practically this was dangerous in the Cold War era. The good guys working with the Communists? It drove U.S. labor crazy. The unity pacts were in response to the Italian economic miracle, which had been very beneficial for business, for employers, for traditional elites. Organized workers felt left behind. Working together the unions intended to rebalance the labor share of the economic pie. Lots of Washington interest at all the agencies, including the CIA, in what was going on. A large political section, including labor, did

lots of reporting. Oh, we did lots of other engagement. I remember choosing a young mid-level labor leader for what we called "leader grants" to the U.S. The individual would spend 30 days or so and we would work to influence a future country leader by enabling them to get to know the U.S. under great circumstances. Franco Marini went on to head the Italian CISL unions and the Christian Democratic Party. He became a major political figure. It was typical. By the way, in the post-Cold War era Washington lost interest, as it should have, in the intricacies of Italian political life. Who's on first or running for third no longer meant much in the global scene. But it did in my time at the embassy.

*Q: It was very controversial but did you personally have any feeling about the so-called opening in the left in other words, to recognize the extreme Socialist's and the Communists?*

CREAGAN: Yeah, I mean that was controversial. By the time I got there the first "opening to the left", to the Socialist Party on the part of Christian Democrats, had already occurred. That was when President Kennedy was in office. By the early 1970s there was the great concern with the Communist Party gaining influence. There was a lot of attentiveness to that and efforts to keep the CD and Social Democrat and Socialist parties in the U.S. "orbit". That's why, if I remember, there was concern that even contact would adversely affect a party. If embassy officers were seen talking with the Communist Party officials, or in our case the trade unions, it would somehow indicate to the Christian Democrats and the others that it was time to deal. Now the most important trade union leader of Italy in those years was Luciano Lama. He was head of the CGIL. Now we viewed him as Mr. Moderate, and he would be in the category of the current Italian President, Giorgio Napolitano, who was also a leader of the Communist Party. We could not talk with Lama however, and if somebody thought you had contact with them, that would be a personal problem for Mr. Labor Attaché. The AFL-CIO would go for his head. So that's one kind of sensitivity.

On the political side, there was great sensitivity in the 1970's to the impending "historic compromise" bringing into the government area both Christian Democrats and Communists. So I think back to the later years of that same decade in Italy in Naples with Ernie Colantonio as Consul General and then with you, Stu. You remember Richard Gardner was Ambassador. The Communist Party was making deals at different levels with the Christian Democrats. When I was in Rome in the early '70s Andreotti was a major figure in the Christian Democratic Party – a major figure who was conservative and played with the U.S. in a way that the secretive Ambassador Graham Martin liked. It's amazing the difference of just a few years. Far left opposition groups (*grupuscoli* and *autonomi*) began creating havoc even in 1973 and 1974. The unrest came out of the Paris May (1968) and the Italian "hot autumn" of 1969 when workers went on a wave of strikes and demonstrated all across Italy, bringing down governments and winning significant gains. I always attended the Labor Day demonstrations in Rome. May 1 was an important day and one celebrated from Moscow to Mexico with Marxists and Communist Parties playing key roles. I would go to St. John Lateran, where the three labor federations in Italy would stage the day-long rallies. Normally, families would turn

out as well. By 1973 and 1974 the *Autonomi* were bringing violence: street clashes with police, the shattering of windows and chaos. The discipline of the trade unions and PCI-led rallies was breaking down. The far left groups were able to wreak havoc in neighborhoods near St. John Lateran and the center city of Rome, Milan and elsewhere. So that was a concern and as that break down in order increased, the old Communist Party and the majority parties increasingly worked together to bring order.

*Q: Did you see a liberal wing sort of a European Euro-Communism developing at that time?*

CREAGAN: Yes, the Italian Communist Party (PCI) became the leader of a Euro-Communist group (included Spain led by Santiago Carrillo but not Portugal led by Alvaro Cunhal) a Euro-Communist group that accepted NATO and was not linked tightly to the Soviet Union the way the elders had been. That was happening right then in '72, '73, '74. The PCI Secretary was Enrico Berlinguer. He was a charismatic and attractive leader. As a sidebar, I remember walking up the hill near my house on Sunday for mass at the nearby church. Often, there was PCI chief Berlinguer, outside the church talking, reading the paper and politicking. His wife would be inside at mass. I would pass him by (especially since I was not permitted to talk with PCI officials thereby missing some great opportunities for a bit of info gathering) and go into Mass. He would stay outside and talk with the folks. So yeah, this was becoming a quite different kind of Communist Party without that loyalty, if you will, to Moscow. That, however, was not the understanding in important Washington circles, which saw no differentiation between one Communist party – or even Socialist party – and another.

*Q: Well did you sense that you may say the belief in communism is getting I'll say diluted in so far as how it worked. Was it more theory?*

CREAGAN: I think after you had had the Italian Communist Party opposition to the Soviet crackdown in Czechoslovakia in 1968, things changed. The Italians at that point were looking to find "good government" and without individual corruption. Well, in Emilia Romagna (Bologna/Parma area) there was good local government. It was run by the Communist Party. So there was a lot of interest on the part of the Italians in doing things differently and the PCI was giving good local example.

*Q: What about – again we are sticking to the period you were there the first time in Rome – what about the Red Brigades and terrorism and that sort of thing. What was going on?*

CREAGAN: The threat was beginning. You had clashes also because you still had a residue; I guess you could say, of the MSI from Mussolini days. As I said, I recall specifically the rally in 1972, I think, at the Piazza Navona where MSI leader Almirante drew the crowds. Perhaps some people remembered the "good old days" before World War II and Mussolini's fatal alliance with Hitler. The crowds were immense and I remember being crushed by the crowd in the Piazza Navona. At the same time, and partly in response to the old Right, the student movements became more radical. They increasingly saw violence as the key. So it wasn't Red Brigades yet, but what they called

the *autonomi*. It was the increasing violence and a step toward the kneecapping, kidnapping and the killings of the Red Brigade. By the mid 1970's the Red Brigades were going strong. But what I remember is the beginnings of it all. It was of great concern. Also, the national trade union leaders were concerned about being able to control the radical trade unions and the workers in the northern steel and automobile mills.

*Q: Was there much in the way of spillover from events in France during June of '68…*

CREAGAN: Yeah, I think there was pretty direct impact. I can't say from personal recollection because I didn't get there until the beginning of '72 but what had happened was that the student movement became quickly European-wide. Of course, in the U.S. the anti-Vietnam War movements had mushroomed, Kent State killing of students had happened and all that. The Italian populace had urbanized since the war and the youth were becoming radicalized both to the right and left but mostly the left. Again, after the Paris May of 1968 and the uprising there, action moved to Italy with the labor strikes and the "hot autumn" of 1969. Trade unionists, as I say, were getting out from control of their leadership. Nothing is of greater concern for a leader; whether he is a Communist trade union leader or a Christian Democratic trade union leader, than a loss of control over the rank and file.

*Q: Ah yes. Well it was sort of in many ways the last stand of labor reporting within the Foreign Service wasn't it?*

CREAGAN: I think that's right, yeah, absolutely. When I came into the Foreign Service in 1966 there was a labor attaché corps in expansion, because it was seen as really very important in the Cold War and East-West struggle and that meant Europe, but also Latin America. Those who had been Labor Attachés went on to become ambassadors. In my small cohort of four, two of us became ambassadors — for reasons other than, but including, the labor officer experience. My favorite recollection of the importance regards Ben Stephansky, Labor Attaché in Mexico in late 1950s /early 1960s. President Kennedy is said to have been talking with the President of Mexico, Lopez Mateos, who commented that the Foreign Service officer who really understood Latin America and Mexico was Ben Stephansky. Lopez Mateos had been Minister of Labor before becoming President and knew Stephansky. Kennedy is said to have asked, who is Stephansky? He then told State to make Stephansky ambassador. There was resistance because he was a FS 3 (like a FS)1 after the changes). Not a senior officer. Stephansky got Bolivia. Two points: One, the president gets to nominate whom he wants as ambassador; and two, the Labor Attaché corps was doing vital work and in touch with the pulse of countries. But I think you are right. By the 1980's and certainly after the end of the Cold War we were no longer interested in domestic politics the same way. And Republican administrations, as well as the times, were not kind to the U.S. Labor Movement and its influence declined across the board, including within the Foreign Service.

*Q: Well the anti-Communists like Jay Lovestone?*

CREAGAN: Yeah, sure, he was still very much a part of it, and for Western Europe it was Irving Brown.

*Q: Irving Brown too, yeah.*

CREAGAN: Latin America was different because there we had AID funds for the Alliance for Progress. In Latin America you had "AID/labor" money. We were doing different things like training labor leaders. One could consider Europe and Latin America as part of the great overall struggle but we were doing different things.

*Q: Did you feel that this was you might say a good path to follow labor reporting at that time?*

CREAGAN: At that time yes, yes I did, I thought it was fascinating. I thought it was meaningful. For me with a background in political science, twice a professor, it fit in terms of reporting and trying to analyze. It seemed vital, also because Washington was interested. Even a guy like Ambassador Graham Martin would always indicate much interest in what was going on in labor/political matters.

*Q: How about the Vietnam War? How stood we when you were there with the Vietnam War?*

CREAGAN: In Italy at that time?

*Q: No.*

CREAGAN: Is that what you mean?

*Q: Had we pulled out or…*

CREAGAN: Well, in Italy there was little support for the Vietnam War out among the Italian populace and certainly not among the trade unions. So I would get solid negative commentary, if you will, from the leaders. But, also, we had moved beyond, because this is the period '72-'73 of the Paris Peace negotiations. So Kissinger was in Paris and it was a time when the furor and the anti-American aspects which would have been high in '68-'69 and '70-'71 were past and people were looking toward settlement in Vietnam. After all Kissinger and his North Vietnamese counterpart got the Nobel Peace Prize; so we were kind of wrapped up in that as well. In 1973 it was sign it, wrap it and get out.

*Q: How was Italy doing in your estimation at the time both politically and economically?*

CREAGAN: Yeah, it was doing well, if we think about the prior period. This is one reason labor was so assertive because Italy had done well. After all if you looked around people had been moving from their bicycles to the *motorino*, to the Fiat 500s and 850s to the Alfa Romeo and Fiat 124. There was progress in society, and Fiat was a model of the Italian miracle — producing lots of jobs. Fiat was successful and other industries were

successful. You had in those years labor turmoil, because it was a time of a growing economy. Labor wanted its share. I think about at that time the largest trade union was the metal workers union (FIOM) of the Communist Party unions, the CGIL. Times change. Now the largest trade union is the pensioners. At that time there was hope. So the early '70s was when you had some conflict but it was with optimism for change as well. Unions were successful. They could shut down the automobile plants and they could make a government fall with the general strike. They did that. Gains were made and more were wanted. And there were signs on the horizon that the political system was breaking. It is hard to have a working democracy when almost one third of the vote (PCI) cannot count because they are excluded formally from the national government. Then came the Red Brigades and European-wide terrorism. It wasn't just Italy; remember then there were the German Baader-Meinhof, Red Army Faction and the others. At the same time society was improving; people were getting their own apartments, getting their own cars; it was improving. Those who had nothing, and those whose parents were from poor agriculture and tenant farming in the South, Basilicata or Calabria, were themselves doing much, much better.

*Q: How about the other political game and that's within the embassy, Rome is a big embassy and you can't help but know that there are different currents. How did you find the embassy?*

CREAGAN: Um, let's see. Basically I found my colleagues really cooperative. I mean we had a good group. I especially related to the mid-rank officers and in the various agencies. Let's take the FS-04 as standard kind of rank. We were econ guys, political guys, intelligence. There were a bunch of us, mostly men for the obvious reasons of the Foreign Service before the reforms of 1972. Although we had many agencies and military groups in those years, it was not like twenty years later when the law enforcement group, including DEA, were many more. We were working together for the good cause. What happened at the upper levels was sometimes obvious. We had "Mr. Minister", Wells Stabler who was very correct, very stuffy, very traditional. He became ambassador to Spain. After Wells, who was with Graham Martin, we had Bob Beaudry with Ambassador John Volpe. You may remember Bob. We called him Iron Pants. He became the DCM and, man, he worked long, long, long hours. My bosses included Political Counselor Bill Barnsdale, whom I liked, and Jean Wilkowski, Econ Minister Counselor. She was said to be difficult, but I did not feel that. I sat in on the economic section meetings, with the commercial attachés and treasury attachés as well, and I provided a view and the economic statistics from labor. All in all, it was a really cooperative kind of work atmosphere. I was impressed with the quality and dedication of the people. We had what were called "Italian Hands" – experts on Italy who had served several times there. That kind of expertise was essential in the Cold War years. It was matched by the Soviets. I remember Boris Gololobov, a Soviet embassy officer working the trade unions. He had served two or three times in Italy. Ironic that, while I could not talk with the Italian Labor Leaders who were in the PCI, I could invite to my house – and did – Boris Gololobov and wife. In some of our meetings I was joined by another political labor officer. Oh, in later years after I had retired and was President of John Cabot University in Rome, I would meet with the Russian Ambassador, just the two of us, over lunch in his

grand Villa Abamelek, and talk about the days when we competed for the hearts and minds and votes of Italian labor leaders.

*Q: How about when Volpe was there? You know there are all sorts of stories about Volpe.*

CREAGAN: Well, he brought his own guy, Tom Trimarco, as a kind of "Chief of Staff"; so there were tensions there because you had a DCM, who, after all, manages and runs the embassy. Ambassador Volpe came from a totally political background and construction company background as well; so he was not a traditional kind of career Ambassador. Volpe spent a lot of time meeting and entertaining people from the U.S. and Massachusetts. So, he's at Villa Taverna a lot. Beaudry is running the embassy, but Trimarco is the Ambassador's presence at Via Veneto. Tom would be in touch with Volpe or run out to the residence. I assume he came back with, if not instructions, ways in which the Ambassador wished to proceed. Beaudry had to interpret that. Tom was a good guy; so the arrangement was not so easy for him either. I was a buddy of Tom's, and saw him for what he was. Bob B. was clearly our boss in the embassy. I didn't get wrapped up in those personal aspects. I remember one instance of directly responding to Volpe's needs which were clearly domestic U.S. political. There was a longshoremen's convention in Trieste, and the U.S. was represented by two International Longshoreman's Association (ILA) labor leaders from New York, Anthony Scotto and his cousin Anthony Anastasio. Scotto married the daughter of the crime family king, Anthony Anastasio. Volpe let me know that he was "out of town" and that I should accompany the two to Trieste. Scotto was a university type guy (I later thought he was a model for Michael Corleone in Godfather.) He went to prison for major labor racketeering. He also taught at Harvard and was said to have been considered for Secretary of Labor. (Don't know. Go figure.) I flew with the guys to Trieste. They made a lot of cracks about Italian men being "queers" because they used purses. (Very popular in the 1970's. I had one too, but luckily did not carry it with me to Trieste.). One thing you could tell: Anastasio was more crude and Scotto more cultured. Both were crazy tough. We met Italian longshoremen. We flew back to Rome. Still no Volpe. They flew away. I was glad. So, for me Rome was great. We had one son, Kevin, when we arrived. Sean was born in Rome. We were lucky to have managed to play the housing allowance into a neat apartment in a grand villa. Villa Lontana. Swimming pool and all. I think the actress Anita Ekberg and Tony Steele had a condo there. Cool.

I think you asked about embassy conditions and morale and all that. Rome, like Paris and other big posts, was big, with dozens of government agencies and hundreds of employees. In the days before the FLO and the CLO existed, one was expected to take care of oneself and family and to adjust to the living circumstances. Invariably when inspectors would come around, the morale would not be as good in Rome as it would be in places like El Salvador where everybody joined together to meet the challenges of hardship posts. In Rome the idea was, "hey, you are in Rome and that is like being in Washington, New York or wherever. It's a big world-class city, you've got what you need and you are on your own." That sometimes could cause morale problems in the larger embassies. Again, I didn't really feel that.

*Q: Well, then you left there in…*

CREAGAN: Yeah, I think July '74 and then went directly to Peru where I was the political officer and labor attaché.

*Q: What was the situation? You were in Peru from when to when first?*

CREAGAN: From 1974 to 1977. It was very different that's for sure, starting with the weather. It was very depressing to go from a beautiful Italian summer. You can picture Rome, Capri and Naples with blue, blue skies. Peru in July was overcast and drizzling what they call "*garua*" every day. It stayed overcast from June to November. A steady 59 degrees both day and night. Grey. Depressing. The job was fascinating. I was a kind of political observer of an experiment in governing; a military government was engaged in what it called the "Peruvian Way to Socialism". I also was able to represent the U.S. in interaction with the members of that military government. General Velasco led a junta that pulled off a coup d'état against the democratically elected government of Fernando Belaúnde in 1968. They asserted themselves and put their tanks through the ESSO oil refinery, ITC they called it. So we had a government which was military, but not what you usually think of as military and right wing as General Pinochet was next door in Chile. This was a military on the path of the "Peruvian Way to Socialism". Their action was expressed as based on the Yugoslav model. So, they expropriated private property and created new "national" entities. For example, they took over the fish meal industry which was in the hands of a few industrialists and called it PescaPeru. PescaPeru proceeded to overfish *anchoveta* and send the industry into decline. That's another story. The military took over the oil and called it PetroPeru; the mines and called them MineroPeru. There was ElectroPeru, etc. They even "expropriated" the Humboldt Current and called it the "Peru Current". Why not? So it was very interesting observing that and working in the U.S. Embassy, dealing with this government. Although we had excellent contacts in the government (the career diplomats were always professional and aware of Peru's long term interests and interaction with the U.S.) and society, officially the GOP was inclined toward the USSR and Cuba. The Soviet Union was providing arms, from tanks to jet fighters, and Cuban advisors had their way. The press was totally censored. It had been taken away from the publishers and the owners and then turned over supposedly to several sectors of the populace, the *campesinos* or small farmers had one newspaper (El Commercio); the "workers" had another (La Prensa) but, of course, not really. The military government controlled all the papers. So you had a situation of censorship. As a political reporter/observer I was trying to find out what was going on. I worked with my counterparts in the Israeli embassy, the British embassy, and the Italian embassy. Felice Scauso and I would go to rallies of the civilian opposition. I worked with the bureau chiefs of AP, UPI, ANSA, Agence France-Presse, etc. We were all trying to find out what's going on and all working together. The New York Times, they had people; so again, from my point of view, very interesting indeed.

*Q: At the embassy was the Soviet Union sort of running as top dog?*

CREAGAN: Yeah, and I didn't deal much with them, except when we celebrated détente and space cooperation with mutual receptions. The Cubans, of course, were there and the other regimes you would expect. One responsibility I had was to work with the civilian opposition to the military government. There was the major party, APRA, one of the earliest Social Democratic parties in the hemisphere and led by the great leader Victor Raul Haya de la Torre. They had a lot of support among labor and among *campesinos*. They had set up lots of cooperatives. They were a party well organized as a mass party. You could see traces of organizations that the Fascist Party of Italy might have; you could see the other traces of organizations that a Communist Party might have. But they were the democrats. Now they were never able to win elections, because every time they would win an election the military would pull a *golpe de estado* and kick them out. My fascinating job was to deal with them and with the Peruvian labor federation (CTP), linked to the APRA. My military contacts would tell me from time to time that the government knew I was seeing Haya de la Torre. I replied that of course I was. I would visit him at his home called Villa Mercedes on the road to the Andes. He told me that the government tapped his phones, in fact all three military services were tapping the phones, not trusting each other for readouts. I talk of military government and censorship but they did not shut down the APRA party affiliated agricultural cooperatives and trade unions. The regime did put a lot of pressure on them.

*Q: Well did you find we were looking for Cuban influence there?*

CREAGAN: Oh yeah, very much, and it was there. There were a couple things going on. Arms purchases, as I said. The Soviets sold the Sukhoi 22 which was a fairly advanced aircraft and would supersede the F-5s. We were concerned about that kind of thing, because – what would they be used for? The Peruvian generals were thinking about working their way toward reversing the results of the 1879 War with Chile, when Chile had not only taken part of Bolivia and cut Bolivia off from the Pacific but had taken part of Southern Peru. So the Peruvians, that is the military government, were preparing for the possibility of redressing old grievances. 1979 was approaching. So obviously we were very much concerned with these things and also, of course, the Soviet and the Cuban influence over the regime. One example of the Peruvian military government paranoia, I am sure fostered by Cubans, was the decision (in 1975 still under General Velasco) to kick out the Peace Corps as spies. I remember writing up the embassy protest for the Ambassador.

Then we were interested in the squeeze that was being put on democratic organizations. There was the effort to put the cooperatives out of business. The military government ideologues had implemented something which might even sound good in hypothesis. It was the creation of Social Enterprises (*Empresas de Propriedad Social*). As a basic idea you and I get together and we set up this little enterprise; we make some money. The profits, which the GOP called "*excedentes* or "surplus" don't stay with us. They go back to a government fund which is used to start up new Social Enterprises. Thus the jobs increase and the society benefits. The idea is interesting and would work perhaps in a perfect society — or a monastery. What in fact happened is that people did not work to profit, since they could not keep it. This in contrast to the cooperatives of APRA. They

actually might be set up mainly in agriculture or in sugar cane or what have you. The APRA cooperative profits went back to the cooperative itself and into a distribution scheme – but among those who were actually in the Coop. So it was interesting to watch these so called experiments work or not work. In the end, of course, the government enterprises failed and in the end the military government failed. In 1975 there was a coup d'état by one military general against the other. I remember being in a meeting of government ministers from the non-aligned movement around the world. During the week-long meeting of UNIDO the coup occurred. General Morales Bermudez had overthrown General Juan Velasco. The new leader appeared and told the ministers that there was continuity. "The same government that welcomed you now bids you farewell". There was symbolic continuity but real change. Morales was a moderate and war plans against Chile were shelved after a time. Transition to civilian government also took place — not right away but in a few years. The civilian former president, Fernando Belaúnde, was permitted back in the country.

In fact, there is a story there. I met with Belaúnde and a lot with his "team" like former press secretary, Mario Saavedra. My chief contact in the military government was an army captain, Vladimiro Montesinos. He was at that time, I think, the aide to Chief of Staff, General Mercado Jarrin, and he was associated with the left side of the military, including Prime Minister and General Fernandez Maldonado. One day Montesinos called me in and said the government did not want me (the U.S. Embassy) to meet with the civilians like former President Belaúnde. He said they had photographic proof that I was doing that. I replied that that is what we do – meet with the democratic opposition and the civilians to also encourage them. That ended that conversation and Montesinos and I continued to meet almost weekly it seems. He gave us lots of information on what was going on inside the GOP. I assumed that somebody up there wanted us to know.

One incident I remember, I think they called it "the *Limazo*", in reference to the 1948 riots that convulsed Colombia, the "*Bogotazo*," that was in response to the assassination of the Colombian liberal leader, Jorge Gaitan. In 1975 the police in Peru were still from the APRA Party. They had been on strike against the military government for days. So, there were no police in this huge city, Lima, a metropolis of over 5 million. A day went by, two days went by and by the third day or so mobs were forming and they began to protest everything. They began to burn buildings. On February 5, I was down in the center of Lima watching the protest with my "colleague" from the New York Times, Jonathan Kandell. It got pretty violent there, and he said, "This is no place for a diplomat". I replied, "This is no place for New York Times reporters." We backed our way out of there and he went to his office. In those days you didn't have your little cell phone, and he had to return to the office for phone or telegraph connection. I went back to the embassy. Well, the mob continued to grow and to burn buildings, including major government offices of expropriated enterprises. The city burned and then the mob arrived at the U.S. Embassy. They moved on us; we, of course, got into safe rooms and had Marines ready. We put on the gas masks. Some of the crowd came over the wall/fence. I would say we were in imminent danger. Just as something not good was about to happen and we would have had to have marines act, around the corner came Soviet T55 tanks that the Peruvians had bought from the USSR. For the first time in my life I remember we

were "cheering" for the Russian (made) tanks, as the crowd took the hint and melted away. The tanks had their turrets moving back and forth and as they moved down the street the riot at the embassy itself dissolved. Quoting me, the weekly Caretas noted the words of an American diplomat, "*Gracias a Dios por los tanques rusos.* "You can conclude that the embassy was in a bad spot – toward the center city. The riots and looting went on all day and the reports were of over 100 dead and perhaps 1000 wounded. A curfew was put on. Oh, you can be sure that the embassy moved far away from the center city.

*Q: What happened?*

CREAGAN: Well the embassy was just so obviously insecure that we eventually built a new one far out and with physical protection. The Ambassador's residence also came under attack one time. The explosives blew a hole in the wall. All were OK. We did not move the residence. I think we were more "casual" about terrorist attacks and kidnappings and all that in those years. I had friends kidnapped; our Ambassador to Brazil was kidnapped as well. Our Ambassador to Guatemala was killed and my friend, the labor attaché kidnapped. One of my former DCM's was kidnapped. I don't remember the U.S. media or public or congress reacting particularly strongly in most of those cases. And it was always made clear to us that if kidnapped you were on your own. No U.S. ransom. Expendable diplomats? It was clearly a different era. On the personal level, the military's own insecurities and the rivalries among the services kept Lima tense at times. As coup and counter-coup rumors percolated, things happened. At one point the navy was said to be working with the air force to wrest power from Velasco and the army. The navy went to sea. It was said that it could shell the city as threat. The air force could strafe army bases. But in the end, if calculating, it was clear the army would control. The navy would not shell its own city and the air force would find army tanks on the air strip should it take action. So…nada. Living under curfew, imposed in 1975 after the "*Limazo*" with its 100 or so deaths and perhaps 1000 wounded, was interesting. At one point the curfew was as early as 8 PM. If we were out at a diplomatic function and did not get going in time, you stayed in place till morning. I remember several tense moments with the military checkpoints after curfew. Son Sean had asthma as a little kid and he had several late night attacks. I had to drive him to the hospital for emergency treatment. Driving very slowly, with a white flag flying from the car antenna, we would make our way to the hospital. I really worried at the army check points. Nervous soldiers, not well trained it seemed, and a tank pointing its turret at us. When we got to navy checkpoints with sharp young officials and no guns pointed, we felt a lot better. One night bullets came thru our bedroom window. I thought then that it was prudent to send Gwyn and the kids back to the U.S. for a month or so (this was summer of 1975 before the successful coup). Of course we paid for that kind of "evacuation" ourselves.

*Q: What was your impression of the military as far as the ruling capacity?*

CREAGAN: They were supremely confident, certainly in the first years and the army captain I often met with was a key example of that. His view was that of the military governments. (At that time the military ran Peru, Chile, Argentina, Uruguay and Brazil.

The military in Peru had a different ideological stance than Pinochet in Chile but they were all of the same formation.) A common idea was that the civilians were incompetent to run a government. No idea, for example, of strategic planning. And civilians really don't have any discipline. They don't know how to make things work; they have no follow through; they just sit around and argue in Congress. Meanwhile terrorists (all Marxist in orientation) run amok. So the future as seen by the military governments was a long term hold on power. Army Captain Montesinos used to talk with me about the melding of Peruvian and Brazilian strategies, including a pathway (roads and other ways) connecting the Atlantic with the Pacific (This was 1975. That project may be coming to fruition in 2016 or beyond.) Montesinos talked of the Brazilian General Golbery and grand strategic ideas. Civilians would not be back running governments until perhaps the year 2000 or beyond. This was 1975. In fact, the military was out of power in Peru by 1980. The incompetence was theirs. So you had that kind of supreme confidence which quickly, of course, came undone, because the military and the civilian ideologues were completely incompetent in running a country. The myriad of enterprises like PescaPeru and MineroPeru busted. The more moderate General Morales Bermudez led them out the swamp, if you will. Looking back, the kind of inter-service rivalries and the tensions of curfew in the mid 1970's that I discussed, demonstrated the opposite of real military confidence and capability in managing Peru.

*Q: Let's see your ambassador in Peru was who?*

CREAGAN: Bob Dean. Bob was a career guy, a good guy. We had Bob Dean and Dick Barnaby was DCM and Lyle Lane after that. After Dean, Harry Shlaudeman, one of the great Foreign Service officers, became Ambassador. He was a Latin American type; Harry had been assistant secretary for Latin America, he had been on the Dominican Republic desk as I recall and after Peru was Ambassador in Brazil. I was his political counselor there. He had also been ambassador in Argentina, and even Nicaragua. Harry Shlaudeman was ambassador in the '76-'77 portion of my time in Peru. By the way, I left Lima to go to Naples as political/econ counselor and then later Harry was my ambassador in Brazil. I left Brazil to go as DCM to the Vatican and Harry said, "Creagan, you leave me for Naples and now you leave me for the Vatican. Why are you always leaving me to go to Italy?" I said, "Well…" He said, "Yeah, I understand I think. But my one European tour was Romania. Not the same." By the way, Peru was a hardship post then. It also brought out the interagency inconsistencies and inequalities that caused resentment. For example, in Lima goods were hard to come by – from meat (15 meatless days a month) to many goods. The military had a weekly flight bring in – for them only – groceries and other goods from the PX in Panama. They also had mail delivered through the APO which we were not permitted to access. Our mail came through a really slow diplomatic pouch. Remember there was no email or easy phone access. Regarding meat, it was smuggled into the city in the trunks of cars, and my wife would buy her meat that way. We also ate whale meat. Very bad and stinky in fact. Gwyn and friends organized a protest, and they wrote a letter to Larry Eagleburger, who at that time was the Under Secretary for Management. The women called for fair treatment and access both to PX shipments and APO. Larry responded positively, and I think we put the squeeze on our military (we had both MilGroup and Attachés). Or share or forget it for yourselves

became the word. By the way, when I went to lunch during the 15 "meatless" days with army captain and aide to the military leaders, Vladimiro Montesinos, he would order "military lunch" and always got steak. Privileges of the Peruvian way to socialism.

*Q: Well did you feel that there was a real threat of say a full scale Castro like take over?*

CREAGAN: No, I didn't. I thought things were up in the air; you couldn't say that the military were going to fail, but it just didn't look to me like they were going to be long term or that Castro could really take advantage. And Peru is next door to Chile. After the 1973 *golpe* in Chile, things were clear. Now the Peruvian military had good relations with Cuba and they dealt with the Soviets and all that, but at the same time they were very nationalist and they were going to stay very Peruvian. They never eliminated the civilian opposition and, especially after General Morales Bermudez overthrew General Velasco who had kicked out the civilian government in 1968, the atmosphere took on tones of transition. Morales let back in Peru the president who had been exiled, Fernando Belaúnde, so things were changing. I think the military could see by 1975-76 for sure that things weren't going to work out for long term military rule. So, no, I did not think there was a chance of Castro-like takeover.

*Q: How about say the British and French embassies were they playing any particular role there?*

CREAGAN: The British were always important and the French played French interests. The Israelis were there and, of course, the Cubans were active. The Italians were always good reporters and I always thought the Brazilians were knowledgeable, but didn't exercise a lot of influence. They do now in that area, but the Brazilians, while a colossus of a neighbor and with military government, had a different culture. So the ones that would have influence would be the Cold War bad guys, the USSR. China was rather self-isolating.

*Q: How about the Vatican?*
CREAGAN: The Holy See was intensely interested in Peru, also because the adherents of liberation theology were centered there (and Brazil). I was friends with, and shared information with the Auxiliary bishop, a Jesuit named Bambaren. He later moved up to be bishop, in spite of what I am sure were Vatican Curia criticisms of his support for a soft form of liberation theology. Fr. Gustavo Gutierrez, a kind of father of liberation theology, was Peruvian and active. (I met him later at Notre Dame and we reminisced about Peru in the 1970s.) Spain was active and even had their own labor attaché. They were looking for more influence in Latin America. What I forgot in noting the government and diplomatic relations is that Velasco (until August 1975) and Prime Minister/General Fernandez Maldonado and many others were very suspicious of the U.S. The AID program and the Peace Corps were symbols of U.S. influence. General Velasco decided that the Peace Corps must go. And so, he kicked them out with charges of being CIA and all that. I remember writing our reply, and the ambassador used that. Relations were frosty but never broken. It changed for the better as the transition became feasible.

*Q: How about Ecuador?*

CREAGAN: Ecuador and Peru, of course, always had border difficulties. From time to time it would break out into hostilities and the U.S. would have a very prominent role, because both of them needed the OAS, the Organization of American States, to help bring things to an end. That meant, in effect, they always needed the U.S. and Brazil. So Ecuador was there and, like the rest of South America, under a military government. In difficulties with Peru there was always a sense of nationalism and pride; so tensions. But never did we think that would be a war as could have happened with Chile.

*Q: Yeah. Did you get any presidential or important visits?*

CREAGAN: The one I remember most was Mrs. Carter coming down, because I was assigned to her. She and her group…I'm trying to remember I wouldn't have known Madelyn Albright but she might have been with her. Anyway she had this group of women with her and then me, from the embassy. We stayed a couple or three days out above Lima toward the Andes, where actually the sun would come out. The "resort or village" was called Granja Azul. I stayed out there with them, and they brought with them Bob Pastor. Bob was the NSC guy for Latin America. Like me he had been an academic and did his PhD on Guatemala. It was kind of fun eating dinner and doing the hosting duties with Mrs. Carter and group. She told me she was studying Spanish every day and also noted her influence with the president (like pillow talk). She questioned who was to be the next Ambassador to Peru (it was Harry Shlaudeman) and noted he had been in Chile as DCM (well briefed) when the U.S. was anti-Allende. I told Mrs. Carter that Shlaudeman was the best of the career officers and he already had Peruvian agrément. She should not be concerned. Mrs. Carter went to see the president of the country. I wasn't there, but I think she told him not to go to war against Chile. The generals didn't like the idea of a lady telling them what to do, but they did not go to war. So…

*Q: How did you find social life there?*

CREAGAN: Well, it was very active in the diplomatic circles. We had lots of dinners back and forth. We were always with diplomats, press, Peruvian political party leaders, and military as well. Dinners and receptions were used to work the scene. Try to find out what was going on in the world of censorship. A typical dinner at our house might be with an assistant secretary of the foreign ministry, a bishop, Mario Vargas Llosa (writer and future presidential candidate), editor of Peruvian magazine Caretas, Enrique Zileri, a military officer in government position, civilian political party leaders, a labor leader and several foreign diplomats. Gwyn was busy setting up and actually cooking many dinners. We had a pretty good size embassy with AID and MilGroup as well. With Peruvian friends we would spend weekends in travel and even camping on the deserted sand dunes of the South. We went to social clubs like the Club Nacional for business receptions. We had some American industry. Gwyn and I were good friends with the CEO of Chrysler and his family (kids the same age as ours). Our oldest went to the American school. Another one of our sons had been born in Rome; so he was preschool in Peru. Oh, near

our house was the Lima Cricket Club. I played tennis there often. And on Sundays we had a morning tennis foursome with my friend from Chrysler, a military attaché, perhaps a Ford Foundation person or other and me. So a lot of activities, much more than, say, in a big city.

*Q: What about the Shining Path?*

CREAGAN: It hadn't come up yet. The military had just eliminated a prior group, led by Hugo Blanco. The Shining Path hadn't really organized. One of the reasons the military felt they had to be in government though was to crush terrorism and to prevent its rise. That didn't work.

*Q: Well did you have much contact with some of the students?*

CREAGAN: I didn't deal much with the students there. I was dealing with the political leadership and also with union leadership and military when they were in their official capacity, in the prime minister's office wherever. My job involved the Foreign Ministry as well. Lots of different things – demarches and working very closely with professionals in the foreign ministry – those who would still be around after the military were gone. As I noted, the terrorist threat was always there in Latin America. The bomb thrown over the wall of the ambassador's residence and some concern that the residence and embassy were exposed, especially after the riots and mob action of the "*Limazo*". Terrorism in the mid 1970's was not well defined. Then came Shining Path. In the 1990's my old contact, Vladimiro Montesinos became President Fujimori's Intelligence Chief. Lots of violence, effective action against Shining Path and lots of corruption. Another story for another diplomat of that time. I understand that the leader (Guzman) of the Shining Path was a professor at San Marcos University. Although I had taught a course at university when assigned to Mexico in the 1960's and generally kept some university connections, in Peru I did not spend time at San Marcos.

*Q: You went back to Italy right?*

CREAGAN: From Peru I went to Naples.

*Q: Today is the 7th of June 2013 with Jim Creagan. Jim, when did you go to Naples?*

CREAGAN: I went to Naples in 1977 so it would have been June or July; it seems to be the normal kind of timing. In Peru we were talking about that and I was just going to recall a couple interesting things about Peru and the people.

*Q: Yes, would you.*

CREAGAN: I think I had said that we were dealing with this military government which thought it was taking Peru to socialism as guided by the Yugoslav model (Branco Horvat and socialist decentralized enterprises). The military, as I said were in appearance very arrogant, very self-confident. And they controlled information – in the press, on

television and all that. So I spent a lot of time working with and journalists and others, including Mario Vargas Llosa. He, of course, became a great author and had written Conversations in a Cathedral. We might have lunch and meet with another guy who had been exiled in Argentina but allowed to return, Enrique Zileri of the weekly Caretas magazine. Another colleague was the AP Bureau chief, Hank Ackerman. And the ANSA bureau chief, Luciano Sena. And the AFP guy, Albert Brun (less "trusted"). We'd sit there in the restaurant and talk about the democratic future, the civilian's future, of Peru. Mario got into his head later that he was going to run for president and he did. That didn't work out so well. Fujimori beat him for a lot of reasons that became important in the Peru of a decade later.

The other thing I was remembering is that you asked sometimes about internal embassy stuff. What was kind of interesting is that we hadn't yet come together as an interagency group with ICASS and a mission coordination. The military part of the mission with its attachés and Milgroup got, of course, APO. They had food and booze supplies flown in by plane from the Panama PX and commissary on a weekly basis I think. The packages would be shuffled down the hall past offices with state department and other agency employees We did not have APO; so we got our mail by very slow diplomatic pouch. And no PX privileges. They didn't have CLOs in those days, community liaison, but they had the irate wives who got together. Gwyn was a leader of that group. They wrote their protests to Larry Eagleburger, who I think was undersecretary for administration of the State Department then. The women got results, and we ended up with APO. I'm not sure we ever got the commissary delivery (frankly, I preferred getting all kinds of fresh fish on the Peruvian market. Most of Gwyn's official dinners were fresh fish based, I think. A great ocean. But anyway it was kind of interesting internal dynamics.

*Q: Well it is interesting how it's seen sort of almost like going back to the middle ages.*

CREAGAN: Yeah, I mean out of the past. The clash of privileges in an austere environment. Land of big PX in Panama? U.S. military flights with goods coming down to Lima from Panama – at taxpayer expense? All the fault of Congress.

*Q: At one point there was a lot of discrepancy about AID, AID got special privileges and State didn't and all that.*

CREAGAN: Correct. I remember the famous AID curtain allowance or whatever the hell it was. And they got all their appliances and furniture supplied. State Department diplomats and employees had to buy appliances every move, as voltage would change. I was recalling the other week that it was most interesting, however, to be able to pick your own house to rent. We had an allowance and you could or might have to pay more for sometimes really interesting places. Now it is all standardized with government provided housing.

*Q: I mean if someone was thinking about it today they would think 'oh how petty' but the problem is that when you have a team sent abroad to work on problems you've got to be treated pretty equally or things don't work; all the lines of communication breakdown.*

CREAGAN: Right especially if you are in a hardship post such as Peru was at the time. You better really work at it and that means from the top down everybody has to cooperate. Then I went to Naples in the summer of '77.

*Q: How did you feel about your assignment there?*

CREAGAN: Well, let's see, it was Joan Clark who talked to me about it. I remember she was famous in Department circles — Director General and all that. She thought it would be important to go back to Italy. There was a fear in Washington that the Communist Party would overtake the Christian Democratic Party. Kissinger had had that kind of concern and was said to have reacted negatively when the Italian Christian Democratic leader, Aldo Moro who was noted for his subtly in language, told him that the Christian Democrats and Communists were on "converging parallels". Meant to reassure the Americans that even though the two parties were working more closely together in what became known as the "Historic Compromise"; it did anything but reassure the U.S. So, it seemed to make sense to go back to Italy in an interesting Consulate General like Naples or Milan. In fact, one of my colleagues from the political section of the Rome embassy was Consul General in Palermo, another was in Milan and focus on the changing political scene was fascinating. When I was labor officer in the early 1970's we dealt with the trade unions and the unity of CD and PCI along with the Socialists. Now we were seeing the political expansion of that. Remember it was still Cold War — 1970s. So, I looked forward to Naples. The position was political/commercial/economic Consul. A guy named Mike Skol, later Commercial Attaché in Rome and Ambassador to Venezuela, had been there. I talked to him about it. Then there was the living in Naples. A crazy, confusing, wild, place with real people and the best "setting" in the world. Vesuvius and Capri and the Bay of Naples and Sorrento and…

*Q: Yes, well you served there from when to when?*

CREAGAN: 1977 to summer of 1980, three years.

*Q: Who was the Consul General?*

CREAGAN: So that was Ernie Colantonio. Ernie was from the area south of Rome, Frosinone, so he really felt great. It was a kind of going home for him. Lots of friends and, I think, even relatives not so far away. Naples was unique. You will remember the famous Homer Byington, who was born in Naples and later became the CG. Tradition. I think there had been generations of Byingtons as Consuls in Naples. The Consulate had a yacht as well. It was lost by the time Ernie was there, but in Byington's day the junior officers served "duty" on the yacht on Sundays or whenever. By the time I got there the yacht had been taken away by Washington. Only the U.S. admiral (AFSOUTH) had a "barge". The military were a lot smarter. They called it a barge, and Congress did not get after it. It looked just like a yacht. Ernie felt good there. He had a big circle of friends. I think he ran the commissary system in Vietnam as one intriguing assignment before Naples.

*Q: Well I was wondering, there has been a lot of debate about people who were immigrants or children of immigrants sending them back from where they came from. There is always on the part of the person this is not just ambassadors or consuls general but actually other positions. Sometimes there was concern about how this worked; I mean was it a good thing? It's great for the person but were the people who went back treated seriously or were they put upon to perform services that no person who had no tie to the area would dream of performing. How did you feel about that?*

CREAGAN: Yeah, in Italy you had Ambassador John Volpe. Most of the FBI and DEA were Italian origin. For some jobs it can be important. But it may skew analysis and opinion and decision. I remember the policy at the officer level used to be to avoid sending an officer to a country of origin or that of the spouse. There was talk of pressure for visas and all that kind of thing. With visas the trick is to keep control in hands of the Consul. We had a famous case in which we gave a visa to a guy whose street name was well known – O'Maluomo, which means what? The bad man.

*Q: Yeah.*

CREAGAN: And he ran a part of Naples, in what we would call the *Camorra*. I don't know the particulars, as I was on home leave at that particular time. What had happened, I think is that it involved not Ernie directly but a senior Neapolitan consulate employee who had run up some gambling obligations. In any case, this guy came in and got a visa. He needed some medical treatment as he had been shot in the face at some point. A file which would have indicated his having been denied went missing, I was told. Off went "O'Maluomo" to Chicago where he disappeared. Probably staying with friends there. Not too cool for the consulate as the Naples police had a warrant out for him for murder or mayhem. This case comes to mind as I think of the need for U.S. Consul to look at the cases and not leave it to a local employee.

Relevant for your analysis was the case of one guy we had in the political section in Rome. He was from the South of Italy and identified with a faction of the Christian Democratic Party. His Italian was perfect, his family was from Italy, and certainly of clear political associations. He understood the issues. But he had a clear point of view. That is a drawback for analysis. So I would be kind of concerned that, on the one hand the person knows culture and language and towns and cities and provinces and all of that very, very well. But on the other hand, don't be too close. Perhaps it is better to have somebody not from that cultural tradition. Two classic examples of countries where we needed to think about advantages and disadvantages of assigning someone directly from the country were Italy and Mexico.

Another thing about Ernie by the way, I don't know if you remember this, of course, you weren't there yet but it was great. One day there is a cable that goes out from Naples and it's a Flash NIACT Immediate. The text was, as I understand it because I didn't see it, "Ernie Colantonio retires." So he got noticed. I remember we had the person running

communications and administration, who was there when you were there as well, Julia Welch, was furious about this. I thought it was humorous. Did you hear about it?

*Q: I heard about another one that was some labor dispute and it was one of our local employees paying their taxes which they weren't.*

CREAGAN: Oh yes.

*Q: Colantonio got involved in this thing and sent a Flash message which usually means there is either an earthquake or war has been declared.*

CREAGAN: Right.

*Q: Then all of a sudden it came in on this and people were still talking about it when I…*

CREAGAN: Maybe because of that one. I remember that issue but I remember that issue from working in Rome earlier as the assistant and then the acting labor attaché where we had some real tension with the GOI. The Italian government wanted to know the salary scales and wages of our embassy employees. We held the position that, as a diplomatic mission we did not have to submit all that stuff. We left it up to the individuals to declare income and pay their taxes. So that was always an issue in the labor ministry and in labor affairs. I did not remember Ernie's involvement but that may be why he sent another Flash.

The political scene was very interesting. I remember Dick Gardner was ambassador up in Rome and the issue still was the possible and future role of the Communist Party in the Italian government. The PCI about equaled the DC in parliament and could yet pass it in vote totals. The question was what the U.S. would do if the Communists got in government. So we had this policy enunciated by Dick Gardner and by the U.S. to the effect that Italy is a democracy and it is up to the Italians to elect whatever party and whom so ever they choose. At the same time it is up to the United States then to determine what kind of relationship we would have with that government. We had concerns about the Communist Party in an Italy still a key member of the NATO. Since the Communists were gaining in strength, or so it appeared, we really needed to get out and find out who they were. At that time we had extremely limited contact with PCI officials and leadership.

One of the things that I was permitted to do and told to do in Naples was to actually get out at the local level and meet the Communist Party officials. So, as the political consul, I would go around to the consular district areas of Calabria, Basilicata, Puglia and Campania. I would meet Christian Democratic leaders, Socialist Party leaders and then the Communist Party provincial leaders or even regional leadership. In the case of Campania there was Antonio Bassolino, who was the regional secretary and later mayor of Naples and President of Campania region.

As an aside, I remember talking with Bassolino. He was suspicious of the U.S. Consul (and vice versa), he had a hard look and hard talk. I thought he would be a future leader and he was. I talked with him almost 20 years later in 1994 when he was Naples mayor and I was DCM in Rome. It was the G-7 with Clinton, Yeltsin and the rest. The city was beautiful and Bassolino had done much to make the G-7 work. We recalled the old days when I was the Imperialist and he was hard Communist. Times change.
It was just fascinating to see the PCI headquarters, the organization, to see the number of employees they had vis-à-vis the other parties. They had far more employees than the Christian Democrats, for example. This without a great deal of obvious financing. They seemed to have a really good organization even in the Italian south where the Communist vote totals were down. You expected important headquarters up north in Emilia Romagna, which the PCI controlled, but not in the South.

The big election was in 1979 and a concern was that the Communist Party would continue to advance but in fact, other things were happening as you remember. The Red Brigades, of course, were building almost a sense of invincibility, of shooting professors on the steps of the university, kneecapping a journalist, eventually kidnapping Aldo Moro, president of the Christian Democratic Party and murdering him and, of course, placing his body mid-way between the Communist Party headquarters and the Christian Democrat Party headquarters. So lots of things were going on and the Communist Party in fact was losing some of its edge. Well, anyway in the election of '79 the Christian Democratic Party, won big – 38, 39 percent – and the Communists had dropped to maybe to 30 percent. It was the Italian south, the area of Campania, Puglia and the rest which gave a huge overwhelming victory to the Christian Democratic Party and kept our Cold War partner, if you will, in power.

*Q: Looking at it did you see the breakdown or the concern about anarchy? Did the electorate see the Communists too close to you might say to the anti-government Red Brigades or something?*

CREAGAN: In the south it sort of had its own rules; you didn't see a breakdown or a move toward the Communist Party that way. In fact, the terrorists, I think, were much less effective in the south than in the north where you get some kind of panic when you don't know if you are going to be targeted as a journalist or as a politician or professional as you are waiting for a bus and you get picked off; but lots of fear and concern. At the national level you had the Communist Party and the Christian Democratic Party working together to somehow end this terrorism threat, and so they came up with this historic compromise, "*Compromesso storico*". That meant the two would work together. The terrorists were trying to undermine the parties. They attacked the top of the Christian Democratic Party kidnapping and then killing Moro in an effort to bring out divisions in the party and to break up any CD/PCI cooperation. As I noted, when he was murdered, the Red Brigades managed to dump his body midway between the headquarters of the Communist Party and the Christian Democratic Party. The Red Brigades focused on the reform sector of the CD, the modernizers if you will. Among that group were young members of the group (*corrente*) allied with seven times Prime Minister Giulio Andreotti. His group was reformist, at least in the Naples area. He was trying to get the party out

from under those long-time, almost mafia-like leaders like Antonio Gava. One of his young leaders was a guy named Pino Amato, a close contact and friend of mine. In 1980, you will remember, Pino Amato was close to the Labor Minister, Enzo Scotti, and was in Scotti's vehicle (without Scotti) when the Red Brigade attacked and assassinated him, remember that?

*Q: Yes.*

CREAGAN: I was up in Germany at the time but you will remember very directly the *brigatisiti* tried to escape and the Neapolitans, being what they are, had windows open and quickly became involved screaming "*assasini, assasini*". The *brigatisti* got confused and drove into a police block down at the main piazza, near the Opera House San Carlo.

*Q: They got caught in the traffic.*

CREAGAN: They got caught in the traffic; so I guess when they got to that piazza the police had time to grab them. I saw this on TV later, as I was in Germany with a group of Italian congressmen when this happened. The Red Brigades tried to resist and they threw a grenade. It didn't go off. It was said that when they grabbed the three or four Red Brigades, one was a young woman. She started crying, and that ended the so-called invincibility of the Red Brigades. Prior to Naples they had escaped most actions unscathed and in effect unseen. No more. A headline could be, "Terrorists succumb to chaos and vitality of Naples".

*Q: I don't know how you felt about it but I used to resent Italians. I remember the prefect or something his wife made comments about having to serve in this backwoods area and all. Of course, the embassy picked this up and it's sort of rubbed raw.*

CREAGAN: Yes, I know what you mean. I remember talking with people from Milan for example; they had never been to Naples and certainly never intended to go to Naples. It was not Italy for them. They used to say it was Africa, meaning third world and all that implies. There was a different culture. And Neapolitan was proudly considered by the Neapolitans and others as a language of its own and not just an Italian dialect.

*Q: Yeah.*

CREAGAN: Naples was a pretty exciting place and then, of course, what a glorious area. The surroundings or "*Dintorni*" from Capri to Sorrento and the Amalfi Coast are arguably the most beautiful areas of Italy. That, of course, brought U.S. visitors didn't it? There were many of the official variety (I remember the always difficult Richard Holbrooke and cabinet members like HEW Secretary, Joe Califano.) Visitors were usually shared with the admirals of the Sixth Fleet and the Commanders of the NATO base (AFSOUTH). We did a lot with them.

*Q: What did you feel looking at it as a political officer about the impact of our military there?*

CREAGAN: Yeah, well the military had a profound impact on the Naples area — just in terms of the thousands of servicemen and economic impact. And the impression of two nuclear carriers with six thousand men aboard, each coming into Naples harbor. Big. We had the Navy Sixth Fleet, officially headquartered in Gaeta but with the personnel mainly in Naples – Naval Support Activity (NSA) and the NATO (AFSOUTH). There were the 15 NATO countries represented with a U.S. four star admiral in command. Some of them were real characters. I remember Hal Shear who preceded the terrific Bill Crowe, who was later Chairman of the Joint Chiefs. In a press conference a reporter asked about Col. Kaddafi and the possible threat from Libya. Shear looked at me and said, "The Consul would be diplomatic but I don't know how. Kaddafi is a pimple that must be squeezed out…" Well, that was 1977. You mean impact on Naples?

*Q: The whole area.*

CREAGAN: Yeah, of course, looking at it as part of the geo-political scene of the Cold War and all that, you have clear power of this incredible Navy, this fleet. What I remember, for example, more than once we had coming into Naples two aircraft carriers with 6,000 men – in those days, all men – on board and 3,000 would come off each carrier at a time; that's pretty impressive stuff. So in one sense kind of passive strength there and then the impact on the area. In Naples ever since '44, there were the Allies marching through Naples and to the north. The U.S. military was a big part of Neapolitan reality. In other ways, the military and the Navy would be in Naples but not "of" Naples. I mean not necessarily having much to do with our political relationship with that area and certainly with that city.

*Q: I remember being in the PX one time and hearing two women, Navy wives, talking to each other and they said, "Have you ever been through the tunnel?" Of course the tunnel was this tunnel that leads you to downtown Naples and both allowed, no they'd never been through the tunnel. Talking about…*

CREAGAN: And they didn't intend to go there either right?

*Q: Yeah, we are talking about something about four or five miles away from one of the most interesting and major cities of the world and they weren't going to…*

CREAGAN: That's a shame but it's easy to happen with the military because they have their life, they have their base, their housing which you remember was way out. But it is really important for the commander to get involved. Well, Bill Crowe was there for much of the time and when you were there as well. Crowe then was the NATO Admiral and he allowed (pretended as well) that he was not experienced about the Italian realities and was just a simple Admiral. Now, Crowe had with him a remarkable Navy captain, Jay Coupe. Jay was fantastic and really "Mr. Neapolitan". He sang opera and every song about Naples you could imagine. He loved the city and its people. Jay would bring the Admiral in to meet everyone, from Communist Mayor to Princess so and so. With Jay Coupe at AFSOUTH, the military had insight. There was also a great spokesman for the

command, Joe Favorite. He married a young Italian lady who was important in the resistance against the Germans and whose family was and is a terrific combination of the idealistic American and Italian. One daughter works for John Cabot University in Rome and the other is married to the grandson of the great Neapolitan shipbuilder, Achille Lauro. But you are right to note that many of the Navy assigned to Naples never really got to know the people or city. They stayed in the "base" environment.

*Q: Well you were fortunate to miss out on a major earthquake which we had there, of course. And that caused…*

CREAGAN: Yeah, I can comment on that from a different point of view. Let's see if there is anything else on Naples. It's interesting that the politicians in Naples had impact in Rome party councils. The Mayor was a Communist, Maurizio Valenzi. I met often with the Vice Mayor, Giulio Di Donato. Di Donato became deputy Socialist Party leader with Prime Minister Bettino Craxi. He fell along with Craxi in the scandals of the 1990's. One of my contacts and one of our leader grantees was Paolo Cirino Pomicino. He became an extremely influential leader of the Christian Democrats and Minister of Government. His campaign was that he would make it "rain money over Naples". He was kicked out in the scandals of the 1990's. Many Neapolitan politicians got involved later in the corruption and the "clean hands" scandals of 1992. I guess my point is the Naples politicians were politicians 100 percent of the time. They got into top levels of the political party system which, of course, collapsed in disgrace and brought in Berlusconi, which is a whole other story. But Naples was very important politically. Those parties, the Christian Democrats and then especially the Socialists, had Neapolitan leaders. Even the President of Italy is a guy named NAPOLITANO. He was a Communist Party congressman with whom I would go to lunch.

The Naples earthquake was really something. Should I discuss it?

*Q: Well, I wanted to ask one further question. What was your impression of the criminal elements in that area; of course, the Camorra and down farther south the 'Ndrangheta? From our point of view as the American representative there, did they represent any particular influence or not?*

CREAGAN: Yeah, you mean did they influence us?

*Q: Well our interests?*

CREAGAN: Yeah. Yeah, you know in terms of this as tangential but when you think of that particular group you think construction, for example. We needed to be very careful in considering military construction for U.S. Navy support, personnel housing and all that. Was the land owned by a particular Naples family or was the builder somehow in cahoots with a particular family? With our military construction there was the need for the builder to have a kind of anti-mafia certificate of good conduct. I thought there was a danger of somewhat naïve navy leadership getting played by the prominent family or two. Key would be the advice received from the Italian senior employees. It could be good or not.

There was always something underneath. I remember that after the earthquake our AID was always in danger of getting siphoned off. The need is audit, audit, audit. Even the good Cardinal of Naples got involved with a not so savory crowd.

By the way, while I remember that the criminal gangs of those days were bad it was not then the Naples of the drug importing Camorra and Gomorra, as the movie. The death and destruction caused by traffic in hard drugs. In those days, at least I recall I'm thinking '77-'78, we lived in a villa actually on a cliff overlooking the Bay of Naples and out there you watched the almost romantic enterprise of the gangs in cigarette smuggling.

*Q: Yeah.*

CREAGAN: So, it was not cocaine at that point. The big ticket was cigarette smuggling. It was romantic in the sense that there were movies about the smugglers and they were kind of heroes. Mario Merola playing smuggler. Wearing balaclava and piloting their "*motoscafi Blu*" – long, slender, high-powered dark blue boats – kids would want to join for the ride.

*Q: In those blue power boats.*

CREAGAN: The fast boats with the numbers covered. They would go out near Capri and there would be a mother ship and they would load on the Marlboros and head back to the port of Naples. They'd come back and then the Italian police, the finance police and the customs would chase maybe six of these fast boats coming at them. The police have one boat and they may have a helicopter, but they had to choose one or two boats to chase. Not all the boats would have shipments of cigarettes. So the police might get an empty one. But if they did catch somebody at the port, the people hanging around, ladies and kids, would protest like hell. So it was different in that regard. I remember Neapolitans used to say, "This isn't so bad, the cigarette smuggling. We're in a sense occupied by the King of Savoy (the North) when once we were the great Kingdom of Naples. Naples is the great capital and now we are part of Italy, but northern Italy is rich, we are not. Smuggling is simply our way of taxing Milan. We don't pay the state tax on smuggled cigarettes. We keep that money in Naples". That of course changed and in the '80's smuggling rapidly deteriorated into drugs and much death and destruction.

You asked me about their influence. There was an influence certainly in Neapolitan daily life. And the Camorra had well developed protection rackets. Merchants had to pay or face the consequences –broken windows, bombing of shops at night and other stuff. I think for us, well we weren't carrying on any great campaign to crack down on cigarette smuggling in Italy and that kind of thing. The mafia was a dangerous organization and then there was always some link to the U.S., at least to New York and Jersey.

I remember, by the way, a case where we were transporting some, how should I say it, some highly classified material.

*Q: Oh ho, ho, ho, ho.*

CREAGAN: You remember that was carried in a Navy van right down to Naples. One of the scams in Naples was they'd come up behind your car and hit you from behind. Then they would get out and scream. Then you would get out to look at the damage on the back bumper, and they would take your car. Well, in this case there were two U.S. Navy personnel with this plain van with the classified and they were hit from behind on this ramp, I think, coming into Naples. So, the guy who hit them from behind was screaming. The two Navy guys come back. They look to see if there is damage and then they hear "rum, rum" and their van is being driven away. That was a mess. So we, of course, are desperate to get our classified back, and so you remember we are going around to see what we can do. I remember talking to the Naples police chief, I called him Colombo, as he was the kind of guy who was really a lot smarter than he seemed. He said, "We're going to help you get the pouches back. He did work on it. Then I talked with the head of the *carabinieri*. The general told me that "We're going to help you and really work on that. When we find the materials you've lost you are going to get them right back – after we've looked at them." So "Colombo" is in competition with the *carabinieri* to try and find this for us. I understand that lots of pressure was put on the Camorra to find the diplo pouches. They did not like the intense police pressure. The scam was probably the work of freelancing petty criminals, and not professionals.

*Q: Well they got some of the stuff back.*

CREAGAN: Got some of it didn't they, yeah, I think a pistol and stuff and the pouch seals. In the face of pressure the thieves probably threw the bags into the sea. Or some other diplomatic mission got something they imagined useful. That was a case of the organized gangs helping out the police in order to take pressure off themselves and free them up to carry out their normal daily, nasty operations.

*Q: Yeah.*

CREAGAN: The earthquake. I remember it very well from the Washington end. From the Washington standpoint there was op-center news of the Thanksgiving earthquake in the Naples area. We immediately set up (I was Italian desk officer) an AID 24-hour crisis management team in response to the quake. What had happened to me after Naples is that in the summer of 1980 I went back to Washington to be the Italian desk officer in charge of Italy, the Vatican and Malta. I had another officer working for me, and then I spent most time on Italian issues. So that's why when the Naples earthquake hit in November, I was deeply involved with Washington response. We had some experience with Italian earthquakes because there had been one in 1976 up north in the Friuli region. So that was fairly recent and there had been a lot of involvement of Congress. Anyway, within a very few days we organized a mission to the earthquake zone. It was led by Geno Paulucci of pizza fame and Chun King Chinese food. We flew Air Force 2 in representation of Vice President Walter Mondale. Members of the mission were Lt. Governor of New York Mario Cuomo; Congresswoman Geraldine Ferraro, San Francisco Democratic party leader, Nancy Pelosi, Italo-American congressmen like Silvio Conte, labor leaders and yours truly. We had briefings in Rome with the Ambassador of course (Richard Gardner)

and with President Pertini among others. Pertini was a real character. He was elected president even in his 80's and he was very direct in speaking. Pertini had spent years in prison under Mussolini and he let it be known that he had missed out on a lot of years of romancing the women. Pertini said to Geraldine Ferraro, "I like you. Do you know why I like you?" "Yes, Mr. President", she said "because I am Italian" No", he quipped, "it is because you have the *belle gambe* (great legs). She smiled and so did we. Now Cuomo was practically campaigning in places like Avellino. He had kids in tow and was shaking hands with all. I think Cuomo's family was from that Avellino area. A note on the value of language even though my former Ambassador, Graham Martin did not think it so. On the way back to the U.S., Cuomo told the group, "Hey, how come we are all Italo-Americans and the only one who speaks Italian is this Irishman Creagan?"

*Q: We had Senator Pell too.*

CREAGAN: What's that?

*Q: Senator Pell came from…*

CREAGAN: Oh that's right but he wasn't with us, he must have come himself.

*Q: He was actually at a disarmament conference in Spain, in Madrid.*

CREAGAN: Oh yes.

*Q: He made a big point of getting over there and posing with the _____.*

CREAGAN: I can imagine because of his district right; I mean because of his Italo-American electorate.

*Q: Oh yeah. I remember we got into a helicopter and at one point the helicopter pilot was saying it was pretty foggy and said, "This isn't very safe." But Pell wanted to proceed ahead.*

CREAGAN: Take it back.

*Q: Well there is nothing hungrier than politicians looking after votes.*

CREAGAN: Oh boy, that's for sure. A point from the Washington end. Dick Gardner was ambassador in Rome; so he came back for testimony on the Hill regarding aid to Italy. I accompanied him up on the Hill for the hearings. We had asked for, I think it was $25 million, and were to set up a new AID office in Naples. So we had asked for money and authorization to do the things you do for earthquake reconstruction. This was a lesson for me in domestic politics. W asked for the $25 million as I recall. To my surprise the congressmen and Senators — tough Republicans like Senator Alphonse d' Amato of New York criticized the administration. They asked why we only wanted $25 million. That's not enough for a bad earthquake. You should ask for $50 million. I was astounded. Jessie

Helms was there, Senator Helms. His state was definitely not with Italo-American constituency. He was teed off. And he mumbled something and walked out of the meeting. But they got their $50 million.

*Q: Well we were very concerned about the type of aid that would be used because there were so many places for corruption and one of the ones that really concerned us, we didn't get it luckily, was the idea it sounds great to have an American hospital. But you know that in Italy nobody wants to die in a hospital. If you are not well the hospital is the last place you want to go to.*

CREAGAN: Yeah, exactly.

*Q: So we didn't want to say we'll have an American hospital as this wouldn't be staffed or used well at all.*

CREAGAN: So in the end you were able to eliminate that one?

*Q: Yeah, the other thing was that the Italians have long memories and actually it wasn't too long before – maybe ten years or so – that there had been a major earthquake in Sicily and people were still living in boxcars.*

CREAGAN: Yes, exactly. I remember talking about that, still living there and that's the issue always. Where did the money go?

*Q: I mean unfortunately we talk about Italy particularly in those days I don't know how it is today but…*

CREAGAN: Well later it became a problem for Cardinal Corrado Ursi, because money had gone into housing and there were relatives involved. Yeah, it's just a tough situation. In Washington I'm still dealing with Italy but also with the Vatican.

*Q: Yes, let's talk about the Vatican. The Vatican was not just a benign area out there; there were problems with it.*

CREAGAN: Yeah, yeah, if I think about the U.S. and the Vatican, of course, John Paul II had been elected in 1978, so there was this force, this force from Poland. Then Reagan was elected and the Soviet Union and the Pope and Poland were really a focus of foreign policy. John Paul had gone back to Poland first in 1979. The Communist Polish leadership was afraid to have him and afraid not to have him. So they were going to let him come back but keep out of politics. Brezhnev said, "Don't do it. Tell him he is a smart man, tell him to get sick, tell him not to go." In any case, he did go to Poland and just had huge throngs, a million people in one meeting and I think 13 million saw him on that visit. He always would be able to use religious terminology with everybody understanding what it means when you are talking biblically about "throwing off chains".

So in comes the Reagan administration and we raised our level of contact, if you will, with the Vatican. There were several reasons, some of them having nothing to do with policy and all that. The U.S. system of ambassadorships for sale came into play. Now I don't mean that in an entirely derogatory sense, since that is the U.S. practice since the founding of the Republic. Concerning the Italy post, Max Rabb had basically won New York for Reagan and he wanted and got to be ambassador to Italy. Reagan and Nancy were best friends with the Wilsons. So the new President Reagan asks Bill, "What would you like?" Well, Bill is a very fervent convert to Catholicism and he wanted to be ambassador to the Vatican; so he got it. Well the only problem, Stu, is we didn't have an ambassador to the Vatican; we didn't have diplomatic relations with the Vatican. That was complicated and had to be worked out. Presidents had tried to do it before. President Truman tried to make General Mark Clark, the 5th Army commander whose troops fought at Salerno and Monte Cassino, liberated Rome and then drove up the peninsula. There was tremendous opposition to Clark as Ambassador to the Holy See. Some of it was opposition on a religious basis from fundamentalist Protestants, generally opposed to the idea of diplomatic relations with what they considered a Church and not a State. Then there were the Texans, including Senator Tom Connelly who was chairman of the foreign relations committee, who hated Mark Clark because of what they felt were grave mistakes in Monte Cassino. The Texas division was sent into withering German fire and U.S. troops took tremendous losses. In the end Truman knew that he was going to lose the Senate. There would have been 85-90 votes against Clark; so Truman pulled the nomination. Then we had no relations. John Fitzgerald Kennedy wouldn't have dared to have relations with the Vatican. Nixon sent a personal representative, Henry Cabot Lodge, and that was interesting. We worked the Vatican account from the Rome embassy; one of our political officers had that responsibility.

But now in 1981 you've got Bill Wilson and he's concerned that he is not an ambassador and he would say, "Why is Max Rabb Ambassador to Italy and I'm Mr. Wilson?" Well, I could only tell him, "Because you are Mr. Wilson and at the Holy See. We don't have diplomatic relations." Well he worked on it and he worked it. I remember being in a meeting with him and Judge Clarke who at that point was Deputy Secretary of State. Wilson kept talking about it. Clarke said, "We can't do anything about it now and don't talk to people outside about it; let's see what happens." In any case, Wilson went to Reagan I am sure, and they worked diligently on it. State did not play a role, as this was a political decision of the highest order. By 1984, Reagan and friends had gotten the "Moral Majority", that is the fundamentalist Protestant group led by Jerry Falwell, to agree. Ronald Reagan was able to put Wilson up before the Senate in 1984 and he cruised through. Then we had a full diplomatic relationship with the Vatican.

To go back to the time on the Italian/Vatican desk, a big issue was Poland, Poland, and Poland. Organizing of the labor unions (Solidarity) and Polish government crackdowns. Cardinal Casaroli was the Secretary of State (like a Prime Minister) to Pope John Paul II, and he came over to discuss Poland with Secretary Haig. General Haig was then Secretary of State for almost two years from early 1981 to mid-1982. Casaroli was the only person I ever saw Haig give deference to and even appear humble. They would discuss, with me as note taker, what was going on in Poland, what to do and how the U.S.

and the Vatican could work together in generic terms. For the most part, as I recall, Casaroli did the explaining of the situation and the actions of Pope JP II.

By the way, Larry Eagleburger was Assistant Secretary for European Affairs. I remember being in the office one Saturday (we did that a lot) and Larry calling me. He said, "Creagan, get Pio Laghi over here. I want to talk to him." Again, we were working on issues with Poland. Then Archbishop Pio Laghi was the Apostolic Delegate to the United States (a Church position of the Holy See in countries) and was the kind of "unofficial" Papal Representative to the U.S. I called him, and he replied, "Mr. Creagan I don't have to come in." I said, "What do you mean you don't have to come in? We called you in here. We call the Italian embassy and tell the Italian ambassador he's got to come in. And he does." "Yes", replied the good Archbishop, "but the U.S. does not have diplomatic relations with the Holy See; so I don't have to come in. But if your Mr. Eagleburger will offer me a nice cup of coffee and something else, then I will do it." And we did, and he did. The Vatican wanted to work with us, but not fully unless there were diplomatic relations. In 1984 we got that.

There was lots of cooperation with the Vatican on key issues from Lebanon to Nicaragua, and it was very important that we have "Our Man at the Vatican" (Later there were two women U.S. Ambassadors to the Holy See.)

*Q: Well, what was your impression while you were in Naples and got back to the desk of Richard Gardener as ambassador?*

CREAGAN: Oh, well I thought Gardner was really good professionally, first rate, spoke Italian. Of course his wife was Italian, and he had a strategic vision. I remember he had this little book, *Parliamoci Chiaro*, Let's Talk Plainly. But he always stuck to the vision. Gardner loved public diplomacy, and you maybe were part of that too; that is he would take his scripts out and stick to the script, get the word out, get the word out, keep it going. There may have been some irritating parts to his character that were especially felt by those close to him. Probably some micromanagement. The guy had a great talent I can tell you, great ambition, and he was very knowledgeable in Italian affairs. In order to orchestrate this relationship with Italy, with its very important Communist Party, Gardner had to articulate the policy of full support for Italian democracy (elect who you will), at the same time letting it be known that we would have difficulty working with a Communist-led government. Imagine that government in the NATO. At the same time there was a reason for PCI popularity in the regions it ran and in its electoral success. It was developing as Eurocommunist – that is, part of a democratic system and opposed as well to some Soviet actions like the Soviet crushing of the Czech Spring. It was time to get to know the communists in a more open diplomatic way. That meant bringing in the consulates as a step in the process. We were in Naples and Tom Fina was Consul General in Milan.

*Q: He was he was around, yes; I remember him now.*

CREAGAN: Up in Rome they would call it "Embassy Milan", because Fina was reporting independently and expressing the view that the Communist Party would soon be in government and we had better get to know and work with them. They had some credibility as a kind of personally clean governing force in central Italy and were not considered personally corrupt. They engaged in a lot of what would be illegal financing – from *ExIm* companies they controlled and other ways – but it went to the party not individuals as was the case with the other parties. Gardner was responsible for discipline and the assurance that Italy understood the U.S. position of not "preferring" the PCI in government. The Jimmy Carter administration was tough on the Cold War issues. Remember that Zbig Brzezinski, Polish, was the National Security Advisor. It was an irritant having Fina in Milan with a more open position and one known to the Italians. Members of the Political Section also wanted to ensure that Washington understood the likelihood of PCI in government and the need for us to be in contact. We got into Dissent Channel stuff. One of the guys in the political section sent excellent Dissent Channel messages – and later went on to become a Harvard academic. So there were some policy and diplomatic tactics tensions, if you will in the Gardner embassy.

*Q: Yes.*

CREAGAN: Now, I understand the possibility of tensions between embassy and major consulate, just because of the nature of things. I later was CG in Sao Paulo and reported directly to Washington. The Commercial Counselor and the Labor Attaché were in Sao Paulo. It was big. I coordinated everything in written or unwritten accord with the Ambassador in Brasilia. My predecessor had some issues with coordination and the inspectors generally had to deal with the Sao Paulo/Rio/Brasilia relationship. So I can see how a guy in Milan would think, well, wait a minute, this city is in many ways more important than Rome. And I have a kind of independent role. Gardner had to deal with that reality. In any case, he was really first rate intellectually – and academically. I saw him later in New York, when I was at the U.S. Mission to the UN and he was there as professor at Columbia.

One story from the Italian Desk in January 1981: Reagan is inaugurated and Haig is Secretary of State. There is a rush to be the first foreign leader to come in and see the new American president. Secretary Haig had determined that the foreign leader who would see the American president first would be the French president, because France is really important in that regard. Germany, of course, is faithful, but the French would be the first to come in. The Italians had different ideas. They considered themselves number one friends of the U.S. But they had been told no. The President could not see the Italians yet, was the word. So the next thing I know, the Italian Ambassador informs me that Emilio Colombo, who was Foreign Minister of Italy and was a leader of the Christian Democratic Party, would be coming to Washington to give a speech at Georgetown on January 25. So we have the inauguration on January 20, and Colombo is in town January 25. The Ambassador was looking for a meeting with Secretary Haig and to see what could be arranged at the White House. "Forget about it" was the response from the Seventh Floor down to me; no way is it going to happen. Haig will not see him before the French and neither will the White House. The next thing I know (and indicative of the

Italo-American influence in the American political scene) the Italian Embassy DCM tells me that Colombo is indeed coming; he is giving a speech at Georgetown and he will be seeing Vice President Bush with perhaps a "walk in" to the President in the Oval Office. Now, would the secretary like to see him? Oh my God. Anyway, a long story short, the Italians and Colombo were the first to get to DC and the first to get over and see Vice President Bush and then walk down and see Reagan; so it was kind of kind of comical the way the Italians could outsmart the French – and upstage Haig as well.

*Q: Today is the 29th of August 2013 with Jim Creagan; I'm Stu Kennedy. Okay Jim, what about desk officer?*

CREAGAN: The desk officer was an extremely active job. I was just remembering Bob Beaudry. He was my DCM back when I was in the Rome embassy in 1974. I remember Bob saying, "You want to be a desk officer. A desk officer is a "mandarin" of the Department," as if they kind of ran things. It's interesting when I think about the desk officer job; it was a lot of coordination of inter-government positions, organization, working with the Congress and lots of time with the Italian embassy. Very busy – on the phone constantly – and time sensitive deadlines for lots of stuff from talking points to position papers. Then there were the State Dinners and the kind of state visits that took place in the Reagan administration. I don't know how it is now, but the desk officer was invited to the State Dinner. When Ronald Reagan had President Pertini of Italy in Washington in 1982, Gwyn and I were at the dinner. I had helped Protocol in the organization of the invite list as well. We had Perry Como and Frank Sinatra sing together (I wonder if they ever did that elsewhere?). The Italian president told me the two weren't real Italians as everybody in the U.S. said (he considered Italo-Americans something different), but that's another story. I then traveled with President Pertini around the United States. He had ten days or so in this official state visit mode and we had U.S. Protocol going with him — accompanied by yours truly. We did all sorts of things in San Francisco, Chicago and New York. In San Francisco the Mayor, Dianne Feinstein, met us and Nancy Pelosi of course was there. Pertini and I argued a bit about the situation in El Salvador. He was critical of our support for the GOES and noted that the grandson of a great Italian President Luigi Einaudi, was involved in that Central American policy. I told him it was an effort to secure democracy in a civil war-torn country. In Chicago we saw the governor and mayor, Jane Byrne. She was a tough Chicago "pol". Pertini called her a steel flower. In New York the eighty something president wanted to go to Club 54. I didn't go. I don't know what happened, but he showed up in the morning. We finally saw him off to Italy.

I remember the first dinner of the Reagan era. As I said, the first European visitor to Washington after Reagan was president was the foreign minister of Italy, Emilio Colombo. He had maneuvered in a beautifully Italian way to get there before the French. The Italian Ambassador, Rinaldo Petrignani, had a dinner for Colombo. Gwyn and I were invited, of course, in my capacity as desk officer. Everybody was there. I mean Secretary of State Al Haig, the National Security Advisor, Dick Allen, Secretary of Defense, Cap Weinberger, Senators and Italo-American Congressmen, Scotty Reston of the New York Times and others. The unbelievable Secretary Al Haig got up after dinner and made a

speech about himself being the Vicar of foreign policy. "I know you are all wondering what that is," he said. Well, you know that there is a red phone (hot line) in the president's office for direct call to the Soviet leader. When Richard Nixon was president the phone would ring and he would pick it up and there would be Brezhnev. Nixon would say, "Henry, come on in here." Then he'd say "I'm going to do this and that and I'm consulting here with Henry on détente and I think I want to do a, b and c and Kissinger would say okay." That's important. But it is not Henry being the Vicar. Then he said, "When Jimmy Carter was president and Brezhnev was on the line, Carter would say that he was going to talk with Zbig and get back to Brezhnev in ten minutes. Haig then remarked that the Zbig role was good but not really what he had in mind. No, being the Vicar of Foreign Policy meant that when the phone rang and Brezhnev was on the line, President Reagan would look over at me (Haig) and say, "Al, it's for you." Everybody was kind of quiet. I imagined what must be going through the minds of Dick Allen, Cap Weinberger and even Scotty Reston. Haig and the White House had a tense relationship for the next two years of Haig's time. I can understand.

Finally, work on the desk was varied, to say the least, since you got involved in all issues Italian that concerned the USG. Sometimes the desk experience is really fulfilling in a totally non-political or "governmental" way.

One day I got a call from our Consul General in Naples, Walt Silva. Walt told me that he had been contacted by the Italian cultural authorities responsible for Pompeii and Herculaneum archeological sites. They had just discovered in Herculaneum the "bodies" of residents fleeing the eruption of Mount Vesuvius in 79 A.D. They had been enveloped in the volcanic flow and preserved in the position of running toward the sea. Italy had no money in cultural coffers to step in and preserve and in three months or so the "bodies" would deteriorate and disappear. What to do? I remembered that in all the receptions and stuff a desk officer did I came to know a guy at National Geographic, Lou Mazzatenta, who might be able to help. I called Lou and he told me a photographer was coming back from Greece and could stop in Naples. Long story short. National Geographic got involved, put in millions for preservation, published an issue on Herculaneum (the most read perhaps ever) and saved the day. Later there were usual frictions with Italian government entities and so forth, but I felt really good that chance desk officer contacts could help save archeological treasure. (Better than Google? Who knows?) Walt Silva made it all work and leg USG from Consulate Naples in a neat project.

*Q: Very interesting. Now, let's cover the Portugal tour. You were there from when to when?*

CREAGAN: I was in Portugal from 1982-1986 and that's four years. That really is a long time in Foreign Service experience; I was really lucky to have that two years, home leave and two years. One of my boys, Kevin, was able to do his entire high school years in Portugal, and I think that was very important.

*Q: Oh it is.*

CREAGAN: When I arrived in Portugal, Dick Bloomfield was leaving as Ambassador and the DCM, Ed Rowell, was Chargé'. Ed was sort of classic Foreign Service, and he had been in Latin America, Portugal and other places. We had a good embassy group. In Portugal there was a sense of being a team. Allen Holmes, who had been deputy assistant secretary with Larry Eagleburger was named ambassador. He brought Alan Flanigan as DCM. Two really terrific guys. Flanigan had been my boss in what they called Western European Affairs back when I was Italian/Vatican desk officer. Holmes didn't stay the entire time I was there and the position next went to a political appointee, but he stayed for several years in Portugal. Holmes was a great ambassador who knew how to make the embassy team work together.

Just a note on the Foreign Service life then. We still went out and found our own housing. We had housing allowances. You took that and then looked for places to rent. Lisbon was a difficult place to find housing. Finally Gwyn found a big white house 24 kilometers away up in the town of Sintra. It is a town in the hills, where the kings would spend the summers. We ended up with ten acres and woods right next to the old palace of the kings, the Palacio da Pena. So when you awoke in the morning you were up in the clouds. Incredible. There were a few downsides like no heat in the winter other than the big fireplace. It would get into the 40s inside the house, and the kids wore gloves for months.

*Q: Let's talk about the political situation in Portugal. I've interviewed Ed Rowel…*

CREAGAN: Oh good.

*Q: …and Frank Carlucci but that whole Portugal thing is a fascinating period and you were coming in at the end of the thing. Could you talk about what the situation was when you were there and what the issues were and ….*

CREAGAN: Yeah, correct, Carlucci was at the heart of it when Kissinger, you know, would say that…

*Q: Ready to write Portugal off.*

CREAGAN: Write him off, that's right, Mario Soares was the head of the Socialist Party and Prime Minister much of the time I was there, and I was able to work closely with his people, his staff, and Mario Soares himself. I mean it was that kind of place where the U.S. Embassy had great access to the leadership. Kissinger apparently had said to Mario Soares, "Soares, you are the Portuguese Kerensky." So he was basically telling Soares that he was weak and the Communists would shove him aside. Soares liked to recount that tale; he told me about that and told many others. He said he told Kissinger, "No, you are wrong and the Socialist Party will prevail." Larry Eagleburger used to call Soares, "my kind of Socialist" – along with Bettino Craxi in Italy and Felipe Gonzalez in Spain – they were clearly democratic, economically rather conservative and anti-Communist. Mario fought the Communists with baseball bats and votes. He won. The Revolution in '74 overthrew the dictatorship and the Communists had some early advantages, also because some of the military leadership and the "Captains of April" were leftist. Now

being Portugal, basically no shots were fired in the revolution. The military was still in partial power when I came in ’82-‘83 toward the end of a transition. The president was still military, President and General Eanes. There was still was a military council overseeing the political development, but Portugal was becoming a solid parliamentary democracy with the Socialists on the moderate left and the more conservative Social Democrats to the right of the political spectrum. The Communist Party was a tough Communist Party, Stalinist, and linked to Moscow, but by 1982 was not a serious contender for power. The issues were Portugal adherence as a loyal member of NATO. There had been questions about it and they had been questioned in NATO circles as the Communists had influence. Carlucci had to deal with that in the 1970s. They remained a good solid partner.

Speaking of military issues, we undertook the renegotiation of a key base agreement in the 1982/1983 period. We worked on nuts and bolts and ensuring that the U.S. had use of Lajes (Azores) a very important cog in our worldwide basing. It was key for anti-submarine actions but also for support in the Middle East. In the 1973 Middle East War, Lajes was essential for the resupply of Israel. It was very important for Cold War reasons. Lajes was a place where they said the Army had the boats (they ran the tug boats), the Air Force had the ground because they ran the air base and the Navy had the planes, since they flew the Orion P-3 anti-submarine planes.

We negotiated with the Portuguese, basically over price for the U.S. base. Now the understanding in NATO was mutual defense and you did not pay for use of a base in anther NATO country, but the Portuguese did not accept that, except as fiction. For deep political reasons the Portuguese government needed a quid and we were willing and able to provide development money for the Azores, for example — not calling it a payment for the base. Remember that at that time in the early ‘80s, the per capita income in Portugal was only a few thousand, and the people in the Azores had per capita income as low as $500-600. I mean they weren’t destitute poor, because they had cows and milk and some land, but this was not a rich Western European country. Portugal did not go into the European Union until 1986. That changed everything. So in 1983 we negotiated lots of interesting things. Our Ambassador, Allen Holmes, was chief negotiator. The DCM, the PolMil Officer, Patrick Folan, and I were part of the team. The Pentagon sent lawyers and we had periodic negotiating sessions.

As part what I might call “creative compensation” for the Portuguese, we set up a “Luso-American Foundation” as part of the base accord. It was handsomely funded and had a U.S. and Portuguese directorate. Projects included the academic and cultural, stressing the ties between Portugal and the U.S. It did good work. In any case, we worked out mutually satisfactory compensation and continued full base use. George Shultz came to sign. He was Secretary of State, because Al Haig had quit and his resignation had been accepted back in 1982 while he was in Rome. So George Shultz comes to sign this in ’83. I remember that we were not quite finished when Shultz came to sign and I was up calling the Defense Minister in the middle of the night to get it done. We were working this out right up to the last hour.

In 1986 Portugal entered the EU. There was a lot of work in preparation for that. So, Portugal was an important ally and then linked to the rest of Europe in the EU. That was essential for prosperity and development. Wonderful people: ten million in all of Portugal. There was some incipient terrorism, which was present in all of Europe. We had several incidents from anti-NATO groups. One time mortars were lobbed at the embassy, and shrapnel broke the windows. Another time, an RPG was directed at the ambassador's office, but it didn't go off. A member of the Communist Party found the darn thing and called the cops. We were in the uncomfortable position of thanking the Communist Party for "pulling the alarm" about the RPG.

Then another time there was a bomb in the trunk of our Marine Gunnery sergeant. I had just left work and I had my car radio on and I heard the boom. The marine had just pulled up to our new embassy gate. The guards checked the hood and undercarriage as they always did. When they opened the trunk, it set off a…I guess it pulled a thread or something and this thing was about to go off. Everybody ran, and it blew up sky high. Lots of noise and smoke, but nobody was hurt. I got back there and I remember I ran up to the communications and called into the State Operations Center, telling them that a bomb had gone off and nobody was hurt. They said, "We've already got the report." "How could you have a report? I'm right here, it just happened." "Oh, we got a report from The Associated Press." Well, my buddy, the bureau chief of The Associated Press, just happened to be across the street at the time, and heard a boom, opened up his curtains, saw the thing and called it in. We were always in competition with the New York Times, The Associated Press and others. The AP chief, when I was with him years later, had fun recalling how he scooped the embassy.

In another case, there was an attempt to kill me by an anti-NATO group again. They had apparently meant to target me at my home, which was kind of isolated in the hills of Sintra. It so happened I stayed out late the night when they were said to be lurking about and they missed me. In any case, I – and the family – were pulled out of our house and had to move in with the Ambassador for two or three weeks. Then we had to move from the house. I was not allowed to go back to my house so Gwyn, my wife, had to move everything. Interesting that she was allowed to go back. Back then terrorists I suppose had some kind of honor and were interested only in the person targeted, not family. Now, there were hundreds of bottles of good Portuguese wine in the cellar; so I don't know how Gwyn did it but she got them all moved.

I think of another terrorist incident in Portugal in which I was tangentially involved. In April 1983 the Portuguese Socialist Party hosted a meeting of the Socialist International led then by Germany's Willy Brandt. The group included the usual democratic Socialist parties, but also at the meeting were the PLO, Israeli Labor Party led by Shimon Peres, the Druze of Walid Jumblatt and the Nicaraguan Sandinistas as I recall. I was invited by the Portuguese as a diplomatic representative. I was a close contact of Rui Mateus, the foreign policy chief for Mario Soares and the Portuguese Socialists. Others there were Felipe Gonzalez of Spain, Bettino Craxi of Italy and many more. It was a relaxed setting. I remember sitting in the evening with Shimon Peres, Mario Soares, Felipe Gonzalez and others as they talked of Palestinian /Israeli peace and all the world's issues. A fascinating

diplomatic assignment. The PLO was represented by Issam Sartawi, a moderate leader in favor of negotiations with Israel. He was going to speak to the group. Pretty important. You had the Israeli's there, you had PLO. It seemed hopeful and ahead of its time. In the morning of the second day, I think was, a closed meeting of the SI leadership was in progress. I was walking into the lobby of the Montechoro Hotel in Albufeira. Ahead of me was the PLO Rep., Issam Sartawi. I moved forward to shake his hand. Then I stopped and thought. I remembered that our UN Ambassador, Andy Young, got in trouble for shaking the hand of the PLO Rep at the UN. I hesitated for a moment as I considered the important diplomatic gesture of acknowledging PLO presence. As I hesitated, a person came right across the floor, went straight up to Sartawi and bang, bang, bang assassinated him. There was chaos on the floor. Police arrived but the assassin got away. He was later said to be from the Abu Nidal wing of the PLO.

*Q: Jim, why would the bombers be after you?*

CREAGAN: Oh, I guess because I was political counselor of the American Embassy and we were a big deal. They weren't after me as Jim Creagan but as political counselor of the American Embassy. It would have been one of the anti-NATO far left groups. In any case, there was intelligence about an attempt; so I and my whole family moved in with Ambassador Allen Holmes for a time. The kids had fun — tennis courts and all that. The Ambassador and Marilyn were just terrific people. After we moved to a different house, I had to have a guard with me to follow me while jogging or whatever. Restrictive but OK.

*Q: Were we looking at the officer core and the initial coup with the government of Salazar and all the old tried and true 25 year old captains and all while you were there were we looking at the officer corps trying to figure out what they were up too?*

CREAGAN: Well, we were interested but I have to say when I was there we had full confidence that that phase was over. The President was Ramalho Eanes, the top military general, but he was the last of the generals to have that position. It was the end of that phase. There was still a Council of the captains as a kind of ultimate court, but the civilians were in charge of government. The pendulum had swung so fully to the civilians that our focus was on getting to know the Socialists, the Social Democrats and the others. We supported the bringing of Portugal more into Europe and that happened in 1986 with Portuguese entry into the European Community.

By the way, in some specific issues it was a lot easier for us when Portugal was not so linked to the EC. Once in Europe, the response from the GOP on issues of agriculture, for example, was "take it up with Brussels". In any case we were looking at the civilians much more than the military. With the military we had professional military-to-military relationships. There was a NATO headquarters in Portugal — IBERLANT. That gave the military things to do as well. And then we looked at Portugal in the world because Portugal was still important in Africa. So we followed from Lisbon what was going on in Angola, in Mozambique, and the other former colonies. There were connections of many of those leaders with university and government in Lisbon. So we were very interested. I even remember shenanigans on the part of people in a couple of the conservative political

parties and even on the part of some in government leadership. They were playing with RENAMO, the rebels in Mozambique. Now, it was not USG policy to play with RENAMO, but some, even in the Reagan White House were supportive of RENAMO.

*Q: I mean it wouldn't be you but it would be Allen Holmes and all but have any problems at this point dealing with the government there because you had the Reagan White House and you have people within the Republican Party who Socialists were anathema?*

CREAGAN: There was an understanding in the Reagan White House and with some of these very conservative guys, but especially over at the State Department with well-respected professionals like Larry Eagleburger. There was an understanding that these Socialists – in Portugal – and the Spanish and French and Italian Socialist parties were the ones that we really wanted to work with. The Secretary of State understood that these were true democrats. In fact, Reagan made a State visit in Portugal when I was there and the Socialists were in government. That greatly pleased and helped Prime Minister Mario Soares, a socialist.

*Q: How did that visit go?*

CREAGAN: Very well, very well, I remember…of course, the logistics were quite incredible. A thousand people accompanied. We had frictions in the advance process and in the security team frictions with the Portuguese. Fun to recall afterward. By the way, some unpleasantness and frictions could have had negative impact on relations if the media had been privy to it. In those years we did not go public with the nonsense. One case: The Secret Service had sent men and dogs to the Prime Minister's office to sniff it out and be sure that there was no threat (bomb?) to the President. The Prime Minister's staff and security took umbrage at the unannounced and "arrogant" approach of the U.S. team. I got a call from the Prime Minister's Chief of Staff. He said "Creagan, we have just arrested your Secret Service dog – and the handler." "You can pick them up later". The Chief of Staff was pissed and felt the pride of sovereignty, but our close personal relationships made certain that this kind of advance team slights and presidential visit preparation was managed quietly. Another detail. For Reagan, we had to fly in a special bed for him from Austria. He stayed at this beautiful Palace of the kings (Queluz) but it lacked a presidential bed. The President loved the palace. Both he and Nancy — and their entourage – loved the association with "royalty". The Portuguese don't have "official" royalty since the country has been a republic for a century, but there are lots of former royal family and folks with titles all around. Just like in Italy. Republic since 1946, but sometimes you would not know it. I noticed that American politicians and even Ambassadors seem to have an affinity for former royalty. Something magic there. You can call them Princess and Count and all that. I digress, but I was at one dinner before the Reagan visit and one of Nancy Reagan's confidents was there. He called her on the phone and I heard him say, "Nancy, we are up to our ass in royalty". Neat.

Portugal was a very traditional place, before the entry into Europe. After 1986, things changed rapidly. One diplomatic example of the traditional approach. It involved Iran-Contra and missiles to be sent from Israel to Iran. Figure that one out in neat terms! Israel

and post 1979 Iran? Cooperating? All organized by the U.S. White House? I remember an incident, I think in 1985. Do you remember we had the Tow missiles and the Hawk missiles somehow sent from Israel to Iran?

*Q: This is during the Iran Contra?*

CREAGAN: The Iran Contra…

*Q: Yeah.*

CREAGAN: I think it was November '85, when Hawk missiles were to be sent from Israel to Iran via Lisbon. Why Lisbon is beyond me. I remember getting a call from the Undersecretary at the Portuguese Foreign Ministry, Pedro de Menezes, to come in right away. In diplomacy, when called in by the Foreign Office, you go. So I did. I was told of a shipment of missiles at the airport and some guy, a retired General Secord, and an Iran destination and something about a White House "OK" for it all. I was asked what is going on? I told Menezes that we (I) did not know anything about it, but I could reiterate our clear policy. I said, "Look our policy on Iran is clear, crystal clear, and it is "Operation Staunch", which meant "Nothing for Iran". We had just had our special envoy on Operation Staunch in Lisbon and the Foreign Ministry a few months before. I had accompanied him to see the Foreign minister. Well, the Portuguese government obviously had grave doubts about a "sketchy" activity; so they stopped any transshipment at the airport in Lisbon. No clearance. The Portuguese were really old fashioned. People like Ollie North or others may have played around and used the term "White House", as in Mr. X "speaks for the white House" in order to spring the shipment loose. But for the Portuguese, it was the U.S. Embassy which spoke for the USG, not individuals running around with some association with the White House. And the Portuguese knew that the Political Counselor of the embassy and the Chargé' and Ambassador reported back to Secretary Shultz. The Portuguese were very interesting that way; they played things straight. Not tricky. They were not enamored of "back channel" government. It was quaint but good.

*Q: Well I mean okay but on these missiles…*

CREAGAN: Pardon?

*Q: On these missiles I assume you reported back to Washington obviously.*

CREAGAN: Absolutely.

*Q: And what…*

CREAGAN: I don't know all the back and forth of what was going on behind the scenes but I think Secretary Shultz had not been informed.

*Q: I mean was this sort of taken out of context?*

CREAGAN: As far as I know that was the end of it. Stop. It didn't go anywhere. The Portuguese, as I say, were old fashioned.

*Q: Oh God. You are lucky you didn't get caught in some of the shenanigans.*

CREAGAN: Well that's right, that's right. We played it straight, the Department of State played it straight and I don't know what the shenanigans others were playing but it seemed really stupid. By the way, I considered the Portuguese really good on so many issues. And we briefed them a lot, also with visiting emissaries. A favorite was General Vernon Walters. Do you remember Vernon Walters?

*Q: Oh yeah.*

CREAGAN: He would always come through and he loved briefing the Portuguese on intelligence matters and all of that; he was everybody's special envoy. I found it comical because he would be coming in from meeting with Prime Minister Andreotti in Italy (in later years I took him into see the Pope for Intel briefings) and we would go see foreign Minister Jaime Gama in Lisbon. Walters said he was switching from northern Italian to Portuguese. Gama would reply, well you are not speaking our Portuguese. You are speaking Brazilian. Walters was fun, had good jokes and was a good briefer. He could switch from Brazilian Portuguese to Italian to other languages and always with a sense of mystery and good humor.

*Q: Well Vernon Walters…*

CREAGAN: He was amazing.

*Q: He had been attached to the Brazilian division in Italy during World War II as military attaché in Brazil. So I mean he had diplomacy and language so I mean he couldn't have been a more perfect envoy.*

CREAGAN: Exactly, and he loved to tell stories and then we would always do the serious business of the intelligence and all of that. Four years in Portugal went really fast. We were completely involved, working with really good people and democracy flourished. Many of the civilian leaders, with the exception of the grand leader Mario Soares, were really young because they had taken power from the military in 1974 when in their twenties or early thirties. A Foreign Minister in his thirties and a Minister/Chief of Staff (for Prime Minister Cavaco Silva) late twenties I think. When Jose Manuel Durao Barroso (later EU President) came back to be Minister he was still a graduate student at Georgetown in Washington. He and I would go out to his "favorite" place, Banana Power — also a disco as I remember.

In 1986 Portugal joined the European Union, which had a huge impact. They went from very low per capita income of not much more than $2,000 per capita to over $10,000 and up. They prospered in the European Union.

*Q: How did we feel about Portugal and the European Union at the time and did we feel that it would be sort of out gunned or…?*

CREAGAN: We were in favor of Portuguese entry because it would not do to have Portugal, essential NATO ally, hanging on the edge of Europe. Its traditional links with the UK were fine, but that was no longer going to provide. So the idea was that Portugal and Spain come in together and that would make for a more viable and expanded European Union. The close US/Portugal ties would remain and even influence the EC and then EU. There were minor concerns of the nature that we could not deal with them anymore on a bilateral basis. This included agriculture and the fate of genetically modified crops. Overall, for the U.S. it was a good thing to have Portugal and Spain going into the EC in 1986.
Our ties with Portugal were underlined by its important role in NATO. Washington understood that and we had both President Reagan at one time and V.P. George H.W. Bush come to town. Vice President Bush was a wonderful man and very good in his many roles, from UN Ambassador to CIA chief to V.P. to President. He understood and related to the Foreign Service and our people. Of course he had experienced the Foreign Service personally as envoy to China.

*Q: Yes.*

CREAGAN: He was real people as you remember. We set up meetings with Mario Soares, the Prime Minister, and there was to be one with Felipe Gonzalez, head of the Spanish Socialist Party. I got a call from Emilio Feo, Gonzalez Chief of Staff I think he was. Feo said that Gonzalez would not meet with Bush — the reason being that there were upcoming elections in Spain and Gonzalez did not want to be seen with Bush as Felipe was in his anti-NATO phase (to satisfy the Socialist voters).

*Q: Yeah.*

CREAGAN: I said, "What do you mean? He is trying to change the meeting?" He said, "No, he's not going to meet with him. Bush will just have to find a reasonable…" "What's the problem?" "Well frankly", said Feo, "it's the NATO issue". I had to notify the staff. VP Bush is such a great guy that it did not ruin his day or injure his ego. There was time on our hands at that point; and so Frank Carlucci and I talked for a while in the old ambassador's residence, which had been his. Senator Clayborn Pell once told me that he had lived there as a kid. His dad was the Minister to Portugal in the thirties. Anyway, I sat there with Carlucci and we talked about Portugal of a decade or so earlier. Creating a democracy was not a foregone conclusion.

*Q: Well how did you find the Portuguese media because Carlucci was saying how during his time of travail there he was really getting ripped apart by the media there along with practically blatant death threats and all?*

CREAGAN: Correct, but Carlucci's time there was when you did not know where Portugal was going. I found the media vigorous, but it was Center Right and Socialist primarily. It was not anywhere near as irresponsible as media I have known. They were giving some really good analysis, also about what was going on in Africa.

*Q: Well speaking of battles we had this war going on in Africa.*

CREAGAN: Right.

*Q: And Angola and Mozambique were right in the middle of this.*

CREAGAN: Yeah.

*Q: We must have had African specialists coming out of our ears to talk about…*

CREAGAN: In my political section I had one guy focused on Africa, Johnny Carson. Johnny later on became ambassador at several places in Africa and he was Assistant Secretary for Africa. Really sharp and very knowledgeable.

*Q: Yeah, I've interviewed Johnny.*

CREAGAN: So in the embassy we would follow it and, of course, I would follow it with political parties, with the political folks there, and then there were journalists coming up from Africa. And we had the Washington visitors as well. Frank Wisner, you remember Frank…

*Q: Oh yes.*

CREAGAN: Frank was a DAS on Africa then. He would come over with his Office Director, Bob Gelbard, and others. They were always coming through, and we'd set up meetings and we'd do stuff in Lisbon. Then off they would go to Luanda and mainly to Angola to try and see what could be done. But there is no doubt that Portugal, Lisbon, was great as a listening post and also for getting people to come up there. I later used some of that that I had learned in Lisbon including the language and something about the teams you know, sports teams. I used that in Rome when I was at the Vatican and I became an American link to RENAMO, the Mozambique rebels in a civil war. That is another story, but it goes back to Lisbon in a sense. By the way, just to complete the embassy thing now I think in 1985 Frank Shakespeare came. Frank Shakespeare was the…

*Q: USIA group there.*

CREAGAN: Nixon's "Junior Minister" he would say. So he was head of USIA and he ran *CBS television* and the *Heritage Foundation in different ways.* Frank wanted to be Ambassador to Portugal and so Allen Holmes was "reassigned", let's say, back to be political/military assistant secretary in Washington. Then Shakespeare came and we, the

career service, were dubious. But he was kind of fun. He told it as he saw it. He wanted to be Ambassador to Portugal. He told our country team, "It took me ten seconds to get the job." He had talked to Reagan and it took him ten seconds. We were irritated with that rather direct, and honest, description of how the U.S. system works. But we had a good relationship, and he had certain things that he was focused on and also some interest in Africa. Just to note the way he would run things, he said to me later after he had pulled me out of Brazil to be his DCM at the Vatican, he would say, "Creagan, you take care of the State Department and I'll take the White House." So, Frank was highly political and he meant to let things operate in a professional way. Not a meddler. He was a good conductor. He emphasized the political agenda as he saw fit. He understood the big picture and the stakes in the Cold War.

*Q: You know one of the themes which runs through my oral histories on Portugal are the Azores, the same way with Canada's fish negotiations. Were the negotiations for the Azores more or less handed to a team from Washington?*

CREAGAN: Oh, when we were negotiating for the base agreement?

*Q: Yeah.*

CREAGAN: The lead negotiator was Ambassador Allen Holmes. It worked well for these Lajes Base negotiations. He dealt very well with the Portuguese negotiators.

*Q: He had military professionalism.*

CREAGAN: He was trusted and known by all the players on the Portuguese side. We at the embassy were his first team. I worked the political account. My political/military guy, Patrick Folan, had detailed knowledge of the issues. The DCM, Alan Flanigan, oversaw developments. And he himself was a base negotiator in later assignments. The Pentagon lawyers and teams came periodically from Washington but the lead was Holmes. It worked out well. Now, the bottom line comes down to money. We don't pay for NATO bases in territory of fellow allies, but the Azores was a good cause for aid. We had to figure out a way that would support economically the Azores. By the way, in Portugal we had an AID mission, and so we were still working on Portuguese/Azorean development. The per capita income was one of the poorest in the world. The cash income of Azoreans was under $1000, but because they had cows and cheese and milk and crops they were not starving. Dignified rural. In the base negotiations good will carried us through — along with some hard bargaining seen by some Portuguese as paying for bases and by us as development aid and other creative projects. One creative idea was to set up a Luso/ American Development Foundation which would have cultural and other activities. It got a 50 million, if I recall, seed grant from the base negotiations account. So, if you have someone like Allen Holmes as Ambassador, an experienced career FSO, it is best to have him/her lead the negotiating team.

By the way, just another anecdote on George H.W. Bush. He was meeting Mario Soares and, of course, Mario is the prime minister and Bush invites him to Kennebunkport. Then

I was with him at a meeting with the next Prime Minister, the Social Democrat (more conservative) Cavaco Silva (later President of Portugal) and he invites him to Kennebunkport. That was the great Bush approach. He just built up personal friendships with the world leaders. I think that proved so important when it came time for the 1991 Gulf War. Bush could build up a coalition against Saddam and his occupation of Kuwait. I just watched him in action myself. Impressive people skills and foresight.

*Q: You know one of the themes which runs through my oral histories on Portugal are the Azores, the same way with Canada's fish negotiations. Were the negotiations for the Azores more or less handed to a team from Washington?*

CREAGAN: Oh, when we were negotiating for the base agreement?

*Q: Yeah.*

CREAGAN: The lead negotiator was Ambassador Allen Holmes. It worked well for these Lajes Base negotiations. He dealt very well with the Portuguese negotiators.

*Q: He had military professionalism.*

CREAGAN: He was trusted and known by all the players on the Portuguese side. We at the embassy were his first team. I worked the political account. My political/military guy, Patrick Folan, had detailed knowledge of the issues. The DCM, Alan Flanigan, oversaw developments. And he himself was a base negotiator in later assignments. The Pentagon lawyers and teams came periodically from Washington but the lead was Holmes. It worked out well. Now, the bottom line comes down to money. We don't pay for NATO bases in territory of fellow allies, but the Azores was a good cause for aid. We had to figure out a way that would support economically the Azores. By the way, in Portugal we had an AID mission, and so we were still working on Portuguese/Azorean development. The per capita income was one of the poorest in the world. The cash income of Azoreans was under $1000, but because they had cows and cheese and milk and crops they were not starving. Dignified rural. In the base negotiations good will carried us through — along with some hard bargaining seen by some Portuguese as paying for bases and by us as development aid and other creative projects. One creative idea was to set up a Luso/ American Development Foundation which would have cultural and other activities. It got a 50 million, if I recall, seed grant from the base negotiations account. So, if you have someone like Allen Holmes as Ambassador, an experienced career FSO, it is best to have him/her lead the negotiating team.

By the way, just another anecdote on George H.W. Bush. He was meeting Mario Soares and, of course, Mario is the prime minister and Bush invites him to Kennebunkport. Then I was with him at a meeting with the next Prime Minister, the Social Democrat (more conservative) Cavaco Silva (later President of Portugal) and he invites him to Kennebunkport. That was the great Bush approach. He just built up personal friendships with the world leaders. I think that proved so important when it came time for the 1991

Gulf War. Bush could build up a coalition against Saddam and his occupation of Kuwait. I just watched him in action myself. Impressive people skills and foresight.

Less effective in the people skills department were our Secret Service and advance men preparing a State visit. We had President Reagan in 1984. President Reagan was coming to Portugal and would meet with the Prime Minister. The Secret Service came in with their dogs. They just walked right into the prime minister's offices and began sniffing. Now that was not hard to do, even if not well coordinated, because the Portuguese Prime Minister and his offices in those days were basically open. The PM would walk down the street without guards. You could just go up and talk with him. He would come into the Club, Gremio Literario, where I was a member and just talk. No note takers. So these guys, the Secret Service, go to the PM's offices. They brought their dogs and they walked right into the prime minister's office and started sniffing around. No permission sought. I get a call from the prime minister's chief of staff saying "Creagan? This is Bernardino," he says, "We've just arrested your Secret Service dog and your Secret Service guys with him." I said, "What? What's going on?" He said, "How dare they just walk right in to the PM's office!" I said, "Alright, I'll see what we can do." As I remember the dog and its handler were released. Anyway, we had good personal relationships at the highest level of the Government of Portugal and that was important.

*Q: Was there any flirtation with Euro-Communism both in France and Italy?*

CREAGAN: Right, so you know how important Euro-Communism was in Italy, and the dangers that a PCI electoral success might have undermined Italian democracy — and its very membership in NATO. Well, in Portugal that kind of scenario was not in question. The Communist Party was rather "Stalinist". The leader, Álvaro Cunhal, with his big shock of white hair, was hardline. He had lived in Moscow. His PCP was not Euro-Communist at all. They were solidly against the NATO and against the idea of the democratic Western Europe. The party was clear and, therefore, isolated except for the period immediately after the revolution of 1974. So, we had no problem with Eurocommunism. The PCP was stuck with maybe 15 percent of the vote and that was that.

*Q: I think it was Frank Carlucci who told me, he told me, "We were blessed with having this really hard-lined Stalinist guy who looked like a hard-lined Stalinist guy.*

CREAGAN: I would agree totally and that continued into the time that I was there. Cunhal and his party just put themselves out of the game.

*Q: Yeah who was it in Italy who was really for a while was really charming everybody?*

CREAGAN: Right, it was Enrico Berlinguer, who used to go to hang out at the Catholic church where I lived in Rome. He was handsome, likeable and thoroughly "Euro". Cunhal was the opposite. We did not have to contend with Cunhal. Luckily, as Carlucci said, the Communist Party just dealt themselves out of the game. It was win it all or lose. They made a try with the far left military in the '70s but they lost it. By the 1980's the

USSR was changing. I remember Mario Soares telling me around 1984 that he had met Mikhail Gorbachev in London. He is different, opined Soares, he is a totally different kind of Communist leader. And that Gorbachev would have been anathema to Alvaro Cunhal, head of the Communist Party of Portugal, because Gorbachev was open with what became Perestroika and Glasnost. Soares saw it in him. It was England where they met, I believe, and Thatcher was there too. Soares said that he was impressed with the guy. I guess everybody was later.

*Q: That was probably the meeting where Maggie Thatcher said we can do business with this guy.*

CREAGAN: I bet.

*Q: Just a touch more about Portugal could you talk about social life there and how it worked professionally for you.*

CREAGAN: Yeah, well diplomacy as social activity was well established. Lots of diplomatic corps activity. It was pretty constant. Information gathering from lunch to dinner to receptions to State dinners and all that. We would meet with top individuals from the different parties and there were lots of the evening diplomatic events where you could get work done. No place is as good as Brasilia, just because of what it is in terms of the ease of getting together and dealing with issues, but Lisbon was very active. Gwyn and I lived in Sintra, 24 kilometers from the center of Lisbon. It was a beautiful setting in the hills and people would come up there, the politicians, the diplomats, the journalists and our embassy folks. The heads of Christian Democratic Party, Socialists, all of them; and we would get them together. We became friends with many and it made it easy to work with them on matters of mutual interest for the U.S. and Portugal. Small though it is, Portugal often swung above its weight in matters of Europe and NATO as well. Portuguese became heads of the EU Commission and all that.

*Q: They always have, yeah. What about during the time you were there I'm confusing my dates but I may be off on my dates but was there a problem dealing with Israel? You know we've used Portugal as a place to resupply Israel and…*

CREAGAN: Right, right, that was, of course, '73 and there was a problem then with the October war, but that was when the dictator – not Salazar who had had a stroke I think – but Caetano. There was some real tension over use of Lajes then. The Portuguese wanted U.S. support for their wars in Africa. No way. In the time I was there, from 1982 to 1986, there were not issues of confrontations or real tension on Israel or use of Lajes. Again, the Socialist Party was in government for much of that time, and it was very close to the Labor Party in Israel. The Portuguese were trying to be very open, and they were hoping that they could even be part of the solution. And so the Socialist International brought together the likes of Israel's Labor party, some PLO, Jumblatt of Lebanon's Druze and so forth.

*Q: Well Portugal, of course, during World War II was a bit like Switzerland where there was intrigue….*

CREAGAN: They were something, yes.

*Q: Now was that going on when you were there?*

CREAGAN: No, clearly they weren't playing both sides; clearly they were desperate to be an integral part of NATO in the Western Alliance. No, you wouldn't have had the intrigue and all of that because they weren't under the same circumstances. What you did have is one element from the days of World War II. Kings and exiled leaders had come to Portugal then – or shortly after the war like King Umberto of Italy – and they were living in this place Monte Estoril in Portugal. It had its gambling casino and one sensed a bit of the intrigue of World War II. But, that was all.

*Q: How about did you have the electric revolution email and all that caught up with you yet at this time?*

CREAGAN: Not yet, not yet, we were still doing the old – I don't think we were doing Airgrams anymore but certainly telegrams – and then we were into the secure phone. For me, email was about a 1993 method of communicating within the embassy. My predecessor as DCM and Chargé' at the embassy to Italy, Dan Serwer, used email in an interoffice way. I instead called on the phone or went around to the offices. So email in 1993 for me. By the way you remember the CLO, Community Liaison Officer. Gwyn held that position in several embassies, including Portugal. In Italy in the late 1980's also. She was CLO both to the Embassy to Italy and the Embassy to the Holy See. One of the few offices that worked in both places. Oh, one thing I wanted to say about the U.S. Embassy in Lisbon, is that when I arrived in 1982 the embassy was in a building right on the street. I mean we were right on the sidewalk. Picture the whole building like an apartment building on the street — Duque de Loule. The embassy offices on different floors were apartments. I remember my office had a bathtub, a little bathroom with a bathtub next to it. It was a building totally insecure. If we had any of those terrorist incidents in that building we would have been blown up. But we were moving, and Allen Holmes forced the move out of this pretty crummy place into a new embassy with walls and gardens and all that. We moved in before the new embassy was ready, but it was necessary. We then were set way back from the road. When mortars were lobbed at the embassy, they did not do much damage.

*Q: Well Jim, I'm thinking this would probably be a good place to stop.*

*Okay, today is September the 2nd, 2013 with Jim Creagan and Jim you are off from Portugal as political counselor.*

CREAGAN: Correct, I think we talked some about that last time, and I was just thinking about some of the aspects of it and how Portugal had changed from the times of Carlucci in the seventies. During the time I was there, '82-'86, we were involved in a lot of issues

of the foreign policy kind with Portugal as key ally. Certainly by the time you got toward 1984-'85 we were beyond concern with the domestic politics of Portugal. Maybe it was going to be a government that was Social Democratic or of the Socialist Party, or perhaps the conservatives. Maybe the Reagan people liked the conservatives better, at least hypothetically, but we worked issue to issue. I remember the Grenada invasion. We went into Grenada alone and then asked for support from allies and others. In Portugal you had a Prime Minister Mario Soares who was furious about Grenada but basically went along with us. We tried to work with them on Central America. The Sandinistas were part of the Socialist International, so you had a Portuguese Socialist Party that was ambivalent. On the part of the leadership, Mario Soares and his team very much wanted to be with the United States on the big issues.

I think we talked last time about the base agreement. It was extremely important for us. Lajes was a large and vital base in the Azores. It was like a huge aircraft carrier in the middle of the Atlantic. Under the leadership of Ambassador Allen Holmes we negotiated a continued agreement and set up something creative – the Luso-American Development Foundation. We pumped in about $40 million for some years, and it did lots of important things for development but also culture.

*Q: Was there much tie between Brazil and Portugal at that point? Did they kind of have a special relation?*

CREAGAN: Yes, and that was kind of interesting and maybe even humorous. There was obviously a very close connection for reasons of history and culture. When the Portuguese revolution had occurred in '74 and in those years thereafter, the important families from the era of Salazar and Caetano were threatened. Champalimaud, Espiritu Santo and others left Portugal and went to live in Brazil. The connection with Brazil goes back to the 19th century when the Portuguese monarchs fled to Brazil as Napoleon took over the peninsula. One thing I remember…if these big houses in Lisbon were left vacant, they would be subject to invasion. The *retornados*, those coming back from Africa, temporarily occupied the houses of this group. There were tens of thousands of *retornados*. The rich people went to Brazil and worried. One solution to avoid occupation of the house was to rent to diplomats. When we arrived it was kind of the end of that period, but you would have diplomats, U.S. and others, living in palaces and paying a few hundred bucks a month rent.

Then Brazil, of course, was becoming an economic giant and Portugal was interested in participating in investments there, participating with Brazil in Africa as it became more possible to invest in Angola and former Portuguese colonies; it was Brazil that had the construction giants who were able and ready for Angola. In regards to Portuguese/Brazilian relations, I remember one event of the "state dinner" and the state visit variety. Jose Sarney, who was the president of Brazil, was hosted by President Mario Soares. This was summer 1986 while we were still in Lisbon but bound for Brazil. They had one of those incredible state dinners, which the Portuguese were good at. (I remember a terrific one for President Reagan.) For some reason, possibly because Gwyn and I were being transferred to Brazil, the Soares team invited us to the Portuguese/Brazil

affair. It was as if we were in the days of the king. A lavish scene at the grand Queluz Palace.

President Soares and President Sarney had signed a treaty or accord, called the *Accordo Ortografico*. I remember Soares telling me after, "You know the Brazilians will violate the accord by tomorrow." The Portuguese tried to control the language, but the Brazilians were like the Americans in "creative" use of the mother tongue. Another comment from Soares to me concerned Brasilia where I had been assigned. He said that the problem with Brasilia, the capital, is that it has no *esquinas* or corners or plazas where people could congregate. It was smooth and flowing and in his view not a place for good Portuguese urban living. No place for people to come together. Concerning Sao Paulo, he told me that he had just been there. He noted that there were about twice as many people in Sao Paulo as in all of Portugal. "How can that be that the daughter (Brazil) is so big and the mother (Portugal) is so small?" So, you can see a relationship which was deep but sometimes even comical and in some sense culturally adversarial. We moved from Portugal to Brazil in '86.

*Q: Well, in Brazil did you find economic developments basically dominating our concerns?*

CREAGAN: Absolutely, you are quite right that was the situation — yet political change from the military governments was still playing out. Sarney was the first civilian president since the 1964 coup, and the country had to complete its transition with a new constitution (completed in 1988). The political was of importance to us. By the way, I was going to be assigned as Political Counselor to Italy under Ambassador Max Rabb. Remember him?

*Q: Yeah.*

CREAGAN: He was Reagan's ambassador, and I had been the desk officer when he was nominated. He used to call me "mother", because I tried to prepare him for his Senate hearings back in 1981 and he would say, "yes, mother, do I have to read this? "I would tell him, "Yes you do". He had an easy hearing, because everybody liked Max and they didn't really throw tough questions at him. Anyway, Max was bringing me out as political counselor in Italy in 1986. Our Assistant Secretary for Latin America demurred and DAS Bob Gelbard got to the DG with the word that Italy was not politically sensitive like Brazil and said something like "We've got to pull this guy out of Italy. Don't let him go to Italy. Send him to Brazil, because he is one of those who speak Portuguese and has political experience and all that." We were still interested and concerned with the whole political opening toward civilian democracy in Brazil.

The economy was something of a mess. Inflation was usually out of control. One of the actions taken by President Sarney was to make an abrupt change in the currency. The Cruzado was the new currency intended to freeze inflation. President Sarney initiated the Cruzado Plan where he simply froze everything – wages, prices and all of that. The media and others saw it as economic miracle. Sarney was on the cover of Time and

Newsweek, I think. They were important back then in the ‘80s. Good marketing is important. But the iron laws of economics permit very few real miracles. Very soon, because prices were frozen, you had goods being held off the market and pretty soon you couldn’t find beef, you couldn’t find this, you couldn’t find that. I remember the weekly magazines like Veja, putting on the front cover a Government of Brazil minister “searching for the fatted cow”. They had all disappeared (held off the market as prices were too low). Evidently that plan didn’t work, and the Brazilians really didn’t get their economy together until the early ’90’s. While I was there, you had this interesting inflation running well up to thirty percent a month. Crazy.

We had as ambassador one of the greats in Latin America, Harry Shlaudeman. Harry had been assistant secretary, Harry had been ambassador, in fact he had been my ambassador in Peru, and he had been ambassador to Argentina and Brazil and so forth. Harry was there in Brazil. We were a pretty big embassy and when I think of it I reflect on Brasilia, the new capital. They wanted everything to be orderly and this was Oscar Niemeyer’s dream and all of that. That meant diplomatic missions as well. Much in Brasilia revolved around state-to-state relations and the diplomatic missions. So they stood up a diplomatic quarter, if you will. The number one embassy, resplendent there on the choice corner plot of land, was the Embassy of the Holy See. Relations with the Holy See were privileged and the Papal Nuncio was always Dean of the Diplomatic Corps. The number two embassy was, and it makes sense, Portugal, the colonial motherland. Number three was, appropriately, the Embassy of the United States of America, so there we sat as number three. Number four was Russia. It was still the USSR but it had a big “Russia” sign out front. Number five, right next to us, was France and then the UK and then the others. Like that. We interacted a lot with all of them. At one point the U.S. decided to build a big wall around our embassy. Terrorism was a concern in those years — from the sixties, seventies and eighties it was a Latin American issue as well as in the Middle East. Anyway, we built a wall around us. (My son Kevin, home for summer from college, actually worked on it.) Sure enough, weeks or few months later, the Russians started to build a wall around theirs. Diplomatic and security copycat.

The diplomatic life was very active and it was social; so you would have next door a French embassy tennis tournament and then we would host at our embassy. At those tennis tournaments, sort of low grade tournaments, at those events you would do your work as well because you might have a foreign ministry counterpart there. Sometimes I would do work with the assistant secretary of the Brazilian foreign ministry as we rode bicycles. It was that kind of a city and that kind of an atmosphere. Ambassador Harry Shlaudeman didn’t have a lot of use for receptions and diplomatic events and, in fact, he would tell me, “Watch this” and he would come in the front door of the embassy, shake hands with the ambassador and the others and then go right out the back door. I would stay and work the group there. He dealt with the big important guy in the foreign ministry and that wasn’t really the foreign minister. It was the number two, the career guy. The Brazilian foreign office (Itamaraty) and Brazilian diplomats were really top, top professionals from the excellent diplomatic academy. So the Ambassador dealt with the top guy, the equivalent of our deputy secretary – a guy named Paulo Tarso Flecha de Lima. He got things done that way. Then we had Jim Ferrer, DCM. I was political

counselor and with a good-sized section. On economic and commercial issues the Brazilians never gave an inch. They considered themselves maybe better prepared and better trained than us; so we had intellectual property issues that were really grinding. The Brazilian approach then was to be essentially autochthonous. Make things in Brazil. Take parmesan cheese for example. It was to be made in Brazil and similar to the Italian original. You, of course, had Volkswagen and Ford and other automobiles made in Brazil and then you had a Microsoft look alike made in Brazil. The ideal was to cut imports of finished products and do more finishing in Brazil.

A fascinating political development was the writing of a democratic constitution for Brazil. So I was there from ’86-’88 and I’ll tell you in a minute why it was cut short. It would have been a three year tour but it was cut short. Now, the Brazilians worked on their new democratic constitution during that time. In 1988 they finished it. This was a constitution, how should I say, openly negotiated and openly arrived at. It was not like the U.S. Constitution, where the founding fathers were in Philadelphia, hiding in a building with windows closed during a hot Philadelphia summer. Our founders wanted to finish the drafting before presenting it for approval to the states. In Brazil the impulse was to be the new democracy, leaving the military behind. That meant a constitution written with participation of the people. So they had suggestion boxes in all the cities like Salvador, Rio, and Recife. There were suggestions for the constitution. Now we, of course, in the diplomatic community participated in the sense that we would bring down professors from the United States and they would give seminars to the Brazilian Congress on our constitution or on developing a constitution. The Cubans would do the same, and they’d send somebody down to talk about the perfect 1940 Cuban Constitution. Latin American history is full of new constitutions, well written and detailed. Practice is something different. Discussions and bargaining took place in the social and the diplomatic worlds. Gwyn reminds me that she would invite people to dinner; perhaps there would be ten Congressmen invited to dinner to discuss these different matters in the Constitution among themselves – and the diplomats invited as well. Our dinners were popular and Brasilia was casual; so I remember 30 or 40 congressmen showing up for one large dinner in the garden — not all invited by name. We had good food and drink and vigorous conversation about what would be the ideal political structure and how to construct it. I kept very close contact with the head of the Brazilian congressional committee drafting the Constitution — Bernardo Cabral. He was the key drafter of many provisions. The Constitution was passed and ratified in 1988. It could not be amended for five years as I remember. It was unrealistic. Until then the times were difficult. There was rampant inflation, impeachment of the President, corruption and all that. They finally got things put together with the presidency of Fernando Henrique Cardoso, who got the economics right. I knew him as a professor in Sao Paulo.

Another thing that I remember rather clearly was the narcotics issue. As political counselor I was coordinator of our State Department’s narcotics program. We put in quite a bit of money to work with the Brazilians on that. We had DEA presence as well. The Brazilians wanted to circumscribe DEA activity, because the Brazilians always are extremely concerned with sovereignty issues and appearances. I remember one time the DEA weren’t supposed to be wandering around Sao Paulo. One agent not only got

involved in a Sao Paulo bust, he was a little bit too close to the action. Instead of standing back and observing, I guess he felt he should take part. The foreign ministry threatened to toss the DEA out. I remember working with my key contact, Ambassador Gilberto Velloso, who was in charge of American affairs, trying to fix that. We did, but it was tough. The DEA were not entirely guided missiles. I dealt with the Chief of Police for Brazil, Romeu Tuma. We were tracking the flow of drugs from Colombia. They would flow through Cuiaba in the Mato Grosso state over by Bolivia and then to Sao Paulo and out to Europe or Miami. DEA worked with the Brazilian police and sometimes we found that airline employees themselves were involved. I remember one conversation with Tuma about the impact of the drug traffic in Brazil. He told me that in his mind Brazil cooperated with the United States for some mutual benefit. However, Brazil had no real drug problem. Brazil was a transit country but not an important destination for drugs. The problem was U.S. and European consumption. I remember telling him that he might think they had no severe problem but within five years it would be very bad. Transit becomes destination almost automatically. Sure enough Sao Paulo had hundreds of thousands of addicts within not so many years.

*Q: Were there social scientists and all saying the drug problem and looking…I mean the statistics in places like Colombia and Bolivia are pretty firm about what happens, the overflow of drugs into the local market.*

CREAGAN: Exactly, yeah. Pretty grim statistics, and by the way the Brazilians understood that as years went by. They are, how would you say it, the big boy in the neighborhood and doing a lot of good work trying to stop the flow of cocaine from Bolivia and elsewhere. The flow of drugs in the Amazon brought Brazilian sensitivities into play. We always felt that it was important to stop the drug trade up in the Amazon. The military projected sovereignty by its own presence on the Amazonian borders. They felt their sovereignty was easily abused, perhaps by us, by Colombians and by international drug traffickers.

*Q: Speaking about sovereignty you arrived there shortly after the Malvinas business.*

CREAGAN: Well, I was assigned to Brazil in 1986.

*Q: How had Brazil reacted during that crisis between Argentina, Great Britain and …*

CREAGAN: Well, you know they had no love lost for Argentina even though in the years of military government the southern cone was all military governments. The Peruvian military, for example, looked up to the Brazilian military for pointers and for strategy. The idea was that the militaries would be the engines of development in Latin America. So even if one military was left on the political spectrum and one military was right there was at least an understanding that, well, they were one club. In Argentina you had the military, of course, and in Brazil you had the military at the time of the Malvinas. The UK was outsider so in the war you had some Brazilian support for the neighbor, and it was a for the neighbor military government. But support was tepid. Brazil and Argentina were always competitive. Argentines looked down on Brazilians and Brazil

was always a neighborhood giant and non-Spanish speaking. So different. The two did decide to put together a kind of free trade zone, called Mercosur. It was not always good for Argentina, as Brazil dominated – the auto industry for example. Whatever the issue, from Malvinas to Cuba policy, Brazil would want to distinguish itself from the U.S. position. The Cuba of Castro didn't really mean anything substantial for Brazil but it was useful to goad the U.S. a bit on that embargo.

I had a neighbor whom I liked – Celso Amorim. He later became foreign minister, but in those days he was Minister of Commerce. He and his wife would come over for Sunday brunch, and we discussed the U.S. /Brazil issues in a competitive but not unfriendly way.

*Q: Well we were talking about the drugs and all – had we raised the issue of perhaps putting in radar stations or basing planes?*

CREAGAN: Yeah, at least when I was there they were not really very favorable toward installations or even full DEA presence. It took time for them to even approve DEA in Sao Paulo. Again it was a sovereignty issue. An issue which turned out well was the nuclear issue. Brazil had been developing nuclear energy, and was tempted to go for nuclear arms. Argentina was doing the same. Obviously a strong push on the part of the United States was needed in order to get those countries out of the business of trying to compete in the nuclear area. The Brazilians developed nuclear power, and the Germans worked with them on a plant near Angra dos Reis (Rio area). In the end Brazil gave up on weapons and joined in declaring the South Atlantic a nuclear free zone. That's an issue that turned out very well, and the South Atlantic Nuclear Free Zone could and should be a lesson for other areas of the world.

*Q: Did the Brazilians use Cuba as a point of irritation against us such as the Canadians have?*

CREAGAN: That is a good analogy. When I was Consul General in the early 1990's I would meet with Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva, then a union leader and always candidate for the presidency on the worker party ticket. He used to always say to me, "Stop the blockade of Cuba; stop the blockade." Then I would always explain to them that it's not a blockade it's an embargo; I mean everybody – Italy, Germany etc. – everybody who wants to trade with Cuba can deal with Cuba. But we choose not to do so.
*Q: Sometimes there are these things – If you are, as we are, kind of a super power – you can't really challenge us head-on on major issues but around the periphery you can sort of annoy us…*

CREAGAN: That's right. I think the most annoying and difficult for us would be in that economic/commercial area and in areas of intellectual property and so forth. We did work the democracy issues. We had great hope for the flourishing of democracy, but I must say that so many flowers bloomed they kind of crowded one another out or got caught in the weeds or something. On the one hand the 1986-'88 period was very heady, Brazil was developing democracy and the military was stepping back.

*Q: When you were there can you describe the government what was happening with it?*

CREAGAN: The civilian, Tancredo Neves, who had opposed the military governments and was the preferred choice of the electorate for first civilian president, died before taking office. His Vice President, Jose Sarney, who was from the Northeast and part of political balancing, then took office as the first civilian president since 1964. Sarney came from an area with traditional rural values. Not exactly the "Masters and the Slaves" but not modern either. Neves had been from the more modern south and central state of Minas Gerais. You know they used to say that Brazil is the number one economy in Latin America and Sao Paulo is number two economy in Latin America and Mexico is number three. It was like that. But a disproportionate part of the political leadership is out of the Northeast. The party that ran the Congress, dominant in the Congress, was called PMDB or democratic movement party. Many of the democratic and civilian political leaders had been exiled by the military – just plain kicked out of Brazil back in 1964. So now in 1985, 1986 and 1987 they were in charge and popular because they were anti-military all those years. In fact, Professor Fernando Henrique Cardozo was one of those. He was one of those who ran the congress, were anti-military – at least by the late 1980s. So you had a kind of dynamic tension in the Congress. To give you an example of governors, I had gone to Recife where we had and still have a Consulate General. The governor who had been kicked out by the military for "communist" leanings was back as governor. He was Miguel Arraes. In Rio the governor back from the pre-1964 period was Leonel Brizola. Brizola and Arraes were for social change. In the 1960's we had some difficulty distinguishing the social democratic left from Marxists linked with Soviets. I remember Arraes in Recife telling me "I can't think of anything good the U.S. has done for Brazil. Okay, you've built this road, AID built this road that went, I don't know, 100 miles from here, but you squelched democracy." So you had those old guys coming back and you could argue with them, but they were really the old guard and were rewarded, of course, by the people for the years of exile. But then new politicians came along and Brazil became a very vibrant and changing democracy. They hadn't really figured out how they were going to organize the Congress or how they were going to organize the constitution and it was a little bit chaotic, but with optimism.

*Q: Well how about the press, the media?*

CREAGAN: Yeah, very active. If I compared the press there with the press in Portugal, the Portuguese press would be considered more analytical and well-disposed to working with the United States. The Republicans were in office in the U.S. The press had been too close to the military in some areas.

The thing about Brasilia, as I think in some ways in contrast to any other place I've been, is the fact that it was really a political city, a government city, a diplomatic city. I mean it was open with free flowing space. You could get around fast. You could do three diplomatic receptions in one evening — and get lots of info. The press was working the political scene as well. Now, Brasilia was not an exciting city. It was not Rio. And the "New York" of Brazil was always Sao Paulo. In fact, Brasilia was so without cultural activity in those years that the Italian Ambassador would tell me upon returning from

Rome, that Rome was impossible with the traffic. You could not get where you wanted to go. On the other hand Brasilia was great with no traffic. But there was nowhere to go. I found a political effervescence in Brasilia and the diplomatic interaction. You could be in constant touch with the foreign ministry on the issues.

*Q: Well how was the conflict in Central America viewed there?*

CREAGAN: Well by that time (1986) there was a search for an agreement so the Brazilians would have been very supportive of what they called the *Contadora* Process. They would be working with Costa Rica, and tried to get an end to the violence and to get some kind of agreement in Central America. In 1986 the Brazilians led the Rio Group, which brought together the *Contadora* group and the support group with Brazil. The U.S. was not thrilled with the Brazil role. But it played a part in bringing peace to Central America a few years later. We always had visits from Washington. I remember in a particular way a visit by Assistant Secretary Elliot Abrams. Central America was his focus, of course. He arrived in Brasilia, but his luggage did not. Elliott was wearing sneakers and Levis I think. We had a meeting with President Sarney, but Elliott didn't have clothes. I called Gwyn and she found a pair of my black shoes and a tie and suit. He looked good. Off we went off to see President Sarney. I got a comment later that President Sarney opined that the Assistant Secretary was wearing my tie. He probably knew more than we imagined. Anyway, Elliott fit into my shoes as well. We had a lot of CODELs in Brasilia in that year of the Constitution. Senators Chuck Robb and Bill Bradley and others saw the importance of engaging with Brazil because of its economic weight and as it moved into democracy.

*Q: Prior to that Brazil had been sort of relegated to the outskirts of diplomacy by the Americans?*

CREAGAN: Yeah, I think if you talk diplomatically they hit below their weight so to speak. They really were kind of looking inward and so that's one aspect of it. You had military governments; you had some terrorism. Remember our ambassador, Burke Elbrick, had been kidnapped but was not killed. Our Consul in Porto Alegre came under fire and, I think, attempted kidnapping. There was the problem of terrorism and of repression. Brazil looked inward.

*Q: Say in looking inward…*

CREAGAN: When I was there it was the opening, if you will, to the world and to democracy and all of that.

*Q: Say at the embassy among other embassies and all was there a discussion about whether Brazil is going to be a major power and all it should be?*

CREAGAN: Yeah there certainly was always a discussion there and Brazil being what it is: a country of the future and always will be.

*Q: Yeah.*

CREAGAN: No, there was not yet the evidence that this truly was one of the big powers that we see in recent years with the BRIC and, especially, the major economic ties with China. That didn't really happen until the period in 1991-1992 when I was Consul General in Sao Paulo. The U.S. did have a lot of investment there. We probably had over 30-35 thousand employees at General Motors and maybe 25 thousand at Ford Motor. Volkswagen was big as the Germans were there; so just for the Brazil market itself you had a lot of activity. By the way, to digress, by 1986 Brazil had developed alcohol cars, ethanol cars. I bought one myself, a Volkswagen. Brazil developed ethanol cars to gain more self-sufficiency in fuel. They strove to be free of the devil oil. They developed the sugar cane/ethanol industry. That put them in good shape on energy. They were also in very good shape in the aeronautical industry, which I later saw up close as the Consul General in Sao Paulo. The firm EMBRAER, which makes a lot of regional planes that we have in the U.S., is in Sao Paulo state. EMBRAER had been a military government company and then grew out of that.

*Q: Well here is this is major, really major, power in this continent, it's got a well-developed defense industry but would you all sit around and say yeah, but what are they going to use the tanks for?*

CREAGAN: Right, right. By that point there was not a concern that they might use the tanks in the region, so to speak. But the military ran that government from '64 to '85 or so. A lot of the military hardware they had was good for show. Oh, and sales to Iraq — Saddam's regime.

*Q: Toys, yeah, but we understand.*

CREAGAN: But you've got to have it, you have to have that military industry and then it was valuable for export as well; so they made some pretty good ones. Then they had a missile program as well. Heading off the missiles is important. Okay, they weren't going to the moon yet but, hey, if the U.S. can have its satellites up then Brazil can too.

*Q: Yeah.*

CREAGAN: They had a launch pad in the north so there was that.

*Q: Were they building stuff, as most of the equipment had already been developed in other countries?*

CREAGAN: Do you mean like in computers?

*Q: Yeah.*

CREAGAN: Yeah, we had MSDOS and there is no doubt that things looked like they were still parallel and so close that they were copying. We worked on those things a lot.

Brazil was capable of great projects. I think of the Itaipu Dam, which is down on the border of Paraguay, Argentina and Brazil. It produced, I think, 12.6 million megawatts of power and made our Hoover Dam look really small. I remember I took Senator Bill Bradley out to see it and he was blown away. I think it's the largest in the world until the Chinese…

*Q: The Three Gorges Dam.*

CREAGAN: Three Gorges, yeah. I mean very impressive stuff they could build. Well that meant tremendous influence over Paraguay after all which was a partner which could use a little bit of that power. Influence over Bolivia because Brazil was developing Bolivian gas deposits. In recent years Evo Morales – I think unwisely – had his guys go over the wall to the Petrobras Installation in Bolivia and that teed off the Brazilians. Big brother. Bolivia had gas, had some deposits, and Brazil needed the energy, because Sao Paulo has almost 20 million people, and major industries. It needed to be fed with energy.

*Q: Did Lula appear at all when you were there?*

CREAGAN: I met Lula and then worked with him later when I was Consul General in Sao Paulo. His trade union was extremely important in the automotive and other industries. Sao Paulo was the economic heartland of Brazil. The action was in Sao Paulo. For example, of sixty or so congressmen from the state of Sao Paulo, about 58 went home for the weekends. Much to do. Brasilia was quiet on the weekends for that reason – that the political leadership left town. For Lula the action was Sao Paulo as well. When I first saw Lula, I was struck by the Italian connection. On the wall of his offices were all these posters for the Italian metal workers trade union, the FIM-CISL. I asked what they were doing on the wall, because I had dealt with the Italian metalworkers years ago. Lula said that they trained the Brazilians in striking, the so called "chain strikes" to shut down the assembly line.

*Q: What was your impression of the politicians in Brazil at the time and their effectiveness?*

CREAGAN: They were new at being able to organize a democratic Congress, so it was kind of chaotic in many ways. There was corruption and interesting vote trading. There was a classic case where they took a photo of one of these Congressmen cheating. They had electronic voting, whereby you press a button at your desk. A congressman leaned over to a desk where the congressman was absent and punched the vote button. There was a really good photo of that taken by a sharp journalist. That was just kind of fun and illustrative of what would be going on in the new Congress. The leaders were older men like Ulysses Guimaraes who had led the party, the PMDB, in "loyal" opposition to the military. The more impressive personal leadership came later when those like Fernando Henrique returned to the political scene.

Brazil is so huge and its politics were very much centered on the states. That had been an old tradition. The Northeast had a disproportionate share of the political power, if you

base that on population. It was the old traditional Brazil and the politics in some of those states was still led by the old landed families and/or the "Colonels". Presidents in the 1980's still came from the Northeast and not the powerful economic states like Sao Paulo or Parana. Because of the 1964 coup and the military governments for the next twenty years, the body politic had slumbered like a Rip van Wrinkle. New leaders for the new Brazil had not yet developed.

*Q: This is one of the things that are so often forgotten when you have something like a military dictatorship for some twenty odd years or so; the political process suffers because there are whole generations that just haven't had the experience of politicking.*

CREAGAN: Exactly, yeah and that's so true. In a way they are lucky they had this professor Fernando Henrique Cardoso, who was an excellent political scientist and pragmatic economist. He had been removed from his job by the military but came back later as Minister of Finance and then president.

*Q: Were we concerned basically as a country about terrorism?*

CREAGAN: Not very much in the mid 1980's. In fact before we built a wall around the embassy, we had been wide open. Brasilia was like that. But we were not so concerned. I remember Ambassador Shlaudeman saying, "What the hell? What a waste. What are we doing building a wall?" But we built it. And the Russians were concerned enough to at least build their own. There was concern for terrorism in the '70s in many different countries in Latin America. Issues in the 1980's involved our own budgets. We were reduced to one AID employee. After massive projects in the prior decades, it was cutback time. I remember I would go to Recife for political visits –and to see if we could sustain a consulate there. And yes, it was important and necessary to have that presence in the Northeast. It was much of traditional Brazilian reality. I remember talking with the great Gilberto Freyre at his house in a jungle-like garden area of the city. We discussed the essence of being Brazilian – the mix, the Cosmic Race of Portuguese, African-Brazilian-maybe some Indian and then all the rest. The northeast embodied that culture as described in his 1930's classic sociological work – The Masters and the Slaves**.** Recife was also the home of that great Archbishop/Saint Dom Helder Camara. He was bishop of Recife/Olinda during the military governments and was a champion of the poor and a thorn in the side of the military. They censored him. He was up for a Nobel Prize but some say the military lobbied against it in Sweden. When I saw him he had retired and was living in a simple two rooms with hammock and plain wooden table. I did see a photo of him and Pope John Paul II visiting Brazil in 1980 or so. Two guys in white and a sea of people.

Recife had been the center of the peasant leagues. These were sharecroppers and poor peasants trying to band together to counter the power of landlords. The leader in the 1960's was Francisco Juliao and the center was Recife. The military government kicked him out, of course. I saw him in 1970 in Cuernavaca Mexico where we both taught at the *Centro Cultural de Documentacion* of Ivan Illich. I taught about trade unions and he taught about organizing the agricultural workers. I was conservative in the sense of

seeing unions in pattern of AFL-CIO and he was Marxist. So, Recife was important to keep open. Now, we also had a consulate in Salvador Bahia, and we were down to one guy. With a post you need an office, some security and a driver and some classified ability. We could not justify keeping Salvador open in the budget crunch. The consul was able to move to the ConGen, Rio. So, we closed Salvador and then Belo Horizonte as well. We couldn't justify one guy there; so we left the USIS person but closed the consulate. And then it was the turn of Porto Alegre. There was money in the diplomatic security account, because our embassy in Beirut had been blown up. So, we built a wall in Brasilia, but could not keep consulates open. I never worried about terrorism in my travels throughout Brazil.

*Q: How is living in this peculiar diplomatic city?*

CREAGAN: It was kind of fun. You still went out and looked for your own housing. I found a grand place which was what they would call a Portuguese Solar or villa. I believe a prior AID Director had also lived in the place. We had a huge expanse of area behind the house which went all the way to this artificial lake that they built in Brasilia. Across the lake was another huge expanse of land and then the Chinese embassy. So, I faced the Chinese Embassy. Lots of property. I remember I had a Rhodesian Ridgeback, a big dog of about 110 pounds. He ran freely. More than once he chased people out of the area behind the house (not fenced). One time we had a guard, I can't remember why, but we did not have a guard permanently. I remember coming home and finding the dog jumping at the guard. The guard would put a chair up and try to protect himself. The dog wasn't going to bite him, but thought the chair was a game. The house was great for lawn dinners and for entertaining of the semi-casual (*sport fino* in Portuguese) variety.

*Q: Who was the ambassador when you were there?*

CREAGAN: Harry Shlaudeman was his name; one of the greats. By the way I enjoyed Brazil and I was totally engaged, but this guy, Frank Shakespeare, who was Reagan's Ambassador to Portugal and had been my boss there, got the Vatican embassy after Portugal. When he went there he said, "I want Creagan for DCM". The Department told him that I was not available. I said, "I don't really want to go, I'm fine here in Brazil." But Shakespeare worked at it and they kept giving him names, but he rejected them. He must have gone to the White House, because the next thing I know in 1988 I'm pulled out and sent to the Holy See to be Frank Shakespeare's DCM. Harry Shlaudeman said, "Creagan, why are you always leaving me for Italy?" He had been my ambassador in Peru and from there I was assigned to Naples. Now I was his political counselor in Brasilia and they pull me out to go to the Vatican. He lamented that his post in Europe, Romania, I think, was not Rome.

*Q: How long were you dealing with the Vatican?*

CREAGAN: From 1988 to 1991. As I noted, my Ambassador there had been my boss in Portugal. Frank was a very special kind of guy. There were certain things he focused on, whether it was in Portugal or at the Holy See, and things he didn't. People in the Reagan

White House were interested in Portuguese Africa and in supporting Savimbi as UNITA rebel leader in Angola. In Mozambique some of them supported RENAMO – the rebels in Mozambique. Well, that was not our policy. I remember one time a guy from the White House in Portugal, his name was Constantine Menges, came to Lisbon and I took him to see Soares. He was telling the Prime Minister about need to support RENAMO in Mozambique. I noted for Soares that was not our policy and the policy was outlined in speeches of George Shultz, Secretary of State. Basically, U.S. policy was aimed to wean FRELIMO (GOM) away from the East Germans and USSR. We provided AID as well. Frank Shakespeare expressed many views on Africa held by conservative Republicans of the day. It was to challenge everywhere Marxist governments aided by the Soviets. U.S. policy was really more nuanced than that. Now, if Shakespeare was going to do something not in sync with our stated policy, he would tell me to "tell State that Ambassador Shakespeare is off the reservation again". I liked him and he was focused like a laser on many things of importance. When assigned to the Vatican as his DCM I saluted and off I went to Rome. Just like Brer Rabbit. It was the summer of 1988.

*Q: Today is the 17th of September 2013 with Jim Creagan and Jim you remember you moved to your new assignment.*

CREAGAN: Right, so I am on my way from Brasilia in the summer of 1988 to the Holy See.

*Q: Yeah, you were there from when to when?*

CREAGAN: I arrived in the summer, maybe August, of 1988 and then departed for Sao Paulo as Consul General Sao Paulo in January 1991.

*Q: Okay, could you just do a brief account of how we developed relations with the Holy See because it had been a controversy for a while and then how things were at the time you were there.*

CREAGAN: Okay, recalling once upon a time there was the Pope, of course, with his Papal State. If you looked at it that way, and the United States did, it was a state like any other with a couple of significant ports – Civitavecchia and Livorno. We had commercial relations with the Vatican in the 19th century, and just as the Revolution of 1848 took place. The Pope was driven out of Rome for a time. He came back with the help and protection of French troops. The U.S. maintained relations until after our Civil War. By 1868 it looked as if the Pope were to lose control of the Papal States and Rome itself. The USG was also not pleased with a letter that the Pope had sent to Jefferson Davis during the war, addressing him as President of the Confederate States. It was not recognition but it was acknowledgement of Davis' letter to him. That did not go down well with the Union folks. By late 1868 the Congress cut off all funds for any diplomatic relationship with the Holy See, which meant basically that the person we had there at the time had to leave.

Then there were no diplomatic relations until World War II. As the war clouds developed, Franklin Roosevelt thought it best to have somebody at the Holy See right in the heart of Fascist Italy. He designated a personal representative, who had been the CEO of U.S. Steel, Myron Taylor. But the most interesting thing is that, as war broke out in Europe, there was a Foreign Service officer, Harold Tittwell, in Rome and at the Embassy to Italy who became attached to the Taylor mission. Taylor would go back and forth to Rome, as did later Presidents' personal representatives. I remember Henry Cabot Lodge as one in the time of President Nixon, and Mayor Wagner of New York with Carter. They would go to Rome and would stay at the Grand Hotel in Rome for a few weeks each time. In World War II Harold Tittwell actually took up residence in the Vatican (neutral territory). Other diplomats, including British Ambassador Osborne, did the same. Tittwell provided valuable confidential reporting during his several years living inside the Vatican. After World War II President Truman thought that it was time for full diplomatic relations with the Vatican, and he named General Mark Clark to be ambassador. Clark had been the general, of course, who was Commander of the 5th Army. His army invaded Italy at Salerno and came through Naples, Monte Cassino and up from Anzio. He was the general who led the armies entering Rome on June 4, 1944 as the Germans withdrew. So Truman thought it would be good to name Mark Clark as Ambassador to the Holy See. Wrong move. Clark was roundly hated by some of his troops, the Texas Division, because they had taken Monte Cassino with heavy losses. Senator Tom Connally of Texas at that point was chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. Clark was assured of being massacred in the Senate – like 85 to 15; so Truman withdrew the appointment. Then Kennedy didn't have anybody there. He was Catholic and wary of backlash. Nixon sent Henry Cabot Lodge as a personal representative again.

When Reagan came in in 1981, he and his best friend (or actually the wives were best friends) Bill Wilson got together and he asked Bill where he would like to go as ambassador. Wilson, of course, replied – or so he told me – "The Vatican, the Holy See." "You got it. You're the U.S. Ambassador to the Holy See", Reagan told him. Well, as it turned out we didn't have an embassy at the Holy See; so he was "Mr. Wilson". I remember those days, because I was in charge of Italian and Vatican Affairs on the State Department desk back in Washington. Then Wilson and Bill Clark, who was deputy secretary of State but a close friend of Reagan's and in some ways more powerful – certainly domestically a lot more powerful – than Secretary of State, Al Haig. I remember a meeting with "Judge" Clark, Bill Wilson and me. Wilson said, "How come I'm Mr. Wilson and Max Rabb is ambassador to Italy?" I need to be ambassador and the president wants me to be ambassador." Clark said, "That's really touchy politically so let's not talk about it outside of this room." So that was that. However, the president and friends worked on it quietly, Bill Wilson pushed it and by 1984 there was enough support in Congress to have an ambassador approved by the Senate. Jerry Falwell and his "Moral Majority" supported and Congress undid its ban on money being sent to support diplomatic relations with the Vatican. Wilson got through the Senate with an overwhelming vote of 81-13 and we had an ambassador to the Holy See. I had gone to Portugal in 1982; and so don't know the various actions that took place on the domestic front.

It was 1984 when we established formal diplomatic relations with the Holy See. By 1986 Wilson got himself involved in some things that were outside his portfolio, the Holy See. Because Wilson was a friend of Reagan, Italian political leaders used him and he got involved in some Italian political machinations involving Libya. It did not work out so well. Wilson resigned, and the man who was my ambassador in Lisbon where I had been political counselor, Frank Shakespeare, became the second U.S. Ambassador to the Holy See. He really wanted that. I had gone off to Brazil in 1986. In 1988 Shakespeare was to pick a new DCM. He indicated that he wanted me. The Department was opposed as there was a list of possible DCM's and I was still on my tour as Political Counselor in Brasilia. When asked, I said I was fine in Brazil. However, Shakespeare, former head of the Heritage Foundation and USIA Director under Nixon with a lot of clout with the White House, insisted. I'm like Br'er Rabbit being thrown into the Briar Patch of Rome and the Vatican. So I went to work for Ambassador Frank Shakespeare in the summer of 1988.

I can also tell you a little bit about that embassy then and how it is different.

*Q: Yes, would you please. How did you operate?*

CREAGAN: Let me just back up about the Washington side of U.S.-Vatican diplomatic relations. The Holy See had an Apostolic Delegate, they called it, because they didn't have diplomatic relations with us. He was a very important guy who was a key to the US/Vatican relationship all the way up to the 2000's. His name is Pio Laghi. Cardinal Pio Laghi talked with President Bush before the invasion of Iraq in 2003, making the point about gravity of invasion, unintended consequences, Sunni/ Shi'a issues and all of that. Back in 1980/1981 he was the Apostolic Delegate to the U.S. Church. We had an informal diplomatic relationship, and we would deal with him at the State Department. Poland was in turmoil. The Solidarity trade union was being created. We wanted a close relationship with the Polish Pope and the Vatican. I remember Cardinal Casaroli, Vatican Secretary of State (Prime Minister) came to Washington in 1981 and met with Secretary of State Haig. I was note taker and obviously it was all about Poland. Haig was very respectful of Casaroli. Only time I observed that particular trait in Gen. Haig. In the informal relationship, Pio Laghi was the Vatican rep. I remember Larry Eagleburger, our Assistant Secretary for Europe telling me to "call in" Pio Laghi for something on Poland. Now when you call an ambassador to come into the State Department they have to come. It is a diplomatic thing. So I called then Archbishop Pio Laghi and told him Eagleburger wanted him to come in right then. Laghi said, "But Mr. Creagan, we don't have diplomatic relations; so I don't have to go in. But if Mr. Eagleburger invites me for coffee I'll accept." I say this to note that we had a long, if informal, relationship with the Holy See.

Our embassy to the Holy See in 1988 was classic, a political embassy in *toto*. No economic or commercial sections. We were a pure diplomatic post. There was a political appointee ambassador, and as it has turned out they are always Catholic. There was and is an experienced Foreign Service officer, DCM. We always had just top notch political officers and that would be a key. I had Craig Kelly who went on to be Ambassador to

Chile and Deputy Assistant Secretary of State, and Debbie Graze, who was really good and with great career and a DAS as well. We had an administrative officer and our own budget, but we didn't do the intricacies of budgeting and all that. We were supported by Embassy Rome. That's the only thing Embassy Rome could do for us in the sense that they couldn't get involved in the substance of our relationship with the Holy See. Neither the Holy See nor Italy would approve of the ambassador to one being the ambassador to the other. They had to have different people, and they had to cover the Holy See from somewhere else. If you represented a small country without the ability to have two embassies in Rome, you covered the Holy See from France or Spain but never from Rome. On the admin side we could get the support from our Rome embassy. Also, the RSO served both. We had our own drivers and contract security. So, we had an ambassador, DCM, political officer, admin officer, and a very key United States Information Service officer as well as an active protocol office. USIS was important, as we were in constant public diplomacy dialogue with the highly educated citizens of the Holy See. I remember the dialogue occasioned by publications like "Problems of Communism" and so forth. Anyway, there was a need and use for the information from USIS.

Then we had a small Marine contingent of six and they were, of course, supported by the larger Marine contingent across town. They lived at our embassy and had a very special life I think. They had relations both official and social with the Swiss Guards who were their counterparts. So that was kind of fun, I think, for the Marines. Then we had really expert Foreign Service nationals, one American citizen with fluent French which was, by the way, the official written language at the Holy See, Italian was and is the unofficial language spoken by everybody. On the Holy See side you had a very talented diplomatic corps coming out of the Vatican Diplomatic Academy. These were people from around the world. Members of the Vatican diplomatic corps would be Italians, of course, but also Frenchmen, Argentines, Germans, Americans and so forth.

*Q: Where did you live?*

CREAGAN: Yeah, that's really kind of interesting. Let me start first with the chancery. The embassy itself was acquired by Bill Wilson who was always very good, I must say, in getting properties for the U.S. government or for U.S. government use, because we really were not buying properties. Having quite a fortune, Bill would offer to use his personal money for many things — in hope, I am sure, of getting repaid down the road. And remember he was personal friends of the Reagans. We acquired under lease the Villa Pacelli. It was a villa about a quarter mile from the Vatican, a beautiful villa where Pope Pius XII had spent a lot of his youth; it was his uncle's, I think, villa – the Pacelli family villa and what a great chancery. Then Bill Wilson had seen to it that it was properly attired with beautiful chandeliers and terrific silk coverings and treatments. …The kind of place suitable for Vatican diplomacy. For the ambassador, we had leased the residence of the president of the American Academy, toward the top of the Janiculum Hill. It was a beautiful residence. The American Academy at one point could no long afford to be there, to keep it, to have their resident president, if you will, or executive director in Rome staying there; so they ended up leasing it to us at great advantage, I think, to the

American Academy finances over the long run. We lease it and it's probably still under lease as the residence of the ambassador. It should have been bought years ago. That is another example of a very shortsighted Congress. I remember that Ambassador Shakespeare would really give them hell and with good reason. One day the Chair of the House committee in charge of State Department appropriations was in Rome and getting a briefing from us at the Chancery. He was probably jet-lagged and was dozing a bit as Shakespeare talked. When the Ambassador began to describe the facilities he shouted that if his son was as irresponsible as the Congress on renting a house rather than buying, "I would have him HORSEWHIPPED". The congressman woke up and listened to the good explanations such as – 100 years went by with no U.S. representation at the Vatican. That was understood based on U.S. Politics and all that. But once relations were established, there could be no political possibility of the U.S. breaking relations with the Holy See. Therefore, there could be no financially sane reason for not obtaining the property for a U.S. Residence. All seem to understand. Nobody does anything. That is the U.S. congressional reality.

I was the DCM. When we arrived in the summer of 1988, the place under lease for the DCM was incredible. It was the Villa (Medici) del Vascello. It had been in the Doria Pamphili family and later the Medici. The villa was built around a Roman theater – not so practical but an incredible dwelling. The ancient Roman walls surrounded it; they looked battle worn, and the cannon balls that had been fired in the battle of the French against Garibaldi in the revolution of 1848 are still embedded. It had a tree growing – a big huge vine really – growing right in the middle of the dining room and encased in glass. When it snowed, the flakes would drift down to the table as if one were outside. The villa looked over the Villa Abamelek which was this grand villa and park that was the Soviet Embassy to Italy and later the Russian Embassy. I never got into it while it was the Soviet embassy, but I had the privilege of being friends with the Russian ambassador years later in the new century, when I was president of John Cabot University in Rome. We stayed at the Villa de Vascello for a few months. The good princess who owned it (Pallavicini) wanted to raise the rent from 7,500,000 lire to 15,000,000 lire. I told her the U.S. taxpayers would not do such a foolish thing, and we searched for new quarters. So, Gwyn looked around Rome to try to find a place that the United States government could do a long term lease for the present and future DCM's to the Holy See. We found a place that had not exactly been a residence. It had been a villa turned into law offices. Not far from our embassy chancery and not far from the Vatican where the work took place. On an everyday basis you are inside the Vatican doing demarches, doing whatever the relationship with the Holy See called for. Gwyn found the place and then worked on remaking the interior. It became a very nice house (Villa Laura) for us and future DCM's to the Holy See. Later, I think, it went over to the DCM to the FAO and UN agencies. I find it still interesting that in those years, you – the Foreign Service Officer – especially the spouse, did it themselves in terms of housing and creativity in same. Shall we talk issues?

*Q: Yes, yes, and your evaluation. There is much talk about how well keyed the Vatican was to local situations but what was your feeling?*

CREAGAN: Absolutely, the issues we dealt with were world-wide. It was Central America, Eastern Europe and the Soviet empire, and the Middle East. The Vatican was really focused on Lebanon and the civil war and trying to do something about that. Then I got involved in heavy diplomatic lifting two Christmas eves in a row. In 1988 the issue was return of bodies of U.S. pilots shot down in the U.S. air raids over Libya in '86. Then the next year in '89, again right at Christmas, the Noriega case broke out, and I dealt with that for many days. Then other areas included seeking a peace settlement in Mozambique.

In the late 1980's …in spite of there being a Polish Pope, there was still a very close relationship between the Holy See, Italy and Italian politics. I mean you still have the top people in the Curia, the top people around the Pope, being for the most part Italians. That includes, of course, the Vatican bank – even though you had an American bishop, Paul Marcinkus, as titular head of the bank. In the foreign office the Archbishop in charge of the Secretariat for Relations with States is what we would term the Foreign Minister. He was Italian, Angelo Sodano, and he is still around as Dean of the bishops. Sodano had been Nuncio in Chile; and so when I had to negotiate with him on getting Manuel Noriega out of the Vatican Embassy in Panama, he knew all the intricacies of that kind of problem. The left extremists, the MIR, had been chased into the Holy See Embassy in Santiago when Pinochet was in power and Archbishop Sodano was Nuncio. He negotiated the MIR leaders out of the embassy and up to Cuba and Africa. He knew what he was doing. His deputy, with whom I have been friends, was a Frenchman named Tauran, Jean-Louis Tauran. He later became the foreign minister. Jean Louis had been Deputy Nuncio in Lebanon and really understood the Middle East. The Pope's chief of staff was an Italian archbishop named Monduzzi. I would deal with him on presidential visits, like when President Bush came. Monduzzi was a character. He really controlled things well, including the U.S. White House advance personnel. The Vatican was excellent on the issues involving the USSR. The Vatican had extra-territorial buildings around Rome, negotiated at the 1929 Lateran Treaty with Mussolini. One large building over at the Piazza Spagna, was Propaganda Fide. I used to interview the Cardinal running that huge enterprise, Cardinal Tomko, about events and trends in Africa. He got reports from priests around the region and was well briefed. His info was useful for us.

*Q. How did you go about gathering info?*

CREAGAN: That's a good question. We engaged in really traditional diplomacy on a daily basis. Let's say that there was an issue in Central America involving Nicaragua. The embassy driver would take me to the Vatican gate for diplomats and we would be waved through by the gendarmes. Up to San Damaso Courtyard, we drove through Baroque palaces and tunnels. As I walked the papal palaces on my way to meetings with the desk officers of the Holy See, I passed through passageways and rooms adorned with incredible art, including that of Raphael. Then I would call on the Vatican desk officer for Nicaragua. Now in that case, it just so happens that his name is Tim Broglio. Tim is now the Archbishop for the U.S. Military Forces. Tim was the desk officer for Central America in the late 1980's. He had gone to high school about 25 miles from my home near Cleveland. We talked Ohio high school football. I remember giving him my

"demarche" for that day intended to undercut the Sandinistas and seeking Vatican support for the U.S. position on some controversial issue. I said to Broglio, "Tim, how you doing? Let's do this and this and this. Being from Cleveland and a good U.S. citizen, you understand our position." Tim would tell me, "Well Jim, I am from Cleveland but – guess what – I've got a Holy See diplomatic passport and I represent the Holy See and we don't agree with you on Nicaragua…" So we would go back and forth and then I would report back to Washington about the demarche, the Vatican response, the interpretation of same, etc. So it was very traditional in some ways every day.

Then I might meet the Vatican Foreign Minister or get together with the deputy foreign minister, the Frenchman, for lunch over in Trastevere. We would go over issues concerning Lebanon, where both the Vatican and the U.S. were working together to try to bring some kind of peace to that war torn country and to reduce Syrian influence. Nothing has changed. He might say to me at lunch, "Look, get with the Patriarch (the top Cardinal for the area was a Lebanese Maronite Patriarch with offices in Rome). I would then go across Rome to the Maronite headquarters and call on the Patriarch. His name was Sfeir. We would talk about the fate of the Christians, what's going on in all Lebanon and I would outline the U.S. position. He would already have had a talk with the Vatican deputy foreign minister; so there was a good deal of coordination. The Vatican had great influence especially over the Christian community in Lebanon; also they had some influence in the Muslim quarters as well because of Maronite schools that some of the leaders had attended — even Hezbollah. It was a very close and interesting relationship among Christian and Muslim in Beirut. Of course, those were still the years when a Muslim could go to Christian school and the guerilla groups or terrorist organizations were primarily political and even secular in nature, rather than Islamist.

Certain diplomatic activities were unique to the Holy See. While a National Day is normal, and the Holy See treated the June 29 Feast of Peter and Paul as akin to a National Day (the Feast is holiday also in Rome). But other countries don't have canonization ceremonies with diplomatic corps in attendance. Nor do they have Midnight Christmas Mass as a working function for diplomats. I happen to be Catholic and so you would expect me to want to attend Midnight Mass. However, the ambassadors from Iran, from Japan, and from many other countries who are certainly not Catholic are there without fail. In those days we had 123 or 124 countries represented at the Holy See (now it is 180 plus). At mass you had a full representation, and that was good for diplomacy. At Midnight Mass were the representatives of countries with which the U.S. did not have diplomatic relations. So I might be next to the Iranian ambassador and in the other direction would be the Cuban ambassador. So, exchanges occurred.

I remember in 1988, I got a call on Christmas Eve from the Pope's deputy secretary of state, known as the "sostituto". The Vatican had received a call from their Nuncio, their ambassador in Tripoli. He had been contacted by Qadhafi who said he wanted to make a good will gesture to the United States; and was going to return the bodies of these two airmen who had been shot down in the 1986 attack on Tripoli. I was able to get in touch with Assistant Secretary for the Middle East Murphy. He gave our response for me to pass on. We obviously welcomed the return of the remains of two of our Americans who

died, but at the same time that return would have no effect on the relationship – antagonistic at that time –with Qadhafi. So I relayed all this at Midnight Mass to the top Vatican officials. After Christmas, I was the chargé d'affaires. Ambassador Frank Shakespeare, who had been head of USIA and CBS television executive told me to remember that, for the media, what really transpired was not important. It was all perception; so I needed to make sure no one saw the U.S. role as negative in any way. I worked it with the Holy See so that the remains were turned over to the Holy See and then to Italy. I was at the airport to receive them but had no contact with Libyan officials. The transfer was Libya to the Vatican, to Italy for forensics and then the United States. We had an airport ceremony with marines and flags. Then we flew the bodies back to the United States.

The next year, 1989, I was going into Midnight Mass when I got a call relayed by my driver from the car radio to depart the Basilica and get on up to the embassy, the chancery, and call Washington on the secure line. The message from our action group, led by Undersecretary Bob Kimmitt, was that Manuel Noriega had taken refuge in the Vatican embassy and to tell the Holy See not to give him asylum. We wanted him. So, I dashed back to St. Peters, walking in just as the Pope was climbing up to the altar. I tapped the deputy foreign minister, a Frenchman, on the shoulder and we went back to whisper to one another, television cameras on us. People told me later that they thought, "Oh my God there must be a bomb" or something because there had been some rumors of that. I told the Vatican official (Tauran) that Noriega was in his embassy and the Holy See should not give him asylum. We want him, I said. He is a criminal wanted for drug violations. Tauran replied that "The Chief of State is up on the altar, the Prime Minister, Cardinal Casaroli, is sitting over at the front of the diplomatic section. The Mass is long. Tell President Bush and Secretary of State Baker that they have three hours to think." Then he said, "Don't go in and get him." I said, "That was the furthest from our minds (although we did already have the Nunciature in Panama surrounded with troops)". All day Christmas I met with the Vatican Foreign Minister, Archbishop Angelo Sodano, talking about Noriega. "Prime Minister" Cardinal Casaroli had called Jim Baker who was at his mother's place in Texas, and the thrust of the Vatican approach was to underline that Noriega was in the Nunciature and would not be given over to us as a matter of international law. We were an occupying power. Sodano was clear – and Casaroli reiterated at other occasions – that the U.S. thought in four year presidential increments, but The Holy See had to think in century-long cycles. So International Law and not today's national interest must prevail. Sodano told me that Bush/Baker should be reassured that Noriega could not cause trouble elsewhere. We had some concern that he might try to organize some resistance in the mountains (like Castro?) Sodano noted that he had a gun when he came into the Nunciature but that a nun had lifted it when he was in the bathroom or somewhere. I believe they gave him one beer but that was it. Sodano made it clear that there would be no women for Noriega. With all that established, we spent the next ten days in Panama and at the Vatican trying to get Noriega to leave the Nunciature of his own accord. The Vatican counseled patience.

We then patiently negotiated for ten days, punctuated at times by rock music. I remember one time the prime minister or secretary of state, as they called Cardinal Casaroli, calling

Ambassador Tom Melady and myself in and then having the deputy foreign minister follow up with me concerning the rock music that was being blasted by the U.S. psych troops into the Vatican Embassy. The idea was to keep Noriega off balance, but the Vatican reported it was actually keeping the Nuncio awake and he needed his sleep. Noriega was sleeping on the other side of the house. In any case, cut it out. So I zapped back a cable. Then I got a call again from the deputy perhaps an hour or three later saying, "Well, maybe President Bush isn't in control because the music continues." So I zapped that back. The music stopped. After ten days Noriega, apparently tired of a Vatican regimen and concerned with mobs gathered outside at times, asked for his uniform and general's cap. He agreed to walk out on his own and surrender to the U.S. Which he did. That's the kind of thing that happens at these official functions, which happen to be Mass or religious celebration.

The Pope had a unique role in the breakup of the USSR and we were witness to some events as that unfolded. Then there was the cultural interaction. Under Frank Shakespeare and Jim Billington, Librarian of the Library of Congress, the U.S. and Holy See collaborated for a great exhibit at the Library of Congress. There were Vatican Secret Archives materials and it was all marvelous. These incredible documents also included items like Henry the Eighth's love letter to Anne Boleyn and the Great Khan telling the Pope to appear before him and pay homage. The Pope didn't do that but he did keep the letter. So we worked with Vatican Library secret archives to send a magnificent exhibit to the Library of Congress. The Vatican was pleased to do it and had had a relationship with the Library of Congress going back to the 1930's when the Library of Congress helped the Vatican in cataloguing. There were a few items like the Mayan Codex that the Vatican would not have wanted to go to Washington. Once out of the Vatican, Mexico might seek to get them back.

You want me to talk about the end of the Soviet Union?

*Q: Yes, because of course, John Paul was the par excellence.*

CREAGAN: Exactly and through the eighties, of course, they had been doing their thing in Poland. That all started with the Pope's first visit to Poland, when Brezhnev warned Gierek not to permit it. The Pope went, told the Poles to "be not afraid" and Solidarity was born. When the Pope traveled to Poland, multi-millions turned out. That was "soft power" to be used. And he did use it. His was not power of troops or legions but the kind of moral power. He was able to renew the Polish sense of patriotism as well. Through the 1980's we supported Solidarity and, in Italy, the Italian trade unions played a role in that. The AFL-CIO was involved at all levels as you might imagine. We supported Solidarity through our channels, discreet and indiscreet. I think I may have mentioned the intelligence briefings given the Pope by Vernon Walters, as an example of high level rather obvious cooperation. Then came the summer and fall of 1989 and the beginning of the collapse of East Germany. The Germans were fleeing out through Hungary and into Austria and all of that. We were, of course, in touch and gaining probably more information from the Vatican than we were giving — the Holy See having a specialized and 'parochial" knowledge of cities, towns and rural areas. The new leadership in

Moscow, with Gorbachev at the helm, was interested in more contact with the Holy See. Gorbachev was trying to do more to gain support from the Russian Orthodox, because he could see that the Orthodox were still a force. So, on the occasion of the millennium of Christianity in the Soviet Union, the USSR worked with the Holy See on some aspects of that. The Soviet opposition to certain religious liberty aspects of the Helsinki Act, like ability of religions (Orthodox) to use the media, was dropped. One reason would be that Gorbachev wanted the Orthodox to go on TV as a kind of partner of the regime. It didn't work out for him but has for more recent Russian rulers. Gorbachev and the Pope decided to meet. That happened on December 1, 1989. They talked of Europe as common home from Atlantic to the Urals. They were both Slavs. Gorbachev said his mother was a believer. In the fall 1989 of turmoil, the meeting was a sign of hope for the future. They established diplomatic relations. Now, I had to report on the meeting, because President Bush was meeting with Gorbachev off Malta the next day. Tough assignment, since the two met alone for a time. I got something from my usual contacts. Tense. Later, in the Dominican Republic I had lunch with the Nuncio who was Polish and the Pope's note taker at the meeting. That is another story.

I recall an event involving another East European country — Czechoslovakia — that demonstrated for me the Pope's power and ability to speed the events of 1989 to conclusion. The Czech Communists were really tough. They crushed the church. The Ministry of Cults controlled much, including the naming of bishops. They made sure there were no unruly bishops, by preventing bishops from office. I think they only had two bishops active out of the twelve or so dioceses. The Vatican negotiated patiently with Czechoslovakia throughout 1989 in preparation for the canonization of St. Agnes of Bohemia, a 12$^{th}$ Century saint and patroness of the country. On November 12 the canonization of St. Agnes took place at St. Peter's along with the beatification of Albert of Poland. The Vatican officials had been working for more than a year to try and get some Czech participation in the canonization ceremonies. They asked for permission to bring the old Cardinal Tomasek to Rome. He was over ninety, but still a symbol of Church vs state repression. The Czechs were very resistant but in the end they said, "Okay, maybe 100 pilgrims can go to Rome. After all it is St. Agnes the Patroness of Bohemia. Okay, maybe five hundred people, OK maybe a thousand". The Vatican kept up subtle pressure and the Czechs gave in. Remember that this was 1989 and Eastern Europe was coming apart. The GOC perhaps thought that a little give was necessary. Finally, they agreed on a few women going and some TV coverage as well. As diplomats we went to the ceremonies. I am in my tails and Gwyn in her black gown and mantilla. The others had their military uniforms and swords and all that. The ceremony for St. Agnes began and the Pope spoke. He read in Czech and in Polish the words of the prophet Isiah. "Release the bonds, set free the oppressed and throw off the yoke." You could see the chills run through the crowd and especially the Czechs who were there, many in costume. I could see tears rolling down the face of the women. It was dramatic in a way that Karol Wojtyla, the actor, could do. Afterwards, there was a demonstration, I think, at St. Peter's Square. This was being televised back to Czechoslovakia. The next week there were massive demonstrations in St. Wenceslaus Square, with people waving St. Agnes banners. Within two weeks the government fell and Communism was defeated. St. Agnes is termed in the Czech Republic as the "Saint of the Overthrow of

Communism". The Pope played a key role as catalyst for street action the next weeks. It was the end of a dramatic year and one which showed the importance of the papal soft power. The Pope was an incredibly strong voice and influence. Some of that was forgotten as he endured the papacy through years of Parkinson's and physical decline. He died in 2005.

Another area we worked was the Ukraine. There is a Ukrainian Catholic Church linked to Rome, but which looks like the Orthodox in terms of ceremonies, vestments, etc. There is a married priesthood. In the 1940's as the Soviets exerted control over Ukraine they threw out the leadership and the priests of the Ukrainian church. They took over the churches and turned them over to the Orthodox. I've talked a little before about the Lebanese patriarch which has its Maronite headquarters in Rome. Well, the Ukrainian Church in exile also had headquarters in Rome and properties that technically may have been Holy See property. Cardinal Lubachivsky, exiled in 1946, was the leader there. I would go see Cardinal Lubachivsky, who by the way, went back to the Ukraine after the Soviet Union fell. Already an old man; he died there in his home country. It was amazing. He never thought he would go back. I gathered information on the Ukraine and worked with Ukrainian priests on some soft intelligence and activity. We had friendly intelligence agencies working on several cases; we had Bibles being smuggled into the Ukraine; we had information and letters smuggled out. Lots of very interesting activity, which I would just say supported the people of the Ukraine and the opposition to the Soviet domination. Some modest good work from the U.S. Embassy of the Holy See.

By the way, for whatever reason, the powers that be in Congress, State or White House felt they could no longer afford the chancery at Villa Pacelli – that which Bill Wilson had set up in grandeur. The embassy then moved to cheaper quarters, which I think may have been the Russian delegation to the Holy See. We moved the chancery down to quarters near the Circus Maximus. That event occurred, not when Shakespeare was Ambassador or when I was DCM, but several years later after we had left. Frank Shakespeare was Reagan's Ambassador, and President Bush wanted his own of course. Shakespeare departed in the summer of 1989. I was chargé d'affaires ad interim. President Bush was ready to appoint his person, and I sought the *agrément* from the Holy See. I went to see the Vatican foreign minister and the deputy foreign minister with a bio and a formal request to accept the new ambassador. They looked it over and noted the good credentials – Nixon's ambassador to Rwanda and Uganda. In the Bush campaign the expected nominee was the head of "Catholics for Bush". The credentials looked great and "Catholics for Bush" told you something. The deputy foreign minister read and then looked at me and said, "Creagan, why do you always send a Catholic to the Holy See? Aren't you a Protestant country – and with Jewish population as well? How come there isn't sometime a Protestant or a Jew named Ambassador?" I said, "Well Monsignor, actually it has nothing to do with you; it's a domestic U.S. thing. The U.S. Ambassador to the Holy See will always be a Catholic as far as I know, because that's how our politics works". The president names a key campaign contributor or participant as reward. From Bill Wilson to Shakespeare to Melady to Flynn to Boggs to Nicholson (head of RNC and Catholic) to Rooney and on they are Catholics. Different political parties and different administrations, but always Catholic.

A note on instructions to ambassadors. First, there was no a religious aspect to the embassy work. As Ambassador Shakespeare said, "We do foreign policy not religion". The U.S. Embassy to the Holy See has nothing to do with the religious side or getting involved in naming bishops somewhere. Some, even in U.S. Catholic circles, thought we might get involved in naming bishops. Absolutely not. Other embassies to the Holy See and other regimes might do so. The Concordats with Latin American countries had considerable interaction between the states. The U.S., of course, had no concordat governing U.S./Vatican relations. Or involving Church matters. That said, there was and could be some aspect of the relationship that would affect the religious or internal Church sphere. When the Pope went to Nicaragua and waved his finger at Nicaraguan priests who were ministers of government, telling them to get out of government, that fit U.S. policy of opposition to the Sandinista government as well. In our discussions with the Holy See a mutual commitment to fighting human trafficking was and is an important area of cooperation. When I was there, the instructions to the ambassador included getting the Holy See to open full diplomatic relations with Israel. Coming from the USA, which established relations with the Holy See only in 1984, it indicated how we came to value the ties and how we might influence the Israeli/Palestinian issue. The Israelis were talking with the Holy See and their Ambassador to Italy had a relationship with Vatican officials. The Pope would see Prime Minister Rabin or Shimon Peres as well as Yasser Arafat on the PLO side. But the Vatican in the late 1980's considered that if it moved unilaterally for a full diplomatic relationship with Israel it might set off Palestinian reaction and violence — also in Lebanon. By the mid 1990's a full relationship was achieved. The consistent call of Pope John Paull II was for "peace with justice", in other words, not just peace but peace with justice. The Holy See called for that (use of force) in Bosnia in the early 1990's – in favor of the Muslims being killed by Christians. Those were Orthodox Serbs for the most part, but Catholic Croats were in the fight early. And when Saddam Hussein invaded Kuwait on August 1, 1990, the Vatican Deputy Foreign Minister Jean Louis Tauran expressed the frustration with me – "What was wrong with you guys? Why didn't you see this, what was with your intelligence? You saw the troops massing on the border and did you think they wouldn't move?" Tauran on that occasion and the Pope during the early 1990's did not reject military action, if measured, in the cause of peace with justice.

*Q: I think let's do Mozambique.*

CREAGAN: Okay, Mozambique in 1989 was suffering another decade of a long civil war between the FRELIMO movement, which had taken power after the Portuguese revolution in 1974 and its withdrawal from the African conflicts, and the opposition RENAMO. FRELIMO was supported by the Soviets and, in particular, East Germans. RENAMO was supported by South Africa and others, including some Portuguese. After years of devastation a moment appeared when an approach to peace could be made. The intermediary, for particular Church and tribal reasons, was a wonderful Italian NGO called Saint'Egidio. There was an archbishop in the Mozambique city of Beira, who was of tribal connection with RENAMO and respected by all. Saint'Egidio leaders knew him.

In the summer of 1990, I was the U.S. representative, the chargé d'affaires to the Holy See. I agreed to meet quietly under the auspices of Saint'Egidio with the "shadow foreign minister", Raul Domingos of RENAMO. We met in what you might call a "Vatican safe house" up at Castel Gandolfo on the Alban Hills. I brought the State Department Mozambique desk officer with me. I first met alone with Domingos and we kind of worked around to the issues. We talked in Portuguese about Portuguese soccer teams and we talked about Lisbon and we tried to get past the suspicion that might be felt. Soon we were talking about modalities of mediation. Should Zimbabwe or Kenya be invited to support talks? I said that procedures will take care of themselves and to let the Italians work on that. I said let's go to Rome and meet in the Saint'Egidio convent. Nothing to lose. And so it started. They met through the summer. We got the U.S. involved because they wanted us and because we could do things like provide technical advice. For example, we had satellites, and as we began to discuss holding the opposing troops away from one another and setting up a buffer zone, the U.S. would be useful in establishing and verifying facts on the ground. So in the end they got the Italian government and Prime Minister Andreotti – you remember him – to pay for all the pasta and hotels and whatnot. Saint'Egidio provided the location and the smarts, and the U.S. got involved. We brought over Assistant Secretary Herman Cohen, and we jumped into the details. And away it went. So, between August and December we got an agreement for a cease fire; it didn't hold but we got an agreement for a cease fire. Some of the FRELIMO and RENAMO negotiators joked, calling it the "Creagan Cease Fire" because it followed Thanksgiving festivities. One of the things we did was on Thanksgiving Day was to have meetings at Saint'Egidio's convent. The mediators went back and forth between the groups, carrying messages and suggestions. I brought up an old U.S. Thanksgiving tradition – at least in my recollection, of turkey, stuffing and Wild Turkey bourbon. I had a couple bottles of Wild Turkey Bourbon – 100 proof. So the RENAMO had bottles of it, FRELIMO had bottles of it and they drank and socialized. They had a great time. They had big headaches the next day, but they signed a cease fire and applauded Thanksgiving. That "Creagan Cease Fire", as they jokingly called it, was a going-away good will message for me as well. I was traveling December 1 or 2 for reassignment to Sao Paulo as Consul General. It was a fascinating six months, with the Vatican, the NGO, Italy and the USG able to bring these two sides together. Ultimately they did sign a long-lasting agreement and ended the Mozambique Civil War. The key person from the U.S. side was Cameron Hume, who replaced me as the DCM in our Embassy to the Holy See. The issues at the embassy were varied as indicated by the Mozambique peace talks.

*Q: In the first place, on this Mozambique group, they sound like these are quite sophisticated people even though they were guerillas?*

CREAGAN: They were. Raul Domingos, the RENAMO guy, had been, as I recall, at the University of Coimbra in Portugal. He later headed up the opposition parliamentary group in Mozambique and ran for president. So, some of them had the formal education. And a key figure was the Archbishop of Beira, Jaime Goncalves, who helped bring the sides together. I remember once a meeting in the sacristy of the Church Santa Maria in Trastevere. He was, of course, very knowledgeable. The key to success for this cease fire and then full peace agreement was the knowledge and commitment of the Saint'Egidio

mediators. They were the pastor of Santa Maria, Vincenzo Paglia and Fr. Zuppi, along with Saint'Egidio chief, Andrea Riccardi and his great team.

*Q: One reason for going for a relation with the Vatican is that it has these very knowledgeable people sitting as Nuncios all over the world. How much did we use them to try out ideas, what's going on? I mean did you have other country issues to pursue—like what does the Holy See think about the situation in Argentina or Thailand.*

CREAGAN: Right. For example, if we had policy points to make on Argentina, I would meet with the Vatican "desk officer" for that area. They were always very knowledgeable, as they themselves had been either Nuncios or one of the diplomats in their embassy in those countries. And invariably they followed the issues in a way that was highly skilled. I was always impressed by the Vatican diplomats in Rome. Their knowledge of the former Portuguese colonies like Angola, Cabo Verde or Mozambique was exceeded only by the Portuguese – or perhaps the U.S., involved as we are in everything. You know some of us, when we were at other posts, always found the analysis of Vatican diplomats rich in insight. I know in the '90s when I was visiting in Cuba with our principal officer there, we had a dinner with the Papal Nuncio. He was very much on top of issues like human rights and other matters of deep concern for the U.S. and the Vatican. Am I explaining it ok?

*Q: Yes, you are.*

CREAGAN: In Rome at the Vatican you had great expertise on the world's issues. In addition to the Secretariat (Holy See State Department) you had other "ministries" like the one for "Justice and Peace". It was headed by a French Cardinal Etchegaray and his deputy from Ireland, Archbishop Diarmuid Martin – now the Archbishop of Dublin. Martin was a great diplomat with whom we could work on the human rights issues. He was later Nuncio to the UN in Geneva and then Dublin Archbishop. The successor to the French Cardinal Etchegaray was Martino, who had been the Vatican "Ambassador" to the UN in New York. Lots of experience. The "hat " of the ministry included as well "*Cor Unum*" or the equivalent of an AID ministry, dealing with Catholic Charities, CARITAS, and other NGO's around the world. It was all encompassing, from the war on drugs to the challenge of human trafficking.

*Q: How did you find the attitude of the Vatican and its diplomatic corps on the problem of AIDS?*

CREAGAN: You know it was hitting in the late '80s, but not with great realization of the incredible impact. The Pope opposed the use of condoms for the traditional reasons. And homosexuality. As for individual AIDS victims, there was manifestation of care and concern. The pope had taken a highly visible symbolic action, with his hugging of a child with AIDS in a 1987 visit to San Francisco. But we did not deal with that issue with the Vatican. At least I don't remember it coming up. We had our policies on AIDS and condoms but no reason to argue it with the Vatican. In the late '80s I think we were just realizing the enormity of the problem ourselves.

*Q: It took quite a while for really the world to focus on this.*

CREAGAN: Yeah while it was killing us yeah, that's right.

*Q: Jim, in the United States there are several hot button issues dealing with the Catholic Church mostly revolve around sex. One is the marriage of priests and the other is abortion. I mean these two and there are others but did these come up or were we just kind of avoiding them?*

CREAGAN: Okay, they certainly didn't come up in our negotiations with the Vatican. When they came out with encyclicals, a letter from the Pope that dealt with the world issues, we would engage as an embassy. But on issues like a married priesthood or the later focus on pedophiles, it was not for us to engage as state to state. Internal Church matters were for the Church. On abortion I can remember plenty of discussions on that, but with the American priests or the American leaders in Rome either at the Vatican or maybe the North American College. So it was American to American and not official policy. We had in Rome the North American College Seminary. There were some really top young men and with good leadership. One of the rectors was Tim Dolan, who is now Cardinal of New York. Well, with those guys we discussed all the U.S. issues. Married priests were always a good topic of conversation. You had in Rome some representatives of the Ukrainian Church, whose priests were sometimes married with children. All OK. It is tradition.

An issue that, at first glance would not seem to involve the U.S. Embassy did in fact call for our attention. Carmelite nuns had a convent outside Auschwitz, where they prayed. American Jewish leaders did not want the nuns close to the site and saw it as an affront to the Holocaust memory. At one point certain American Jewish leaders came over and an audience with the Pope was set. There was some pressure on the Ambassador to take up the issue with the Vatican. The leaders at one point failed to show for an audience with the Pope. A symbolic snub. Ultimately the Pope himself told the nuns in effect, "You have two choices. You can go back to the Main Carmelite Convent or you can quit, but you are getting out of Auschwitz." The Pope did it himself. There was an effort to get us involved in a religious area that we were quite uncomfortable with. It worked out.

*Q: Did you find the ambassador being of a political persuasion getting oh more involved readings from political pressure within the United States within the Catholic ranks in the United States?*

CREAGAN: Right, I think that might have been a problem with Wilson, being the first ambassador. Shakespeare was very devout and went to church every day. But he was very clear about the embassy role. We did foreign policy and not religion. He was also clear and correct, I am sure, about the need to consider the fact of diplomatic relations for the future. He said, "The United States might have struggled for decades and even a century to have diplomatic relations with the Vatican, so that is understandable. The Senate was poised to prevent General Mark Clark or anyone to represent the U.S. at the

Vatican – until Reagan did it. But once you have diplomatic relations, a diplomatic relationship, with the Holy See you are never going to break them. So guys you better purchase an embassy and purchase our residence." But they never did.

*Q: What about visitors I would imagine having an embassy there would mean that every Knight of Columbus and his family wanted to be presented to the Pope and there you were.*

CREAGAN: Right, yeah, sure that's a big thing here, you are right; talk about the things you did and who meets with the Pope. Obviously, Secretary of State Shultz comes over, yeah; he is meeting with the Pope. President Bush with a huge entourage and you have meetings with the Pope. Even the NATO commander met with the Pope. I would take lots of Senators, lots of Congressmen to see the Pope, and we tried to be very forthcoming. I took Lee Iacocca to see the Pope; I took George Steinbrenner to see the Pope. I did not know what to tell the Pope about Iacocca. I mean I couldn't say Chrysler to the Pope. He wouldn't know. So I said "here is the head of the U.S. automobile industry." The Pope looks at him and he says, "You must be the friend of Cardinal O'Connor." That was the New York Cardinal. Why did the Pope say that? O'Connor had a big Cadillac and that impressed the Pope when he went to New York.

As you indicated by your question, we had lots of visitors. There were individuals. But often it was a group, such as a CODEL – or a President with his entourage of hundreds. President H.W. Bush (the father) came. It was a great visit. I worked with the Pope's Chief of Staff, Archbishop Monduzzi. He was a tough one, who did not like the White House staffers. He said, "You know the Vatican is not only a nuclear-free zone but it's an arms-free zone as far as your people are concerned. I don't want any of those Secret Service guys coming in with guns." So I said, "Okay, right, we'll work it out". Going to one of the meetings an agent had a bulge under his jacket. Just as we were getting into an elevator Monduzzi was somehow able to press the button and the door closed locking out the Secret Service guy who had to run up three floors of stairs to get to him. Other agents were there, and after all we were inside the fortress Vatican Palace. No terrorists up there. Monduzzi was a tough one but we organized the visit.

President Bush had the White House guys work on his Vatican visit schedule for him. They said to me, "The President is going to meet with the Pope for an hour and fifteen minutes." That would be seven o'clock and at 8:15 we break. Then there is, of course, the motorcade and the helicopters up and then the President goes to dinner with the president of Italy; that's the way it is going to be." I said, "Well, the problem is that we don't actually decide on when to terminate the meeting; the Pope decides. We need to have some kind of plan in case the meeting doesn't go an hour and fifteen minutes." "Nope," the advance guy said, "that's it, and we aren't going to negotiate." So, anyway, I was working with Monduzzi, the Pope's chief of staff, on that. He said, "We'll see." I was worried; so I contacted a friend of mine – an Archbishop – who had the keys to the Sistine Chapel. The President's meeting with the Pope began without a flaw. Just the two of them. We were outside that library in a meeting of Jim Baker, the Secretary of State, Brent Scowcroft, National Security Advisor, Archbishops Sodano and Tauran, our

Ambassador and me. We are addressing the world issues. We were doing Lebanon; we were doing the Middle East, Central America and all. Forty-five minutes into the meeting, not an hour and fifteen minutes as the White House had insisted, the Pope presses this little button under his desk. When the Pope presses the button the doors fly open and the meeting is over. So there he is, there's the president out of the meeting.

We then greeted U.S. residents of the Vatican and U.S. seminarians at the North American College, and then President Bush said, "Why we don't get a cappuccino". Well, how are you going to do that? You can't. The motorcade is not ready for twenty minutes or so and what? Luckily, the Swiss Guards had the phone I needed and I was able to call the archbishop. He was ready. "I've got the keys." So I asked the president and his people near where we were standing (and would have been standing for twenty minutes) about where he might want to go. I said, "Mr. President, have you seen the Sistine Chapel?" "Oh no, Barbara gets to see everything I haven't seen…" "Well, let's go." The elevator was ready and there we were, Baker, Scowcroft, Sununu, Barbara and the President all walking around gawking at this marvelous Sistine Chapel all by themselves. Then the president went up to the Pauline Chapel and to where I was able to show him where the Pope does that speech, *Urbi et Orbi*, from the balcony looking out over the piazza and all the way down Conciliazione to the Tiber River. The president looked at that and made a comment on how it gives one a feeling of power and awe. Anyway, it was a great time, and the kind of thing that just happens. With preparation.

*Q: Did you find that the politics of the Catholic Church in the States I guess they wouldn't interfere because basically the bishops were on the side of the Bush's.*

CREAGAN: Yeah, except for Cuba at the very least. The embargo or what the Cubans and Brazilians called the blockade was hurting Cubans, and hurting good Catholic Cubans in a human rights way and not being effective against Castro. So there would have been certainly a difference there. The Bush policy, like every president's policy after the sixties – was overly influenced by the small group of Floridians who came out of Cuba – some of them even related to Fidel Castro. The bishops were Vatican as well as U.S. citizens. We told New York's archbishop that we could not provide protection if he traveled to Lebanon as well as Cuba. We discouraged his travel. We didn't have diplomatic relations in one and the other was in a state of turmoil. Our embassy had been bombed twice. So the archbishop told me, "Well, I'm going to Lebanon, but I'm not traveling on my U.S. passport anyway. I have this Vatican passport as I am a Vatican diplomat." So forget it in terms of the protection. Oh, it wouldn't have changed things, if anything happened to him.

*Q: No.*

CREAGAN: The U.S. government would have hell to pay if the bishop were hurt. But just interesting that the bishops also would carry a Vatican diplomatic passport. There were differences in policy on Central America in the 1980's but by 1990 there was some convergence on negotiations to end civil wars. By the end of the Cold War everybody was pretty much on the same sheet of music.

*Q: Noriega in Panama – did that raise any particular problem in the Vatican?*

CREAGAN: Well, yeah it was really interesting spending Christmas day with the archbishop who was the foreign minister; I enjoyed his Dubonnet and we discussed the possible outcomes of the Noriega case. They were trying on the one hand to reassure us that Noriega was not going to create or lead any movement in the sense that he was not going to be able to be in contact with anybody (there were rumors of guerillas in favor of Noriega in Veraguas province) while he was in their embassy, but they were really adamant that they were not going to turn him over to us. That was in contention as principle for some time. The foreign minister made so clear that we, the United States, were the occupying power. As such they could not turn over Noriega – but they also recognized that he was a bad guy. That was maybe the only invasion where we ended up with 90 percent of the people in favor – after it all worked out. But anyway, the Vatican view was that their embassy had to provide the traditional diplomatic protection, and that a foreign power could not go in and get him. They considered the U.S. technically in violation of international law even though they understood where we were coming from and that he was a really bad actor.

Now I also heard that one of the things that their ambassador should have learned in the diplomatic academy was "don't open your door". Once he let Noriega in, he had to proceed under strict rules.

*Q: Yeah, well we had that problem sometimes.*

CREAGAN: Yeah, exactly.

*Q: Did you ever hear any stories about Cardinal Mindszenty?*

CREAGAN: Oh yes.

*Q: It was all over by that time but …*

CREAGAN: But the guy who was in charge of the Vatican opening to the East under Paul VI was Agostino Casaroli. He was an archbishop then and in charge of Public Relations with States. I remember talking with him about Mindszenty, then living in the U.S. Legation in Budapest, being a very difficult guy to deal with. Casaroli led the Vatican policy of "Opening to the East ". What we called détente, right?

*Q: Yeah.*

CREAGAN: It was important that there be this contact with the East, but Casaroli said that Mindszenty never forgave him for it. By the way, I understand the U.S. Embassy people were really relieved when Mindszenty finally left Hungary, because he was a difficult guest.

*Q: From all accounts I think he was.*

CREAGAN: Cardinal Casaroli told me that Mindszenty was probably up there in heaven wagging his finger at him and, like Dante, putting him in hell. Casaroli said that Mindszenty never did forgive him for Vatican *Ostpolitik*.

*Q: Did you find any of the non-American hierarchy there quite well-tuned into American politics and at a certain point kind of shrug their shoulders and say well you know…?*

CREAGAN: Yeah, well certainly on the Italian side you found every point of view but many who were critical of the Reagan administration, because they would have been more on the Social Democratic side. I'm trying to think of other countries' hierarchies there…you had the diplomats in the embassies, of course, you dealt with the Egyptian embassy a lot, and of course the UK, the Irish and the Canadian and the Germans and the Italians – number one because they were the host, if you will. The Italian embassy to the Holy See was and is a very important one. The Iranian ambassador wouldn't shake hands. I found that the leadership in *Cor Unum* (I call it the Vatican AID) with a French Cardinal and an Irish Assistant were very collaborative. The Irishman was outspoken about U.S. and politics. Of course, if you are Irish you are kind of brothers who speak plainly. We had a lot of contact, of course, with the U.S. hierarchy. A lot of those guys were on the conservative side of the spectrum I must say; and that group was on the rise.

*Q: Jim, you are an old Italian hand talking about the thing – did you keep an eye on whether the Catholic Church was messing around in what we would call Italian politics or not?*

CREAGAN: Yeah, of course, that had been such a close relationship. What had happened at the top of the Holy See when I was there was the fact of a strong pope who was a Pole. The Italians would say "never again", but then they got a German for pope and now an Argentine. That is the end of a many centuries-long run of Italians. So, the Pope is Polish and the Deputy Foreign Minister, with whom I worked a lot, was a Frenchman. Powerful leaders in other "ministries" were Slovak, French, German and even American. The Curia was still heavily Italian but power from the top was shifting. Prior to that, Italians had been Popes and Catholic Italians (Christian Democrats) were running Italy. Pope Paul VI had been intimately involved with Italian politics and his predecessor even more so. Paul VI had been Archbishop of Milan. Then there was the Vatican bank, which had difficult issues and Italians in effect running it — not always in a transparent manner. The major party, the Christian Democrats, was very, very close to the church and they paid attention to the mutual support. That changed with John Paul and on the Italian side, following scandals, the Christian Democrats lost power.

*Q: In your chats, as almost an aside, were the movers and shakers in the Catholic Church concerned, as many people are, with the change – in particularly Europe – where there are some that say basically Europe is going through a post-Christianity stage? As we know you go to a Catholic Church almost anywhere in Italy and you find all the men sitting outside smoking while the women are going to church.*

CREAGAN: Right. Yeah that certainly was the phenomenon that already had taken hold. Of course the churches maintained the income tax designation so that a percentage of income tax (I paid Italian tax and I remember the Church check off) goes automatically to the Church. It doesn't matter if you are in the church or not. At least they were getting supported. But there are a couple of other things going on as there was a lot of activity in groups like Saint'Egidio and *azione cattolica* (two millions of members in the 1950's). Lay people and youth were involved in everything, including soup kitchens for refugees. So they felt very good they were doing things like food banks even for illegal immigrants. Churches where these groups were involved were full while the neighborhood churches were pretty empty. The new groups were what I would call Social Democrat-Catholic.

The European crisis, if you will, was not yet evident. Take a place like Poland. Everybody was Catholic and participating and going to Church. It was also a patriotic act against the Soviets' domination. So when I was there, there was no "post-Christianity" crisis. In Eastern or Central Europe it was quite the opposite. I'm talking about the late eighties and early nineties.

*Q: Was liberation theology a topic of conversation or concern?*

CREAGAN: Not concern, but the Pope was really tough on that because of where he came from I guess. His own experience was of a distorted state using "Marxism" as a tool of control. There was a real clarity. You could have what they called "preference for the poor", but when it came with a suggestion that Marxist change would be exacted with violence, then no. There was no endorsement of the Sandinistas. The Pope spoke very clearly and with authority. So, not a lot of discussion on that.

I remember when I left the Vatican assignment in January '91 it was to go to Sao Paulo as Consul General. I arrived just before Gulf War I, and the Consulate was receiving bomb threats every day. I addressed that by instituting thorough checks of all vehicles, from consulate, banks or whomever. That helped but was not as definitive as the British Consul General, who simply closed the consulate and changed the telephone number. No more threats. Concerning liberation theology, the Archbishop Cardinal of Sao Paulo was on the scale of support for liberation theology. Dom Cardinal Evaristo Arns exercised the option for the poor. He was a wonderful man, but not a favorite of the Holy See.

*Q: I'm not sure if I've got the right name, Opus Dei…*

CREAGAN: *Opus Dei*, yeah.

*Q: …because that's been used in books now it's been sort of like the CIA or the KGB or something like that. Did that every come across you at that time?*

CREAGAN: There were always comments like, is this guy *Opus Dei* – or that one. The head of the Vatican press office was a civilian, not clergy. Joachim Navarro -Valls was

close to the Pope and *Opus Dei*. The Pope was very supportive of the very conservative *Opus Dei* group. The leader was a Spaniard like Navarro-Valls, who spent time with him in Spain. He was Josemaria Escriva de Balaguer and has been canonized a saint. John Paul II probably was quite partial to *Opus Dei* and this other newer group, the Legionaries of Christ. The Leader, a Mexican named Maciel, turned out to be a fraudulent character and sexual abuser.

*Q: I never heard of that. What is that?*

CREAGAN: This is a very conservative group, whose leader was charismatic. Maciel organized and recruited lots of young people, priests and others. The Pope very much liked him and was very supportive. It turned out that Maciel had children and preyed on young men as well. None of that, of course, has anything to do with our foreign policies. Speaking of policy, we had three embassies in Rome. There can be confusion. Some see an overlap of function. Operation Just Cause and invasion of Panama resulted in the Panamanian caudillo, General Manuel Noriega, seeking asylum in the Vatican embassy. Peter Secchia was our U.S. Ambassador to Italy. He went to Midnight Mass the night Noriega took refuge. I saw Pete after Mass. Ambassador Secchia told me that he was ready to take on the case, as he was the senior American official in Rome. I said that "No, Pete, it has nothing to do with you." This was clearly a U.S./Holy See issue and did not involve Italy or our Embassy to Italy.

*Q: Well I couldn't help but do that. I mean we are talking about bureaucracies and mine is bigger than yours and that sort of thing.*

CREAGAN: That's right, yeah. Oh, and then sometimes ambassadors think, well the president is over here at the residence, Villa Taverna, over here for the Italian thing. Then he is going to see the Pope I am going with him. "Well, no you're not." The ambassador to Italy does not ride over with the president or even in the motorcade to see the Pope because that's another country. You know how it goes. Then I remember there was a fight by one of the ambassadors when Reagan was coming in (when he was no longer president). President Bush was president, this is '89 and Reagan was coming to Rome and coming to see the Pope. Clearly the Vatican was hosting him. But there was a dispute about who receives him at the U.S. military airport, Ciampino, and so it was if you're going I'm not going or I'm going even if you go, well then I'm not going…these guys would fight in a comical way.

We had a third embassy to the UN organizations, the Food and Agricultural Organization, FAO. They pretty much stayed out of the way in the years I was there. Then later we had this wonderful George McGovern with us in Rome as ambassador to UN organizations. It was a learning experience for the U.S. Embassy to Italy when the Vatican Embassy was created.

*Q: Well I think this is probably a good place to stop.*

CREAGAN: Okay, I know there is a lot of church stuff but actually…

*Q: Well the church stuff is particularly interesting with you sitting there in a place. I'm looking upon this collection as a historical collection and not just as diplomacy collection.*

CREAGAN: Right, well we stayed out of Italian politics, although you know the Vatican playing with Italy in its politics is really true; it's deep and historical. But I think by the '80s and '90s you had the loosening of that very close tie; you had a Polish Pope for one thing.

*Q: One further thing you just said that suddenly came to me. What about papal finances? You know this hit the headlines from time to time – how stood it during your time?*

CREAGAN: Well, if you think about it in terms of our banks, it is not much money. We are talking hundreds of millions in revenue and the same in expenses. The finances were in the red, sometimes in tens of millions of dollars. Again, that is not much in our terms. The Pope's non-spiritual strengths were clear in the field of international relations and human rights and freedoms. He needed somebody to take care of the finances. A solution was to get this American Cardinal, Szoka was his name, He was the archbishop of Detroit — a Detroit that worked. Szoka came in to straighten out Vatican finances. He turned things around, because he put in good old American accounting methods. I think he got advisors from this company and that company. The auto companies were doing well, and had experts. Anyway, he got the budget and finances back in order. The Pope thought the Americans would fix it and the Americans fixed it.

The bank was a different thing. Officially in charge was Paul Marcinkus, an archbishop out of Cicero, Illinois. Paul was a great guy, he was just a friend of everybody, from George Steinbrenner to Lee Iacocca. But the Vatican bank got into some real problems, involving an Italian bank called Banco Ambrosiano. The bank had failed and there was plenty of fraud, said to involve billions. The head of that bank, Roberto Calvi, ended up hanging himself or being hung under Black Friars Bridge in London. The IOR or Vatican bank somehow allowed its "letter of credit" to be used to guarantee loans in Panama, and Paul Marcinkus probably signed off on them. He took responsibility for being a "lousy banker", but not a crook. The Italians indicted him. But the Holy See, being sovereign, did not turn him over to Italy. In any case, the bank looked bad. Marcinkus, who was my friend, said that he didn't even pass Econ 101 in college, and the Curia trusted Italian bankers to really run things. He told me that the Italians were not happy about his trying to put American controls into effect and to avoid the practice of changing dollars and other currencies which came to the bank as contributions for missions into lire and then into the currency to be used in missions in Africa or Latin America. The Italian banks were getting an exchange rate cut as the currency went into lire and then out again. Marcinkus said that the Italians were out to get him because he was trying to cut the Italian banking system out of the equation. Just go dollars to *soles* or *cruzeiros* or something like that. He was not saying it in a paranoid way, just the hypothesis as he saw it. Whether or not there was a conspiracy, Marcinkus became a fall guy for all the shady things that were going on, also between Bank Ambrosiano and Vatican Bank. When

Marcinkus was indicted, he couldn't leave the Vatican to go play golf or anything. He missed the golf. Paul appears in some of those crazy semi-novels or expose's about the alleged murder of Pope John Paul I, who only lived thirty days or so as Pope. Marcinkus is written as "lurking" outside the Vatican Bank at six a.m. How suspicious. Actually, Marcinkus kept American, not Italian hours, so 6:00 am near the office was not an unusual thing for an American. Pope Francis is still working on bank transparency and all that. He brought in a good German banker.

*Q: Well did we have an economic officer who looked at this or this just wasn't part of our portfolio?*

CREAGAN: Right. Not a part of the portfolio. It was a Vatican internal issue, and we might have done a report or several on it. But it wasn't our issue in terms of state to state involvement. Now it could be a very deep issue for U.S. dioceses, for U.S. archbishops or the bishop's conference here in the U.S. but they would take it up with the Holy See. That is probably how you got the Detroit Archbishop Cardinal in charge of Vatican finances.

*Q: You were, in a way, fortunate that you didn't have to deal with the priest's pedophilia problem.*

CREAGAN: Oh boy, I'll say, and I don't have any idea what they did at the embassy at the time the issue arose with furor.

*Q: It couldn't help and I won't say the issue but it certainly is a subject of great interest.*

CREAGAN: Oh yeah, that's really awful and had a great impact in the church but yeah. We were there before all that.

*Q: Was there even a cloud in the sky about this?*

CREAGAN: Not that I remember, not that I remember. It was the end of the eighties. Issues were Cold War and all that.

*Q: One last question Jim. When you were there what was happening with Yugoslavia?*

CREAGAN: Yugoslavia was about to come apart and, of course Tito had died and Milosevic was in charge of what was seen as Greater Serbia. So the Vatican worked closely with those who were looking for independence and had a relationship with the Holy See. Croatia and Slovenia, both with significant Catholic population, were going to break away. We were critical of that. The Holy See and Germany were the first to recognize Slovenia and Croatia as independent states. Slovenia got out without much fighting but Croatia was, of course, part of that whole bloody breakup involving Bosnia. The Vatican's primary interests were in Croatia and Slovenia – and Bosnia as well. It wanted peace and justice and independence for those peoples. Then later the Pope and the Holy See were deeply concerned with the fate of the Muslims in Bosnia, who were being killed by the Serbians who were Orthodox. And so religion was a central part of the

bloody struggle. The Vatican was very tough in its assertions, and the Pope called for peace but with justice. The Vatican saw the need for intervention of the kind that only occurred in 1995 after massacres at Srebrenica. We considered that the Holy See was too quick to recognize Slovenia and Croatia and that recognition accelerated the breakup. The Vatican considered that Europe and the U.S. moved far too slowly in intervening to protect the people of Bosnia. As the breakup approached, I remember late 1980s meetings with bishops from the area. I was having dinner with two bishops from the area, a Croat and a Serb. They were arguing on whether Serbo-Croatian was one language or whether they were different. It got heated, for reasons outside discussion on language alone. It was not like the Portuguese criticizing the Brazilians for use of Portuguese. The tensions in the late '80s, before things broke up, were there at every level including among the clergy.

*Q: I followed it from Washington just out of the service and all but I spent five years in Belgrade.*

CREAGAN: That's right.

*Q: I was very disturbed about the Pope and the Germans because I felt they had a hand in pushing things along.*

CREAGAN: They almost precipitated things and I know people did think that. Yeah, I thought it was too quick.

*Q: No it was a very, very difficult time on the European side.*

CREAGAN: Oh yeah. You were with Eagleburger, right; he thought that it could hold together.

*Q: Well we hoped that it would hold together but…*

CREAGAN: Yeah, yeah it just…

*Q: Larry and I took Serbian together.*

CREAGAN: Yeah, exactly.

*Q: Well Jim I think I've milked you about everything but if anything occurs to you that we didn't mention even if it's a little aside or something because I find this fascinating and we got a lot of new Catholics out there.*

CREAGAN: Right.

*Q: By the way…*

CREAGAN: By the way, speaking of Catholics and the Pope in state to state relations, when I met the Pope I would shake his hand, but not kiss the ring. I noticed that several Roman Catholic heads of state, in particular from Latin America, bent down and kissed the ring. We would never do that because we are the representatives of the United States and the Pope is the Head of State of the Holy See. One final comment on the Pope and official visits and blessings. General Vernon Walters, who had been lots of things including deputy director of the CIA, came by now and again to brief the Pope on Eastern Europe and intelligence matters in those last years of the Cold War. One time that I went with him General Walters, before talking business, asked the Pope to bless some rosaries he had in his pocket (we had bought several on the Via della Conciliazione outside St. Peters.) Walters put his hand in his pocket, but he had so many rosaries he had a hard time getting his hand out with the rosaries. Pope JP II told him not to worry; the papal blessing would go through cloth.

*Q: Oh God. Well let's take another time. I can call you next week in the afternoon.*

CREAGAN: Okay, that's fine, the only thing is I have class all day Wednesday and then I'm going to Notre Dame to hope that they beat Oklahoma. So Tuesday afternoon if we can do that.

*Q: Okay, 2:00 p.m.*

CREAGAN: Great.

*Q: I have to say every once in a while I get into religious discussion with a man I have breakfast with almost every morning is Dr. Alfred Goldberg, as you may suspect he is of Jewish background but was the chief historian for the Department of Defense; he is 95 years old right now and going strong. He raised the question of the Immaculate Conception and the Virgin Mary.*

CREAGAN: Oh, my gosh.

*Q: So that got me to the Catholic encyclopedia. I suggest some time you read that. It was 1854.*

CREAGAN: I'll read it.

*Q: So you left the Holy See when?*

CREAGAN: I left the Holy See in December of 1990. I remember it was just after the conclusion of the Mozambique cease fire – what they initially, in jest for the most part, called the "Creagan Cease Fire". They did sign that ceasefire a day or two before I left Rome and they all remembered fondly the Wild Turkey bourbon I had served on Thanksgiving. So that was about December 1. I probably left around December 3, 1990. I took a little home leave and appeared in Sao Paulo the first week of January 1991.

*Q: Can you describe Sao Paulo which amounts to basically it's always been considered equivalent to an embassy as far as its importance and all but would you explain why is it so important and then the situation there?*

CREAGAN: Okay and yeah, we probably will explain a little bit about Sao Paulo and its relationship with the embassy. You are so right that there was a lot of friction too. I remember when inspectors came down. There was often a difference on whether Sao Paulo would report directly to State or whether it should go through the embassy. This recalls for me the efforts of ConGen Milan under Tom Fina, reporting its views on the Italian Communist Party and government in opposition to the ambassador's call for one view from Italy. Sao Paulo is a city of 20 million people and the center of industry, finance and increasingly, those who run political Brazil. Of course, Brasilia is the capital, but not of the source of power. Brazil was often described as "Belindia", a combination of Belgium and India. Sao Paulo is the Belgium part. Rich in comparison. In recognition of the economic and political realities, the United States had a very big consulate general in Sao Paulo, in my time over 200 people. In terms of the different kinds of functions you'll immediately recognize that residing in Sao Paulo were the commercial minister counselor and a good-sized staff of 15 or so. Also the Labor Attaché was in Sao Paulo. That is where the unions were, headed by a very strong leader who became president of the country, Ignazio Lula da Silva.

*Q: Okay Jim, you were explaining about the importance of Sao Paulo. You'd better retrace your steps.*

CREAGAN: Yeah, okay, within Brazil terms Sao Paulo's environs there are about 20 million people which had grown ever since the introduction of coffee, so you are well back to the turn of the century when coffee came in and slavery had been abolished in 1888. And slavery was focused, a lot, on the northeast along with sugar but then coffee came in; a coffee boom that was centered on the agricultural areas of Sao Paulo and the state of Parana in the south. With slavery abolished workers had to be imported. They were found in Italy. It was the period of massive Italian migration and millions went to the U.S., Argentina – and Sao Paulo state. Then there was major immigration from Japan and they, too, became agricultural laborers. Then came industrialization and more immigrants and more wealth. That grew through the 20th century; so by the 1980's you have "Belindia". Sao Paulo had high per capita income. It was Belgium while the Northeast was the India part.

The politics of Brazil meant that more presidents and leaders were coming from the northeast, the India part. Their democracy was nicely controlled by the "colonels" as they called them. In Sao Paulo it was a little more raucous. Trade unions were important and elections contested. The presidents in that period when I was in Brazil, after the military dictatorship, were not yet coming from Sao Paulo but in the 1990's they did. If you looked at Congress you've got 60 from Sao Paulo, a huge number of Congressmen coming from Sao Paulo and all the economic energy there. So the United States and Japan and Italy and others focused on Sao Paulo and set up substantial and important consulates general there. I remember the international competition. I was proud of our

commercial operation and remember talking once with my Japanese consul general counterpart. He asked, "How are you doing in commercial?" I said, "We are great, we have fifteen people." He said, "Well that's pretty good, we have thirty people." So the Japanese government was focused on Sao Paulo where there were over one million people of Japanese origin, Brazilian citizens. They were focused in a competitive way, of course, on business. Then we had our labor attaché in Sao Paulo, again because that's where the trade unions were, big trade unions, industrial trade unions and steel and aircraft and other areas. Lula, one of the leaders, of course, went on to become the president of Brazil. So, there is the importance of a vibrant political climate. The Labor Party had Marxist roots and was proud of ties with Cuba. So that was interesting. There was a strong Social Democratic Party, which gave to Brazil its best president of the century, Fernando Henrique Cardoso. I knew him in Sao Paulo. Another party had strong links to the center/right and the mayor of Sao Paulo then was a Lebanese Brazilian, Paulo Maluf. Sao Paulo was and is home to many people of Lebanese and Middle Eastern descent. Sao Paulo was a consulate with a political section, with a labor counselor, a big commercial section and other agencies that you can imagine are important in the big city. We had the biggest consular section and I think it is still right up there at the top. Brazilians travel a lot, and to the U.S. – without visa waiver like the Europeans.

We had Marine guards — one of the few consulates then with them. There were at least ten government agencies operating in Sao Paulo, including the IRS. Some, you could say, were headquartered there. The U.S. consulate general had important things to say and do; we reported directly to Washington and not through Embassy Brasilia as other consulates would typically do. With political reports and the others, we went straight to State. I remember that this was a bone of contention quite often. Inspectors would come down and the ambassador in Brasilia would complain that Sao Paulo thinks they are independent and are reporting directly but they really need to report to the embassy and like that. Then this would be written up and the inspector would recommend that things be either as they were or be changed. I remember that Bob Sayre was inspector and wrote up that Sao Paulo, because of its importance, should be independent in some ways and should report directly to Washington with copies to Brasilia and all of that. Then, Bob became Ambassador to Brazil. As I recall he changed and pressured Sao Paulo to go thru Brasilia. Understandable. I guess that judgement depends on where you are and where you stand.

Now when I was Consul General in Sao Paulo Rick Melton was Ambassador. He was a good guy to work with, very organized, very sharp and not bombastic or controlling or anything else. His DCM, Bob Service was an old friend of mine. So I felt that we had a very good working relationship and yes, I went direct to Washington on many things, but the Ambassador and DCM trusted my judgment in doing that. My approach was that I worked for the DCM and I worked for the Ambassador. My predecessor, Myles Frechette, I think had a more fractious relationship as Myles had been an ambassador. And often the consul general in Sao Paulo had been an ambassador. Melissa Wells is another one.

*Q: Sticking to the administrative stage how did you deal with the government. Was it the city government, the state government or what?*

CREAGAN: So that would be clearer in terms of levels. In other words, I was not dealing with the president of the republic, he's up in Brasilia, the ministers of foreign affairs and the rest of the government are up in Brasilia; so that's obviously for the ambassador and for the embassy to do. I was seeing, instead, incredibly important people in the economic and political class based in Sao Paulo state or Parana. I dealt with the governor. He was probably the most important governor in all of Brazil for sure. Then I would deal with the city government or the party, the Marxist Workers Party that kept striving to get the presidency with Lula as candidate. I dealt with the Senators and congressmen from Sao Paulo who almost always spent weekends there. And I dealt with Brazil's top business leaders. I was what they call honorary president of the American Chamber of Commerce. I worked all the meetings and with the top companies, including GM, Ford, Eli Lilly, etc. I dealt with Lula, and when the ambassador would come to town I'd take him to see Lula and like that. My relationships were Sao Paulo. State government was important, and at that time it was run by confident European style Social Democrats. The important thing also in Sao Paulo is that the consul general and his consulate are dealing with major – really important business figures – of Brazil. Osiris Silva for example. He was CEO of EMBRAER, a major world aircraft company. It had been government sector, then privatized. Many of the aircraft you fly in the U.S. are made by EMBRAER. We had an interest in keeping close with them. They opened up a factory in Fort Lauderdale. The Sao Paulo American Chamber of Commerce was the most important in Brazil of course. It was, in effect, the American Chamber of Commerce of Brazil. The U.S. Consul General was the honorary president, but it wasn't just honorary. I mean I went to all the meetings and worked all the issues and there were issues on opening up the Brazil economy after years of protection and import substitution. The big hitters were on the board: I had General Motors with its 35,000 employees; Rick Wagner was CEO of GM-Brazil. Rick went from Sao Paulo to one other job and then CEO of General Motors worldwide. He got dumped in 2008 when things went bad, but General Motors is doing okay again and Rick, I'm sure, got a great golden parachute. In Sao Paulo we had as well Ford, Goodyear, Eli Lilly and all of these big American companies. We worked on issues of importance to the U.S. and to many of its companies.

The push was not just trade and tariffs; it involved other areas of Brazilian law that impacted foreign companies. Sao Paulo worked on these with the companies. The AMCHAM (American Chamber of Commerce) worked its interests with the Brazilian government. We worked together. The trade issues were directly taken up by the embassy with the ministries of government. I would go to Brasilia quite often, and the ambassador or DCM would come down to Sao Paulo.

*Q: Let's talk about your relation with the business people first.*

CREAGAN: Sure.

*Q: It's unusual for a counselor officer or anybody to really get very much involved in business affairs in a foreign country outside of making sure that they aren't picked on.*

CREAGAN: Right. Well, I guess you would say Sao Paulo at that time was different in that respect in that there were issues bigger than the problems of one company. It was about opening up the Brazilian economy, and that had to do with the tariffs and the free trade and all of that; that was something that the U.S. government pushed and, of course, that was at the time of the North American Free Trade Agreement and then the aspirations for a Free Trade Agreement of the Americas (FTAA). That did not happen, but we pushed for free trade, free trade, free trade. The Chamber of Commerce, that is these American companies, was trying to break down the barriers which were those traditional protectionist areas of Brazil. So obviously the U.S. government and U.S. business were working hand-in-hand. I wore the two hats of U.S. Consul General and honorary president of the American Chamber. Then there were the competitors like Toyota. With the Japanese we could both cooperate and compete. Other consulates in Sao Paulo were active commercially as well, including the Italians and the Canadians

*Q: Would you say they did seek you out?*

CREAGAN: For the American Chamber, yes. We had regular meetings and we worked up positions to present to government and I had discussions every weekend with the very active president of the Chamber. That position rotated and might be the GM CEO or another major company. Yes, we were active both socially and on the agenda. I spent time with the Brazilian big hitters, the guys who ran the railroads, the soybean king, the coffee barons, the ethanol sugar producers. I would be seek them out, spend time with them, find out what they were doing, what we might do together. It was an active life with business, not just the American business and the foreign business and those working in Brazil but also the Brazilians. Then there was the interaction with political and economic players from the U.S. We had a lot of visits – from Senators like Bill Bradley of New Jersey or Boren of Oklahoma to Vice President Dan Quayle and Vice President to be, Al Gore. They came to Sao Paulo for serious business – and to go to places like Iguassu Falls.

*Q: Did you get involved in the politics of coffee and all or what was the situation coffee wise at the time?*

CREAGAN: With coffee I'm not thinking of great frictions and difficulty. There were really interesting ways, new methods of preparing coffee. You know when we look at Starbucks today with the Frappuccino and all that. The Brazilian entrepreneurs found a market in Japan. They freeze dried the coffee and canned milk and sugar and found a market with Japanese schoolchildren – buying the coffee from a vending machine which mixed the ingredients on the spot. Fresh and hot or cold. We have them all over the world now, but I think the Brazilians got a jump. They had been the producers of bulk coffee but realized that profit is all in the value added. I think Japan was a new market. The Japanese then became addicted to coffee prepared that way – out of machines. By way of a footnote, the Brazilian coffee exporters in Santos told me they sent the best beans to

Italy – not surprising – and the worst beans to Portugal. I don't know what that meant and liked the "*bicas*" of coffee in Portugal. I do know that the coffee in Italy is superior.

Sugar was being used creatively to produce ethanol. The Brazilians got a jolt with the petro crisis of the 1970s and moved to get energy self-sufficiency with ethanol. They were way ahead of the U.S. and our use of corn as ethanol produced about 1/7 the energy that sugar could do. I had an all-ethanol car in Brazil. We watched it, we were interested in it, we had EPA people look at it, but the U.S. did not go for it. And we kept a tariff on the ethanol coming from Brazil to protect prices on our own sugar cane industry and to protect corn for ethanol as well. It made no economic sense but a lot of political sense.

*Q: You know for a long time Brazil seemed to be moving towards – and there is an economic term I can't think of it – but basically building everything on their own.*

CREAGAN: Oh yeah, import substitution and autarky I guess is the word; everything "made in Brazil", yeah.

*Q: What was the situation when you were there and were we doing anything about it?*

CREAGAN: By 1991-1992 they had realized that that wasn't working and they were just scrambling for some kind of economic policies that would work. So we felt that pressure on opening in the trade area could have some effect. The president of Brazil at that time was a young guy swept into office. He was sort of the original figure that gets office because of effectiveness of campaign, financing and television publicity. He was a blank, handsome kind of guy, Fernando Collor de Melo, and he had some vague policies that looked like they could be good for Brazil. However, his government was corrupt and things went bad. They never got a grip on inflation; when I was there it was running as high as thirty percent a month up toward three thousand percent a year. These were crazy inflationary spirals but great for certain bankers and rich people and those who would get the so-called "overnight rate". This was putting your money in banks overnight and pulling it out; lots of economic activity, but distortion. So on the one hand it looked like there was some opening and there was work that could be done but on the other hand all the distortion including the corruption. In fact, in 1992 this guy, young man Collor de Melo was impeached. Brazil got its economy in order because of these Sao Paulo guys, Fernando Henrique Cardoso became finance minister in '93, put in a plan based on the new currency – and they had to create a new currency the *real* – with discipline and brought the inflation down from thousands of percent to single digits. That happened after I left and the young president was impeached.

*Q: Well how about your role in helping steer our major government industrial powers in a corrupt economic situation? It's as touchy as hell.*

CREAGAN: Yeah, sometimes it works and you have very good people. I must say Sao Paulo was much better than the Northeast and had serious people working on the issues. I mean those like Osiris Silva, Fernando Henrique and Laffer. It is true that in the Sao Paulo of the later military regimes and during the Brazilian effort at import substitution,

there were a lot of strong political characters. Those included men like one ex-governor, Adhemar de Barros about whom they said "*Rouba mas Faz*". He robs but he gets it done. He got elected, and highways were built, development occurred. The government of Sao Paulo was responsible for that. A lot of money flowing, a lot of business done, and no doubt bribes paid.

By the way, my introduction to Sao Paulo was interesting. When I arrived in Sao Paulo the first week of January 1991, there were daily bomb threats as it was the run up to the First Gulf War. It was a gathering storm there which became Desert Storm and the attacks to drive Saddam Hussein out of Kuwait. Sao Paulo is a city with a large Arab and a large Jewish population. So, in that atmosphere of imminent war, tensions were high. The America Consulate General was a point of reference for threats and all that. As bomb threats were received, the consulate closed and its people spilled out into the streets. I had to make some quick decisions to button things up, as it was kind of chaotic. We were in a building with other tenants — a bank and other stuff. There was a parking garage in the basement. I had to make sure the Marines were up to strength and I got the RSO down to supervise. Then we needed to get approval of other tenants to inspect their vehicles – and ours of course – before any car went into the garage. I set up inspections like we did in Portugal with guards looking under the hood, in the trunk and under the car to ensure no bomb. Once we did that we could be pretty sure that most idle bomb threats had no credibility, and we stayed in the consulate at work. It also reduced the fun of any prankster who might be calling in threats and enjoying the evacuations. We buttoned up and the Marines tightened up and it worked. Bomb threats were going to the UK consulate and the French consulate as well. The UK Consul General told me that they just cut off their phones. That left nobody to call and threaten. They also closed the consulate and worked from home. Not an option for us. As I noted above, Sao Paulo was a city of 600,000 or so Lebanese and Middle East residents and a very large Jewish community as well. Also, over a million Japanese and two million of Italian descent. With 20 million people it had everything. Concerning terrorism, there had been a long-standing issue of possible terrorists, perhaps Hezbollah and others hanging out in the so-called triangle of Paraguay/Argentina/Brazil. It was a rather loose and unregulated border. So there was concern about that in Sao Paulo at least in that first half of 1991. And then in 1992 the Israeli Embassy in Buenos Aires was bombed with considerable loss of life. It was thought that Iran, Islamic jihad and Hezbollah were involved. That border zone was thought with more reason to be an area to watch.

Concerning narcotics, we had the Drug Enforcement Administration involved and tracking the transport of cocaine thru Brazil and out from Sao Paulo to the U.S. and Europe. In 1991 the Brazilians still thought they were somewhat immune from the worst effects of narco trafficking which came from Colombia through the western part of my consular district, the Mato Grosso over to Sao Paulo and then out to Europe and the U.S. It was an issue we were working on. I had many conversations with the federal police chief, Romeu Tuma, about the simple fact that transport of drugs always morphs into drug use by the transporting country. Just think of payment for shipments in the product, cocaine itself, and you get an idea of how it can spread.

*Q: Jim? Talking about the mobs Iraq …*

CREAGAN: Pardon me?

*Q: …with this horrible Saddam Hussein and certainly not the most popular figure invades a country and why would mobs come out, and I take it, in support of him?*

CREAGAN: Yeah okay. Well, there were not mobs out of control but demonstrations against the U.S. and Israel rather than support for Saddam. The theme might be that the imperialist U.S., in league with Israel, with the Jews, is going after an Arab leader – Saddam Hussein. I don't think that had great hold over people, because he was such an evil dictator and he had just invaded, of course, an Arab country (Kuwait) and was threatening Saudi Arabia and so forth. But there was enough emotion that some groups could get worked up. Enough for the Jewish Club to be worried about maybe some act of sabotage or a bomb. There is always somebody, either a terrorist or a want-to-be terrorist willing to threaten bombs. It had to be taken seriously. Now we never had a bomb in the Consulate Sao Paulo but you had to take seriously those threats. Then, I wanted to make sure that somebody wasn't getting their kicks out of having all the people spilling out of the consulate every day. Not good. But we were not concerned about hostile mobs.

*Q: Were there elements at that time of al-Qaeda running around?*

CREAGAN: Well there was this concern of the lawless area, the triangle down there in Paraguay, southern Brazil and Argentina border. There had been the bombing of the Jewish Center in Buenos Aires and it was felt that this is Hezbollah or then later Hamas or these kinds of groups – maybe the Iranians evolved but none of it so clear. Al-Qaeda was kind of really not yet a factor over there in Brazil and the Americas, but Hezbollah and maybe some Iranians were a possible source of trouble. And anti-Israel bombing in Buenos Aires and that kind of thing was real. If it happened in Buenos Aires then it could happen in Sao Paulo. We have these big communities.

*Q: What were your relations with Rio?*

CREAGAN: With Rio? With the consulate you mean?

*Q: Yeah and the relationship between Rio and Sao Paulo. Was Rio the place where everybody with money hopped off to for the weekend or something or what?*

CREAGAN: Yeah you are right. Sao Paulo is business. Rio was the place to go for recreation and fun. Of course it was a serious consulate with business and political and cultural activities but….Copacabana and Ipanema, too. I would try to go to Rio a few times a year. We had friends there who were the economic officers and then there was my counterpart, the Consul General so we'd stay there in Rio. We went to the *Carnaval* and sat in the nice box where the governor and some foreign office people were. Congressmen were wary of a CODEL to Rio as it would appear to be what it was – a break and vacation. So, they came to Sao Paulo. Nobody came to Sao Paulo to play.

The world-wide environmental conference was in Rio. It was "Rio '92". President Bush came as did Fidel and many of the world's leaders. Nobody considered a "Sao Paulo '92" meeting. Actually, I took Al Gore (Senator and running for VP) to the coastal jungle area (Mata Atlantica) of Sao Paulo/Parana state. He wanted to demonstrate his environmental credentials far from the madding crowd in Rio.

In terms of a business relationship with the U.S. Consulate General –Rio, there was some business between the consulates, but we would more likely meet in Brasilia to talk over things rather than my going to Rio de Janeiro. We would coordinate up in Brasilia with Rick Melton, the Ambassador, and with DCM Bob Service and the others of the Country Team. For me Rio was the best for *Carnaval*. I did not like *Carnaval* in Sao Paulo. As for beaches, we did have those in Sao Paulo state. Our consulate people went down to the beaches — about forty miles away. It was important to get away from Sao Paulo. Sao Paulo and Mexico City were at that time possibly the world's most polluted cities. Sao Paulo ultimately had an impact on my sense of smell, assaulted as it was by the heavy odor of human waste coming from the Tiete River.

By the way, the city also had serious security problems, so we all had to think about that. I do not mean political insecurity, but insecurity because of the high level of crime. So I always had to go around in a bullet proof car, and a Sao Paulo policeman was assigned to me at all times. At our house we had guards, and they were in a bullet proof booth in the front of the house. Guards were up on the wall for lookout. It was a criminal problem. The Japanese consul general some years before me had been kidnapped and ransomed; so neither the Brazilian nor U.S. Government wanted to deal with that kind of case.

*Q: Well how did you and Gwyn find the social life?*

CREAGAN: Very much official social life. We had a good USIA operation, and people came through SP. John Updike and the Philadelphia Orchestra and jazz artists. Much of our official social life was out at my residence. We had staff and a cook and so forth, although Gwyn seemed to do all of the great cooking. And she made sure that things went well. We had a lot of events at the house. We had a lot of visitors. It might be a CODEL with senators like Bill Bradley. We would do a luncheon for political and business leaders, many of them of national level, future or past presidents or foreign ministers. Then I would have business people there, a luncheon or a dinner for thirty or forty people from the AMCHAM or American Society or other. We lived in the residence which was probably fifteen or twenty miles from the Consulate General. And there was always incredibly bad traffic. Near us was an area called *Chacraflor*. It was gated and guarded. That is where the executives lived. We didn't live in there, as we had our own U.S. government residence but the General Motors and Ford and others lived there. On Sundays we played tennis or jogged with the business people – Brazilian or U.S. The Brazilians are very much outdoor people, so we did something in the area of sports on Saturday/Sunday. Whatever we did, it was at least semi-official social, political or economic. In Sao Paulo we often did the official lunch; so I'd have lunch with a labor leader or a political leader or the mayor or a Consul from Italy, Canada or wherever.

*Q: How stood things on the political side – did we have concerns about contacts with the extreme left or not?*

CREAGAN: Probably that had changed from earlier years. People who had been terrorists in the '60s and even involved in kidnapping the U.S. ambassador, Burke Elbrick, were politically rehabilitated after the demise of the military government during the mid-'80s. Things were changing fast, and the left was quite accepted in the political scene. The Labor Party of trade union leader Lula was becoming very powerful. Of course, he became President of Brazil. And now there is a president, Dilma Rousseff, who was in the terrorist ranks. As for the United States we say we never deal with somebody who's a terrorist or who actually kidnapped an ambassador. But times change.

*Q: Yeah.*

CREAGAN: The time I'm talking about, 1990- 92 when we were in Sao Paulo, we certainly had no problem meeting with politicians and others from the entire viable political spectrum. The business elite feared Lula at that time (they later grew to love him) but met with him and his people all the time. So did we.

*Q: You didn't find the situation that you were so used to in Italy when you had to treat the Communists with very kid gloves.*

CREAGAN: Not at all. I remember even later in 1994 in Rome, inviting the Communist Party leader to July 4 was a big deal and with imagined repercussions from Washington and in the Italian political scene. I dealt with that. But in Sao Paulo, I don't remember having that kind of sensitivity. The military governments had really focused for a time on Communists and supposed Communists or Socialists or even Social Democrats. But those days were gone and the Brazilian attitude kind of fudged ideology. No grand debates like in Italy.

*Q: Well in a way we were fortunate.*

CREAGAN: I was telling you how we had security issues. I mean I had the Sao Paulo cops with me, the residence was guarded and all that, but the danger was not really political. It was gangs or violent individuals.

*Q: I'm told that the wealthy elite often helicoptered to work.*

CREAGAN: Correct. That could be security and it was also Sao Paulo and traffic gridlock. It became close to impossible to move around. From 10 or 15 miles away it could take an hour to get home. I was in the backseat working and using whatever means to communicate. We didn't yet have Blackberry or whatever, though car radio was useful. Then the pollution was really bad, and it was a very crowded city so the rich developed a helicopter approach.

*Q: Were we, sort of the powers that be, in the United States worried about the Brazilian menace commercially or not?*

CREAGAN: You know we were interested in opening up Brazil so we had been really quite concerned with intellectual property being stolen /copied especially with Microsoft and computer technology. There was a considerable change from the mid 1980's when I was in Brasilia and the 1990's when I was in Sao Paulo. Brazil was an export powerhouse and engaging in much more trade. Then, of course, we supported U.S. companies. General Motors was exporting from Brazil in addition to the domestic market. It hadn't yet, of course, gone through the coming prosperity and building of a much larger middle class. In the first decade of this century up until the Chinese slowdown Brazil and the Brazilians were doing well. When we talked about the BRIC's it was Brazilian economic expansion we were underlining. On visas, for example, there was great growth in travel to the U.S. by Brazilians with money to spend. Back when I was there in 1990-'91 there was the traveling class, but also attempted visa fraud on grand scale.

*Q: Jim? Hold on for just one second. How stood things from your particular observation with Argentina?*

CREAGAN: Yeah a relationship sort of friendly I guess. Well first you had the competition. I mean there were both of them with military governments but they were military governments in competition. Both were working on nuclear programs. In energy, the Germans had provided the Brazilians with nuclear energy. At a certain point the Brazilians and Argentines decided to stop the clandestine programs and to join the UN in declaring the South Atlantic a nuclear-free zone. Brazil and Argentina had always been competitive but by the time we are talking about, Brazil had moved well out ahead. Brazil, of course, kept growing and so there was no comparison in terms of the country and the society and the populace and the ability to do things. By the time we are talking about, 1990-'91, the Brazilians had put up this incredible Itaipu Dam down in the Argentine- Paraguay-Brazilian border. It was mostly a Brazilian project, a massive project and made our Hoover Dam and our installations look small. There were 12.6 million kilowatts produced. Man, I'd take Senators there, like Boren from Oklahoma, and Bradley from Jersey, and from other states. They were just blown away by the power of that hydroelectric dam.

The Argentines and Brazilians were together in a southern approximation of NAFTA called MERCOSUR. One problem was that the markets were not as complementary as Mexico /U.S./Canada. The area included Uruguay and Paraguay as well, but basically it was Brazil and Argentina. When it was suitable for producing automobiles in Argentina for that market then it could be unfavorable to produce them in Brazil; so you had that kind of competition and with U.S. companies being a part of that and with operations in both countries. Brazil boomed in agriculture those years — crops like soybeans. Argentina always had cattle. The relationship was good enough.

*Q: There wasn't an intense feeling of rivalry and dislike?*

CREAGAN: Well on the personal level you have some of that. The Argentines, for example, in the summer, January or February, would come up to the Brazilian beaches and act superior or obnoxious. I think all pretty manageable stuff.

*Q: What about your observations on relations between the, well, racial relations in Brazil?*

CREAGAN: Yeah, that's interesting because so much has changed. Brazilians assumed that there was not racism like we experienced in the U.S. Brazilians had a few set sayings. One is that "Money whitens" which gives you an idea. The power couple for a time was Pele, the famous soccer player and Xuxa, a blonde star of a children's show. So, that kind of played into the idea that Brazil was not racist. Then another phrase was that Brazilians are the "Cosmic Race" with mixes of all, from Portuguese to Japanese to Italian to descendants of African slaves and to Germans and Russians and all the rest. And much of that is true, although the Brazilians were far more racist than they imagined. A black power movement had some results in Congress and society. I remember meeting with Benedita da Silva the first black congressman. The Brazilians followed the different shades in Black and White, and in the "accepted" societal context, all was good. It is true that, unlike the U.S. at the time, in Brazil friction was not evident on the sole basis of race. There was a feeling that poor was poor and rural poor was a mix of all. Lula da Silva, one of many children in his family and a shoeshine boy – then steelworker — and then President – was an example of poor struggling up. There was little racist element in that struggle of the poor of all shades struggling to improve their lot. I know my oldest son used to travel everywhere by bus and lived off the land so to speak for a time in Brazil. He told me he never felt racial tension in Brazil though he was blond and "white", and mixed it up with all. So you had poor White and poor Black and they understood one another. I never spent much time in Washington, but racial tension was palpable in the '70s and '80s. This didn't seem to be the same in Brazil; so that was kind of a reality. Call it a false reality to some extent, since they have discovered that they are indeed racist with lots of associated problems and with a not so cosmic race as time goes by. Blacks overall do tend to be the poorest, although there are so many poor Whites from Portuguese and other European or Asian descent in the Northeast and elsewhere. To finish, if you lived in Sao Paulo, you could well be a descendant of Italians or Portuguese or Japanese or Lebanese. All were proud to be of their origin and Brazilian too. They found their niche. In the Northeast – Salvador, Bahia or Recife – many more people were descendants of slaves from Africa.

*Q: Well did you get involved at all in sort of the worldwide concern over the Amazon or was this just beyond your reach?*

CREAGAN: Sao Paulo was a center of all the organizations; so you had the local and growing environmental organizations. There was Nature Conservancy, for example, and important local organizations, some focused on saving the Mata Atlantica, a coastal rain forest in the states of Rio, Sao Paulo and Parana. Brazilian NGO's were pushing their government to make changes and reduce destruction of the Amazon rain forest as well as

damage to the Pantanal, a massive swamp and jungle area larger than Texas. They worked to stop the migration of peoples from the South without land (*sem terras*) to the North to occupy land and burn the jungle. You saw many of these organizations demonstrating at an alternative Rio '92 in that city. It was a parallel to the Rio Summit which brought world leaders to Rio to focus on the issues of the environment and on pollution, and what turned into the Kyoto Protocol on curbing carbon emissions. The world was in attendance at Rio, including President and Barbara Bush, Fidel Castro and most of the others. I got very personally involved as I escorted our own Senator named Al Gore to the coast where, accompanied by Brazilian governmental and non-government environmental organizations, we observed the rainforest. It is the remains of the great Atlantic forest of Brazil of which only five percent or so remains. That forest is extremely rich in many species and certain kinds of monkeys and much else. Anyway, Gore was a Senator who was very much involved with environmental causes. In the summer of 1992 he was at the point of being Clinton's running mate. He went to the Earth Summit with that in mind. I took Gore and Senator Paul Wellstone of Minnesota, now deceased. He was in an airplane accident. We spent a couple of days in the jungle, hosted by the Brazilians, including the Governor of Parana. That was very interesting. Gore brought his own TV crews, no doubt for the coming campaign. A point is that Brazilian organizations were active and important and getting some things done. Also the U.S. groups. Nature Conservancy had a U.S. representative in Sao Paulo. I remember that Alex Watson, who was Ambassador to Brazil, after his retirement worked for Nature Conservancy. He would have had a special interest in preservation of the Brazilian natural environment. Sao Paulo was always a center of action.

*Q: Did you find resentment within Brazilian ranks about Americans pushing this sort of thing? In a way we kind of did to our west what we were telling them not to do.*

CREAGAN: Right. Well, Brazil hosted the Rio '92 so took ownership of the issue. There was a lot of government sensitivity, especially in the time of the military governments until the mid-1980's, in other countries "meddling" in Amazon issues. The Brazilian stance was not only that the Amazon is Brazilian but that they needed to get a lot more Brazilian presence, including military, up on the borders to prevent bad stuff –from drugs or other developments from bleeding over from Colombia and Peru. Concerning action on what has become to be known as global warming and carbon emissions, Brazil's posture was like China's of that period. As developing economies they could not be put to standards of the U.S., Japan and Europe. At the same time Brazil had lots and lots of environmental organizations who had the real stomach to take to the streets. They had an alternative unofficial summit in which they pushed even further for environmental controls and so forth. So as I think about the people I worked with in Sao Paulo (Roberto Klabin's NGO comes to mind), they were trying to do things with Nature Conservancy and others.

*Q: Were you able to do anything with that I mean giving aid and all?*

CREAGAN: Well, with Brazil we really didn't have much to give at all. AID had just a little bit of money – for "family planning" education and effort. Then some help on the HIV/AIDS front.

*Q: This brings up another subject. How stood we on birth control methods and all?*

CREAGAN: Now in Sao Paulo I didn't do anything. I don't remember that as an issue, certainly not in the negative sense that existed in Mexico in the late 1970's where the U.S. was even accused of racist efforts to reduce the Mexican population. Populist presidents of the PRI attacked the U.S. in any birth control initiative. "In population there is strength" was an attitude. I remember back in the mid-eighties in Brasilia, where we had one AID officer, and family planning was an area that could be worked, especially when it became an effort to fight the HIV/AIDS crisis. I remember one discussion in the embassy. The AID chief was quite disturbed that a shipment of condoms was hijacked or stolen at the Rio airport. I seem to remember that it was "millions" of them. They were to be distributed to local organizations before the Carnival for obvious reasons. So the condoms were ripped off at the airport and our guy was reporting the disaster. The Ambassador took the news with great calm and said, "Well, what are they for? Don't you think they will get used? We would have given them away anyway."

*Q: What you are really talking about is a country that very much at the point we are talking about very much represented the same thought processes as the United States as far as social problems and how to deal with them.*

CREAGAN: You have a good point. At least if you are talking about southern Brazil and most of my Consular District. The city of Curitiba, for example, was in my consular district. The city of about two million people was very advanced in planning and in actions on environment in an urban context. Jaime Lerner, the mayor, was world-renowned and the city had UN awards for its actions on environment, transportation, working on the homeless problem and that of street children, including providing schooling. The populace was diverse indeed – the result of the southern Brazil "melting pot" of European immigrants in the early twentieth century and after the wars. You had Germans, Russians, Ukrainians, etc. It was a city based on a European immigration. The mayor was Jewish and very popular. Yes, what you were saying is true. It's a Brazil that was doing many of the same kinds of things we were and in some areas was ahead of us — from ethanol for cars with less pollution and less dependence on oil to some urban planning and public transportation. But Brazil is larger than the continental U.S. and the North was another world. Drought, peasant farmers, legacy of slavery, the Amazon being raped, mines and mercury and a good deal of environmental devastation.

*Q: Yeah. Well did you have many mayors or governors or others from the States coming out and taking a look?*

CREAGAN: Yes, absolutely. It seems that everybody wanted to take a look. Sao Paulo was a city you would not have wanted to copy, but there was some collaboration with our EPA and with other cities with the same issues. Mexico City officials, for example,

would come down and work with Sao Paulo and study ways to cut emissions from automobiles. Industry was another problem and even more for Mexico City. I think in those years we had six million automobiles on the streets of Sao Paulo on a typical day. Well that's crazy; and so they were working on these issues together with Los Angeles and Mexico City.

*Q: Were there any issues or incidents that particularly stick in your mind that you had to deal with while you were there?*

CREAGAN: The major problem that I remember was the lack of security when I arrived, and the need to try and provide it. With the U.S. in a large office building that included other tenants like banks – and which had a garage in the basement, there was no long-term or totally credible solution. So, the U.S. ConGen has moved to its own compound with walls and good security. It is what we are doing as we can around the world. Mexico City, for example, will move from nice architecture and great location to a walled compound away from the center city.

*Q: Well why don't we leave it at this point and we will pick it up…where did you go from there*?

CREAGAN: From there, and that was, as I recall, the end of August of 1992, I went to the USUN.

*Q: Okay well we will pick it up…*

CREAGAN: They were preparing to send me to Rome as the Chargé', because it ended up we didn't have an ambassador for a long time. I went to the USUN for the General Assembly as what they called senior advisor for Latin America. So that was a great and interesting experience and then from there to Chargé' and then DCM Rome.

*Q: Okay, well I will pick it up then, how's that?*

CREAGAN: That's great. As we are talking things come to mind and then I kind of lose them. By the way, I'm just connecting people; so a contact in Sao Paulo is a guy named Celso Lafer. Again Sao Paulo had the best professors. He's a professor and he is also an industrialist and then Foreign Minister. He would come over to the house and we'd talk about the problems you know from a pragmatic point of view. He was then named Foreign Minister and I saw him up at the UN. Sao Paulo was swinging its weight politically be 1992/1993.

*Q: Oh yeah.*

CREAGAN: No traumatic events but Sao Paulo was beginning to take the big positions in Brasilia, including the presidency that had been held by those from the Northeast. Economically the saying went like this – Brazil is the number one economy in Latin America, Sao Paulo is the number two economy and Mexico is number three.

*Q: Today is the 21st of October 2013 and Jim we are up to '92 and you are off to the UN.*

CREAGAN: As you know very well, every autumn they send up Foreign Service officers to be up at the UNGA. I was there in '92 at the UNGA running from the beginning of September to mid-December. My understanding was that the UNGA traditionally ended then because it was when the last ship left New York for Southampton. I was what they called a senior adviser for Latin America, whatever that means. But it certainly meant that I covered Latin American issues generally, overlooked the work in the USUN of the political officers and economic officers and those dealing with Latin American issues and then held hands of public members. The public member that I dealt with most was Gloria Estefan, and Gloria was star of something called the Miami Sound Machine. She was a great singer out of Miami. She still is very good. So she was up there and I think Senator Larry Pressler was up there as well. It was the Republican administration of George H.W. Bush. I can get into some of the issues. Let me first say that we had a career guy as the ambassador, Ed Perkins, who was really a great guy. He served as ambassador to South Africa. He was also DG. He was COM, and Alex Watson was also ambassadorial rank. Alex was later Ambassador to Brazil, and he had been deputy assistant secretary as well as Asst. Secretary for Latin America. I know when he retired he went with Nature Conservancy for Latin America. Then you had some really good people in the Mission. I remember a young political officer I worked with – Joe Manso. He did well in the career. I remember when I went down to Bolivia in 2009 after our Ambassador had been kicked out, Manso had been in charge of the anti-narcotics program which had lots of employees and millions in program funds.

So anyway, there were those months at the USUN and issues came up dealing with, let's see, I think if I'm just trying to focus on Latin America; Haiti that was a big issue in those early 1990s.

*Q: What was the issue regarding Haiti?*

CREAGAN: Well, with Haiti you always had a mess, always in turmoil with a military government back in power and pretty vile guys. As an example, someone I knew later and tried to get extradited from Honduras – unsuccessfully – was Michel Francois, Port au Prince police chief. He was drug running and into all sorts of unsavory activities. In any case, Jean Bertrand Aristide had been elected president, but kicked out. He was a very popular ex-priest, but also backed by gangs in Haiti, who did not use democratic methods either. Haiti was a mess. Aristide was still the elected leader; so the effort was to take international action to support the elected leader. Clinton later, of course, took military action in '93 but this was '92, and so there was the lobbying of Latin Americans on this issue. Lend support to democracy against the military government. I remember Aristide gave a speech at the UN in Creole, so not too many understood and it had to be translated from Creole to French and Creole to English. In the speech he roamed around but focused attack on the Pope, of all people (remember that he was a defrocked priest so no love lost). The Holy See has an observer at the UN. They are not a full member of the UN, but they always had an observer mission. Archbishop Martino was the

"Ambassador". He walked out when Aristide began attacking the Pope. By the way we continued to work the Haiti issue until finally Clinton ordered invasion in 1993. During 1993, we worked to get international support for an Aristide comeback. He was the elected president. I was sent in the spring of 1993 as a kind of "special envoy for Haiti to the Vatican". My mission was to get the Holy See "on the team" and to support Aristide. The Foreign Minister of the Holy See told me Aristide was nuts and we were a bit off to support him. Another solution was needed to end the military government and get Haiti on track toward a better future. I took the message back to Washington.

The Cuban issue was particularly interesting for the public member that I spent some time with, Gloria Estefan. Gloria, herself, was Cuban and her family had come over after Castro took power on January 1, 1959. Her father was actively involved in the anti-Castro movement. Gloria was the next generation. Cuba, of course, was very, very high on the agenda and something we always dealt with in the assembly. We dealt with it in two ways. One was a resolution on human rights in Cuba, and we would then lobby. She would sing and I would dance – well not really. But we worked on the Latin American delegations in particular as well as the others. There were ongoing human rights violations in Cuba — lack of individual freedoms, freedom of the press, etc. You can go right on down the list of human rights violations with the Castro government of the early 1990s. So we got support for that resolution – not overwhelming support as there were those who would side with Cuba against the United States on any grounds. Some Middle Eastern countries and others. Basically we got Europe with us and had solid votes so that there was a vote against Cuba in the sense of recognizing human rights violations, calling for a Human Rights rapporteur to Cuba – which often wasn't accepted by the government and so forth. That was one resolution where we were, I guess you could say, effective with good reason.

Then there was another resolution that always came up and it had to do with the U.S. embargo against Cuba – that is U.S. self-imposed restrictions on trading with Cuba and with all the different variations that were put into that over the years. Now that embargo was always called a blockade by Cuba. I think I mentioned that when I was in Brazil and talking with Lula, then the trade union leader would always bring up the "blockade" as crushing Cuba. I would then try to explain that it was an embargo and that Italy, for example, could and did trade with Cuba. Anybody could trade with Cuba, but the U.S. didn't want to. Anyway, that issue would come up – the embargo or the blockade. Even though Gloria Estefan was fantastic, a great singer, good looking, dynamic, and effective in lobbying, the votes we got that year on the Cuba embargo question were as follows: We got the U.S. vote (not too hard since that was our position); we got the Israeli vote for obvious reciprocal kind of reasons. And we got one other vote from one of the former USSR republics now a state. They were influenced to vote for us; I think they had a Colombian adviser or something. So those were issues on which we spent time in the General Assembly Chamber – sitting at the desk and lobbying the UN delegates. It was fun.

Other issues that came up which were important and not dealt with in the chamber, but were important to do right there at the UN, were issues on Central America. One group

was called Friends of El Salvador. El Salvador was coming to the end of the long civil war in which, of course, we were deeply involved during the eighties. So you had on the one side the Marxist FMLN and the other side the fiercely conservative ARENA, coming out of the right wing military government. By 1992 the Marxist left was no longer "burdened" by the links with the failed USSR. So the Friends of El Salvador which included the U.S. and Mexico and Central Americans like Panama would meet at the Mexico mission and at other missions and just go over the issues for resolution between the parties leading to free elections. A UN peacekeeping operation, UNOSAL, was set in motion. It was especially interesting to be a little part of the group discussion those months, because I had been in Salvador way back in the late 1960s when war broke out between El Salvador and Honduras. The issues we were discussing in 1992 were a result of that war and aftermath. Now the Marxist lead negotiator and the right wing lead negotiator were able to sit down at the table. We were able to facilitate and more. It was important and part of the new hope that world organizations represented in the years immediately after the fall of the USSR. Groups of countries could come together and help to push in a viable direction those who are exhausted by civil war but don't know how to end it. That was the Friends of El Salvador. Then there was the Friends of Guatemala. Alex Watson handled matters at the leadership level; Ambassador Perkins would have left most of the Latin America portfolio to Alex. The Guatemalan parties as well were able in the early '90s to reach an agreement. An important and positive UN role.

Of course, autumn in New York is not too bad. We lived on 49th and First Street, Beekman Towers, and I walked to work at the USUN on 45th and First. I soon became a partisan of East Side over West Side.

*Q: Did the issue of Puerto Rican independence come up?*

CREAGAN: No. I think by then pretty much people left it alone as a U.S. domestic issue, essentially since the periodic votes in Puerto Rico never indicated much support for outright independence. It was always, either commonwealth status or statehood.

*Q: Well you know you've been dealing with the Latin American scene for some time. Would you say things kind of simmered down by this point or was there much anti-Americanism?*

CREAGAN: There was anti-Americanism. Central America, after all, in the '80s was the crisis point. Anti-Americanism focused there and the anti-Communism focused there. By 1990, that had ended. What had happened in Nicaragua is that the Sandinistas were so confident that they had the support of the country after basically beating back the Contras who were supported by the Reagan administration and with characters like Lt. Col. Oliver North. In retrospect, pretty nutty stuff (cakes for the Ayatollah?) which failed. Anyway the Contra phenomenon was over, the Sandinistas felt very confident. So they went to a free election – and lost it. So no, there wasn't the 1980's knee jerk anti-Americanism. The one person railing against everybody was Haiti's deposed leader Aristide, I don't know, Mr. Crazy.

*Q: Let's talk a bit about Aristide. He had quite a backing with the Black Caucus, I think, in Congress and he had a certain following in the United States but people I've talked to say the guy was really not only somewhat crazy but vicious.*

CREAGAN: Yeah. Again his support came from some nasty gangs, the Lavalas. They roamed the streets and intimidated. Aristide may have been elected, but ruling with gangs is not the way to run a democracy. It undermines legitimacy. I remember the Holy See view. At one point the Vatican had a kind of special interest in Aristide, an ex-priest. One incident recalled for me by the Vatican Deputy Foreign Minister. Aristides's gangs went over the wall of the Vatican Embassy and beat up the Vatican ambassador. They stripped naked the deputy Nuncio and sent him running. That was pretty shocking for the Holy See and pretty shocking in terms of proper diplomatic behavior. The Holy See really had no truck for this guy, and he was considered by them to be a nut case.

I remember after this UN experience – September to December 1992 – I went back to Washington for a few months before I went out to Rome as Chargé' d Affaires in the spring. When I was back in Washington (Clinton had just taken the oath) we were setting up a program, policy and commitment to get democratically-elected president Aristide back in office and to kick out these military guys. Later you will remember there was confrontation. Jimmy Carter was down there, Colin Powell. A lot of pressure was put on Cedras to get out. In the early spring the administration was trying to get solid world support for the ejection of the military and for Aristide to go back as the democratically-elected president of Haiti. Clinton's new policy was much more action- oriented than George H.W. Bush had been with Artiste. Part of it was pushed by Congress, and the Black Caucus on the Hill. More Democrat than Republican. I had a very minor part in the long running play. I was sent from Washington to the Vatican as a kind of temporary "Special Envoy to the Holy See on Haiti". My good friend, Msgr. Jean Louis Tauran, had been deputy Vatican Foreign Minister and was moving to the top slot. So, I went to see him and told him that Washington was behind Aristide and working to put him back on his seat as the democratically elected president. I told Tauran that the Vatican should "get on the team. Aristide is going back. We are restoring democracy in Haiti". Tauran told me that Aristide was crazy and if "you put him back in office, we do not support." Well, he was right and our policy did not work out so well. Then it never does in Haiti. We did kick out the military but, of course, it didn't work out and Aristide got booted once more. Let's hope that this many years later and after the terrible earthquakes in Haiti, there can be new life. But the early nineties was a mess.

*Q: Jim, what is the situation of the Vatican and the UN?*

CREAGAN: They have always had what they call an observer mission; so they have an ambassador there called Nuncio or representative to the United Nations. He was an experienced diplomat by the name of Martino. He now heads the Justice and Peace "Ministry" at the Holy See. They have a staff in New York, diplomats of the consular category and secretary category that kind of thing. They are present in the General Assembly. They are not voting, but they are interested in all the issues and especially the human rights issues and the issues of war and peace. Africa and Central America and

Latin America were of key importance in those years. They played a constructive role for sure but always behind the scenes. Next to them sat another observer, the Palestine Liberation Organization, the PLO, which had observer status. The Holy See was one of the 193 or so countries with representation at the UN. The Holy See is a full and voting member of the Organization of Security and Cooperation in Europe, OSCE. It is a member of the nuclear nonproliferation treaty, which means it is subject to inspections. The Holy See did not vote at the UN but exerted its influence in the old fashioned diplomatic way – at dinners, lunches, receptions etc. persuasion and soft power. Issues of Justice and Peace.

*Q: Was there any move to make them a full member?*

CREAGAN: I don't think so and I'm not sure they would have wished that. It could well have been controversial, not in the way the PLO has been controversial but with some controversy. So there was no public assertion for status on their part, and I think no one else has pushed it either.

*Q: Well how sat Chile at the time?*

CREAGAN: Chile, let's see, it had, of course, come into a democratic government. Yet Pinochet had power that limited the government. He was still army chief of staff and held on to power just in case; but they had a democratic government and very active. I remember being with the Chilean ambassador several times during that fall and lobbying on or being lobbied on different issues. One thing in my memory was the active nature of the Chilean ambassador on international issues beyond Chile. The Chileans were well prepared, and clearly saw the value of the UN beyond a specific Chilean issue. They had diplomats who were well prepared. That's what I remember about Chile. They were resolving their issues through reconciliation commission and in a Chilean way.

*Q: What were the Cubans doing?*

CREAGAN: Cubans were active lobbying against us and always pretty effective on the Embargo matter and losing in the Human Rights arena. On human rights they tried to push Article 2, and that one should respect sovereignty and the United Nation Charter – no interference in domestic affairs of states. So they would try to push that. Votes on human rights in Cuba were contested. They always lost that one, as far as I remember, but it was always one that you had to work on. Then there was the embargo, and they just tore the place up on that one. The year I was at the UNGA, we got three votes — US, Israel and one of the former USSR states. The states of the UN didn't think much of an embargo, especially one which affected other countries. We went to the extreme of legislating that if a ship of your country touched port in Cuba then it could not be admitted into a port in the United States next. Countries, including our European allies saw us as meddling in their domestic affairs. So Cuba did well in its lobbying this issue in New York.

*Q: Did you feel that the Clinton administration was doing basically the right thing?*

CREAGAN: Boy, good question.

*Q: It's a hard one.*

CREAGAN: It's a hard one. On Haiti, when I was at the UN, President Bush was still in office. It was the end of the George H.W. Bush administration, with the election having taken place in early November. When Clinton came in I was back in Washington for the spring and preparing to go to Rome. With Haiti our heart was in the right place, but the problems were intractable. And the democratically-elected leader was a disaster. On Cuba, Clinton initially tried to change things, but Congress had much power. It passed specific resolutions or prohibitions on trade with Cuba and travel to Cuba. But Clinton wanted to open up a bit; so the Americans could have more freedom also to travel to Cuba. For example, for a time universities could take students to Cuba but that was shut down over time. But I didn't deal with that. I worked on Haiti and the Vatican a little bit and prepared to go to Italy that early spring. Clinton had been elected and – unlike some ambassadors who yearn to stay on even under a president they opposed, Bush's Ambassador to Italy, Peter Secchia, had said he wasn't going to serve a minute under Clinton; so he actually flew away on January 20. That was the proper thing to do. His DCM, a career officer and former economics officer in Rome, became Chargé'. The idea was to have me go out and replace him until a political appointee ambassador was found.

You know when you are in Washington and waiting, you do other things. I also wrote efficiency reports, and I remember writing the efficiency report for Nick Burns, who has had a really good career. He was several times ambassador and became Under Secretary for Political Affairs. Nick was at that time working for Brent Scowcroft as a young Foreign Service officer at the National Security Council. A Foreign Service officer needs a Foreign Service officer to write your efficiency report. So I would go over there and see what Nick was doing and how things were at the NSC, and I wrote his report. Scowcroft then reviewed it.

*Q: How did you feel…you were walking around the corridors and all what was your impression of the Clinton taking over? Sometimes these changes of administration are relatively bloodless and sometimes they are kind of nasty.*

CREAGAN: Well, you know I wasn't there with the transition – that is from November to January. I was there when the Clinton people were just coming in. If I look up at the Secretary of State, it was Warren Christopher. He was so proper. He was not a street fighter, he was not a Holbrooke. I remember seeing Christopher a little bit before I went to Italy, and he seemed to bring calmness, if you will, a lawyerly calm to the office. I had a friend of mine in the Pentagon, God rest his soul, and he would say, "I saw Warren Christopher today and you wouldn't believe it. He appeared almost life-like." Then down at the other levels with Latin America you had Alec Watson and Larry Pizzulo. Larry Pizzulo had been in Nicaragua as Ambassador, kicked out by Reagan when he came in. I remembered Larry from the 1970's. He was going to Nicaragua as Ambassador and I was called when I was still in Naples with the pitch to help get dictator Somoza out of

Nicaragua. Activist foreign policy. I was offered political counselor as I remember. I preferred to stay in Naples.

*Q: How long were you in Washington out of the UN?*

CREAGAN: I was there maybe five months something like that.

*Q: Then off to Italy?*

CREAGAN: Then off to Italy. So, in the summer of 1993 I replaced Serwer as Chargé. We had no ambassador. Clinton had intended to nominate Dante Fascell, senior Democratic congressman on the House Committee on Foreign Affairs and heading the subcommittee for Latin American for years. Fascell was of Italian origin, and that had some importance domestically. He had retired from Congress and his wife was not well. They were back in Florida. Fascell was told that the DCM would run day to day matters, and the job need not be so taxing. He considered it, but in the end decided that he would not take the job. That left it open, and you had a battle among the Italian-American groups as to who would get it. One candidate was Art Garza, a judge and a leader of the Italian-American Foundation. Another was Frank Guarini, Italian American congressman from New Jersey. Time went by and there was no action or consensus on a candidate. In late spring, Clinton was meeting with Secretary of State, Warren Cristopher on Bosnia. It was a dangerous and deadly situation as Bosnians, Serbs and Croatians fought for turf. The Secretary brought along for the briefing with the President the officer who was handling the Bosnian account, Reggie Bartholomew. Reg had headed the Pol/Mil Office at State and had been ambassador to Lebanon. So, Reg is brought along to the meeting. Clinton said to Christopher, "Hey, what is this with Italy? Everybody is fighting for it and whomever I pick is going to create a mess (in the Italian -American community). The losers will be mad. Isn't there some Foreign Service officer who's Italian who can be ambassador?" From the back of the room Reg raises his hand and says "I am Italian Mr. President." So he said, "You, Reg?" So there's Reginald Bartholomew as possible nominee. Nobody in the Department knew he was Italian. They were a little bit flummoxed in the Director General's office, but Clinton thought he could avoid the political flak by sending a career professional. They put it forward.

Then Reg and I got together and Reg said with his usual colorful language, "You SOB, you've been named by the department as Chargé and I know you guys. You think you guys run the place, and I want you to know I'm the boss. I run it. I'm not a political appointee." Then he said, "The Director General has named you for DCM. You are an "Italian hand" and you've been there. Well, I'm going to see if I can get somebody else." I said "Okay." So then about three weeks go by and he comes back and said, "Okay, everybody agrees that you know Italy and the Italians and issues. So, okay I'm going to take you." I said, "Okay, but you have to remember that I have seen you when I was Consul General in Sao Paulo, and you came through. You berated your staff, raised hell with them. If you do that to me, it will be once. One of us is out of there the next day, and it won't be you." He said, "Okay, agreed." So we had a relationship that worked, Reg is a difficult character, God rest his soul, but very, very competent. He learned Italian fast. He

focuses on issues like a laser, but he is difficult. We worked it out in our three years together. Before he was confirmed, I went out to Rome in the summer as Chargé; so I was in Italy running the embassy and mission in that period until mid-October.

A big issue was Somalia, in other words, the U.S. and Italy were doing important things together. Somalia was a top issue for the administration. If I think about Italy from 1993-1996 when I was there as DCM and Chargé, there was a big difference from the years when I was the assistant labor attaché/ political officer in the early 1970s. The issue then was the future of Italy itself. The domestic Italian political scene was of fundamental importance because of the Cold War and the possibility that Italy might vote itself a Communist government. I even remember when you were Consul General in Naples in the late 1970's that was still a concern – as was the domestic terrorism of the Red Brigades. In the early '70s there was concern that the Communist Party would overtake the Christian Democratic Party and dominate the government; so we followed the intricacies in the political parties. In the U.S., agencies other than State Department were also really focused and interested. By 1993 and 1994 the Cold War was over and frankly Italian politics were kind of interesting — like Texas politics is interesting – but not an existential thing. The other issues were really a focus of our attention, like working with Italy on Somalia and working with Italy on other international issues. Slovenia had an importance and especially in the breakup of Yugoslavia. Italy had had a long relationship and at times domination of parts of Slovenia and Croatia. Bosnia was very important for us and for Italy. So, we had some focus on international issues. The summer of '93 I went out as Chargé. The Italian Prime Minister was an old friend from decades before when he was an academic scholar in the U.S. in New York and at Brookings. When I was desk officer for Italy, he would come by and read the Italian newspapers, which we received in the Department. We always discussed politics and other news. When I went out to Italy that summer, I understood the importance of old relationships. The practice of reassigning officers, as we and the Soviets did, paid off in the personal relations that helped make diplomacy work. In our case we used to refer to people as "Italian Hands". I guess that was me with four assignments to Italy — if you count the Vatican as being in Italy (at least you have to live in Rome). It is important to know people when you are in your twenties and thirties and then see them later. As soon as I got to Italy Amato invited me out to his summer place up along the coast in Tuscany and we'd begin to work on the issues; Somalia, unfortunately, being one of them.

*Q: Okay, let's take Somalia in the '90s. Our perspective in Italy – what were we after?*

CREAGAN: You remember the great hunger in Somalia and great concern in the U.S. and Europe. We knew about the famine and great hunger, because we saw it on CNN. That gave a domestic political urgency to doing something. So this was happening toward the end of the Bush years '89, '90, '91. Under President Bush and at the UN we initiated UNOSOM I. That operation was to go in and feed the starving Somalis. We worked closely with the Italians in that and in the subsequent UNOSOM II which included the use of force to prevent gangs from ripping off the food. Because the Italians knew a lot about Somalia – it had been their colony – they were still involved. We had not had an Ambassador there for some years, because of the chaotic situation. Our last ambassador

was Peter Bridges. I don't know if you've done an oral history with Peter Bridges but he has written about Somalia. Important source. Things were a mess there. I would judge Italy in many ways to have been our number one partner in Somalia in the 1990's. The UN operations degenerated as extremist war lords challenged the UN. They were gangs out of control. The worst was led by a man named Aidid. As the Clinton administration came in the UN mandate changed. I remember a lot of things happened but one Johnathan Howe, who had been a National Security Adviser under President Bush and a U.S. Navy Admiral, ended up heading the UN Mission in Somalia. In a real sense, the U.S. was wearing dual hats of UN and with a military component — the most important component as UNOSOM I morphed to UNOSOM II. We had mission creep before long. We were trying to protect the food from the bad guys and then go after the warlords themselves. So that began to develop through '92 and '93 ever more aggressive. At the UN there was a feeling that we could be more aggressive in making sure that food gets to the people. Then there was the question of taking out the warlords. The Italians were reticent about that, and they had a lot of intelligence. They had lines open to the warlord group. We probably thought at that point that the Italians were more "accommodationist", if you will. They, on the other hand, felt that they understood Somalis far better than the U.S. Somalia had been an Italian colony; there was the spaghetti factory, and so forth. Those are the kinds of issues I discussed with Prime Minister Amato. Then in early October our efforts to deliver a blow to the warlords and even grab if possible, Aidid, resulted in the tragedy of Black Hawk Down and the killing of American soldiers on the streets of Mogadishu. I remember informing my friend that (after Black Hawk Down) we would be leaving Somalia. The Italians could make their own decisions. Of course they weren't going to stay in force without the U.S. So we worked closely with the Italians throughout, sometimes in agreement and sometimes not.

*Q: In the first place for someone who is reading about this affair for the first time could you give us a brief thing of what was Black Hawk Down shorthand for a situation?*

CREAGAN: So as we begin to engage in a more military manner in order to prevent the warlords from ripping off the food aid for famine-plagued Somalis, we faced local warlords or chiefs. The UN Mission UNOSOM changed from feeding to fighting. The UNSC authorized UNOSOM II to use force as necessary. We needed to stop the warlords from enriching themselves and from controlling Mogadishu and other parts of the country. Then there was the push to eliminate Aidid, the major warlord. There were Bangladeshi and Pakistani troops in the UN Mission, and they had been ambushed with considerable loss of life. We then turned to our Special Operations capabilities. So that was the operation which ended in Black Hawk Down. What happened was we went in there, were successful at first, but the gangs had RPGs and hit our Black Hawk. Then hell broke out and 18 Americans were killed. I would guess that hundreds of Somalis also died. The Italians would have considered that quite a mission creep, as they were much more inclined to negotiate certain things before a clash. Back here in the U.S., there were scenes on CNN of an American being dragged through the streets. Clinton then determined that this was not what we went in for and we weren't staying. We had gone in to save people and obviously all has changed. I told the Italians what we were doing in the generic sense, and they, of course, made their adjustments as well. Somalia was left

with the warlords. That embarrassment, that issue, the difficulty of the guys being killed had an impact later and affected the Clinton administration policy toward Rwanda. Of course we did not know there would be a mass genocide. When things were beginning to happen in Rwanda in 1994, I remember the Italians were reticent, we were reticent, and other Europeans were reticent. We did not want to have a repeat of Black Hawk Down. Then there was Bosnia.

*Q: Did the fiasco led by the United States do anything you might say in Italy to our credibility?*

CREAGAN: They were pretty unhappy but being unhappy is one thing and being with us on key international issues is another. In the next decade Italy went with us to Iraq, even as questioning the wisdom of the 2003 invasion. Millions of Italians had demonstrated against a U.S. invasion – unless it had UNSC backing. Italians lost many soldiers at Nasiriya, the most since World War II. So Italy stayed with us. I mean we had been so close to Italy during the Cold War. It was important for Italy to keep the faith. If I were looking at the Somalia operation from the Italian foreign ministry point of view, there was plenty of skepticism about U.S. policy in Somalia in 1992/1993. I felt that. Italy was important and with us on Bosnia in the mid 1990's.

*Q: Well let's move to Bosnia then. What was the situation when you came and how was it developing in Yugoslavia and what was our relationship with Italy regarding the situation in Bosnia?*

CREAGAN: Yeah, well this was 1993 on. I am sure that the Somalia experience had an impact on the White House and State in the manner of making us more reticent to respond to human rights violations with troops. Bosnia was a major problem. We saw Bosnia as a European problem that Europe had to address. The U.S. was not going to jump in '93-'94. It was controversial to say the least and we had Foreign Service officers quit the service over our policy of not stepping in to stop the human rights violations. In other words there were many who thought we had to stop the Serbs. We were always briefing and sharing intelligence with the "Contact Group". Always there would be briefings with Italy, with France and then the others. Italy was never happy by the way. Habits grew up in the Cold War including a kind of big boys club consisting of the western victors in World War II: the U.S., the UK and France (OK, the France of De Gaulle got that status for political reasons) and then West Germany. Italy was not quite considered in the league with the rest, and it ran the danger of having a government led by the Communist Party should elections go that way. So, when the big boys would get together it would be Great Britain, France, Germany and U.S. I remember once when I was desk officer in 1981. Walter Stoessel was Undersecretary. The big four had a meeting (in Poland if I remember) and Italy found out about it. Italian Ambassador Petrignani was directed to protest to the U.S. I went with him to see the Undersecretary and report the meeting. Petrignani told Stoessel that "You can't do this. We have been loyal allies and are a power. Promise me, Walter, that you will never do it again." The Undersecretary replied pretty much as follows: "I can't promise you, Rinaldo, because we will probably do it again." On Bosnia, the four power group kind of continued and the

Italians knew they were not always briefed. Ironically, when it came time to act on Bosnia in 1995, the Italians were terrific, and the Italian Carabinieri were able to police and gain acceptance on the streets of both Muslim and Serb Orthodox areas.

One area that the Italians were deeply involved with, and where we recognized their involvement, was Slovenia. Slovenia had broken away from Yugoslavia early and the Italians and Holy See, along with Germany, jumped in to recognize the new state. We thought it was premature and added to the thrust toward breakup of Yugoslavia without any planning. The Italians had this great interest in Slovenia because of history. In the post-World War I world, and through the '30s you had Italians in Slovenia, you had Italians in Fiume and in parts of Slovenia – the old Venetian coast. In the post WWII world there was the issue of Trieste and Zone A and Zone B and what goes to Yugoslavia. So, we always worked with the Italians on Slovenia, recognizing the ties and the knowledge. But apart from Slovenia and Croatia, which had broken away early as well, we tried to leave Bosnia and ex-Yugoslavia to the Europeans. That did not work and by 1995 it was crunch time. Only the U.S. could take the lead. In August 1995 we did that.

In August of 1995 I was Chargé in Rome. Out came Tony Lake and his NSC team with General Wes Clarke as part of the team of advisors. They briefed the new proposed initiative to the Italians. This initiative called for peace talks or else. International troops (IFOR) would go into Bosnia like it or not and peace talks would take place. The Italians were briefed on the ideas. We would go to Milosevic of Serbia and the others and give them an ultimatum to separate and stop fighting. We would send in troops with the Europeans to make things work. I remember the group discussing who would lead the charge on the American side. Tony Lake had brought up Holbrooke. One said no, not Dick Holbrooke because Holbrooke has been out there criticizing the administration on its Bosnia plan. Holbrooke is an unguided missile and all ego. Lake asserted that it should be Dick and that he could make a touchdown. He will take all the credit for the touchdown but he can do it. So, Dick Holbrooke was picked to lead this operation of diplomacy, but diplomacy strongly backed by force. He took on Milosevic and was more than his match. Heads got knocked together, and the Serb planes got knocked down and lo and behold the Bosniac, Serbian and Croatian leaders went to Dayton, Ohio, in November '95. Led by Holbrooke, worked by Wes Clark and pushed by Clinton, we got a peace agreement. It had enforcement behind it. We worked hard on this and the Italians helped. The Europeans had troops, and among the most effective were the Italian Carabinieri. The Italians were basically policing on the ground, as they have this ability to actually get along with the civilians. The Carabinieri worked very well and we had close cooperation with them in that 1995-'96 period. So Bosnia went from a mess to eventual success and an end to the fighting. With international supervision of course.

*Q: I know when I talked to some of our negotiators who were going to see Milosevic there was a crowd outside and they'd be shouting eighteen, eighteen, you know Black Hawk Down, in other words you weren't going to do anything.*

CREAGAN: When they went to Belgrade?

*Q: Yeah.*

CREAGAN: But it worked and, of course, it had to work because we had to be ready then to use force.

*Q: I mean it's still working I mean…*

CREAGAN: Yeah, exactly, even Kosovo.

*Q: You must have had something to do with the Vatican at least from the sidelines.*

CREAGAN: Well that's interesting because one of the things we were very, what do you call it, religious about is that Embassy Rome does not mess with Embassy Vatican – except, of course, for administrative support and all of that. Embassy Vatican had a separate budget, but Rome B&F officers managed the accounts. But in any diplomatic relations with the Vatican Rome does not mess. Once upon a time before there was an Embassy to the Holy See and before there was a U.S. representative always there in Rome, we had a political officer in our embassy in Rome with the "Vatican portfolio". I remember when the Pope was shot in 1981, I was desk officer at State for both Italy and the Vatican. When the Pope was shot, Peter Bridges, our DCM in Rome, was in touch with me and with the Holy See. He gave us the information and got in touch with the Vatican. He had relationships there as well. But once we had Bill Wilson going out as the President's representative and then as the first U.S. Ambassador to the Holy See, (1984) there was no diplomatic relationship between the Embassy to Italy and the Holy See; it would not be permitted on either side. I think I have mentioned that when Manuel Noriega of Panama, the dictator, went to take refuge in the Vatican Embassy or Nunciature in Panama and asked for political asylum, our ambassador to Italy said to me. "Well, okay, I'll take the Noriega problem. It calls for (the big guys). I said, "No, Pete it has nothing to do with you. Embassy, Rome stays out." That's the way it was. So, even though I had a long relationship with the leaders of the Holy See on the diplomatic side, I did not get involved in any way. I will admit that I was a friend of the Vatican Foreign Minister, and I would have him over for lunch or dinner at my DCM residence. But that was a matter of friendship. Of course, he would tell me about his trips to Libya and "talking with Qadhafi in a tent until 4 a.m. or so". He would tell the tales and so forth, but I wouldn't lobby him. We wouldn't do U.S.-Holy See issues or U.S.-Italy issues, for that matter.

*Q: If you were picking up something from your Vatican sources just from lunches or something did you feel you could report or you sort of…*

CREAGAN: Well, I would call a good friend of mine. Lou Nigro was DCM and reporting officer over at the Vatican embassy; so I'd call Lou if there was something that was reportable. Then he could deal with it. I tried not to cross lines. Some people didn't respect that wholly but they really had to. Some people at our Embassy to Italy remained against a separate Embassy to the Holy See. My friend Dan Serwer said to me, "Why do

we have…we shouldn't have an Embassy to the Holy See. It is a waste of money and time. " Well that's an attitude that stayed with some. Wrong, but there it is.

*Q: That's absolutely right to do that otherwise it gets complicated.*

CREAGAN: Yes, exactly. And again the Holy See had been deeply involved in Italian politics; especially during the Cold War decades and with Popes like Pius XII and Paul VI with their very close personal ties with the leadership of the Christian Democratic Party. With the Polish Pope things obviously changed, and the papacy moved away from domestic Italian politics.

Again, I'm thinking about the kinds of things we did. Lots of domestic politics. We had really great political officers, Ken Hillas and Kerry Cavanaugh. Arnie Chacon was another. Arnie is now going to be Director General. He has also been Ambassador in Guatemala. Now, the political officers reported on domestic Italian politics, as well as the foreign office issues. The political scandals of *Mani Pulite* (clean hands) were of interest for Washington as was the breakup of the old parties and the coming into politics of the billionaire Silvio Berlusconi. He was the businessman and was – boom – coming into politics for the first time and bringing a whole new dimension into Italy, breaking up the old Christian Democratic, Socialist, Communist politics; so that was fun and important for us in economic ways as well. But to give you an example of the decline of the Communist, Socialist, Christian Democrat dimension, when Reg Bartholomew was ambassador we would invite not only the head of the Communist Party to Italy but other guys who were in some ways more radical. Nobody gave a damn. In the old days that would have been cause for the removal of the ambassador. If he invited the head of the Communist Party for events it would seem that the U.S. "blessed" a Communist-led government. So, we would never do that. When I was the labor attaché we weren't allowed to talk to the leaders of the Communist Trade Union. By 1993-1994 all that had changed. We had great political officers, but if I looked at what we were focusing on it was Italy-U.S. and foreign affairs generally – not Italian politics.

One curious thing I did as DCM: I would meet periodically with the King of Afghanistan Zahir Shah. The king had been exiled since a coup against him back in 1973, but he was a popular king. This was Afghanistan of the 1960s. Remember that it was a rather pluralist place and the women could actually dress in Western attire, if they were in the cities and the professions. It looked like a country on the way to development in the "development decade" of the 1960s. Anyway, the king then gets kicked out, in a coup d'état, and things deteriorated after that ending up with Soviet occupation. The king came to Rome and had been living in Rome since the '70s. One of the things that developed for me was that, as DCM, I would go out to his home in Olgiata for tea. I would go and talk to him, we had tea with his nephew, and we would have a translator there. The king always talked about the new movement of Taliban youth. He did note that "they are religious students and they are honest. He did not express a lot more knowledge, but Afghanistan at that point was being run by vicious warlords and with constant fighting. A tentative view was that perhaps the students wouldn't be so bad." Then he always said, "What we need," he was always consistent in that, "a Loya Jirga or great council in order to bring all the Afghans

together. It would provide consensus, and that's how you move forward." The king actually survived to go back to Afghanistan – after all the turmoil, after all the Taliban nonsense, after 9/11. He died not too long after that, but went back and presided over the Loya Jirga. President Karzai came out as president. He had U.S.-German support. And the turmoil more or less continued. In the U.S. there were always some congressmen interested and involved. Charlie Wilson of Texas and Dana Rohrabacher of California always interested. When Rohrabacher came to Rome, we would go over those issues and maybe visit the king. However, we must remember that Afghanistan – after the Soviet pullout and before 9/11 – was of little overall interest to the U.S.

*Q: What about Italy had, of course, an economic interest in Libya? What about relations with Libya and Qadhafi what was there?*

CREAGAN: We wouldn't have been in total agreement there, because Qadhafi was investing in Fiat and Qadhafi had a relationship with Italy, and with Prime Minister Berlusconi. We considered, correctly, that Qadhafi was a terrorist. We had even bombed him, of course, in 1986 and the Pan Am 103 bombing was traced back to the intelligence service of Qadhafi. With Italy we could exchange Intel, but the Italians always maintained a relationship with Libya, also of an economic nature. So you had disagreement. On the other hand, they always had information on Libya and that was good.

*Q: What was happening to the Communist Party while you were there?*

CREAGAN: The Communist Party was always a powerful force in postwar Italy and came close to taking over government in the 1970's by democratic means — the vote. The 1990's reconstituted Communist Party or the Party of the Democratic Left was the viable opposition to the Berlusconi phenomenon. That had been a rejection of the entire party system in the aftermath of the scandals, termed *Mani Pulite* or Clean Hands. The political parties self-destructed because of a culture of bribes and corruption. The Communist Party avoided the destruction at first because its "corruption" through close political and economic relations with the USSR did not present cases of personal enrichment and corruption. Young members of the reconstituted party, men like Walter Veltroni, who became mayor of Rome and head of the party, were a viable challenge to the billionaire businessman, Silvio Berlusconi. Walter loved President Kennedy and all the things that that image of Kennedy seemed to stand for. Walter was mayor of Rome when I was president of John Cabot University (1999-2005); so I saw him quite a bit. Walter and other leaders of the PDS like Massimo D'Alema had been Communist youth in the old Communist Party, but the Cold War was over and they had not much to do with the old Communist Party and deemed themselves progressive democrats. They could identify with the aspirations of the Clinton presidency and they liked Clinton.

President Clinton came to Italy twice in 1994. I had to be the key organizer, if you will, of two visits of the President, one in June and one in July. Wow! The first trip was June of 1994. June 4 was the 50th anniversary of the Liberation of Rome. President Bill Clinton came with I think 18 Senators and 40 or so Congressmen. Everyone wanted to be

there on a glorious remembrance and a June day in Rome. In preparation for the visit, I had been meeting with the mayor of Rome, Francesco Rutelli. We met for lunch and "strategized" the visit. We wrote on a napkin our ideas and concluded that it would be terrific to have a Clinton speech on the Capitoline Hill; the last had been done by Kennedy in 1962. So the mayor grabbed at the idea and said, "Let's do it." Well, at first the White House was reticent thinking about security for the President up on the hill and talking to the crowd in the piazza and down the Campidoglio steps to Rome. In the end, the venue was accepted and it all worked out very well. After his talk, Bill Clinton worked the rope and met people named "Amerigo or America" and born about nine months after the 1944 liberation of Rome. Go figure.

I had a personally interesting role, in addition to being the DCM organizer of the visit. Clinton or his staff had a problem with the interpreting. So, in the middle of the night after the Campidoglio speech, I got a call saying that I was to be interpreter for President Clinton at the Anzio cemetery visit and in his meeting/exchanges with Italian President Scalfaro. I think the President wanted what I call a Foreign Service Officer's plain American and colloquial translation from Italian to English. Italian officialdom often has a complicated and convoluted way of speaking to cover all political bases and which distorts interpretation in any literal sense. My favorite recollection of that tendency was the often cited remarks of Italian Christian Democratic president, Aldo Moro, to then Secretary of State, Henry Kissinger concerning the "historic compromise" or the collaboration between the Christian Democrats and the Communist Party. Moro had talked of the need to engage the communists as they were on a track of "converging parallels". Drove Kissinger crazy. In any case, I spent the morning of June 5 at Anzio and interpreting President Scalfaro (no easy guy to talk to; prickly in fact) for President Clinton. The Rome trip was very complicated. I remember that Senator Bob Dole did not want to be with Clinton at the palace ceremonies. He had a separate schedule taking him up to the Apennines near Bologna, where in World War II he had been with the Tenth Mountain Division and badly wounded. All in all, the Clinton trip to Rome was excellent. We did a good job. Then Clinton and all the congressmen went to Normandy for the 50th anniversary of D Day.

The very next month was the G7 plus One (Russia) in Naples. I dashed down there to oversee organization. Our CG was Dick Dertadian. The mayor of Naples was Antonio Bassolino, whom I had known as the Regional Secretary of the Communist Party in the 1970's when we were in Naples. He was a real hardline guy. You know, we were the imperialists and he the Communist; and by the time we met again in Naples in 1994 he was mayor and his party was the PDS, successor to the old PCI. Bassolino was a different guy. I guess I was, too. We stood together and talked about Clinton and Naples and the excellent "remodeling" of the center city. The G7 was held in the King's Palace in downtown Naples.

*Q: Oh yeah.*

CREAGAN: They redid Naples in splendid fashion. It became a car free zone. The waterfront and area around the Castel dell'Ovo and Santa Lucia was returned to the

images we have of old Napoli. Bassolino talked about how to improve Naples, how to try to eliminate crime, clean up the streets and so forth. Individuals of the Communist Party had changed a lot since the 1970's but they still had their ability and their organization skills. After the Cold War everybody renamed themselves and that didn't mean they were successful in government forever. They would rotate with Berlusconi on the national level as hope sprung eternal for making Italy work well and as leader in the EU.

*Q: Well how did we view the advent of Berlusconi? Did we have a…*

CREAGAN: Yeah, well we didn't know what would happen. He was a billionaire businessman who jumped into politics. The reputation he later gained he didn't have at that point, but he was the rich guy who promised to fix the ills of government and society, a result of a stagnant and corrupt party system. We were curious. Reg Bartholomew was invited and would invite me to go up to Berlusconi's office at Palazzo Chigi. Berlusconi would have a little dinner there, and deal with issues. It was essential to be involved directly with him and his office rather than through the ministries as we would have done in the past when you had an organized and long-serving party in government. Berlusconi was the party. Period. Sometimes I would have lunch with his diplomatic adviser Sergio Vento. Vento later became ambassador to the U.S. I had lunch at my place or at his residence or maybe over at his office or we would meet some place and go over the several issues of importance for the U.S. in its relationship with Italy. Berlusconi liked to back channel to the White House; so at the least I was privy to what they were doing without using the Foreign Office (Farnesina). Berlusconi's foreign policy would mesh with some things we were trying to do, but we were curious. What does this guy mean, what is it going to mean? Most importantly economically, what's it going to mean and then who are his allies? I mean, you had this strange Northern League which Berlusconi needed as partner to govern. They were anti-immigrant and anti-South, semi- secessionist and emotional in rallies at least. Umberto Bossi led the party. He was crude, rude and smoked like a chimney. He liked to be photographed in his undershirt, like Stanley Kowalski in "Streetcar Named Desire". Italy was focused inward during the years 1992-1996, also because the whole ruling structure had come apart. As I noted, the former Communists were in the best shape because you did not have obvious individual corruption the way it seemed to be in the Christian Democratic and Socialist Parties. We certainly could work with Berlusconi and he wanted to work with the United States. He wanted at least the image of being more favorable to U.S. positions than – as he always called them – the "Communists". It wasn't always necessarily so. In any case, I saw a consistency in Italian foreign policy because so much was done by those professionals at the foreign ministry — the Farnesina. We had some policy interest in Berlusconi, and Reg Bartholomew really loved the intricacies of all the machinations.

*Q: How did you find the foreign ministry by this time and regards the United States were they…sometimes you have foreign ministries where they almost have their own foreign policy.*

CREAGAN: Yeah, well these guys were very close, they were the kind of colleagues you could really work with, and yes, they really knew all the issues. I knew a lot of the Italian

diplomats from assignments in Latin America and to Italy itself. We had several officers in the embassy political and economic sections who were at the Farnesina on a daily basis. We worked the issues and often had a common goal with the GOI. They wanted to work things out because that's what they were used to doing – cooperating, and compromising. The U.S. had been a kind of big brother for a long time. But I didn't see resentment on their part. They were tough but cooperative in a way that did not exist, for example, in our relationship with the Brazilian foreign ministry, Itamaraty.

The Italians were "well disposed" I think, because we were so important to maintaining their democracy over the years; again that World War II connection was so important and that continued. Many of the top guys in the Italian foreign ministry had served at the embassy in Washington in one category or another – as a third secretary and maybe as a counselor and then maybe some of them as the DCM and then they went on. The ambassadors have always been very close to us and when they were there in Washington, there was constant contact. I remember when I was Italian desk officer; I was meeting with people from the embassy every day, and often with the Ambassador. So, the guys in the foreign ministry who were at the top almost always had been in Washington or New York at the UN. They had a real connection with the United States. When I think about a foreign ministry, in my mind I see a really big difference in the Brazilian foreign ministry and the Italian foreign ministry. The Brazilian diplomats were trained to ward off the U.S. and prevent U.S. influence. The Italian foreign ministry was very much attuned to Italian foreign interests, but very cooperative with the U.S. for that very same reason. Different interests; different attitude.

*Q: This is something I think isn't always understood but anyway in lots of bureaucracies a group of people may be under one regime or another but they have developed their own personalities and how to deal with things. They will accommodate usually the party in power but they really operate in their own special way.*

CREAGAN: Exactly, I think you are right. And maybe, as I say, the Italian foreign ministry had a positive feeling toward the U.S. because there was so much interaction between Washington embassy, a huge embassy for them, and New York and then Rome. Think Moscow /Rome and the interaction was much less. I think of Ferdinando Salleo who was Ambassador to the U.S. and had been Ambassador to Moscow. He had constant and deep connection with the U.S., our congress and even our several important Italian - American associations. He connected with State as a pro. Once, when he and I were at a gala dinner of an Italo-American group, he said to me that we two were the only ones there who related to the Italy of today. Even though I am Irish/German/American, I know what he meant. Now, Salleo, the red-headed Sicilian, had been Ambassador in Moscow, and in the fascinating time of Gorbachev and the end of the Cold War. But the U.S. connection is an entirely different thing. Moscow was cold and after all a dictatorship. So for the Italians we had that close connection, as I say, and it goes back also to the 1940's leadership and to a guy like Andreotti, who was in postwar Italian governments and engaged as Christian Democrat with close U.S. ties in the struggle with Moscow and the PCI. Democracy itself was at stake. Brazilians were totally different. The Mexican foreign ministry would be another because they are always worried about the U.S. as its

overwhelming neighbor. So the Brazilian and Mexican foreign ministries and diplomats would relate to the U.S. in an entirely different way.

*Q: Now with the Berlusconi administration was there a feeling let the good times roll and all or…*

CREAGAN: There appeared to be the feeling that a businessman could make the economy move. The perception was of an overregulated system and rigidities in labor and other areas that could be unstuck by the "go Blue, go Italy" movement of Berlusconi. Give free enterprise more freedom and cut down on heavy bureaucratic regulations. Things didn't work out so well, the change was controversial and Berlusconi had prosecutors on his neck and indictments thrown at him. Berlusconi was voted out of office very soon after being the head of government. His government was not quite like the nine-month "standard-length" of governments before Berlusconi. At one point a government led by him survived for years. With Berlusconi the good times never did roll for jobs and the economy.

*Q: Well how about the Berlusconi TV, I mean he didn't…*

CREAGAN: Oh my gosh, yeah, the big scandal but not so big that he didn't get elected with enthusiasm but, oh yeah, that was always a scandal. This guy, this is incredible that he made his way by piecing together local TV stations. In the 1970's Italians couldn't have private television at the national level. There were just RAI Channel 1 (Christian Democratic station), Channel 2 (Socialists) and Channel 3(Communist). There was some good programming but pretty dull stuff as well. Berlusconi couldn't have a national level private television channel, but he managed to have these tapes that he would do and then use 'runners" around Italy – well actually they flew – in order to legally play simultaneously programming and news all around Italy. Anyway he got around some of these constitutional/legislative restrictions, became super rich and yeah there was always discontent. This guy built these huge channels, like Channel 5, a huge private channel he controlled. Then he gets to be Prime Minister, and in effect, has his own government channel. It was something we would write about and all of that, but you know the Italians had to work out the relationship with him in their own democratic way.

Anyway, we played these issues. Bosnia was very important, especially in the '95-'96 period. Then I was named ambassador to Honduras. So, I began to prepare for the Senate and going to Honduras.

*Q: Well before we do that let's talk just a bit about Reggie Bartholomew. What was his background?*

CREAGAN: Reg had been well, of course, academic. He had academic degrees but then he had gone with the Pentagon and was brought over from the Pentagon, I'll just jump forward because he did some policy planning, but anyway he was brought over in the Carter years to head the political-military office/bureau at State. So in a sense his first job was the equivalent of assistant secretary, right?

*Q: Yeah.*

CREAGAN: So that was kind of an interesting beginning. Anyway, then he has this kind of uncertain status. When Reagan got elected, Reg was kind of walking the halls remarking on "how the mighty have fallen" because he had no set job and needed to get a fixed career status or be eliminated; I think you had a five year appointment then. Reg had this capacity — he could use elbows when he felt it was needed to but he also had a capacity to ingratiate. He laid low, was not eliminated as he might have been as a Carter administration appointee. He became part of the professional corps and the next thing you know (I really don't remember how that happened) the powers that be were looking for a tough Ambassador for Lebanon. Lebanon was difficult and it was violent. Ambassador Frank Meloy had been killed on his way to present credentials in the mid-seventies. But Reg then became ambassador to Lebanon and he and the embassy underwent tragedies out there with the bombing of the embassy and killings at the marine barracks. It was a trying time. Reg was not a traditional Foreign Service Officer. He would have started out as a Vice Consul, and then risen through the ranks to Labor Attaché or Political Officer, and so forth. You don't normally start out as ambassador or assistant secretary. So the career path was different. I remember Frank Wisner got a prize for top Foreign Service officer, a special award, and Reg remarked that "I'm a Foreign Service officer and I should be up there for that award." I told him that he was the total professional and in the career but did not start out as vice consul or rise through the ranks. In any case, he then was Ambassador to Spain and later, the Bosnian negotiator. He hated that job as it seemed unable to lead to anything. This was 1993, well before the U.S. jumped in and secured the Dayton Peace Accords. So he is working both regimes. So with Reagan he is Ambassador to Lebanon and then then he's Bosnia negotiator, if you will, which he hated, with good reason in the '92-'93 period. He happened to be in the room with Christopher as the Secretary briefed the President on Bosnia. President Clinton asked Secretary of State Christopher about finding an "Italian" (ethnic) career FSO for Italy – to end the Italo-American bickering over who would get the job. Reg spoke out, exclaiming, "I'm Italian" – or so it was said. Now I'm sure he would have had another good ambassadorial assignment – like to Israel perhaps. You can't turn down Italy. He always had a competitive relationship with Dick Holbrooke who is, of course, the same type of character. Rough, tough and very smart. Not always the diplomat you want but good in a fight.

I remember when we had visits of President Clinton in both June and July of 1994. Reg was very nervous. He was a screamer too. He would come in in the morning and his secretary would get the brunt of his nervousness. I would tell him to stop drinking three cups of coffee before he came in to the office. When the Clinton trip was being organized for the 50th anniversary of the Liberation of Rome ion 1944, Reg told me that he had never had the visit of a president. He was really nervous. We had some hiccups there in the beginning with control officers and advance teams, but I told him to not worry. I would work with the advance teams and embassy personnel and they would ensure that it was all well-organized. Not to worry. Surprisingly, he said, "OK ". I had had experience in organizing President Reagan to Portugal on a State visit and President Bush to the

Vatican, and I was confident that the Italians would make it all go very well. So it didn't bother me. Of course it was intense as presidential visits are. Clinton came and it worked out well. Oh, the President came up to Reg's office in the embassy. Remember that office?

*Q: Oh yes.*

CREAGAN: The office was originally the Queen's ballroom, with the magnificent chandeliers and all. Clinton looked up and said, "Well, it suits you Reg." So Reg says, "I'm king." That was Reg. In charge. Now he left a lot of the management of the embassy and activity to me. He knew to use the DCM. At the same time he really liked to get into the political minutia. I can think of two instances. He often wanted to check to see if the Political Section was up on the events of the day. He suspected he knew more. Reg was up early and read perhaps five newspapers. Remember that the press in Italy was of political coloration and there were daily papers of the political parties. *L'Unita* for the Communists; *Il Populo* for the Christina Democrats and *Avanti* for the Socialists, for example. *Corriere della Sera* and *Il Mattino* of Naples and *La Stampa* of Turin were not party papers and were pretty good. In any case Reg was up on the news and the nuance. I got up at 5:30 and read six papers. At nine or so when the Ambassador got into the office, I would go see him and we would have our first talk of the day. Reg would say, "Let's join the Political Section meeting. I'm Reg Bartholomew, boy political officer (kind of like Captain Marvel). I'd say, "Let's go". Invariably the political section was caught by his questions. Of course I would know his game and try to be one step ahead. It was that sixth paper that sometimes gave me the edge and detail. The political officers caught on and really did a good job after the first few forays. What Ambassador Bartholomew wanted to get across was that he was on top of it all and you had better be prepared and brief him right. You could not buffalo him like some amateur political appointee. He often drew that contrast. He was not a political appointee but the best professional in the business.

Another note on Bartholomew: When he first came to Rome, we had 35 government agencies at the embassy. As DCM I had to manage those. With law enforcement agencies, for example, in addition to the weekly normal Country Team, I would have them come together for working sessions in my office. Reg came by for the first session or so and just point out that I was in complete charge as if he were there. That was really important and not all Ambassadors support the DCM that way. It is, of course, in their interest. In the first day or so of his arrival, Reg said to me, "Jim, let's walk around but don't tell anybody we are coming." So we slowly walked around section after section, went over to the consulate and then the defense department folks and then to another agency. There was a secure area. Reg said "I'm going in to check it out." An office assistant replied that you can't just go in, "No sir you have to be authorized to enter." "Authorized?" said Reg. "Yes, the chief has to say okay." "I'm the chief", growled Reg, and he kicked the door and he kicked it again. When the door opened, he engaged in some initial intimidation. He walked in and said, "Let me tell you something. I'm the Ambassador and everybody in this embassy works for me, period." So, he asserted clear authority and all got the message. And he was boss.

*Q: Oh boy.*

CREAGAN: It was pretty comical – and effective. He was very supportive of me when I was nominated to Honduras. He said, "Those are the tough guys in sticky places. You will deal with those guys in the sunglasses and the uniforms and a mess". So he was supportive in that way. At the same time he was all elbows and competition, A number one competitor for him was Dick Holbrooke. Holbrooke was in DC; so hard for Reg to do daily combat on that uneven field.

*Q: Today is the 28th of October 2013 with Jim Creagan. Jim we want to talk about your last days in Italy. How did you see Italy going at the time and particularly thinking what happened later on about the economy? Was that ….?*

CREAGAN: Things were more positive in the mid-1990s, so while Italy always had this overhang of an economy that had rigidities there were possibilities for the future. I think there was a lot more optimism in the mid-'90s – certainly than we have today. So you had some alternation of government. Berlusconi had just come in and in those days –although now it is kind of ridiculed – businessmen were new to the political scene and it looked as if there would be new energy in the economic sphere that the old politicians could not deliver. Romano Prodi then alternated with Berlusconi. Prodi was a guy with European experience, the EC Commission and all of that. So, whether you went to a Prodi government or a Berlusconi government there was more hope and optimism for the economy.

*Q: So when you left you thought things were moving along nicely in a way?*

CREAGAN: Yeah, Italy was doing okay; I mean things were moving along and were more hopeful than they had been. After all they were coming out of a period where it had been the Cold War, of course, so you had the Christian Democratic Party with no alternative, except with the politically sanitized Socialist Party. The Communist Party couldn't be offered the government during the Cold War; so democracy was not complete. I mean 1/3 of the electorate (PCI) could not participate in government. Then it all ended in 89/90. By 1992 the scandals of all the years came out in public. Christian Democratic politicians of all levels of government were ruined as were the Socialists. The heroes were the judges of "*mani pulite*". The parties were ruined. Exposed were the levels of personal corruption. In the scandals of personal corruption, enrichment and all of that, the Communist Party wasn't tainted as much. The PCI and its campaigns and offices were financed through export /import with the USSR and in other ways. It went to the party and not for personal gain of the leaders. Or so the myth was fostered. I remember visiting the PCI regional and provincial offices in the South of Italy in the 1970's. They had many times better buildings and more workers than the Socialists or even the dominant Christian Democrats. No way the structure and employees could have been financed from local contributions or legal means. But it came to the party and not to individuals. The PCI just did not suffer as much in that great scandal of 1992-'93 which opened the way for something new – and Berlusconi was something new. So by the time

you got to '96, when I left, you were rather beyond the scandals impact and into a period with more optimism. Look at the U.S. in that time. Jobs and an economy on the march.

*Q: Well Jim why did the scandals come out when they did? They must be one of these things that everybody knew about it but…*

CREAGAN: Right, right. What you can say is that the end of the Cold War in a sense permitted the scandals to be revealed in a public way and for all the laundry to be washed. Prior to that, a public scandal of that magnitude would have endangered democracy itself since the Communists were cut out of government. Obviously, there are specifics and each case came out for its own reasons, but the political environment was right. In the broader scheme you can say that it was time and there were no great dangers, if you will, to democracy or to the country itself. Certainly, the public was ready and able at that point to throw the bums out.

*Q: Alright you left and when did you leave there?*

CREAGAN: I left in the late spring of 1996. It was an election year with Clinton and Bob Dole as candidates. There was not a lot of cooperation going on there between the Congress and the president. I remember in terms of new ambassadors, Senator Jessie Helms, heading the Foreign Relations Committee, stated that they were not going to approve Clinton appointees for positions. Sounds kind of familiar right? I'd been contacted or nominated in November as I recall and was working on the papers. In 1996, no action was being taken on ambassadors. Other appointees were not going to get through the Senate either. In fact, the State Department Congressional Liaison office or "H" basically said we can't get anybody through. So we will just wait (and not try to schedule hearings). Reg Bartholomew told me that if I wanted to get the ambassador position, I had better go back to Washington and do it myself. So I did. I remember being back in Washington with our bureau for Congressional Liaison (H) not really able to do anything in terms of getting hearings. Three of us – Les Alexander who went to Ecuador and Lino Gutierrez to Managua and me – worked to get ourselves a hearing as Foreign Service officers, not partisan political appointees. I worked people I had known on both sides. I was helped by Bob Kimmitt, who had been State Dept. Undersecretary under Bush and others. Senator Paul Coverdale, who ran the subcommittee for Latin America and was a decent person, gave the three of us a hearing. No thanks to State. Senator Chuck Robb helped out as well. Of course he was on the Democratic side but in those years many of the senators got along with one another. I had known Chuck before as governor and the Senator of Virginia. He did the introduction and sponsoring of me, and I had a very good hearing. The issues were primarily drugs and the movement of narcotics from Colombia through Central America and Honduras and on up to the U.S. On a lighter note, I promised to invite the Peace Corpsmen to the Residence for Thanksgiving. I, of course, agreed with pleasure knowing that Gwyn would make it happen with great meals. I found out that I had the largest Peace Corps contingent in the world — 215 or so I think. The hearing went well; Senate confirmation followed and we arrived in Honduras in August 1996.

*Q: This sounds sort of unusual. Did you go to people in Congress and whom did you go to to say look we are Foreign Service types give us a special a break. How did that work?*

CREAGAN: Well, let's see. I talked to friends and I remember best Bob Kimmitt, who had been Undersecretary and knew all the Republicans. He was very helpful as were Senate staffers and Chuck Robb of course. If I had stayed in Rome and waited, I might have never gone or waited a year. Good for Reg Bartholomew. He said get back to DC and do what you can for yourself. Anne Patterson, as I recall, was up about the same time but she was working in the Department probably as Deputy Assistant Secretary. H had the lead and Anne didn't get out for another year – after the election. Of course, she was great and has had many tough diplomatic posts since. Clinton was elected again and then they had hearings and then she got out to El Salvador. I had been in Honduras a year by then. So, in the summer of 1996, Les went to Ecuador, Lino to Nicaragua and I went to Honduras.

*Q: Well this is the first time I've heard of this kind of self-help.*

CREAGAN: You mean do it yourself?

*Q: Yeah, well it makes sense.*

CREAGAN: It was that kind of a year.

*Q: But I would think that Helms wouldn't respond to this.*

CREAGAN: You know the head of the Latin American subcommittee, Paul Coverdell, the Republican Senator from Georgia had been head of the Peace Corps under Reagan and he really had a professional sense of what should be done. He saw it as important to have ambassadors at these embassies in Latin America and especially Central America, and he held hearings. I never saw Helms in all this. I guess Coverdale saw no political down side and went ahead and did the hearing. If we had left matters to H at State, forget about it.

*Q: Okay, how did the hearing go? Were you asked any questions that really pertained to the job?*

CREAGAN: Yeah, quite a few and, of course, well, we FSO's generally know the business, are well prepared and I had been working with the guys on the desk in the Department. The questions, as I remember were focused on the war against the drugs coming up from Colombia, from the FARC and from the others. How was that to be managed in Honduras? Questions like that. I spent time discussing our strategies. We looked to building up forces like police force on the ground. And we really needed to build a police force that worked and was civilian, not military. Honduras had been going through the transition of pulling the police out of the military and making a respectable civilian police force so as to encourage and support democracy. As it was, the military controlled all use of force. We talked about questions like that and the drug wars and then

the good Senator from Georgia threw me his last question. "Ambassador you have the largest Peace Corps contingent in the world (it was over 200 Peace Corps)". I said, "That's right." He said, "Will you promise me that you'll invite them over for the Fourth of July?" I said, "Yes". "And Thanksgiving?" I agreed completely, but noted that I had to ask my wife. I guess I got a unanimous vote.

*Q: You were in Honduras from when to when?*

CREAGAN: I was in Honduras from August '96 to August '99.

*Q: Okay, in '96 what would you say were the main issues that you were going to be involved with?*

CREAGAN: In the broadest respect, we were helping them shepherd that move toward democracy; they had already had elections but there was a need to support the democratic forces in Honduras. Then, there was the drug problem and the need to halt the flow of drugs to the U.S. We had significant AID programs in Honduras. In one area, we provided AID for agriculture and the introduction of cacao and ginger and other crops that could have a beneficial effect for small farmers and result in exports. We had water projects. I remember the system for provision of water to the port city of San Pedro Sula, Puerto Cortes. Other projects, for example, involved motion picture piracy by Honduran TV. The Motion Picture Association got directly involved. The MPA president, Jack Valenti, called me to press the case against Honduran television stations. The President of Honduras pushed back, complaining to me that we did not pressure China on the issue because China was too big. Honduras we pressured, because we could. He was right. And we did. So, we worked a lot of issues, from fostering new agricultural products for small farmers and for export to the U.S. and elsewhere to defending our MPA in intellectual property protection. Under it all was the effort to support Honduras in development of democratic institutions.

*Q: How stood Honduras as far as, I won't say economic development, but as far as democratic development?*

CREAGAN: Well they had been a limited democracy under military rule for several decades. In the early 1960s there was the so-called "Twilight of the Tyrants" and hope that reform, and democracy, would succeed in Latin America. The Kennedy "Alliance for Progress" would help push reform and not revolution as a solution for people and society. Democratic leaders were elected. In Honduras, Ramon Villeda Morales was a kind of darling example for JFK. However, he was removed in a coup d'état in 1963, and we did not recognize the subsequent military government for some time. Honduras and El Salvador fought a bloody "Soccer War" in 1969 and military governments were cemented in the area for some time. In the 1980s it was Cold War battles fought in Central America, and the ideological struggle got mixed up with genuine revolt of the poor and oppressed as you had in Salvador's civil war. In Nicaragua you had the anti-Somoza move against the dictator and then with Sandinistas in power in 1980, supported by the USSR and Cuba.

A pushback was launched from Honduras. The Contras. Honduran governments were military or heavily influenced by the military. By the 1990s civilians had been elected several times and the military influence was challenged. When I arrived a great Central American jurist, Carlos Roberto Reina, was president. He was very instrumental in establishing solid democracy in the sense of electoral democracy and with institutions and a Congress that answered not to military but to the broader public and ultimately, an electorate. Control over the use of force was very important. The military had their own budget and control of the resources. The police were under the military. If democracy was going to be successful then an important task was to get the police out from under the wing of the military and make them a true civilian force answering to elected and, under them, appointed officials.

I came to Honduras from Italy and a few years earlier had been at our embassy to the Holy See. So I had in mind the political importance of the Vatican and the Church, with special reference to Latin America. I looked up the Archbishop of Tegucigalpa, who is now a Cardinal, named Oscar Rodriguez Maradiaga. He was highly respected and a figure above politics, who was of critical importance in moving Honduras along the path toward democracy. The Archbishop was named head of a civil society commission that worked to bring the police under civilian management. His prestige and influence were important in getting the military to give up its hold on police forces. On that issue his success was such that, while he was in Houston for a medical procedure, the Congress named him "Chief of Police". I remember talking to him on the phone about that. He demurred of course but it was indicative. In sum, during the time frame of the nineties there was hope in Honduras. There was the process of democratization and you had a president in 1996 who was democrat and jurist. The economy was improving. The drug menace had not become acute. Honduras was a drug transport country but not yet torn up by gangs and cartels.

While I was there then the next year they had a presidential election, and at that point there were two parties competing, the Liberals and the Nationalists. The Liberal candidate won. He was the owner of an important newspaper in Tegucigalpa, La Tribuna. I dealt with two civilian presidents really asserting democratic control in their country. One example of the symbolic shift of power: When a meeting would be held between let's say the president and the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, the general would call the meeting and the president would be expected to go over to the military headquarters to meet. That was turned around when President Reina said that the meetings would be in his presidential office and in the presidency. Reina had told me of the tension involved. Suppose the military balked. But the General understood that times had changed; and so it was the symbolic action in change of venue that symbolized a shift in power. We were engaged in Honduras and had a robust AID program – in agriculture, in providing water resources to cities like Puerto Cortes, a major port, and in trying to encourage democracy also at that local level thorough aid projects in food and water supply. We had a military presence on a Honduran air base called Soto Cano. We had 600-1,000 U.S. forces, primarily Army, but what we called Joint Task Force Bravo. We worked with the Honduran and other Central American armed forces to be ready to act in

case of natural disasters. We planned with other Central American military forces on what you do when an earthquake hits. How do you respond to hurricanes? That was and is an interesting component of our presence in Honduras.

Anyway, it included consolidation of democracy, and that advanced when I was there.

*Q: Okay well then so off you go; how were you received?*

CREAGAN: I think it was a good reception in the country. The American ambassador is very visible, very much a presence, very much involved in most everything. We had an active diplomatic community. When we had certain bilateral issues; well that was kind of fun. I remember once the press had an editorial cartoon with the president of the country and myself with boxing gloves sparing because we would dispute things like parameters of intellectual property protection. He would say, "What in heavens, why are you going after Honduras and not China? Why would your Congress threaten sanctions on Honduras? Is it because we are so small? And if you want to look at intellectual property violations try China, if you want to worry about U.S. intellectual properties being stolen, look at China. So why Honduras?" I said, "Well, I guess because Honduras isn't China at that point." We weren't comparing it to China. So we would dispute, even publicly, yet did lots of activity together. When I would go out – remember we had lots of AID projects – so I'd go out to inaugurate particular AID projects. The Hondurans had a minister for social development and he would always be out there as well, and we would have big gatherings with the community. He later became president of Honduras and actually was removed from office, but that was into the future in 2009. I would say I was very active in and out of the embassy in Honduran communities all the time, every day. Also there was an active role for the ambassador's spouse, and Gwyn was always out there doing many, many things – with orphans, with indigenous communities, with the ladies in the barrios. She was an incredible hostess, and cook (led the other cooks in making the American Embassy a gourmet place.) The President of the country commented to me that the word around town was that the Ambassador's residence was the place to really enjoy quality cooking — much of it Italian. That was Gwyn of course bringing her Italian experience to bear. So it was a visible and active role. And the dinner table was a great place to do diplomatic business and advance U.S. interests.

I also recall the innumerable individual cases and interactions with the government and its president. I remember one involving a major drug lord. There was this bad man who had been police chief of Port au Prince, Haiti. When we went into Haiti with force in 1993 and removed the Cedras government of Haiti, Michel Francois escaped to the Dominican Republic. He had been involved in running drugs up to the Miami airport, not to mention human rights violations. He was a destabilizing factor in the DR and then, for political reasons, found himself free in San Pedro Sula, Honduras. DEA got the info they needed and we brought a case for his extradition to the U.S. The case went to the Honduran Supreme Court which, I am sure, came under a lot of pressure. The case looked good for extradition. The Honduran president and I both thought it a tight case. The court surprisingly denied it, allegedly under last minute pressure and influence of the narcos. He went free and members of the media took after me as Uncle Sam who kicked

an *autogol*. I am afraid that the *autogol* was against Honduras as the drug trafficker remained free and able to do damage.

*Q: Yeah. Well what happens if you have a case with you might say the goods on a person and the Supreme Court of a country tosses it out. Do we say well we'll enforce it or…?*

CREAGAN: In the old days you might just grab him right? DEA would want that, but we respected Honduran sovereignty. But no, that was not the case. It was bad for Honduras and the president of the country did agree with me, but he could not extradite on his own. It was the court. In the pre-democratic days, the guy would have been put on a plane to the U.S. and basta. So, it was good that, under democracy, the rules were respected.

*Q: Well how was the drug situation vis-à-vis Honduras?*

CREAGAN: How was it? Not like today where you have 85 percent of the coca -origin drugs coming up to the States from Colombia and thru Honduras. The Economist did a cover story with a map and illustration of a gun pointed from Colombia right at Honduras. The drugs then move thru Honduras up to Guatemala and Mexico and to the U.S. Back then, in the mid 1990's, the drug war was primarily at sea. We were running joint patrols with the Hondurans and with others, and we were actually having some success in capturing the so-called "go fast" boats with drug supplies. They were really aiming up toward the Honduran islands out there in the Caribbean. Roatan and Guanaja are two. Then the drugs would move to Florida via other islands or thru Belize. We were definitely working on and getting cooperation from Honduras.

In fact, things were moving forward both in the area of building a democracy and some possibilities in work, that is, the industry that we call "*maquila*" or clothing and assembly industry. It was growing to over 100 thousand jobs on toward 200 thousand. Other industries included shrimp farming on the Pacific coast and tilapia in the big lake Yojoa. All progress stopped and the country collapsed in a very dramatic way due to category five Hurricane Mitch in October of 1998. That killed off industry, including the traditional banana operations of Chiquita and Dole. Chiquita's levees were breached and broken and the land never really recovered. If you wanted to set a date when things went to hell in Honduras it was October 1998 with Hurricane Mitch killing many thousands of people and destroying the country's infrastructure. For us it was an extremely active period as the U.S. and others tried to meet the emergency, to save lives and to feed people. We ended up bringing in aid over time of hundreds of millions of dollars. Honduras never fully recovered even now. And Mitch gave the first impetus toward migration to the U.S. Those illegally in the U.S. at the time were not deported and got what we call Temporary Protected Status (TPS).

*Q: Were you there during the hurricane?*

CREAGAN: I was there during the hurricane. As it approached in late October I met with the president of the country and pledged aid. It looked like it would be a hurricane that would be really destructive on the coast, but we didn't know then how totally destructive.

This was a hurricane that in the end covered 800 miles – from the Caribbean coast to the Pacific coast. It blanketed the country. One expects the wind to be a killer on a coast. And the winds were really bad. One of the islands, Guanaja, named by Columbus The Isle of Pines, was denuded by 200 mile per hour winds. So, there were powerful winds but even more than that it was the three and four feet of rain which pummeled the country for days and created pure devastation, as rivers overflowed and wiped out cities and bridges and buildings and roads and people. As it was coming in, I got with the president of the country and he declared an emergency; so I was able to give them a portion of the money the ambassador has to give in such situations. Then I could alert Washington to the official emergency status of the situation. We acted fast. Luckily, we had the helicopters, 15 at the Soto Cano airbase. We had Black Hawk helicopters and we were able to bring in Chinooks (the U.S. Southern Command was still operating in Panama) and to begin to do everything from saving lives to providing first aid and medicines and food over a long period of time to villages, cities and countryside. We set up a massive rescue operation. President Clinton got involved and later he came down. Many, many Congressmen and Senators were involved; so we had solid support on both sides of the aisle and good support from people across the U.S. and across the globe. General Charley Wilhelm was the head of our Southern Command, a four star, so he and I worked right from the beginning to get into country what we could, as soon as the weather permitted, both to save and rescue. At one point we even were able to get our JTF-Bravo team to pull the president of Honduras out of the mud so to speak and fly him back to the capital. He had gone to the coast where we all thought the most devastation would be. Instead the capital and interior were hit hard as well. The capital was cut off as roads collapsed and its water supply was interrupted. Crisis indeed. As President Flores tried to get back to Tegucigalpa overland, his military vehicles got stuck in the mud. He called me and we discussed that he was "two valleys over" from the base at Soto Cano. I called the colonel on our quick talk phone and within hours he got his helicopters thru the rain and rescued the Honduran president. The president liked to recall for me after that about getting back to the base. Then the U.S. military flew him in a fixed wing plane to Tegucigalpa. A trip that normally takes 20 minutes was taking an hour or so. He asked what was wrong. The pilot replied that they were waiting for clearance. "I am the president, man, you have it". The pilot replied "Oh, it is not that kind of clearance, sir." Bad, bad weather – and it stayed. So, from the end of October until I left in August of 1999, I was very active in relief, rehabilitation and reconstruction. Massive aid projects, National Guard from many states, innumerable visitors including the current and past U.S. presidents. The embassy was committed, starting with my wife who did great work in the assistance and worked very closely with the Honduran president's wife in many, many projects and public cooperative efforts. She was a great representative for the U.S.

*Q: Was there response – I mean were we sending stuff to them or was it equipment or what?*

CREAGAN: Well, the first response was to look for people on the roofs of their houses and that kind of thing. Save lives. We had the original cell phones and I remember I'd be on the cell phone with the Hondurans who were out there, the vice president of the country was down in one town, the minister of social development (a later president who

was removed from office in the " coup" that wasn't your normal coup) in another. They could see a situation and our military with the Blackhawks could get up and go into rescue phase, because they were already in country at the Honduran base. Then there was massive aid that came in and not just from the U.S. but from countries all over the world. I remember the Russians with those huge Russian Antonov aircraft, flying into this 10,000 + foot runway that we built on the Honduran base called Soto Cano or Palmerola.

For coordination we started with an officer in our mil group that set up with the Honduran president's emergency management office as we began the constant coordination of relief. We had lots of AID people and those for crises coming in to manage what became a huge stream of aid. We had auditors from the beginning as well. I remember talking with the president of the country – and the Archbishop was there at this particular meeting – and the president was saying that if aid were channeled thru the Honduran military, it would be assumed that there was corruption – as had happened in hurricanes in the past like the 1974 Fifi. As we talked I was recalling the NGO aid organizations we already had working in Honduras. We had Care, we had Catholic Relief Services, and we had World Vision and others. With the president we came to the conclusion that it would be best to funnel aid through many of these private organizations. With them there would be no accusations of corruption on the part of Honduran organizations like the military. With the NGOs we already had established good auditing mechanisms. So that's how things then developed. We funneled many, many millions through these organizations and were able to control it, audit it and really help people by providing food, providing medicine and even basic housing in an effort to put people and country back together.

Just another anecdote from those days. President George H.W. Bush came down a couple of weeks after the hurricane first hit. I took him to see the Honduran President, Carlos Flores. We were talking about how to get aid flowing best and in quantity. President Bush said, "You know I've got two sons, one is the governor of Texas and one is the governor of Florida, and you know they have National Guards. Do you think National Guards can help?" President Flores replied with some doubts and concerns about the presence of U.S. military wandering about the country and the perception of threats to Honduran sovereignty. I noted that the National Guard are from the U.S. States; so it is different from regular army troops. President Flores recalled his days as an undergrad at LSU (Louisiana State University) and remembered that the National Guard responded to the governor. I am a Notre Dame grad and President Flores and I used to replay bowl games and the rivalry continued when we met the press or in meetings, especially with congressmen and others from the U.S. In any case, Flores agreed with the use of National Guard and, in the end, we had the National Guard from many different states come down and do incredibly good things in Honduras. They cleared roads (there had been avalanches all over the country even cutting off the capital itself for a time). They put up clinics. We had Marines build temporary bridges. To give you an example of need, the capital of Tegucigalpa had ten bridges connecting the city over a river and tributary. Nine of the ten bridges were knocked out by the hurricane; so you can imagine the disaster and the destruction there. Over all the country there may have been 100 bridges knocked out. So we had Marines working in building what we call "Bailey Bridges," which date, I

think, from World War II. It worked. Some of the bridges are still there. There was a lot of activity and a lot of involvement and it was very, very positive in all ways.

In my personal life, one of my sons happened to be there with us at the time and, when these nine bridges were knocked out, he remembered an orphanage that he had been working with, as had Gwyn, my wife. The orphanage was on the other side of the river from us, the water was rising and had already destroyed a huge WFP food warehouse. Kevin was worried about the orphans. He called me, and I was having dinner with the mayor. The mayor sent some trucks from the city and I got an embassy vehicle or two and Kevin found the 45 or so orphans and 7 or 8 sisters at the orphanage, praying. He told them to get in the vehicles and continue praying. Off they went and they got over the one remaining bridge. Then there was nowhere to take them. So he brought them home and we had forty some orphans, six or so with chicken pox, and the sisters all staying with us for some weeks or so. The residence was crowded and food hard to find in the city. But Gwyn made plenty of pancakes with maple syrup that we had in stock.

*Q: Oh boy.*

CREAGAN: That was traumatic, but obviously memorable for the kids. We had them swimming in the residence pool with Marines in the pool ensuring that nobody drowned. They ate hamburgers as well and I heard one praying that the lady (Gwyn) keep providing those forever. Just the other day I got a message that one of the orphans was getting her master's degree from the University of Cincinnati. She had asked about us and was emotional in locating us. She remembers staying at the residence in that time of crisis as really special. I am not sure how she got from Honduras to the University of Cincinnati, but life can be wonderful.

*Q: Well was the example of our ambassador to Nicaragua whose name I mercifully forget who closed his residence off to the staff in your mind?*

CREAGAN: No, it wasn't. I'm trying to think; was that back in the Somoza days?

*Q: Yeah.*

CREAGAN: Yeah, I know exactly who you mean. Turner Shelton. No, that was not on my mind. I guess nothing was on my mind other than that my son showed up with the orphans. So, we had to see what could be done. Gwyn happened to have lots of flour on hand, because we did all kinds of entertaining and had a well-stocked pantry. She ended up making endless pancakes day after day with the kids; and I had maple syrup from the States. But it was hard to find anything in those first days when the hurricane hit. There was no water, because water pipes ran under the bridges and when the bridges failed, the pipes were broken off and swept away. Disaster. In fact, it was the only time that I remember where armed men hijacked water trucks. Water was really precious. We in the embassy had our own well. When the city lacked water in the hospitals, I made a decision – which did not thrill all of the embassy staff that's for sure – but I made a decision to pull up water to fill water trucks (some driven by other older orphans we knew from an

orphanage outside town) and to take water to the hospitals. Some personnel were very worried about the situation – water, food and what might happen. I put in for and got "voluntary departure" so family members and certain non-essential staff (whatever that means) could go back to the U.S. and wait out the emergency. I needed people organized to work the emergency, but we did not want to have people panic or worry about family or be a burden. I did not see a security risk in terms of violence; to the contrary, Americans were seen as a solution to woes. So my decision was that those who could help and wanted to help should stay and do that. Others could have voluntary departure. Some families and children left.

Then you had everybody who wants to come to see the disaster. In the U.S. it had a lot of television coverage; soon I was managing, and the staff was managing, visits of scores of Congressmen and Senators and President Clinton and First Lady Hillary Clinton (separate trips) and Tipper Gore and so forth. They wanted to see and be seen as to how we were doing and how relief was progressing and like that. Then there were many international organizations involved. The UNDP, of course, and we worked closely with the World Food Program. I dealt with the head of the WFP, Catherine Bertini, whom I had known in Rome. Many countries were in the effort and we had a coordinating mechanism of ambassadors and aid officials. We were all active and it was a good cause. Some months later we had a Donors Conference in Sweden to coordinate the next phase. The year 2000 was a time of hope for the future.

*Q: This is the continuation of an interview with Jim Creagan on November 18, 2013. We will still talking about the aftermath of what was it Hurricane Mitch?*

CREAGAN: I think we were talking about Honduras, where I was from about '96-'99 and a massive Hurricane, Mitch, a category 5 with 200 miles per hour winds hit the country and the region. It lingered for many days and much damage was due to the 40 or so inches of rain.

*Q: You mentioned that you had visits from both President Clinton and First Lady Hillary Clinton. How did those go?*

CREAGAN: Well, very well indeed. I think it was the first time that a U.S. president had visited Honduras, and it came at a time of great trouble for the country, but also the relationship with the U.S. was very good. The U.S. had stepped up in response to this hurricane as had President Clinton personally. So that's what is interesting. By the time Clinton arrived in March of 1999, we had come through with about $300 million of committed aid and we were making things happen. We had civilian AID and other teams and we had the military. With the WFP in the lead, we were feeding 800,000 people for about a year. Clinton was seen as the acknowledged world leader in helping Honduras. We had thousands of troops and National Guard rotating through Honduras, way up from the normal 500 to 1000 American troops in Honduras all the time – on a Honduran Airbase, Soto Cano. Those troops had the Black Hawk helicopters, some of which were outfitted as medical copters. The troops were training anyway for action, in coordination with Central Americans, to handle a crisis – be it earthquake, hurricane or other natural

disasters. So it was interesting, and it was unlike Hurricane Katrina where you had the city, state and then federal governments fumbling around with "who's in charge" issues.

When something like Mitch happens overseas, there is no question among our authorities about who's in charge. It's the executive. The Ambassador is the representative of the President, and so has the power to step up and offer initial aid and get the USG involved. And, in effect, President Clinton was acknowledged as the leader of the international effort in Honduras. So we did lots of stuff, drilling wells, building clinics, putting up what we called Bailey Bridges, bridges that Marines had put up. Tegucigalpa, the capital of the country, was totally cut off by the wind and water and landslides. With ten bridges in the city, nine of them were destroyed. So one of the things we were able to do was actually build bridges, including in the city. Bailey Bridges which lasted for years. When Clinton came it was a hopeful moment. Congressmen came with him — from Texas and from California – and the troops, helicopters, and National Guard were there. He spoke with great empathy. Then we had a meeting, a round table of leaders with the president of the country, President Clinton, of course, the Archbishop, the director and president of the university, the head of the industrial association and so forth. We had maybe ten people around the table. I'm sitting back there with our people, congressmen, assistant secretary of Treasury and others. Before the meeting I gave Clinton a quick briefing. I said, "You know you are going to see this group of people, you are going to see this Archbishop Rodriguez (by the way Stu, he is now the number one leader of a group of eight advisers named by Pope Francis to give him advice apart from the bureaucratic Curia). Anyway, I said, "You are going to see Rodriguez Maradiaga, the Archbishop, and he is not going to talk to you about the Church, no, he is going to talk to you about the need for debt relief because that is a real urgent burden on the Third World and overwhelming for Honduras." He said, "Okay, I've got it." So we are sitting at the table and sure enough the president of the country and the Archbishop says, "We need debt relief …" And President Clinton replied, "You know I couldn't agree more. You are not some Asian economy that's screwed up as in 1988 Thailand and Indonesia." He was talking about the so-called Asian Tigers whose currencies and economies were in great difficulty due to economic forces and mistakes. "You have been hit by a massive disaster and you need debt relief and we are going to give you that relief. The Vatican ought to push on that." So Clinton one-upped the Archbishop, and in the end we did give them I think something like six to seven percent of their debt to the U.S. forgiven. A HIPC adjustment. The assistant secretary of Treasury or the deputy assistant secretary of the Treasury said, "Hey, that's not our policy," and I said to him, "Well it is now. The president just said it." Then the university president, the industrialist, the President of Honduras and others talked about the difficulties – about how there was a booming assembly line industry and then that's hit hard; banana production wiped out, and much woe. When they finished, Clinton said, "Let's see, let's sum up". And he gave a brilliant synthesis of what all the people had said. The guy was amazing, I can't remember the synthesis but I remember the impact. Then we went out and looked over the city and the damage. We had a big AID operation going at that point, doing everything from food to wellness. We had a multi-state National Guard operation building clinics and clearing roads. Clinton left the scene with a very positive impression.

Later the First Lady Hillary Clinton came as well and did a great job. You couldn't fly into Tegucigalpa because the airport wouldn't permit Air Force One. It couldn't take a big plane. The runway was not much over 5000 ft. and surrounded by low mountains. Once, I accompanied a 757 pilot in the cockpit as we landed in Tegus. The automatic sensors detected trouble and "screamed" "Pull up! Pull up!" The pilot ignored the device and landed well. You need to be experienced. We had a C-130 go off the end of the runway and kill members of the crew. So there was no way the President or First Lady was going to fly into Tegucigalpa on their big planes. The Clintons and others would fly into the Soto Cano airbase which was maybe 70 kilometers away and then, with Hillary, we got into a C-130 for the flight to the capital. I briefed Hillary on the flight and went over her speech. She was entirely focused on how to advance U.S. goals and help Hondurans. Not a word about what she needed personally. I jotted down some changes for her talk; she got out at the airport in Tegucigalpa and did a great job. In the background a Mexican C-130 is revving up and there are planes from Japan and elsewhere. It was an active airport with lots of supply planes coming in. Hillary then went off with the first Lady of Honduras and Gwyn to some meetings. So Honduras was helped, as were the surrounding countries – all of which had been somewhat damaged by this hurricane.

Another thing we did impacted immigration. Because of the hurricane and its devastation, the USG put into effect the Temporary Protective Status, TPS, for Hondurans in the U.S. There weren't that many, I mean compared to El Salvador which had gone thru the civil war in the 1980's. But there were some Hondurans, and we weren't going to deport them back to a country that was devastated. That was an important program. The NSC was helpful. James Dobbins was the NSC guy for Latin America and he was an effective fighter for good causes. He got the bureaucracy to act. As ambassador, I had full authority to coordinate and to lead all that for the President. When I left Honduras almost a year after the October hurricane, I had spent the bulk of the year on hurricane related business be it political, economic or other. We were pumping in money and coordinating with many NGOs from Catholic Relief Services, to Care, World Vision, Red Cross and many others. That occupied me until I left in August of '99.

*Q: Did you find that the hurricane upset the political equation in the country?*

CREAGAN: Yeah, it did and it really did permanent damage. They haven't come out of it yet. Permanent damage, because in some way it destroyed jobs forever. And it became a push factor for emigration of young men in particular. The situation of semi-chaos provided a climate for gangs and narcos to build infrastructure. Now, those in the U.S. in protected status (TPS) did send back remittances, which began to increase substantially. And that at least provided a source of support for families. Some things can be put back together and some things can't; the Honduran economy never really got put back together. President Flores in his talk with former President Bush put a case for U.S. support succinctly. He said, "You know from a troubled Haiti, the "boat people" tried to reach U.S. shores. You had, for different reasons, more boat people from Cuba, what with Mariel and all that. Well," Flores said, "you are going to see "feet people" from

Honduras, because Honduras is devastated. They are going to walk right across that Texas border; they are going to walk right up to Houston where you live and …" That is exactly what happened in the years following Mitch.

Honduras was open for gangs, big gangs from the area and including of course El Salvador. The drug trade increased exponentially and even Mexican cartels came to Honduras to exploit the country and people. In some ways it was also due to permanent effects of Mitch which are there today. Politically the president after the one I worked with tried to crack down on the gangs and that was partially successful, but the politics were in turmoil after that. The president of Honduras in 2009 was Mel Zelaya, whom I knew as a Minister in the Flores government. The military removed him in answer to a Supreme Court decision and Congressional decision. He had been accused of violating the constitution by carrying out an unauthorized referendum relating to the presidential term. Congress and the Constitution forbade any change in the one term four year presidency. Mel was inspired by Hugo Chavez of Venezuela who perfected the art of reelection into the future. So, acting on orders of the Court, the military pulled Mel out of bed and sent him to Costa Rica. It looked just like an old fashioned coup d'état. The difference is that the military had no interest in taking power but only carried out the order of the Court and the will of the Congress. The civilians who took the government were to be clearly "interim" until the November 2009 election. Mel was isolated in that sense, though he did have support from a significant portion of the populace. Months after he was removed, Honduras held its elections for the next president. The candidates of the parties, including Mel's Liberal Party, had been picked in primaries before the stand-off and Mel's removal. So the U.S. interest was to get the mess behind and move on with the results of elections. Observers (I was one of the international observers) declared the election free and fair. That is the election itself, and not in reference to the state of affairs that immediately preceded them.

*Q: You say the United States gets high marks for what it did. Had it already had high marks or was this taking this out of a trough of public opinion?*

CREAGAN: Not high marks, but did the right thing. A note on the 1980's: Honduras never got into the 1980's civil wars. On the one hand you had the Sandinistas in Nicaragua, who knocked over the dictator Somoza but then organized the government along Marxist lines. How democratic in governing is that? El Salvador and Guatemala were caught up in civil wars as well. Honduras escaped that terrible scenario. From Honduras "deployed" the group called the Contras, which were fighting against the Sandinistas in Nicaragua. Controversial aspects of U.S. policy were not lacking, and the United States was deeply involved in Honduras in those years. So there was deep criticism of the U.S. from the left, as well as great support for the U.S. on the right. But we never got caught up in the turmoil as happened in El Salvador and Guatemala. I talk about the 1990s as a period of transition from the military regimes and civilian governments under some military restraint. The U.S. was working for democratic transition and economic development. The image of the U.S. was positive. As U.S. ambassador, I was rather popular with the people. Then, when tragedy struck, the Hondurans expected, and in my opinion got, full U.S. support to help them recover.

Honduras looked north to Mexico, in a sense for cultural reasons, and Mexico was kind of the colossus to the North. But the U.S. had special importance for historical and political/economic reasons.

*Q: Was there at least when you initially arrived the talk of the colossus to the north and all that stuff?*

CREAGAN: Yeah, there was that too. I mean the United States, so here we were. You looked to the U.S. for answers and for investment and for a future of tourism, although that sector needed a lot of work. I always told them to shape up with the coastal development and the islands, because someday Cuba would be back as tourism destination for Americans. If Honduras had not grabbed some market by then it might never do so. Honduras needed the U.S. and depended on the banana and other industries. Yet the banana also brought great criticism of the U.S. Chiquita and Dole were very important and provided for thousands of jobs. Honduras was the original "Banana Republic". The banana industry "married" Honduras and New Orleans. The founders of the two companies were created by Italian gelato cart salesmen, named D'Antoni and a Jewish peddler, Sam Zemurray. The companies there, like United Fruit (Chiquita), provided jobs, schools, clinics, housing, etc. company towns with cradle to grave aspects. To love and hate. The U.S. ambassador and U.S. Mission represented all the aspects of the U.S. — good and bad. We also had and have U.S. troops on a Honduran airbase. We built a ten thousand foot runway, the best in country. Honduran journalists would engage me in repartee, stating that the U.S. had troops and control of a U.S. base in Honduras. I would always say that we were guests of the Honduran government and people and the base was (as it is) of the Honduran air force. We'd do this repartee with the journalists. Now, I remember when I first went into Honduras, there were political cartoons in the major paper. They had me walking in in striped pants and tails and carrying a package with my name "cREAGAN" to emphasize the Cold War power. Of course, I was Clinton's Ambassador.

*Q: Yeah.*

CREAGAN: Here comes the ambassador from the rich country to a country really down on its luck and the cartoons always showed a little poor Honduran man in the streets welcoming the plutocrat ambassador "to your embassy in this poor country". So that gave a flavor. Then when I was hitting them on intellectual property protection and Honduran violations, cartoons would show the president of the country and me boxing one another.

Now when I left, then they had this big cartoon with the figure of the poor man in the street saying "Gracias Broder", thank you brother, because of all the aid and support we provided in the aftermath of Hurricane Mitch. It's true I was all around the country, by road or helicopter, as we delivered the first medicines. I'd be there with the president of the country and often with U.S. or international political and aid officials. Because of our help, I accepted in the name of Americans certain honors. One editorial cartoon in 2000 shows the President of the Senate of Honduras giving me honorary citizenship. He states in Spanish, "And this comes complete with a green card." So that's the kind of the image

we had because the U.S. Administration – and Congress — responded to tragedy and did good. President Clinton was so very good at leading this whole process. The agencies – State AID and Defense with all its good assets — worked together and were supported by the Congress. That would be unusual for today's political world.

*Q: Yeah, in other words Clinton got the media exposure and all he didn't say well that takes care of that; there was real follow through.*

CREAGAN: Real follow through absolutely and continual; follow through and good media exposure. There were real concrete actions taken that impacted lives immediately. If you go there now you still see the clinics, the wells, Bailey Bridges that were built. I was just in Honduras last year, and there are the bridges that I inaugurated still doing the job, even though intended for temporary use. When we first took action, we moved very fast. Charlie Wilhelm was the four star head of our Southern Command. They had just moved headquarters from Panama and Wilhelm was in Miami. He and I would be on the phone, get helicopters in there (we still had assets in Panama and did not move everything till the end of 1999), get organized and initiate rescue plans. At first there wasn't any money for that but great support again from the NSC and the White House. Jim Dobbins and others at the NSC and the Pentagon gave support. So basically we spent money that you might say technically wasn't ours to spend for that particular event. They borrowed money from a Bosnia account to use immediately to save lives and to carry out rescue.

I remember I think the second day of the hurricane I got a call from Cardinal Bernard Law. He was the Cardinal /Archbishop of Boston; a very powerful guy in those days before all the pedophilia issues and church problems of the last decade. So Law called me up and said that the people in Boston had come up with $500 thousand and he was going to bring it down and I said, "Terrific, Cardinal that would be fantastic." So he did, and he flew down. I got a call from Senator Ted Kennedy who said," Anything you need Ambassador, we in the Senate are ready to help." So when you've got that kind of support, and it has to be both sides of the aisle, it works. The other side of the aisle doesn't want to leave an impression that they don't want to help out people who are devastated. So, I am sure that the Pentagon had no problem in effect moving money from one account to the new one. I had no complaints about support from Washington.

*Q: How did you find your last year there?*

CREAGAN: Very active and, of course, it involved being out in the country. That included Gwyn. She was out everywhere and often with the first lady of the country working on the rehabilitation and helping in very individual ways. For example, at one point after the hurricane we had 45 orphans living in our house…

*Q: Good God.*

CREAGAN: …and seven nuns; so then Gwyn was out there. And those needing help showed up as well. We just kept going right up to the day that we left in August 1999.

We focused on reconstruction, relief and building back. We had means to move around and to deliver supplies and materials. We had military helicopters. The ambassador had and still has, I'm sure, a C-12, a fixed wing plane at the embassy which then got us into places down on the Mosquito Coast and up into remote areas. We would go in with medical teams from our National Guard from Puerto Rico and the states. With AID in the lead, we worked to make certain that aid was audited. That worked out well.

*Q: What did you do after you left?*

CREAGAN: So then when I left Honduras this is at the point in the Foreign Service where it is time to retire or maybe see if there is another post, right?

*Q: Yeah.*

CREAGAN: So Gwyn was ready to retire, after 34 or so years. There was some talk that maybe Brazil would be open. I had had two tours there – as Consul General in Sao Paulo and political counselor in Brasilia. I had four years as political counselor in Portugal. I knew the people in Brazil and kept somewhat in touch after 1992. Other Foreign Service officers would have been good as ambassador. One, who was political officer in Sao Paulo when I oversaw the reporting from Brasilia, was Donna Hrinak. She was really good and did become Ambassador to Brazil later. But in 1999 it went to a Washington lawyer political appointee. Since the election went for "W" that Clinton/Gore appointment did not last long into the new administration. Goodbye to Clinton appointees. And the post remained vacant for quite a time. By the way, if you go with the career FSO you get full coverage, with both Democratic and Republican administrations.

*Q: Yeah.*

CREAGAN: I think we went almost two years with no ambassador in Brazil so that's another story but not a good way to do things. Well, in any case, we weren't going to hang out in Washington, and I would have been ticked out anyway. Gwyn had no burning interest in going back to Brazil at that point. And I had received a call from trustees of a university in Rome, called John Cabot University. One trustee had been George H.W. Bush's Ambassador to Italy, Pete Secchia.. I knew Pete and knew many other trustees from my many years in Italy. They figured I might be rotating out of Honduras and might consider going back to academia. A university presidency, especially in Italy, seemed like a fun career move. I met with trustees in Boston and accepted the offer. Back to Rome we went, and spent the next six years growing the university and – best of all – we got U.S. accreditation from the Middle States Commission on Higher Education, the same accrediting body for the major U.S. universities.

*Q: Okay, let's talk about the…*

CREAGAN: So Foreign Service to the academic side teaching foreign policy, international law so those things kind of go together.

*Q: Well let's talk about the university in Rome. How long has it been there and would you describe it as it was when you were there.*

CREAGAN: It was and is a small university; the kind of place I'd call "college". However, very few colleges are called "college" anymore. The word conjures up small and even prep schools. John Cabot University was founded in the 1970s by American businessmen from Cleveland. A leader was Paul Frohring, the CEO of American Home Products and the first to introduce infant formula and penicillin. Built a huge conglomerate. The idea with JCU was to create an American model university in Italy. Italian students would learn and then enter into business – multinationals. They would speak English, have some business courses under their belts and liberal arts as well. It was and is a university not just on the American model but accredited in the U.S. You and I know the Italian model wasn't much in the way of attendance in classes but great focus on the oral exam when you are ready – in three, five years, seven years. Lecture halls are big and individual attendance was spotty. Our university was and is small classes, with Italian students mixed with students from around the world and especially the U.S. It was a very good study abroad experience for U.S. students. The university was small and not doing so well when I went there. It had an enrollment of perhaps 350 students, which is not viable long term. What we decided to do was to get American accreditation. No university in Italy had American accreditation. By that I mean real accreditation, not the phony accreditation of some, or many, for- profit schools in the U.S. I'm talking about those regional associations, the peer group associations that accredit the universities in the U.S. — Harvard, Columbia, Notre Dame and the like. We were chartered in Delaware and for us the accrediting association was the Middle States Commission on Higher Education. We worked hard for four years and in 2003 achieved accreditation, which means that all courses are accepted in the U.S. and an undergraduate degree is recognized for entry into graduate schools or the professions.

We needed to grow the student body to a viable number — 800 to 1000. I traveled throughout the U.S. and visited with presidents of universities, describing for them the quality of education and experience at JCU in Rome. I did agreements with many universities from American University to Boston College to Notre Dame to Villanova. We had agreements with Emory, Michigan State and many others. (By the way, I remembered my own experience putting together my own "study abroad" by hitching a ride to Mexico and then enrolling at the University of Guanajuato. There were no credits for Notre Dame asked or given. It was the experience.)

This organized way of bringing students from a myriad of U.S. universities (I capped the number from each) to mix with Italian and other European students had great good effect on all. And it helped us pay our bills in a country where university education had been more or less free – without facilities and programs of course. So, by the time I left in 2005, we had almost 800 students and had been turning a "profit". As a "non-profit", universities do not have "profits". What we did have were increases in our "non-restricted net assets". So, we built up. We went to three, six, eight hundred students, which made it viable. In Rome you can get really good professors and that made it valuable in the academic/intellectual sense.

*Q: What was the background of most of those students?*

CREAGAN: If they were Italian students…oh the other thing I had to do was get a European degree because the European universities were beginning to recognize one another's degrees, but it was taking time. The Erasmus (European study abroad) program with its recognition of other European courses had not yet taken off. There was a slow "Bologna" agreement process for validation – perhaps of a French degree in Italy and vice versa. We short-circuited the problem of the validity of a U.S. degree in Italy by getting validation and accreditation from the UK. Our students would get an American degree from JCU and an European degree from the University of Wales. So, in terms of students we had perhaps one hundred to one hundred fifty Italian students. They wanted this degree for business in order to get a job with a multinational company and like that. Then you had students increasingly from China. We had students from Serbia, many who got scholarships; I remember the Bosnian turmoil and good students were coming out of that area. We could help some with scholarships. We had some Latin American students, a small group. The student body of 300 grew to 500 and then more as both study abroad and regular students came. As the quality of study abroad students from U.S. universities expanded, it helped trigger U.S. students to come and study for all four years. It is still the only university in Italy with regional or real U.S. accreditation, and is really a good place to get a liberal arts, social science and business education. So university president was a different kind of action from the Foreign Service and kind of fun, but in 2005 it was important and necessary to come back to San Antonio. So, I was in Rome as President of John Cabot University for six years –1999 to 2005. At the university in San Antonio, I have a "chair" in International Relations and teach International Law and International Relations subjects. I use my Foreign Service experience to enhance the lectures on international issues.

*Q: Well before we leave Rome one of the things that I've gotten from many of our colleagues has been when they get involved with academia they find that they are involved in fights and quarrels that are worthy of the Balkans.*

CREAGAN: Oh that's true.

*Q: Did you find that?*

CREAGAN: Oh yeah. I had a board which I would call somewhat dysfunctional; so you had real splits on the board. I figured that I was okay, in the sense that I had had a Foreign Service career, had retired and was back in wonderful Rome — but not forever. I was pretty liberal with my own opinion on matters and took on board factions – at times in less than diplomatic fashion. At one point I said, "The chairman has been around here for many years and he really needs to step down and let somebody else be chairman of the board". Issues at board meetings should not be about members of the board but about issues for the university. The Boards that I sit on are pretty good in the sense that they discuss "big" issues like should we establish a nursing program/school? Or how do we expand scholarships for Latin American students? How do we get the best and wrest

them away from the Ivies. So we had those kinds of discussions. I don't see fights among the board itself. But, we had that. I concluded that rotation of trustees and limited years for Chairman is important for a university. We had a Chair for 20 plus years. Not a way to innovate. At the level of faculty and Deans of the universities, I saw and see lots of exhaustive meetings over course titles and what constitutes a major or could we add a minor? As President of JCU one of the big issues with faculty – apart from salary of course – was the issue of faculty parking. It is a big issue on many campuses and is certainly important where I teach in San Antonio. But in Rome it was critical. Parking on the Lungotevere?

*Q: Oh God.*

CREAGAN: Now, the faculty had parking in the central courtyard of our 16th century building. It is just up Via della Lungara from the Vatican. I needed space for students and a place safe from cars, not clogged with them. I banned parking in the courtyard, because I wanted to turn that into a beautiful place for students. I gave warning but there was no room for negotiation. I mean some old faculty could have lynched me if given half a chance. So, I paid for metered parking along the Lungotevere. Later everybody appreciated the beautiful courtyard, good for study, for concerts and even for Commencement. I had the Prime Minister of Italy (an old friend named Giuliano Amato) speak there.

*Q: Oh well I remember going around when I was with the senior seminar I did a paper on foreign councils in the United States and I asked, "What's your biggest problem?" I was ready for well security or lack of response but it was parking.*

CREAGAN: Right. Oh yeah.

*Q: Oh yeah.*

CREAGAN: Well anyway I had about 34 years in the diplomatic business and it all started with the kind of inspiration that can come from leadership. JFK. There were many in my generation who were inspired by those words in the inaugural itself —"Ask not…ask what you can do for your country". Then there was the *Alianza para el Progresso*. And with the assassination of President Kennedy, there was the call to continue a dream. And the Peace Corps was a great idea for the time. I remember being at Notre Dame, and the first Peace Corps contingents had training there. When I went down and did my study abroad stints in Mexico and Guatemala, I stayed with Peace Corps volunteers. The American Friends (Quakers) were there in Guatemala as well. So, there was that desire to contribute to the country. That was before the assassination, when the legend of Camelot took hold. I worked for AID in 1963 as I completed graduate studies at UVA. Then entered the Foreign Service with the 73rd class in June 1966 and stayed until retirement in August 1999.

*Q: Well then did you leave Rome on your own will?*

CREAGAN: Good point! I was a university president with good salary and interesting issues, though with an always fractious Board (which I could have ignored in many ways). Gwyn's mom had increasing dementia, perhaps Alzheimer's, and we had to go back. I had another year on my contract, but I told them I really needed to go back to the U.S. It was time – after all those years abroad. Oh, by the way we were assigned to Washington only once in 34 plus years of service. That was from 1980 to 1982 as the Italian Desk Officer. When I came back to the U.S., I stopped over for a semester at Notre Dame – as a Scholar in residence at the Kellogg Institute. Then back to San Antonio. There were several universities in town, and I was going to go back to my original university because they were great folks. That is St. Mary's University where I taught in 1965 and 1966. A friend, who was and is the president of the University of the Incarnate Word (UIW) lured me to go with him and set up an international affairs program in the Political Science area. So I did. I still teach.

*Q: Let's talk about your work now.*

CREAGAN: Well, at Notre Dame in 2005, the President Emeritus asked me to stay with them (it would not be his decision really). But we had to go to San Antonio — and I remembered the long winters in South Bend. They were fun as a student, but …

While at Notre Dame in 2005, I got together with Curt Kamman, who had a long and important career in the Foreign Service and as Ambassador to Colombia and Chile. He taught a foreign policy course at ND and lived in Michigan. We visited with them.

Then on to San Antonio where both Gwyn and I worked at UIW. She managed the study abroad programs and I taught international relations, international law, and the like. I sent many students thru her program to study abroad — not a few of them in Rome. I did that from 2006-2012, six years, after which I cut back on time spent. I still teach one or maximum two courses a semester and mentor some students. As a full professor I taught international law, international organizations, U.S. foreign policy in Latin America, conflict and terrorism. I built a program with about fifty students to advise. At this point I teach one or two courses a semester. This semester I will teach conflict and terrorism and next semester U.S. foreign policy in Latin America. Oh, by the way, sometimes the Foreign Service comes back to get you. In 2009 Tom Shannon, then Assistant Secretary for Latin America and Craig Kelly the Deputy Assistant Secretary called me up and told me that our ambassador had been kicked out of Bolivia and the DEA had been kicked out and the Peace Corps was out and would I go to Bolivia to run the embassy and be Chief of Mission? I said, "No, I'm going to Paris because we were going to spend some weeks there with my brother (former Foreign Service and George Shultz's assistant in 1980's). Gwyn said to me, "well, I know you." Sure enough, the next day, I called back to the Department and said, "Okay, I'll go to Bolivia." So I went to Bolivia in June or the end of May in 2009. They opened up the ambassador's residence, and I represented the U.S. before President Morales and the Bolivians as "Dr. Creagan, U.S. Chargé d' Affaires". I hosted a big Fourth of July reception at the residence. I dealt with Evo Morales and all his advisors, most particularly the Foreign Minister, David Choquehuanca. I told Washington that I would stay three months, because I needed to go back to the university in

September. I thought we would be getting an Ambassador before too long. As it is, we still do not have an Ambassador in La Paz.

*Q: Was it Evo Morales?*

CREAGAN: Yes, Evo Morales. I was called Chargé d'affaires, but actually Foreign Minister Choquehuanca and the others always called me "Embajador". So, we had a kind of continuity. I was older than them, and I knew or knew of the leaders of Bolivia when Evo and friends were children. Former President Paz Estenssoro for example, lived in Lima, Peru, in the 1970's when we were in Lima. Evo and team were in their forties when I was there in 2009 and I was in my late sixties. Anyway, the Bolivian regime was suspicious of the USG. I tried to work with them. They wanted to cut the entire AID program; I worked with the foreign minister and explained that our AID programs were to help real Bolivian people. In the end, we were able to preserve some of these programs but deep, deep hostility toward the U.S. on the part of many of his advisors doomed AID in the longer term.

*Q: What was the root of the hostility?*

CREAGAN: Well in the case of Evo it gets kind of personal because when he was a kid his family moved from the Altiplano down to what they call the Chapare, down in sort of the lowlands – a big coca growing area. Evo got involved in coca growing and trade, and I think the Bolivian police roughed him up as a kid. Evo got elected president, also with a lot of support from the coca "industry". I think he is still president of the coca growers association. So, it is not cocaine with Evo; it is coca leaves and legal chewing and all that kind of thing. There was resentment to the U.S. on the part of others, including those influenced by Marxism and the theme of U.S. imperialism. The Bolivian vice president, Garcia Linera, struck me as a classic European-type intellectual leftist. And many of Evo's team were anti-U.S. After all, we had been the dominant "neo-colonial" power, if you will, in Bolivia. One guy in a top position was named Quintana. He had gone to the School of the Americas; so I guess he thought he knew everything about the U.S. and U.S. military. He had espoused conspiracy theories about how we had troops or bases down in the Bolivian jungle. Not sure how that would work without somebody knowing where or what. It didn't matter. Evo's view of the U.S. was limited to Bolivia, the drug wars and the political scene, but he was influenced as well by his patron and donor, the charismatic Hugo Chavez of Venezuela. I saw the influence of Chavez over Evo when Chavez came to La Paz for an independence celebration. The Russian Ambassador and I concluded at a luncheon we attended that, for all appearances, Chavez was the leader and host and Evo a mild guest. Chavez called on Evo to sing. He didn't. Chavez called on the Brazilian Foreign Minister, Celso Amorim (an old friend of mine from Brasilia ) to sing. Amorim had gone back to Brasilia before lunch, as he told me he would do — to avoid it all. Chavez then called on the band to play and he sang. Quite a show of alpha male. Evo did the alpha male approach sometimes himself. I remember an independence ceremony in Sucre, Bolivia, where Evo had the diplomatic corps present. As Evo and his Vice President, Garcia Linera, stood in front of the assembled ambassadors – and Dr. Creagan

– Evo said, "See this guy (pointing to the VP)", "He reads books. I read people". So there.

Now, Evo really did not know nor appreciate U.S. democracy and system of government. I remember talking to Morales once and trying to explain our programs and decisions. We had these programs of benefits – actual benefits in terms of specific elimination of tariffs but linked to cooperation on our anti-narcotics campaign. One was called ATP/DEA or Andean Trade Preferences /DEA. It was based on Andean countries cooperating on the anti-narcotics campaign. Since Evo had kicked out the DEA (officers and families), he was not a favorite up on Capitol Hill. I explained to Evo and his Foreign Minister another time why we (USG) could not certify that Bolivia was cooperating on the war with drugs. So, Congress would cut out the trade benefits that came exclusively because of this kind of cooperation. President Obama would cooperate with Bolivia in areas that would help the populace and would be open to imports of products like the quinoa with GSP preferences, but ATP/DEA was out. I think Evo genuinely did not understand the role of Congress as independent branch of government. At a meeting I, along with a friend and advisor of our Secretary of State, had with Evo we explained the role of Congress and the President on tariffs and most other matters. Evo then made the telling comment, "President Obama can do what President Obama wants to do." Now, Evo had a tendency to look down at his shoes as he was sitting, and by the way, I remember that he wore nice bright red tennis shoes along with his Levi's and his trademark sweater. At the end of our meeting, which occurred the first weekend I was in La Paz, Evo concluded that "Bush is white and Obama is black, but the U.S. is the same Old Empire". I could see it would be challenging to modify his opinion.

After a fascinating couple of months or so, I had to go back to the university. I turned over the Chargé role to the incoming DCM. I think everybody thought that we would have an Ambassador before the next year (2010), also because we had worked up agreed language for renewed bilateral working arrangements. Instead, in another year or three, the entire AID program was terminated.

*Q: What's the problem?*

CREAGAN: Oh well let's see, they simply won't agree to full relations. And we have issues for sure.

*Q: The agrément.*

CREAGAN: Yeah, the *agrément* – and Bolivia followed the Chavez approach. They somehow think it's a weapon but it's really not.

*Q: It just cuts off any line of cooperation.*

CREAGAN: Yeah, but there you have it. I guess it makes them feel good to prevent exchange of Ambassadors. Go figure. It actually hurts Bolivians, especially when I think of the very beneficial AID programs that were terminated. *La vida es asi*.

*Q: Yeah.*

CREAGAN: When I was there I dealt with a lot of the diplomats. A really important country for them is Brazil. The Brazilian ambassador's residence is right across the street from our chancery; so he and I would get together a lot. I had done two tours in Brazil as Political Counselor in Brasilia and Consul General in Sao Paulo. So, we engaged on a personal level as well and had friends in common, including the Brazilian Foreign Minister. Brazil can be very helpful with Bolivia to keep them on track, but even with Brazil they did stupid things. Evo nationalized Petrobras, the Brazilian oil company, to take sovereign control. The Brazilians naturally froze investment. That was a few years ago. But I mean sometimes what are you going to do? In any case Brazil is big brother; so Bolivia has to work with them. And Brazil can be more influential than we can on important issues, including the control of drug trade.

*Q: Did you come away with a feeling about whither Bolivia?*

CREAGAN: With time, and in the meantime, Bolivia has been blessed by the commodities boom and the growth in China. Some things work. Evo, the first indigenous president as he says, is in power. That part is pretty good. I mean having an indigenous leader, as long as democratically elected and democratically governing, is excellent. But, will he give up power? Will that make a difference? A story to be told. Consolidation of democracy and wise economic decisions can happen but are never guaranteed. It is good that Evo has a government with solid popular approval. That too can be ephemeral. As we know in the U.S. That's not enough. So I hope they are able to work it all out.

*Q: Yeah. This is a quick round up but what is your impression of the students you are getting now?*

CREAGAN: The students are genuinely curious and interested in learning. They are quite uneven in background and in ability to write and communicate orally. I am encouraged by their interest. We get students who are first in their family to university, and they are very career oriented.

In general I think the high school preparation is not good; so it's a chore to get them to write. But they are very career oriented. We also get some very good students. We have a lot of students from Mexico. Many families have moved up to San Antonio for reasons of deteriorating security in Mexico. There are families from Monterrey and Mexico City. The kids are here, and they go to university here. Often, those students have had really good high school training, and they write well. It is mixed, but many students from Mexico write and study better than the students who went to school here in the U.S. I also have students who are a little bit older, and they are in the military or another government agency. We have several foreign affairs-oriented government agencies around here and they are very dedicated. They want to get that degree and move on. Sometimes they want to get a degree in international relations, so they can go to an NGO or maybe the CIA or the civilian side of the U.S. government. So, I find the dedication there. Then there are a

lot of students with simply not good high school training. They can't write, period. Another issue for many students is that they have to work. I have one student who is working all night on EMS and driving an ambulance. After working all night, she comes to class at 10:00 a.m. before going home to bed. That is commitment. If you are at school in the Ivies – or Notre Dame – you are in residence and not working full time. It is really different.

*Q: You mentioned that the violence which has practically gotten out of hand in Mexico which is done by gang violence in many of the cities like Monterrey it gets reflected where you are as far as people fleeing it and all?*

CREAGAN: Oh yes, oh yes. We have quite a bit of immigration, and some families use the "investor" visa which gives them residency if they have invested $500,000 or $600,000 in a business. We have perhaps 100,000 Mexicans who have recently come to San Antonio and environs. I am speaking of legal immigration for the most part. This is good for them, good for San Antonio and good for our universities. We see many more good restaurants – something I like to experience. Then these children/students go to the universities and colleges. That is good for San Antonio, but the emigration is not so good for Mexico. I am told it is getting better in Monterrey; so there will be some returning. Others will stay here for sure, or at least keep a house here.

*Q: Well how do you find the political climate in both San Antonio and also Texas?*

CREAGAN: Well, I'm a democrat; so I like the San Antonio. There is some crime of course, but we have a good, generally community based police force. We have a young Mayor, Julian Castro, who I think is really good and – if we think of the national stage then certainly Julian has a future. He is under forty years old now and his twin brother, Joaquin, is a brand new Congressman. We are very conscious of conservation of the water – aquifer level is on the news every night. There is good tourism. There is a movement of millennials downtown, there are bikes and there is craft beer. We have the C.I.A., one of the few in the states except for Seattle and New York. The Culinary Institute of America has helped create neat new restaurants with South American cuisine and like that.

*Q: Okay, Jim I think this is a good place to stop. Now what will happen will be I will wait for the transcriber and you will get a transcript and then we would like you obviously to edit it but also if there is anything that didn't come up or I didn't ask a question or you forgot something put it in. If, you've got to put a question for me to ask you respond to put it in. This is your thing and particularly in oral history more is better than less because people will come in to these transcripts and they will be going for key words or something and they probably won't use the whole thing they'll use parts of it.*

CREAGAN: Okay, I will do that.

*Q: Okay, my best to Gwyn.*

*End of interview*