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

AMBASSADOR LEWIS HOFFACKER

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Ambassador Jack Jernegan

INTERVIEW

HOFFACKER: This is Lewis Hoffacker speaking about my Foreign Service experience as well as my pre-Foreign Service and post-Foreign Service experience. I'm doing this without files because I did not bring my Rolodex from the Department of State or Shell Oil Company with me into retirement. Therefore, any inaccuracies or inadvertent are the result of fading memories.

My interest in the Foreign Service and diplomacy evolved in high school as World War II approached. I felt that there was something which I might be able to do which could reduce such catastrophes. Therefore, I chose the Foreign Service as a vehicle. There was no background in my family, which was poverty stricken and was broken as well. I had encouragement from the maternal side of my family, but very little financial support. I was determined to work my way through college if necessary. My first year of college was at Gettysburg, near my hometown. I anticipated the draft because this was 1942. So, without money, I took a job in Washington with the Office of Civilian Defense to earn money to go to night school at George Washington.

I was drafted in 1943. I was put into the infantry because my eyes were too bad for Air Force or Navy, which were my preferences. I grabbed an opportunity to attend an Army specialized training program in French, which was designed to prepare military government officers for France. The program was disbanded after about nine months.

I was thrown back into the infantry, where I found an opening to go to officer's training school, and then was immediately assigned to Okinawa, where I was seriously wounded. After six months of hospitalization and further Army training in the United States, I was finally let go after three and a half years in the military.

I returned promptly to George Washington University, where I graduated in 1948 with a bachelor's degree in history and political science. I went on to Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy with a master's in international affairs in 1949. I had a scholarship to Oxford, courtesy of the Institute of International Education, but I chose to take a job in the Department of State until I passed the oral Foreign Service exam. I passed the written portion on the second time around. I was accepted for CIA at the same time I was accepted for the Foreign Service and I chose the latter. Prior to entering the Foreign Service, I worked on the Greek Desk in the State Department in 1949 and 1951, where as a new employee, I concentrated on the refugee problem in Greece and Cyprus, which was boiling over with enosis, the union of Cyprus with Greece. Of course, the communists were active. This was the time of the Greek-Turkish aid program.

I stayed on until my Foreign Service class was organized in 1950. This was a great experience, finally entering this elite fraternity. There were no women at that time in the class. I had some good classmates and stayed in touch with several of them, including Chris Chapman and Herb Goodman. While in the training program, I married the daughter of a Foreign Service officer. We went to Tehran, our first assignment, on our honeymoon, aboard an American export line ship which took our old Ford and us to Beirut. From there, we drove across the Syrian desert, got lost trying to find Baghdad, climbed the western Iranian mountains and ended up in Tehran in 1951. It was a very exciting trip. The ambassador hadn't decided what to do with me. So, I was told to go away for a week and did so to Isfahan, a wonderful place. When I returned to Tehran, I was assigned to the Consular Section with the Protocol Office as part of that job. The theory in those days was to give new officers training throughout the embassy. I started with Consular. After a year in that position, I moved to the Political Section, carrying my protocol work with me. The protocol assignment was very dynamic, with Loy Henderson following Henry Grady, a political appointee. Both ambassadors had dynamic wives of different complexions. Both required heavy protocol support. So, I learned the business from scratch, although my mother in law had taught protocol in the Foreign Service Institute. I had an opportunity therefore to see the Shah and others in the government on a fairly regular basis. The communist threat was always there. Mossadegh, the Prime Minister, was believed to be vulnerable to that communist threat. Therefore, we had heavy CIA activity to counter these incursions from the north. There was no sign of the Mullahs in those days, as the Shah tried to cope with Mossadegh. After a certain amount of coming and going, the Shah did return. But I knew the Shah when he was a mild- "Weak reed" was the label put on him because he couldn't make up his mind on important issues and had to be advised. Of course, later, after I left, he developed the opposite personality. But I was not there to observe that. But it was a wonderful two year introduction to diplomacy in the field. It was very glamorous with the Iranian court, with the wonderful history and beauty of Iran surrounding us. We did some travel. We were off to a good start.

I had expressed an interest in Middle East affairs, thinking I might specialize in that region, and therefore was assigned to the summer seminar at American University in Beirut, where they had an excellent Arab affairs program. For three months, we studied and traveled around the Middle East, not everywhere, but Syria, Lebanon, Jordan. We couldn't get into Israel in those days because of our Arab connection.

I was assigned thereafter to Consulate General in Istanbul, where I did economic work, part of the rotation pattern of those days. It was somewhat of a let-down after Tehran, which was glamorous. And then it was a Consulate, with the usual commercial/economic interests and little of the political. Istanbul itself was a wonderful environment historically and geographically. But the period under Prime Minister Menderes was a difficult time economically and it impinged on even us with our allowances. Our ambassador, Averell Warren, insisted that we convert our money at the official rate, which was very punishing. But we coped. Our first daughter was born there in the American-founded hospital. She

suffered a burn in the hospital after a serious hernia operation and made us have somewhat second thoughts about having tried the first birth in such circumstances.

I then was assigned to the Department in 1957, the Egyptian/Sudanese Desk. It was exciting, as Sudan came into independence. I had a lot of good dealings with the eager Sudanese, who were trying to do the right thing. Then I became disenchanted with our Middle East policy on several scores. Foster Dulles, the Secretary of State, was very self-confident about himself and about his policies and was not an easy person to be around, although I had very little personal contact with him. Our policies just didn't satisfy me. I asked for a shift.

I was assigned thereupon to the Ceylon Desk for a year, the time when Ambassador Gluck, a political appointee, who did not do well in the hearings, was assigned. I'm left with very little impression of Ceylon, which I've never seen. I had indicated an interest in Africa and was delighted to be assigned to a study tour of black Africa, or Sub-Saharan Africa, as we called it in those days. It was financed by the Ford Foundation for 20 or more Foreign Service officers to look at the continent as the wind of change had brought the prospect of independence. For the three months, we traveled around 13 countries in Africa, including three universities. I just had splendid training. We saw Africans emerging into their new world. I was glad to be out of the Middle East. Africa was much easier for me to appreciate. It was less complex. There wasn't the domestic political drag which was always in the Middle East, which complicated our policy making. In Africa, we went about our business. The countries seemed to be open minded and evenhanded and so forth.

After the African trip, I was assigned to Political/Military Affairs in the embassy in Paris, my first experience with European diplomacy. It was a contrast with Third World diplomacy, which I seemed to prefer. It was the period of De Gaulle, '58 to '60, with the Algerian president, of course, explosive, with De Gaulle being nasty to NATO. It was a good change from the Third World and then in that wonderful environment of Paris, where our second daughter was born, more easily than the first, in the American hospital in Paris. We returned several times. It was a good place for Becky to start her world.

I was fortunate at the end of those two years to be assigned to Oxford University to study African Affairs in a program run by the Commonwealth Relations Office for Third World and CRO officers, plus two Americans. This was the last time Washington participated in this program because American universities were developing their own African curriculums. I so enjoyed Oxford that I wished at that time that I had applied earlier for a Rhodes scholarship. I liked the Oxford approach, particularly in the politics, philosophy approach areas. The dons at Oxford, including Margaret Baron, were inspiring, as was the whole atmosphere.

I paid for my experience there by being assigned as US Consulate in Katanga during the turbulent "événements," as we called them. I might go into some detail here because we received a lot of publicity. There have been varying versions of what transpired during

that period, 1961 to 1963. I might go into my version of how it looked from the foxhole, as it were. I started out in Leopoldville, now called Kinshasa, where I had about a week with Ambassador Gullion. It was the week that UN Secretary General Hammarskjold died in a crash in northern Rhodesia. One theory had it that allies of the Katanga rebels may have shot him down. As I was taken to my assignment in southern Congo, Elisabethville, we flew in a bullet ridden plane over the treetops to avoid ground fire. I landed in Elisabethville not knowing that the consulate had been occupied by UN troops after the first round of fighting. I did not think this was appropriate. I could not have a very open consulate with sandbags in my consulate windows and Gurkha troops throughout the grounds facing the presidential palace across the street. So, it took about a week for that to be disposed of and I settled down. My family arrived shortly thereafter, but just before a second round of fighting.

In the middle of all this tension and more than tension (in other words, military incidents) between the UN forces and the Katanga rebels), Senator Dodd of Connecticut arrived. He was regarded as the Senator from Katanga. He supported the very heavy pro-Katanga lobby in the United States. He wanted to see for himself what made this fellow, Maurice Tshombe, the president of Katanga, tick, and to see how our policy was going. It was a tightrope I was walking because our policy was clearly in support of Leopoldville as the central government, and was opposed to this succession initiative of Tshombe. I did my thing. I gave a cocktail party, which is what you do when a Senator comes to town. I was pleased that most of the government ministers and UN missionaries and others were able to gather in the neutral US consulate to meet the Senator and his wife. We were heading for dinner that evening at the home of the Mobil Oil representative, Sherry Smith. I had in my car the Senator and his wife and my wife. As we approached the Smith house, we saw rebel troops dragging three men out of the house and putting them on a truck. I grabbed two of them, George Ireland Smith of the UN, and a Belgian banker, and shoved them in the front seat of the car, and tried to find Urquhart, who was the UN representative there. He had been dragged off into the dark. By that time, despite my asserting my consular immunity, the rebel soldiers who were obviously high on some local weed, were aiming their weapons at us. I thought our time was measured and therefore asked the driver to take us back to the consulate. The rest of the night with Senator Dodd, his wife watching, I negotiated earnestly with the Katanga government, insisting that Urquhart be brought back alive. In the meantime, the UN was losing patience. The military was losing patience because their civilian representative, Urquhart, was unaccounted for. They wanted to assault the presidential palace across the street. I had to hold off this battalion to say that we were going to give diplomacy its chance. We did succeed after what seemed like an eternity. Urquhart was brought in by two ministers of the government, bloodied but alive. We all went to bed. During the night, a UN military officer, an Indian by nationality, was shot just across the street from the consulate.

Senator Dodd had told them to take him to Kolwezi in the west of Katanga. We thought we should stick with the program. I gave my family to some American missionaries as I drove off into the countryside with Dodd, who was very pro-Katangan in his remarks, and anti-Washington at the same time. That was the way it was. Senator Dodd asked if he

could commend me to President Kennedy. I said, "Well, please take it easy because the more kind things you say about me, the more difficult may be my Washington, with the State Department, with our ambassador, Leopoldville. I was glad that we came out alive on that one.

I still had the idea that we could negotiate some sort of a settlement between the central government and Katangans out there on the barricades as the second round of fighting appeared imminent. I tried twisting arms without instructions on the Iban side and on the Katangan side. I did not succeed. Fighting began. A lot of civilians were killed; some military and so forth. We had some missionaries with mercenaries in their garden, firing on UN. I had a great Vice Consul, Terry McNamara, who knew some mercenaries and was able to get them out of the missionaries' garden. We got through that. But the shooting was just too much. I was fearful for the lives of Americans. A Consul is supposed to worry about his people. So, I talked to the UN about this problem with the Americans. I said, "You've got to get them out of here." So, they provided armored vehicles. But I had only about a five minute window to get them alerted and out. I in the meantime was put under house arrest because of the Katangans being unhappy with Washington on a number of scores. So, as I said "good-bye" to my family at the consulate and put them in the armored cars, I did not tell them I was under house arrest because that would have added to their worries. They were taken to the airport and sent off to Salisbury for the duration. This included the missionaries as well as women and children in the consulate.

All hell broke loose there after. Of course, the foreign press had to be there. We got a lot of publicity as it were. I remember Halberstam of the *New York Times* came to see me at the consulate because I couldn't leave because of the house arrest label on me. He had been shot at and missed. He said, "I don't mind dying, but I'd rather not die here, if you don't mind."

The cease fire occurred finally and things settled down. I still believed that we could negotiate this thing. Somehow, my message got through. I was invited to come back to see the President, Kennedy, but not to tell anybody, which was sort of awkward as to why I was back there. But I did tell Mack Godley, the commanding officer in charge of Congolese Affairs in the Department before I went over to see the President, who asked me to review the situation, which I did. He asked if I would carry a letter from Senator Dodd back, asking Tshombe to agree to sit down with George McGhee and Wayne Fredericks to talk about rejoining the Congo. I saw Senator Dodd, who presented this letter, which I carried back. I sat in negotiations which, of course, came to nothing.

Then I was transferred to Leopoldville as head of the Political Section, which was flattering. While there, my wife became deathly ill and almost lost her life because of malpractice in the local hospital. Fortunately, the UN hospital took her in and kept her alive until we could fly out to Paris for proper hospitalization.

In the meantime, the third round of fighting occurred in Katanga an the UN troops succeeded in occupying all of Katanga. That was the end of the succession. It was the least attractive assignment I had, but it had. It taught me an awful lot. The communist threat, of course, was why we were there, to keep the Congo united and to keep the commies out. They were coming in the windows. Mobutu was an instrument in this regard. I never cared much for him. I felt he was lazy and he didn't run a good army. His charm was just that. He was convenient to our government though with heavy CIA support. So, I was learning on the job.

I was assigned to the National War College from 1963 to '64. It was a great year. It broadened my perspective in national security matters. I got to know the military and intelligence people. I made a trip to the Far East, which broadened my perspective in that area. I wrote my paper on southwest Africa. The Department didn't like it, but I must say, after all these years, it reads pretty well. It's the way I thought it should be, with heavy UN participation and independence and so forth. It's one of those places I wouldn't mind serving if I ever got back in the business, but at this age, no one's going to invite me to go to Windhoek.

After the War College, I was assigned as head of the Operations Center as Deputy Executive Secretary of the Department. I gained a new perspective on how communications functioned for the Secretary and how we worked with other agencies, making sure the Secretary is ahead of the news, which is not easy. I recall President Johnson coming over to see how we were doing. He spotted an FBIS ticker tape machine in our office. "What is that?" I told him what it was, foreign broadcasts, raw intelligence. He said, "I want one." So, he got one. He saw it and he had it. But it was a busy one year assignment there, with lots of hijackings and so forth. We took care of the task forces in that regard.

I was pleased, however, that Jack Jernegan, our ambassador in Algiers, asked for me as a DCM. Off we went, all of us, to Algiers, where for two years, '65 to '67, there was a steady deterioration of relations in Washington and Algiers. Then there was the Six Day War, of course, to the break of diplomatic relations. Evacuation of Americans, once again. For the remaining two years, I stayed on as chief of the US interests section of the Swiss embassy, where there was a staff of about 1/3 of the previous one. The Six Day War was very scary. I was called in the middle of the night by a foreign office official and was told that they could not assure the security of Americans. Of course, that was their responsibility. But they said they couldn't handle that. So, we had no choice but to evacuate women and children and so called "non essential" Americans. Unfortunately, I put the ambassador was on head of the list of non essential and I've never lived that one down. But he had to go. So, I stayed on and had two years of bad relations with Algiers. Nevertheless, during that period, there was a gradual improvement of relations, certainly on the economic side, and on the political side, very gradually and indirectly. We worked very well with the Swiss ambassador, who didn't bother us at all. But the Swiss flag was over the embassy, which calmed a lot of spirits. As I left, the Foreign Minister gave me presents, gave me a party and all that. So, things were looking good as I left.

I was surprised to leave to become ambassador to Cameroon and Equatorial Guinea. I don't know how that happened, but there it was. So, I was glad to take on that assignment. I enjoyed Cameroon immensely. President Heto and I got on well. We had generally good relations, including a good AID program. Secretary Rogers visited us.

Here's an interesting anecdote that tells you how bureaucracies work. As I went to Leopoldville to pick him up, his special assistant said, "This is a pretty bland arrival statement. Can't you jazz it up? Aren't you doing something in Cameroon?" I said, "Well, we're trying to get assistance to the medical school," which was a very good idea. It's emphasis was preventive medicine, as opposed to curative. There were three regional clinics, that sort of thing, with our money. AID was taking its time to refine the project. The special assistant said, "You have the Secretary of State. He should say we're going to help." I said, "Well, AID's going to be unhappy." "Well, the Secretary is theoretically in charge of such matters." So, he said, upon arrival, "We are very glad that we are able to support this project." Well, I had real problems with Washington, but I said, "The Secretary has said it and we are committed." So, we obligated three million dollars and it was well invested.

In one little flurry at the beginning, I closed down the Military Attaché Office, which was a big office. All it did was give us a military image and didn't do much else. So, I asked that that be closed down. At the same time, we were without any protection from the communists, who were very plentiful in diplomatic missions in Yaounde. We as individual officers and others had to sleep in the embassy to keep them from photographing our files and so forth. So, I asked President Heju whether we could bring in five Marines to do that. He agreed. That was the right thing to do. It worked out as we planned.

But on the Equatorial Guinean side, there was nothing but problems. We had President Macias, who was, for all practical purposes, mad. We had a small mission over there, an officer in charge, and a chargé d'affaires, and an assistant, who happened to be a husband and wife couple, Al Williams and Carmen. They were superb, but they had been there two and a half years and I thought it was unfair for them to stay any longer. They did a good job. The environment was terrible. Living was as difficult as any place I've ever been. No consumer goods, no food to speak of. And state terror. The president was like Idi Amin. He was trying to destroy any potential opposition. This was a constant preoccupation. In the meantime, the economy, within the three short years since independence, had gone to nothing. Corruption was rampant. People were in bad shape. It was just a mess. In the meantime, the commies had put up big embassies. Soviet, Chinese, North Korean, and others. They needed watching, as well as there needed to be a Western presence there. The Spanish were there. If we had left, it would have made a difference.

So, I asked for a replacement for Williams. I got Al Erdos, number two at Niamey. I had known him socially. He looked like a steady type. I was his advance notice. I invited him

and his wife and baby down to look at the place to be sure that they thought they could cope with it. They said, "Yes," so Al Erdos was successor to Williams. That was about April of '71. In August of '71, he murdered his assistant, Don Lahey, who had been sent to Lima. It hadn't been a very compatible relationship. I was trying to do something about it to shorten it a little. I'm not going to go into that here because I have given to the Institute for the Study of Diplomacy a 75 page paper, which is a look back at the Erdos case after 25 years. I invite you to look at that if you'd like to see how it worked out. It so happened that after we got the news of Erdos and found the body in the embassy, Erdos was taken back to federal court in Alexandria, Virginia, and was convicted of voluntary manslaughter. He was given a ten year sentence. He served a year and a half and died in San Diego after he was in retirement. But I won't go into that here. I'll just say that it was a rough relationship. I still tried to keep the embassy open. Washington wanted to close it. So, for the remaining (tape ended)-

- went over to see the President and others and to maintain our relationship with that government. My successor did likewise. His successor was declared persona non grata and thereupon, the relations were suspended. IT was some years later that a new decision was made to put an ambassador in residence over there and that was done until, for economy reasons, that mission was closed. So, I believe, we had the ambassador in Yaounde looking in on that, but I'm not sure about that.

I asked for transfer home. My marriage was deteriorating and the daughters' education was a problem. I was pleased therefore to be assigned as political advisor to CINCLANT and SACLANT at Norfolk. This was a great year. It happened to be a job that Jack Jernegan, who left Algeria prematurely, had. I was glad to follow him. That took me to NATO capitals. That put me in touch with the important US Navy. Admiral Cousins was a great commander. I was glad to follow him around NATO capitals and to go on my own to the SACLANT headquarters in the Caribbean. So, out of the blue, I got an assignment as head of the Counter-terrorism Office in the Secretary's office in Washington. I reluctantly left Norfolk and went back to Washington. I was flattered with the assignment, which was a tough one. I served under Secretaries Rogers and Kissinger as special assistant. It was grueling, to say the least. We dealt with a lot of hijackings, kidnappings and so forth. But there was an aspect of the job which was worth mention, and that is the prevention side, how to nab the terrorists before they strike. Therefore diplomacy and intelligence were important in this exercise. I enjoyed that, but simultaneously, I wanted a second career. I always did. I didn't want to die outside of the country, so I tried very hard to get a teaching job. They were not taking Foreign Service officers in the teaching jobs. The Vietnam War was still a hangover there. Foreign Services officers were not welcome on most campuses.

So, then I tried other options. I finally found Shell Oil Company in Houston, a consultant in international affairs, which matched very well with the experience I had had in government relations. It had to do with political risk, business promotion, things I knew something about in my Foreign Service experience. I moved to Houston, where I spent the next 13 years. I had a wonderful time in Cameroon and other places where Shell's

subsidiaries were doing good things like finding oil and exploiting it. But I knew when I was 65 that it was time to retire, so I did. I retired to Cape Cod. I tried to stir up some activity at my alma mater, Fletcher School, but there wasn't much going on there except the use of the library in connection with some modest consultant activity. I was able to use the library. But I didn't find it very rewarding, frankly.

I took up volunteer work at the Cape Cod National Seashore, which is part of the US Park Service. I was a volunteer with the hospice at Cape Cod and I found those activities immensely challenging and satisfying. But at the same time, I felt a need for more urban activity and proximity to my family, two daughters, and friends in Texas. So, I moved to Austin in 1995, where I am enjoying modest research and participation in some University of Texas seminars which interest me. I've done a lot of reading, gardening. I'm really quite content.

Now, I've been asked to comment on various subjects relating to the Foreign Service. I hereupon do so. About press relations, I rarely had a problem. I was generous with news men, with whom there were mutual interests. We were often looking for the same thing and comparing notes with them was part of my pleasure and job. I, of course, used USIS fully in press and other matters. I don't know how we could do without USIS, with its panoply of activities. My last public affairs officer in Yaounde and Equatorial Guinea was John Graves of Tehran hostage fame. I can't say enough good things about John or about the USIA, which was so much a part of us. The Cold War was our prime motivation for the 25 years I was in the Service. I didn't argue with it. But it did have an impact on virtually all our diplomacy. It's a pity we had to deal with the Missiases and the Mobutus and others who were bad leaders in so many respects. This was before the human rights emphasis. We dealt with those characters because they were potentially anti-communists. They could have been replaced by communists. IT just is a period in our history which is so wasteful in so many ways. But anyway, the Cold War is over. Bravo! But it was a constant burden on all of us and warped our diplomacy immeasurably. Now we have opportunities not to work with bad guys. We had immense defense attaché officers, immense CIA offices. These were what you had to have to deal with the facts of life, the communist threat.

Is the Foreign Service a good place to work? Yes, for the right person, who is not discouraged by many negative elements such as hardship posts, budget restrictions, security concerns, hospitals, education. It's rough on families. My work was always interesting or I made it so. My wife and daughters were less pleased with the experience. It's imperative to have frank discussions beforehand, hardships entailed, or expected to be. Our divorce occurred, but I can't blame that on the Foreign Service. But marriages are under heavy strain in rough posts. It is an extra pressure that you prefer not having. But one should believe that the Foreign Service is the best job on earth. That was my belief. One must have what I call a "missionary approach," in a sense, much motivation toward a mission, peacekeeping as a strong desire, positive thinking, acceptance of one way loyalty at times. That is, you are always loyal to the Secretary of State, but is he giving you the sort of reverse loyalty? Foster Dulles triggers a real cold shower in that respect. You just

couldn't depend on him to support you if you got in any trouble. Salaries are not great. It's probably difficult now to live on a Foreign Service salary and allowances. But you don't go into the Foreign Service to make money. You do have the security of pensions and so forth, but you have to go in there for other reasons. You have to believe in what the Foreign Service is trying to do. If not, you should go elsewhere.

The Peace Corps is a wonderful institution. I saw it in full bloom in Cameroon and I still know some of the Peace Corps volunteers from that period. My elder daughter went around to visit Peace Corps people. I always found them great. I remember when the Cambodian thing happened, I called them in and we talked about it. I tried to explain it to them and they listened. When Secretary Rogers came to Yaounde, I invited them in. They were polite to him, although they had their problems. The important thing is to sit down and talk with them. It keeps you in touch with a world which sometimes is not clear in busy diplomats' minds.

Congressional visits? I've had lots of those in my 25 years. One should be open-minded, generous. Don't try to teach these Congressmen much. Listen. Get them to talk. Listen to their talk and then respond. You can describe your program and so forth, but don't try to educate them too much, unless they're coming out there to be educated. But so often, they have their own ideas. The most courteous visitor I had was Congressman Kennedy in Tehran. I had him for three days and it was joy to be around him. He was curious, pleasant, and he's the only one who ever sent me a thank you note. I wish I had kept that because I could sell that for something, couldn't I? But it was, I guess, burned up in the files in Tehran. Teddy Kennedy was the opposite experience. He came to Algiers and I had him for three days. He was very unhappy with the ambassador and with all of us because we could not get him a student audience for a speech he wanted to give, probably reminiscent of Jack Kennedy's speech in Algiers or on Algeria. But the Algerian government was adamant. Despite our best diplomacy, we couldn't accommodate him. He was just a difficult and ungracious visitor. He went back and gave our ambassador, I'm told, a very bad mark and that didn't help him. He was a superb ambassador: Jack Jernegan. Another little anecdote here. Senator Ellender of Louisiana came to see us in the Congo. For some reason, I was chargé d'affaires, although the embassy was immense, with all the sort of big AID, big CIA, big you name it. Somehow, I was number three on the list, chief of the Political Section. So, I was chargé when Ellender came. WE gave him a very cursory briefing, but I learned there that the best thing is to get the Congressman to talk. He wanted to talk about what was on his mind. That's fine. He wanted to tell us how to make gumbo, his recipe for gumbo. He also didn't want to see any Africans, which made it easy. He wanted to stay with Americans, wanted to check them out. So, we put him in an American home and he saw only Americans. After he left, he went off to Salisbury, Rhodesia, and said nasty things about the Congolese, who came to us later and said, "If he wants to come to the Congo, we're not going to let him in." We said, "Sorry, he's just been here."

I've been asked to talk about my greatest accomplishment. That's a pretty stiff assignment. I started from humble origins and virtually on my own. I persisted on moving up the

Foreign Service ladder to an appropriate level. Along the way, I hope I left my posts in better condition than I found them. Aside from my obvious self confidence, I was motivated by the great men under whom I worked. Among those greats were Bill Rountree, Arthur Richards, David Newsom, Jack Jernegan, all of whom set examples which made me less of a country boy and more of a diplomat. With that, I leave it to the archives. Thank you.

End of interview