Association for Diplomatic Studies and Training
Foreign Affairs Oral History Project

AMBASSADOR ROBERT S. PASTORINO

Interviewed by: Charles Stuart Kennedy and David Fischer
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INTRODUCTION: BEFORE THE FOREIGN SERVICE

Q: To begin with, today is the sixth of March 1998. This is an interview with Ambassador Robert S. Pastorino. It's being done in San Francisco. It's on behalf of Diplomatic Studies and Training, and I'm Charles Stuart Kennedy. So, to begin with, could you tell me when and where you were born and something about your family?

PASTORINO: I was born in San Francisco, California, March 16, 1940 in North Beach, an Italian Community. I was the first born. I have a sister, Karen, who was born in 1941, also in San Francisco. She now lives in Oakland, is a school psychologist, and has three children living in Michigan, Yosemite and the Bay Area. My parents, Adolph and Florence. were both born in California, my Dad in San Francisco, and my mother in Korbel, a tiny lumber town near Arcata in Humboldt County.

My grandparents came to California directly from Northern Italy from a farming village near Cuneo in Piedmonte, and from the small Tuscan village of Colognora near Florence in Central Italy. My father's parents settled in Sebastopol, California where they grew apples and cherries; unfortunately not enough grapes, they could have been wealthy! My mother's side came to Korbel. My maternal grandfather worked in a sawmill. Korbel was a company town and no longer really exists except for the sawmill. My mother's parents came to San Francisco in the twenties and lived here until they died.

Q: You are really a son of San Francisco, where did you go to school?

PASTORINO: I was born in North Beach and when I was two years old, we moved out to Bayview near Candlestick Park, so I went to a grammar school named Edward Robeson Taylor, where I was student body president in the sixth grade. Leaving Taylor, I went to Portola Junior High and then to Polytechnic High School, which no longer exists, having been seriously damaged in the 1989 Loma Prieta earthquake and never rebuilt. It was out at the edge of Golden Gate Park.

Q: What were your interests as a young boy?

PASTORINO: I was interested in sports; in fact that's why I went to Poly High School, which was known as a great sports school. And, I was always interested in political affairs and foreign affairs. As a kid I did a lot of reading. Also, I was very lucky in that where we lived in the Bayview was literally across the street from Silver Terrace playground. From the time I was eight until the time I was eighteen, I spent most of my waking hours at the playground, playing all sports at all times. I played third base in baseball, guard in basketball, where I was team captain in high school, and end in touch football. I also dabbled in track (middle

distance running) and in swimming, but didn't go far because I detested practicing those sports.

Q: You say you were interested in reading. What type? Did you like fiction or other types of books?

PASTORINO: I read, first and foremost, and still do, the green sheet which is the San Francisco Chronicle sports section, which was actually printed on green paper. In the family lore, I am known for having learned my mathematics and my reading from having read the sports pages and calculating the batting averages. I also was fascinated with history and political affairs. I don't ever remember reading a lot of fiction. I have always tended towards the non-fiction. But in school, I read the fiction which was assigned.

Q: So, in high school were there any teachers that particular struck you or influenced you?

PASTORINO: Probably the ones who had a lot of influence, maybe the greatest influence were on the athletic side; they were the basketball and baseball coaches. On the academic side, if you asked me right now, I couldn't give you a name. But I'm sure the teachers that influenced me most were in the history area and the mathematics area. When I got out of high school I thought I wanted to be a civil engineer; I thought I was pretty good in math. The engineering interest also came from my father who was an electrician who had studied to be an electrical engineer. He didn't make it because he had to go to work during the depression. I still remember I had the ambition to build a towering bridge in the Andes.

If you want to know who else influenced my life, it was not really teachers. Rather it was my parents who instilled in us the virtues of responsibility, discipline, accountability, honesty, and the need for an education. In addition, I remember being influenced by political figures, such as California Governor Earl Warren, or by sports heroes. One of my first heroes was Joe DiMaggio. Joe DiMaggio, after all, was not only a sports hero, he was an Italian-American.

Q: Being an Italian -American, was there a sort of a quality of this type growing up as a boy? Were you part of a community? Did you feel outside it, or was it mixed?

PASTORINO: I didn't ever feel problems of discrimination or anything like that.

Q: Well, I 'm thinking of culture too.

PASTORINO: I grew up in a district which was one third African American, one third Mexican American, and the other third Anglo, with a lot of us being Italian-Americans. I never had hang-ups about culture or race. In fact, I didn't really feel myself very Italian-American until I was twenty years old when I went to Italy

and lived for a year in Italy with my relatives.

I was Italian only in that we went to the Columbus Day Parade. I was Italian in that we ate pasta. I was Italian in that my uncle was a crab fisherman. He was Secretary-Treasurer of the San Francisco Crab Fisherman's Association. Fishing is part of the Italian background. I probably didn't know who Machiavelli was but I knew who DiMaggio and Crosetti were. I was never as interested in British history as I was in Italian history, but I didn't really feel Italian American.

A.P. Giannini was a hero of mine; as you know, he was the founder and President of Bank of America. I was always told in my house that the B of A was the biggest bank in the world, he was the greatest banker in the world, and he didn't like Mussolini. And my father actually worked as an electrician in the house of the Giannini family in Belmont. It was also family lore that my grandfather was given a loan by Giannini only a few days after the devastating 1906 earthquake, a loan against his word that he had money in the bank, because all the records were destroyed or in safes that had been welded shut by the heat of the fire after the quake.

Q: You graduated from high school when?

PASTORINO: 1957.

Q: At that point where did you want to go and what did you want to do?

PASTORINO: Well, my family thought I should go on to college; none of my immediate family had ever gone to college. They wanted me to go on to higher education, I thought I wanted to be an engineer, but I wasn't really sure. I actually won a scholarship, a Naval ROTC scholarship to any University in the country where there was an ROTC program. I could have gone to Berkeley. But I didn't really know what I wanted to do. And since everyone wanted me to go to Berkeley, I decided to go to San Francisco City College, where I took an engineering course. Early on, I came up against a course on Strength of Materials, flunked it, and left City College after three months. I never even finished the first semester.

Q: And then where did you go?

PASTORINO: I went to work. I had worked before. Every summer and Christmas vacation since I was fifteen years old, I had worked as an electrician apprentice. My father got me into the Electrical Workers Union (IBEW); I paid dues and I was part of the apprentice program. Among the jobs I did as an apprentice were a flagman on the Bay Bridge; a fixture hanger in San Francisco Department Stores; a maintenance electrician in office buildings; and various types of electrical wiring jobs. I was sent in the beginning by the journeymen for a left handed monkey wrench and a pipe stretcher but learned quickly that they were putting me

on. I actually enjoyed the work, it being very physical, and very interesting when I could actually see the fixtures work. I was known as a serious worker and made my taskmaster father very proud. But, I knew I didn't want to do that as a permanent job.

So, when I left City College, I went to an employment agency and they sent me to Wells Fargo Bank, which hired me and put me into a management training program. I worked two years at Wells, first as a teller, then in the vault, and then they taught me how to do several different jobs in the bank; I rotated among branches in San Francisco and San Mateo. I would go for a week or even less when someone was sick or on vacation; I would be the loan officer; or a trust officer; or an operations officer; or a teller. And I did that for two years.

Q: What was the feeling in those times, was it sort of understood that if you really wanted to get anywhere in the bank, you're going to have to get a college education, or was that really necessary?

PASTORINO: No, not at all. The Bank helped me go to the American Banking Institute here in San Francisco. They paid the tuition, but they didn't force me. I went for the two years while I was working full time; I studied at night at the American Banking Institute, taking courses appropriate to banking, such as Money and Banking, The Federal Reserve System, Macro and Micro Economics, Branch Banking, Finance and Lending, and other courses. I believe I graduated with a certificate or a degree.

Q: You mentioned that during this period at sometime you went over to Italy?

PASTORINO: After working the two years full time at Wells Fargo Bank, I decided I wanted to the see a little bit of the world, starting with Europe. I had saved my money, living at home. When I had accumulated $2000 in savings in 1960, I went to Europe. I went for two reasons. One I wanted to go explore Europe and see the world; this was a big deal in those days. And, I wanted to go to the Olympic Games, which were in Rome in 1960.

I had never been in an airplane before. I left San Francisco in March 1960, flying to New York, where I boarded the SS United States. I was still single although I already knew my wife to be, Frances Estepa of San Francisco. She did a wonderful thing: she told me to go and see the world and we could get on with our lives later upon my return. I went to Southampton, England. I was gone for more than nine months which was the time from early March to Christmas, enough time to see and visit several countries, see the Olympics, and live with my relatives for several months in Tuscany.
I toured Europe with a guy from Palo Alto, who I met on the ship. He was going to Belgium to pick up a Volkswagen which he had purchased from the US. We drove around in the Volkswagen for four months, touring England, France, Germany, Belgium, Holland, Switzerland, Spain, Portugal and Italy. He went

home from Portugal and I went back to Rome for the Olympics.

When the Games ended, I went to visit my mother's relatives in a little village in Tuscany, which my family wanted me to do. I still didn't feel very Italian-American and wasn't greatly interested. But they wanted me to visit because no one had yet visited the "old country" to see " the old folks", and my grandmother was very excited that I should visit. To make a long story short, I went for lunch and stayed six months. I sort of fell in love with the place. I also went to visit my father's relatives in Piedmonte, in a little town named Sale San Giovanni, near Cuneo, in the Italian Alps, where I learned the Piedmontese dialect and learned to milk cows and make and sell cheese. I stayed there three weeks and then went back to my relatives in Tuscany. I finally went home in December of 1960 to Fran and the family.

Q: What was your impression of the type of life the family that was left behind would lead?

PASTORINO: Well, Colognora de Pracando was a village of one hundred and eighty people. I was related probably to one hundred of them. I was the first person who had ever gone back from the immediate family. Only two people in Colognora spoke any English at all; they were retirees who had lived in the US. I spoke almost no Italian. The only Italian I had heard at home was when the family didn't want us to know what they were talking about.

My great aunt and cousins lived in a two story, stone house that was probably more than 200 years old. There was no road directly to the village. I had to walk the last two hundred yards uphill to the village. There was no indoor plumbing. The toilet was in the basement where they also kept the pigs and chickens. And it was in a very rural, agricultural area, thirty miles from Lucca, and ten miles from the county seat.

And what did they do? They grew grapes, and when it was not necessary to tend the grapes, the men went out hunting for mushrooms, which they liked to call truffles. They weren't really truffles. It was 1960 and there were still bombed-out buildings in the village, including the house of some cousins. In 1945 Colognora had been a strong point on the last German defensive line in Italy. Some of my Italian relatives had actually been taken hostage and killed because partisans had killed some Germans that were occupying the town. So, in addition to the vines, they lived by hunting for mushrooms and finding wood, which they would sell in the winter. In the summer we tended the vines growing on the steep hillsides, often several miles from Colognora. The grapes were sold to big vintners like Cinzano. I say we because I did everything the men did. The women were worried that this delicate kid from the pavements of San Francisco would get sick trying to live like the Italians. Actually, I had the time of my life. We got up at 4:30 AM, saddled the burro, and went out to the vineyard six miles away. It was exciting and fascinating. That's why I didn't go home.

So how did they live? They lived poorly; the village was still not wholly reconstructed. It was run partially by the Communists, by a man who was called Khrushchev, because he looked like him. He was big and ruddy faced. However the Monarchists were also trying to run the Government in the Municipality; one of the Monarchist leaders was my uncle. I learned a lot about Italian politics at that time, with the electorate split between the right (Fascists and Monarchists); the Center, led by the Christian Democrats; and the left, led by the Communists and Socialists. In some ways the village lived like they did in the 19th century. My relatives tried to marry me off to one of the cousins, so she could immigrate to the States. They picked her, she was very nice. I never saw her alone until two days before I departed when they figured out I wasn't going to marry her and take her away.

But, there was one bit of modernization in town. An Italian company had built a large paper plant. It was on a little stream where they could build a dam to provide power to make kraft and other type of paper products. All of the women worked at the factory, thus being the only wage-earners who brought home money twelve months a year. You could actually see the social situation begin to change because the money came to the women on a regular basis, thus providing much more importance to the women at the expense of the men.

Most of the grapes were sold to a cooperative which then turned them into wine somewhere else. Some of the grapes we picked were for our own use so we crushed them and made wine for family use. My relatives encouraged me to jump into the barrel to stomp on the grapes during the crushing. After about twenty minutes, they said "Okay, Roberto, that's enough", and they brought out the mechanical wine press. They had a good laugh at my expense. But since Cinzano controlled the price, my relatives didn't make a lot from the grapes, but they made wine for themselves. The women brought home much of the cash.

Almost all the kids were gone from the village because there was so little opportunity there. I was one of the few young people. All the kids went off to the city to work. There were really only two generations there. My grandmother's generation and my mother's generation were there, but my generation had left.

I learned a lot about Italian politics because the only thing to do at night was to go to the village bar which I did seven nights a week with the men. We went to the bar which had electricity and a television set. The men took me to the bar and they taught me Italian card games and Italian politics. I learned a lot here about the Italian part of me. Tuscany is special because it is still markedly different from Naples, Calabria, or Sicily. So I did get a smattering of the culture of Tuscany. But only a smattering. Most of the relatives were still really rural people; it was I who would suggest that we call a taxi, walk to the bottom of the hill, and go to Florence to go to a museum. This was new to some of them. And I became a great soccer fan.

Q: What was the attraction of the Communist Party in this area?

PASTORINO: At that time, they were the great anti-fascists. They had the best anti-fascist record and the Communists had been the most active members (but not the only ones) in the underground resistance during the war. And the Communists were making inroads already in the paper factories, which were unionized by the CGIL [General Confederation of Italian Labour]. But the greatest attraction was still, only fifteen years later, that the Communists had fought the Germans and Mussolini.

Q: When you went back to San Francisco, how did your parents react to what you were telling them?

PASTORINO: When I came back to San Francisco? Well, ironically the most important development may have been that, at twenty years of age, I could finally talk to my grandmother. She had never learned English and I could never talk to her, except to say hello. And I could never understand anything she said. So, finally, I could talk to her. I used to visit her for lunch once a week from work.

My parents seemed to be very interested in my experiences because it seemed that I knew more about Italy then they did. Both my parents grew up speaking Italian and had to go to school to learn English because none of the grandparents spoke English. My grandparents on my father's side died when he was twelve years old and my father was farmed out to some relatives who later stole his parents' ranch in Sebastopol. But he grew up speaking Italian and so did my mother. But they didn't know contemporary Italy, except some of the mythology they had heard. So what I brought home to them was how the "old folks really lived in the old country".

I did see all of Italy. I would leave Colognora every couple weeks and so I could tell them what contemporary Italy was like in the early sixties.

They were not all that interested in Italian politics. My father was intensely interested in domestic politics, but his politics were already long formed. He was a very liberal San Francisco Democrat. To describe his political ideology is very simple. When he retired as an electrician, he went into self-exile in Italy, he said, because Ronald Reagan was Governor and Richard Nixon was the President of the United States. He could not abide by that. He was a strong labor union advocate. If you want to know who his heroes were, they were people like FDR and Harry Bridges.

So, what my parents got out of my trip was a lot of information. And in fact, I was probably one of the reasons that when they did look for a retirement place, they retired in Italy. They bought a wonderful three bedroom condo in Marino, one of the Italian hill towns overlooking Rome. In fact they could see the dome of St.

Peter's from the back balcony, they were just up the road from the summer palace of the Pope in Castel Gandolfo, and just up the street from Marino's most famous resident, Sophia Loren.

Q: Well you came back 1962...

PASTORINO: 1960, I got back at Christmas 1960. I graduated from high school in 1957, worked in 1958 and 1959 and went to Europe in 1960. I came back and I knew what I wanted to be. I wanted to be a Foreign Service officer.

I got married a year after I returned from Europe. As I said, I knew my wife before I went to Europe. She and I grew up almost next door to one another in the Bayview; we had known each other since we were about 17 and in high school. I was ready to get married at nineteen or twenty but she knew I wanted to go to Europe so she said: "Go, you'll never forgive me if you don't; then come back." We got married in November of 1961.

The marriage was the determining factor in my decision to attend San Francisco State University. I could go to school and live at home in San Francisco. She worked and helped to support us. I immediately went back to work at Wells Fargo. They put me on a thirty hours per week permanent schedule on a regular salary. I had the kind of job in which I could work my regular shift, in which I was a supervisor of a check-proofing department, and then work overtime for extra pay and performance incentives. Sometimes, I could work 50 hours per week or more, and do my homework during working hours. I never found it necessary to study very much at San Francisco State so it was a perfect job. I still am grateful to Wells Fargo Bank.

At one time, I was also working at J. Barth, a San Francisco stock broker, on the night shift from 8:00 PM to 2:00 AM, posting the day's transactions. Normally, I could finish this job by shortly before midnight, so I was going to school full time, and working two jobs. Later, I also worked for two other banks while finishing school and awaiting induction into the Foreign Service—Crocker Citizens Bank and The Bank of Tokyo, where I worked in International Banking, providing the paperwork for AID [Agency for International Development] shipments to Vietnam, and managing the accounts of the large Japanese conglomerates such as Mitusi and Mitsubishi. As I said, Fran worked full-time. In a certain way we never had as much money as during those first four years, before we had kids.

Q: Where was she working?

PASTORINO: She worked at National Biscuit Company, Nabisco, as a comptometrist, the computer operator of today. She also kept the house, took care of the finances, and basically ran the family, which gave me a chance to concentrate on school and work.

Q: Well you say you knew what you wanted to be, a Foreign Service Officer; obviously you weren't getting tremendous exposure to the diplomatic service in your village in Tuscany. I mean, how did you think about the Foreign Service?

PASTORINO: It was a combination of always having been interested in world history and politics and then seeing the world (at least the European part of the world). If there was any one incident to point to, I could mention the time that while living in Seville in a small hotel I was robbed on my money. I went to the US Consulate. Some Foreign Service Vice Consul took two or three hours to talk to me and try to help me get the money back, showing me how to fill out forms. Then we went out for coffee or lunch and he told me about the Foreign Service. And that's probably the time I learned most about this group of people and what they did. It built from there. But, even had there not been that incident, I still wanted to participate in foreign affairs and always wanted to do something for my country. I never cared about making lots of money, neither did my wife, so that was easy. But, I did want to do some public service. The time in Europe may not have exposed me very much to the Foreign Service and Embassies, because I think I only visited that one in Seville. But, the trip exposed me to foreign cultures and how they live.

There is another thing that was important when I think back. There was a wonderful series of books written by Upton Sinclair, such as Between Two Worlds, built around the character of Lanny Budd. There were six or eight volumes and my parents gave them to me as a gift. I had read some of those volumes three times. I never forget the story when Lanny Budd was a member of the US delegation to the 1919 Peace Conference at Versailles, working on the formation of the League of Nations. He was on the sub-committee that helped divide up Bosnia, Serbia, and some of the rest of southeast Europe. That always stuck with me. He lived in Europe and he always had something to do with foreign affairs.

Q: Lanny Budd was one of these characters who was placed in historical situations, but a continuing one. Sinclair used to write about foreign affairs by using this character who was always a sub-head of a delegation or somebody in the middle or far down. He was the fly on the wall for all sorts of things.

PASTORINO: His mother was this gal about Europe and was married five times but always to someone influential in foreign affairs. And his father was a munitions manufacturer from Connecticut.

Q: It's interesting because I asked you earlier about what books you read and you said you didn't read much fiction. Now, you just told me you were exposed to foreign affairs through a series, a well crafted series of books which put you right in the heart of what was to become your profession.

PASTORINO: I didn't consider it fiction. I read the history part. I didn't read much of the love or the personal part. He was an art dealer at one time. That didn't interest me very much. I read the historical parts. They are historical novels, but based on real history.

Q: Its like the Winds of War and other Herman Woulk novels, using a character, a naval captain who is involved in all sorts of things during World War II. You decided that the Foreign Service is what you wanted, you had three months of civil engineering which you flunked, and then you knew quite a bit about how to process checks and banking, the Federal Reserve and all. When you started looking into the Foreign Service, you must have found out about the Foreign Service exam, which includes an awful lot of information which required the necessity to be fairly well and broadly read. How did you approach this?

PASTORINO: Actually, I'm not even sure I knew what the exam process was. I knew that to get into the Foreign Service, to be a diplomat, you have to take an exam. When I went back to school, the exam time was far into the future, sometime after I got a degree. I didn't even know that San Francisco State University had a good IR (International Relations) program. I don't know how good it was then except that some of the same professors who were teaching there at that time are still there now and are well and favorably recognized in the community (such men as Devere Pentony, Urban Whitaker, and Marshall Windmuller). I'm not even sure that anyone counseled me. I just knew that from common sense and from reading that if you want to be a diplomat, that you ought to study International Relations. I signed up for International Relations.

I spent almost no time at San Francisco State, except for class time. I didn't have time. I didn't participate in any extracurricular activities or other events. I don't ever remember talking to counselors. I just went and signed up for the classes. I knew what I needed for the major, knew what I needed to graduate, and I did the work. I knew I probably ought to have a language; I took Italian. I studied International Law, International Organizations, US Diplomatic History, European History, Economics, International Finance, Latin American Studies, and several other courses. I don't remember being very enthusiastic about studying during the three and half years it took me to graduate with a Bachelors Degree. I had a minor in Economics and I transferred all my banking credits. I remember doing analytical reports on the World Health Organization, the Trieste crisis, and China. I don’t remember thinking about what I would do if I were not a diplomat. I assumed I could always return to banking. I do remember that every course I took further convinced me that diplomacy was what I really wanted to do.

I flunked the first foreign service written exam. I got a 67 or something. I don't remember being devastated. I remember my wife asking, “can't you take again? Yes? Good, take it again”. I remember sitting down and thinking about what I should do to pass the second time, what I should study. I remember I got a book of American History and another book on World History. We went on vacation to

Carmel for two weeks and I devoured those books as well as a year's worth of news magazines. I went back and took the Foreign Service exam a second time and got an 80 and then the career just flowed.

Q: How about the cultural side? The Foreign Service exam always asked questions on books, opera...

PASTORINO: I'm sure I flunked all the opera questions, and all the art questions. I did well on the sports. I got a hundred percent on the sports, I know that. I don't remember there was much art but I'm sure I didn't score highly on any of those questions.

Q: Did the fact that you were living in San Francisco, which is an international city, have any influence on your interest in the Foreign Service?

PASTORINO: Interest in the Foreign Service?

Q: I mean foreign affairs.

PASTORINO: Foreign affairs? You must be kidding. It probably had a little, but not where I grew up in the Bayview; there wasn't much foreign affairs out there. And, I did not go to the Commonwealth Club as a youngster or the World Affairs Council because I couldn't afford it and I didn't have time. I fed my interest in foreign affairs from newspapers and books and television, and later at the international banking jobs. The only time I'd been out of the country was going to Tijuana.

Q: Although you were a little bit late, did the advent of Kennedy and his emphasis on public service have any impact on you?
PASTORINO: No. Kennedy was not a hero. He was President of the United States. That was his job; the job was heroic and it just happened that Jack Kennedy was the President at that time.

Q: You took the foreign service exam and passed the written about when?

PASTORINO: Maybe, 1965.

Q: So you took the oral exam?

PASTORINO: Once I passed the written, I took the oral within two or three months. In those days it was a nice, quick process.

Q: Do you remember any of the questions?

PASTORINO: There is a story I love to tell. I was up there in front of the panel with the three Ambassadors and a fourth person from the public sector, and they

asked me, "Well Bob, if you were the Fisheries Attaché in Mogadishu, and they asked you to write a report, what would you do, what would you write about?" Let me tell you I aced that question. Remember I told you my uncle was Secretary-Treasurer of the Crab Fisherman's Association. I told them how I'd write a report. You have to know what species were being fished, what was the legal fishing season, what were the fishing regulations as to size, area, limits, bait and techniques, etc., and what were the legal ramifications? My uncle had been in jail in Peru and Mexico for fishing for tuna, and had tremendous experience in all aspects of fishing, so I knew what the report should contain. I'm sure that I impressed the panel tremendously answering that question. To be honest I didn't tell them about my uncle and my background. It was up to them to find out.

So that's really the only thing I remember about the exam. I remember it was two or three hours. I remember I was drained. I think they told me immediately afterwards that I had passed. Not having fooled around with drugs or protests (because I was studying and working) and not having presumed to tell the US Government how to run its foreign policy, I had no problems with the security aspects of the process, something I invariably get asked about today when I brief on the Foreign Service. I quickly passed the security and health examinations.

ORIENTATION AT THE FOREIGN SERVICE INSTITUTE

Q: When did you come into the Foreign Service?

PASTORINO: 1966. The test taking must have been 1965 or early 1966 but I don't remember waiting very long. I waited maybe six or eight months at most because I switched banks one more time. I left Wells Fargo and went to Crocker Citizens Bank because they paid me another fifty bucks a month; then I went to work at The Bank of Tokyo for six months because they offered me another fifty bucks. Most of the time I was working at the Bank of Tokyo, I knew I was going into the Foreign Service, because I had been given a date to report to Washington. On July 2, 1966, we went to Washington.

Q: So the A-100, the basic officers course...

PASTORINO: I went to the A-100 in the old Arlington Towers in Arlington. Ours was the last class at the Towers and in fact I took my language training in the new Institute in Rosslyn in Northern Virginia.

Q: Can you characterize your class?

PASTORINO: It was at that time the largest class in history. I think it was a hundred and three. I was impressed with my fellow class members. It was one of the few times in my life that I was intimidated. I thought everyone there was from Johns Hopkins and Princeton and University of Virginia. It turned out that they weren't all from those important schools. But I guess the members that made the

most impression were. I was there six months because I took four months of language training. Most of the memories that I have of those six months involved trying to resettle ourselves in Virginia. We were trying to raise a six month old baby, our daughter Shannon, and it was the first time we had ever lived in the snow and miserable weather. As usual, Fran took care of most of the domestic affairs. I remember I hated language school. In fact, I held a ceremonial burning of one of those horrendous green language training books in my fireplace when I finally graduated-- with a 3/3+.

Q: In what language?

PASTORINO: Spanish, which I had some familiarity with growing up in the Bayview. Also I had taken some Spanish in school and I learned some in Tijuana. I also took Italian in school, flunking it at San Francisco State, in this case because of a lousy teacher who I thought knew less than I knew. Yes, I flunked Italian. I'm not very good at languages, never will be. If I would have had to learn Vietnamese or Chinese, or the other hard languages that FSOs [Foreign Service officers] learn, I never would have made it as a Foreign Service Officer. So I learned Spanish well. I later switched to Portuguese in six weeks before going to Lisbon, and that's the history of my language career. Thank God.

Q: During this time, around July '66, was there pressure to get you into Vietnam, as a junior officer, were you feeling that at all?

PASTORINO: I guess I knew there was a CORDS program but I don't remember any pressure at all to volunteer. I was not against the war in Vietnam. I got my first assignment, to Caracas, Venezuela, after the two months orientation course. If I remember correctly, I assumed that at the end of the orientation they would give me an assignment and I would automatically accept that assignment and go. I didn’t think about changing it or negotiating for a “better” posting. I was ready to serve at the needs of the Service. If the assignment needed a language, then I would try and learn that language. I do remember the class did elect Mogadishu as the “worst posting”. When I got the word, I remember they announced it in the class, I said, "Wow, that's Latin America". I had heard something about Caracas. I was happy. I went home and told Fran.

On the way home, I got a post report for the first time in my career. Right away, we found out Caracas was a modern city and not very far from San Francisco. We always worried for the first fifteen years of my career about not being too far away from my mother-in-law who lived in San Francisco. She was healthy but wouldn't travel under any circumstances. I guess I knew about Romulo Betancourt, but I didn’t know much more about the country. I was very happy to go to Venezuela. For me it was a wonderful assignment.

AMERICAN EMBASSY CARACAS: JUNIOR OFFICER

Q: I'd like to put dates in at the beginning of an episode, an assignment. You were in Caracas from when?

PASTORINO: January of 1967 until about May or June of 1970. I spent two and a half years there.

Q: Could you give me a description of your impression of what the situation was like when you arrived in '67?

PASTORINO: Yes. First of all, Venezuela was the largest supplier of oil to the United States and it was a relatively prosperous country. Much of downtown Caracas looked like a major metropolitan city in the US. There were a few Marxist guerrillas in the mountains but they really were not a serious threat in 1967. The economy was doing well. The country was run politically by the grand old man Romulo Betancourt, and the *Accion Democratica* Party which he had founded in the 1930s. He had fought the Marxist guerrillas, had been sent into exile by Generals Castro and Perez Jimenez, and had come back to be President in 1964. He passed on his presidency to another *Accion Democratica* politician, Raul Leoni, who was an Italian-Venezuelan. Venezuela was a very stable country, in spite of the guerrillas. In fact, it had been subverted by both Trujillo and Fidel Castro. There was a tremendous US economic presence in the country. We had no problems with personal security.

A lot of my knowledge came from a person who became my hero at twenty-seven years old, Maurice Bernbaum. Ambassador Bernbaum was a career Foreign Service Officer who cared about junior officers. He made sure we had a decent rotation in the Embassy in order to learn how US diplomacy worked and he made sure we knew about Venezuela. He made sure we took care of our families. He was a wonderful man. What I learned about the Foreign Service in Washington was the organization chart, the structure, and all of that. But I didn't really learn about the Foreign Service until I went to Caracas. I didn't learn about he State Department for five years. My second assignment was overseas also.

Venezuela was a wonderful place. It had baseball, soccer, great restaurants, wonderful places to explore, and my family came to visit us. Our second child, Stephen, was born in Caracas in December 1969, shortly before we departed. He was baptized by the assistant Papal Nuncio, which I thought was a great honor. His godparents were a Foreign Service Officer, and the Ambassador's Secretary, Vita Palazzolo, who became a life-long friend of the family. Vita was a wonderful friend and a big help in teaching how to operate within the Embassy bureaucracy. During our time in Venezuela, we had only one difficult problem. On the four hundredth anniversary of the founding of Caracas, in July of 1967, the city was hit by a massive earthquake in which hundreds of people died. The building in which we lived, Petunia II, in one of the higher class neighborhoods, Los Palos Grandes, remained standing, but had to be torn down later because it was so badly damaged structurally. The building right next to us actually collapsed, killing dozens,

including twenty children that were celebrating a birthday party at six in the afternoon. As soon as the quake ended, we literally ran out of the apartment and down seventeen floors with a baby in our arms and nothing else. We didn't go back into the building for three weeks. I ran out with no shoes on. A Foreign Service officer lent me shoes the next morning so I could go shopping. We couldn't go back into the building because of the danger.

We lived in nine different places over the next three or four weeks; there were no hotel rooms because many of the hotels were badly damaged. We went from one foreign service officer's house to another. They treated us wonderfully. I'll never forget some of them, people like Tex Harris, another Junior Officer, and Bart Moon, the Deputy Political Counselor.

After a month of living in temporary quarters, we had the wonderful opportunity to go to live and work in the Consulate in Puerto La Cruz for three months. We were permitted to live in the Maraven Oil Camp in the house of the Assistant General Manager, who went on leave. My assignment was to replace the vice consul who was replacing the Principal Officer who went on home leave. We moved into this fabulous house which had eight rooms and a huge garden, overlooking Puerto La Cruz Bay. On the fourth day after I went to work in the Consulate, the Acting Consul became ill and I found myself in charge while the Acting Consul recuperated at home. There I am, Acting Consul, four or six months into the Foreign Service. So, the only really traumatic event we faced in Venezuela was the earthquake. Obviously, we got through it. I'm from San Francisco so I'd gone through earthquakes here but none as strong as that one.
Q: What type of work were you doing? You say you were rotational.

PASTORINO: During the first three months, I served in the Commercial Section. This was before the Foreign Commercial Service of the Commerce Department existed. I was basically the Assistant Commercial Attaché working for an outstanding professional named John Eddy. The person working for me was named Hans Mueller, a Venezuelan. Hans Mueller is now 83 years old and still works in the Commercial Section in Caracas. As a Commercial Officer, I hosted trade missions and did some market research.

The second three months I was the Personnel Officer because the incumbent went on home leave and the rotational schedule placed me into the Administrative Section. As the Personnel Officer I did what human resources officers do. I cut travel and assignment orders. I hired and fired some local employees, the nationals, and oversaw their benefits and other programs. None of this work impressed nor taxed me very much because I had done lots of administration in my banking positions previously. I was happy to do it. I learned something about the Foreign Service personnel system, its strengths and weaknesses, which stood me in good stead later during my career.

Then came the earthquake, and my assignment to Puerto La Cruz for three

months. And that was wonderful. One of the first assignments which I received was to go out and prepare the input from Eastern Venezuela into the country-wide Venezuelan fisheries report. What a wonderful irony, given the question I had been asked during my entrance oral examination. I traveled all over Eastern Venezuela for a week talking to fishermen and the fishing authorities. My report was included in the final report sent to Washington.

But most of the work in Puerto La Cruz was consular/visa work, obviously. In fact I understood that I made Visa history by granting the first US immigrant visa ever to a Bulgarian sculptor who had been in exile in Venezuela. In fact it was the first immigrant visa I ever saw. I signed it and I am sure he has since become a US citizen. Puerto La Cruz was a small (100,000 population) oil town at that time, but the US had a Consulate in order to provide for the interests of the Americans working for the US oil firms, a highly important function to support American business, even if some disparaged it. I got to know the whole political and economic power structure in the City and the Venezuelan State of Anzoategui. It was one of my first experiences with the petroleum industry and US business overseas, an experience which I grew to appreciate and like, and which helped me in my career, given the fact that the US economic interests were finally becoming recognized as being very important to US interests. As well, the economic and commercial function was becoming recognized as an important one to US policy and within the Embassy.

After three months, I went back to Caracas and went to work in the Consular section as a Vice Consul. There was a very nasty lady there who I worked for and had to put up with; it almost ruined my career before it began. I feared almost getting thrown out of the Foreign Service because I wouldn't follow her advice on at least one occasion. She had refused a tourist visa to an Italian-Venezuelan who was a tailor. The Consulate had established an experimental program to increase the Consular Section's efficiency, and to improve my Spanish; I sat out on the street corner in front of the Embassy in a little booth. I was the first person who interviewed anyone who came to the Embassy to obtain Consular services. I could immediately reject a visa request on grounds on ineligibility. Or, I could pass out a visa application form and tell the applicant to fill it out and come back. I was out in the booth for six hours a day.

One day, this middle-aged Venezuelan came up and told me a woeful story of having been refused a visa by this horrible Consul. I told him to fill out all the forms again, ask for an interview, and I would do the interview a second time. I checked his background through the commercial section. He wasn't a tailor, he owned about three shoe stores. So I thought that was a good enough reason for him to return to Venezuela, not remaining illegally in the US, and that he should be granted a visa. I must say I made him sign a piece of paper swearing he would come back after three months. The paper probably wasn't legally valid, but I gave him the visa. The horrible lady had a fit but the deed was done and she could not change it. That's what I remember most about the Visa Section.

The three months in the Visa Section taught me a lot of things which I used for the next twenty five years. Given my Caracas consular experience, I always understood the complexities and sensitivities of visa and immigration issues. During my career, I could always sympathize with the Vice Consuls when they were junior officers doing this time-consuming, mind-numbing, but necessary job.

For the last nine months I got a wonderful break because I was rotated into the Political Section. It was the time of a heated, very close Presidential electoral campaign in which the Christian Democrats were trying to defeat for the first time under Venezuelan democracy the stalwart, traditional *Accion Democratica* Party(AD). The *Adecos* had never been beaten and had a formidable political machine throughout Venezuela as well as the tradition of being the party that had fought the right wing military regimes that had ruled Venezuela almost from its establishment by one of Latin America's most renowned "democrats," Simon Bolivar. In fact, the Christian Democrats (the *Copeyanos*) did win the election, and then there were serious questions about whether AD would give up power. They did, leading to the first peaceful democratic political transition in Venezuela, a transition that the US often referred to when discussing democracy with other Latin American leaders.

As the lowest ranking junior officer in the political section, I had three jobs. One was to follow one of the Presidential candidates. I was given the candidate who ultimately finished fifth out of six, a real long shot, named Hernandez, who owned a fisheries company.

I was also assigned three of Venezuela's States in which I was to monitor the electoral campaign for the political section. I visited all three states, two relatively unimportant ones in the East where I had served in Puerto La Cruz, and the important state just outside of the Federal District of Caracas. I had to write a report on the situation in each state and analyze and predict the winning candidate in each state. I was right on two out of three, including Miranda, outside of Caracas.

The third task was the biographic reporting officer. This entailed the compilation of biographic information about important political, economic and social leaders in the country. Every Embassy has this function, with the coordination usually in the political section. This task was most important when political transitions take place. Sure enough, the opposition, the *Copeyanos* (COPEI) and Rafael Caldera won the election. My assignment was to be ended in December of 1969 when I was asked to stay for an additional three months since I was in charge of all the files containing the biographic data on the new Government officials. I was expected to write the biographic sketches and reports to inform Washington about the personalities in the new COPEI Government. So we were extended in the assignment for four or five months. Which was fine. We liked Venezuela. So I spent the extra months in the Political Section compiling and writing a series of

biographic reports. This meant going out and talking to the people. It was interesting.

Q: So tell me, from your perspective, how was America viewed? One gets the feeling in Mexico and other places about the Colossus to the North and all that. I never served there, but it sounds like a much healthier relationship between Venezuela and the United States.

PASTORINO: It was a good relationship. Venezuela at that time was still largely in the hands of the foreign ethnic communities. The Portuguese owned many of the stores. The Italians ran the shoe factories. The British and Americans ran the oil industry. The French owned many of the restaurants. It was frequently said that the only jobs for Venezuelans in Venezuela were in the government or the military.

Venezuelans were positive towards foreigners. Venezuelans lived pretty well. The economy was very good. I don't remember anti-American sentiment except among the few guerrillas in the hills. The Communist Party was not legal at that time, but there were small, nuisance, surrogate leftist parties; they probably didn't get more than two or three percent of the vote. The *Accion Democratica* contained and absorbed, very much like the Mexican PRI, a left wing which clamored for social justice.

This left wing did break off in 1970 under the leadership of a famous teacher, Luis Beltran Prieto Figueroa, who formed the MEP (*Movimiento Electoral Popular*), which used an ear as it political symbol. It was not noticeably anti-American for the most part, but it advocated Socialist economic policies and what they called “more democracy”. Except for the Spanish language and some of the customs, I didn't feel very much like I was living very far from the US. Rockefeller was there with huge supermarkets similar to Safeway. American airlines (Delta, one of the more efficient ones) flew in and out. Tourism was like tourism in California. We had cars, good highways, we drove all over the country.

I learned a little bit about Latin America’s anti-American philosophy but in an intellectual way. I remember once I had to go the campus of the National University in Caracas when there were student elections. Actually I later I found out I shouldn't have gone because some thought it might be dangerous. But I was a Student Affairs officer at the time and I thought I should see what was happening. Kempton Jenkins was the Political Counselor and both he and Ambassador Bernbaum said we should be out of the Embassy, talking to the people. The Public Affairs Officer, Gil Callaway, and I went out there one night and there was a demonstration.

Later that night the police found a cache of arms on the University campus and some tunnels which the guerrillas used to enter the campus and claim immunity from capture. But the guerrilla movement was not much of a threat at that time.

They were mostly out in the mountains, and the Minister of Interior, Carlos Andres Perez, who later became President twice, had sent in the military forces and wiped many of them out. He sent some civic action teams into those mountains also. The military also entered the University and cleaned it up.

The closest I ever came to the guerrillas was one night, driving back to Caracas from Puerto La Cruz (150 miles distant), when we drove past Machurucuto Beach, within an hour of the landing of thirty Cubans and Cuban-trained Venezuelans. The beach was no more than 300 yards from the highway. I didn't know anything about the landing until months later. That's the closest I came to danger from violent, subversive elements.

Q: Well, this Cuban foray became quite famous, didn't it now? This really put the nail in the coffin of Castroism in Venezuela didn't it? Latin America too?

PASTORINO: Well, in Venezuela the Cubans had already been accused of intervening to subvert the Venezuelan Government. By 1970, it was pretty clear that Venezuelan Democracy was working pretty well there, as opposed to the totalitarian system in Cuba. So, the Cubans were not welcome in Venezuela. That's why they had to invade, in the middle of the night across the beach. But this drove another nail into the coffin. But it is an interesting fact that Carlos Andres Perez wiped out the radical leftist elements at that time, and now many years later, some of those same elements are actually in the Governmental system that they had previously tried to overthrow. For instance, Teodoro Petkoff, a Venezuelan, has been a Deputy and Government Minister, after having been in jail and exile. Another is Domingo Rangel. The Machurucuto landing was well-known but not nearly as famous as Che Guevara going to Bolivia, or later the infiltration of Grenada by the Cubans.
It was important because of lot of people, within and outside the US Government made the comparison between Fidel Castro and Romulo Betancourt. They both came to power at the same time. One remained democratic; Castro was authoritarian. The human rights policy of the Venezuelans was far better than that of Castro. One became a US ally and Castro became a bitter enemy. Certainly, the Venezuelan economy prospered more that the Cuban one which became totally dependent on their erstwhile friends in the Soviet Bloc. Venezuela had its oil, but people conveniently forget that Cuba had its sugar and a five million ton quota. Romulo Betancourt was an author. He was one of these well-rounded Latinos who was a renaissance man, somewhat like Juan Bosch. So, it was a clear comparison between ideologies and systems.

Q: Was there any noticeable change or concern? I realize you were at the Junior Officer level, but when Nixon came into office in 1969, you were still there in Venezuela. The Nixon-Kissinger team seemed to be very touchy about leftist, or any regime with a leftist tinge. Did that play any part in how things happened?

PASTORINO: Well, I didn't see it. I don't have any memory of that. Also, *Accion*

Democratica was considered a somewhat leftist, but democratic party.

AMERICAN CONSULATE GENERAL HERMOSILLO

Q: When you left there in 1970...

PASTORINO: During the summer of 1969 we received a telegram assigning us to the Consulate General in Hermosillo, Mexico. I loved Mexico and was excited upon getting the posting, but I must admit I had to look at a map to find exactly where Hermosillo was located, which turned out to be close to California, only 180 miles south of Nogales, Arizona. But for us Californians, Mexico was Ensenada (where I had spent my honeymoon) and Tijuana. So, we went home to San Francisco on home leave, and after six weeks drove to Hermosillo.

Q: How long were you in Hermosillo?

PASTORINO: We were there from the middle of 1969 to the middle of 1971. I was the Economic/Commercial Officer. It was a Consulate General at that time with eight American officers, including a Branch Public Affairs Officer, and perhaps twenty or more local employees. The Consular function was the highest priority, including the welfare and protection of wayward Americans. The Post issued both immigrant and non-immigrant visas to Mexicans, as well as border crossing cards, called *micas* on the border.

Welfare and protection became a big part of my job, because we had an officer that didn't want to visit prisons and get involved in the criminal stuff; as a result I was assigned to do most of it, mostly because I was a man and was the most junior officer. Of the eight of us Americans in the Con Gen, six were female and two were male. The Consul General was John Barfield, another real professional, if a little unorthodox, but a great teacher and a great judge of human character, especially with regard to politicians. Being the lowest ranking officer in the Consulate General, I had the wonderful opportunity to do a little of everything. In fact, when Barfield left the Post for short periods of time, I was nominally in charge because the other officers did not want the responsibility and were interested only in consular affairs.

Hermosillo was a city of 180,000 people, the capital of the State of Sonora, one of the richest states in Mexico. In fact, Sonora was the agricultural breadbasket of Mexico in the ‘60s and ‘70s, and was also rich in mining, fisheries, and tourism. US investment was large and important. Sonora had a pronounced democratic element, often at odds with Mexico City. In fact, when I served there, the Mayor of Hermosillo was from the opposition PAN Party, one of only two important cities in the whole country not run by the PRI, which still won 99%of the elections in Mexico.

Mexico, at that time was still a very *“macho*” society although less than now so it

was hard for females to do some of the jobs. However, the Branch Public Affairs Officer, Diane Stanley, did a fabulous job in every way. She performed every one of her duties splendidly, sometimes in the face of obstinate *machismo*. Once she and I took a "moon rock" around Sonora to exhibit it. I remember well that the only person who wouldn't deal with her, even after two years, was Eduardo Healy, the publisher of the largest Sonoran newspaper, *El Imparcial*. She won over every other "*macho*" in the Consular District, which included all of the State of Sonora, and parts of Baja California Norte, and the already drug-infested state of Sinaloa.

Q: I was in Personnel during this time, and there was a tendency to put ladies of certain age, who had elderly mothers in these border posts because they had to be close to their families. So it wasn't a very healthy way of staffing these posts?

PASTORINO: Not really. We had two of those. But, let me point out that Hermosillo was not strictly a border post. It is about 180 miles south of the border, as I noted above. Actually, I was the person who helped close the original border post in Sonora, the Consulate in Nogales, shortly after the Consulate General was established in Hermosillo. The transfer was not completely consummated immediately because one of the Arizona Senators (Senator Carl Hayden, who had been in the Congress since Arizona's statehood) considered Nogales his personal overseas post and refused to accept its final closure. In fact, within days of his death the Post was closed definitively.

At that time, there was a policy of closing the posts right on the border, such as Cd. Juarez, Nogales, and Tijuana, which were not state capitals, and moving the Posts inland to the capital. Some of the border posts really did not have the political or economic importance of the capitals and it was thought that more important work could be done in the more important city, such as Chihuahua City. But the welfare and protection interest was strong on the border and most jailed Americans got into trouble on the border. Thus, for a time we had a system of two consulates within 200 miles of one another in the same State.

To put things into perspective, we also had a male employee who performed way below standards. He arrived several months after I did, and his performance created a real controversy in Sonora, and the later repercussions really taught me a lesson: Always keep the boss informed, especially when he is new, so that he doesn't get sandbagged.

When Barfield was transferred, this particular employee, a Consular Officer was the acting Consul General. He was totally ignorant of the political situation but wanted to make policy. First, he decreed that no Sonorans should get student visas to study in the US because he didn't think it was fair for US taxpayers to pay the bill. But, then he really stepped over the bounds when he refused a visa to the Governor's brother on the grounds the brother might become a public charge in the US. The Governor's private secretary, Virgilio Rios, one of my best contacts,

called me and told me the Governor (Don Faustino Felix Serna) was furious. I hadn't known about the visa refusal but I did know that the brother owned one of Sonora's largest banks. I informed the Acting Consul General of this, but he was not swayed and refused to issue the visa. The State Protocol Secretary then came to see me in tears about the visa rejection. Still, the Acting Consul General wouldn't budge. Finally, I think I issued the visa, and was declared *persona non grata* in the Consulate General; I was not allowed out of the economic part of the Office, so that I couldn't "meddle" in consular affairs.

That was the situation when Elmer Yelton, the new Consul General, arrived. As part of his orientation, I arranged that he would meet the Sonoran State Legislature in a special session. Diane and I accompanied Mr. Yelton, and all went well, until one of the Sonora State Deputies, a PRI member who was a teacher, brought up the issue of the refused visa. It turned out she had also been refused a visa. Yelton was of course taken aback and offered to look into the situation.

As soon as we got outside of the Chamber of Deputies he expressed his great dismay about the fact that I had not informed him of the situation, especially since it affected the Governor of the State, and leaders of the PRI party. I remember stammering that I didn't feel comfortable about ratting on the Acting Consul General. That of course carried no weight, as it shouldn't have. The only good part of this story is that the offending US officer was removed within weeks from Hermosillo. Of course, and you won't believe this, he was transferred to another Mexican Post, where he could carry on his myopic, anti-Mexican attitude.

Anyway, for me, Hermosillo was a great opportunity because of the variety of tasks which I could perform; in reality there was not much commercial work to do. Anybody in Sonora who wanted to buy something went to Arizona. So we really didn't need a Commercial Officer. I remember one exception to that rule. The elected leader of one of the largest, most efficient Sonoran collective farms (the famous *ejidos*), was a Communist so he could not visit the John Deere showroom in Tucson. But, he was so well known and the *ejido* had such a good credit rating that the John Deere people would go to Nogales, Sonora to do business with him.

But, there was a lot of economic reporting to do and I loved that. Remember I came from the pavements of San Francisco and except for a few months in Italy, I was not a rural or agricultural person. I hardly knew the difference between wheat and cotton. But, I came to enjoy visiting the big agricultural farms and *ejidos* in Sonora and Sinaloa, talking to the owners about the crops, and their prospects, which I then could report to Washington.

As I noted the Consul General was a man named John Barfield. John had married a *Sonorense* (a person from Sonora), and he knew everyone in the state, and everyone knew him. I had always had an interest in politics and political affairs,

and John let me do whatever I wanted on the political side. To this day, some of the very good contacts that I met in Sonora are now at high levels of the Mexican government. I met them when we were both young, and we proceeded up the career chain simultaneously.

For instance, I met a great young man named Leonel Arguelles when he was a student leader in Sonora and then head of the PRI Youth. Later, he was a member of the Sonora State Legislature and a small-town Mayor when I was a political officer in Mexico City. Finally, when I was DCM at the Embassy, Leonel was a Federal Congressman and then an Undersecretary of Agriculture. Much of my knowledge of the PRI and the Mexican political system came from those days in Hermosillo.

Barfield also understood and promoted the need for Embassy and Consulate officials to get out and meet the people in order to keep abreast of events. We used to joke that he carried this to the extreme by marrying into the society. Actually, Consuelo Barfield was a wonderful lady and a big help to us. That political experience which I gained from Sonoran politics also created the story that I made my career by always being correct on my Mexican political electoral predictions. I was correct more than a dozen times on the Mexican elections, not really so difficult because I always picked the PRI and the PRI almost always won; they always won at the Presidential level. All joking aside, some pundits have publicly buried the PRI many times over the past twenty years. It still hasn't happened! It was from Hermosillo that I sent an electoral cable which gained some notice in the Embassy because it had a catchy title: "From Bacadeuchi to Yecora, the PRI Sweeps". I had in fact visited everything in between those two hamlets.

Q: Did we have any concern, or did you have any concern about the fact that the PRI seemed to win these elections no matter what?

PASTORINO: No, no concern at all. Why should we have? It was Mexico, not the United States. Continued PRI rule meant stability, a political stability most of the rest of Latin America did not have. How many other countries have had no revolutions between 1920 and today? And it was the Mexican system, that is the way they did it. Our job was to maintain relations on a good operational level and avoid any threats to the US national interest, not to intervene in their affairs.

I knew the system and its participants so well, that I was asked one night to go to PRI headquarters and help mark electoral ballots. I had followed Luis Echeverria's 1970 political campaign in Sonora, actually traveling one day with his team. Echeverria had no opposition, the PAN having pulled out, and he won a huge majority of the votes. Unfortunately, headquarters in Mexico City wanted a certain number of votes from Sonora. And they wanted the actual marked ballots, which kept many people up all night since the official desired total count was many thousand above the actual voters.

I was asked to help out when I called some of my PRI friends to congratulate them on the victory and they told me they had a big problem. I asked, “what's you're problem? You got ninety-five percent of the vote”. He said, "we didn't get enough votes". I said, "what do you mean you didn't get enough votes, the people voted?" "Mexico City has sent us a quota”, he said, “They want two hundred thousand votes and we're several thousand votes short." I said, "how many people voted?" He said, "a hundred fifty thousand." "Well, then how can you have two hundred thousand?" "That doesn't matter". He said, "we're going to stay up all night and mark ballots". I said, "Why do you have to do that, why not just send in a tally?" "Because we have to open all the ballot boxes in Mexico City in ten days. We've got the Army waiting, the General's here, and he's going to take the ballot boxes on the airplane, and they have to be opened in front of the Congress. Someone wants to be able to count every ballot." I said good luck and stayed home that night.

My opinion of the PRI, which hasn't changed too much to this day, is that they have maintained political stability in Mexico. They have always had their conservatives, which today are called dinosaurs, their Neanderthals. But they have also had their moderates and their leftists. Within the party, there was a significant amount of democracy. If a Mexican wanted to change policy, you could do it from within the party. If you want examples of that political change, just compare Diaz Ordaz to Echeverria. Or, compare Lopez Portillo to Salinas. Or Lazaro Cardenas and Miguel Aleman, all of whom followed closely each other as President.

Mexico has gone back and forth, from left to right in economic policy, as well as in its degree of anti-Americanism, or Mexican nationalism. The PRI modernized Mexico. The PRI accounted for three or four major economic miracles. The PRI brought political stability to the country. As far as the U.S. was concerned on a geo-strategic basis, would the U.S. have been better off with an unfriendly southern neighbor where we had to deploy twenty divisions of troops, or a neighbor that was involved in a civil war on our border? That point often won the argument. For the U.S. national interest, the highest priority in the 1970s, 1980s, and 1990s was to have a stable southern border.

Q: Well back to the time you were there,, was there any feeling that Sonora and the rest of the area was a different world than that from what you were hearing from Mexico City?

PASTORINO: Yes, no question about it. I can sum it up in one word “*Chilango*s”. Most *Sonorenses* think the people from Mexico City are "*Chilangos*." “*Chilango*” has several interpretations and can be very derogatory. It comes from the word the Indians used for sandals like *huaraches*.

So yes, I knew there was a difference. When I later went to Mexico City to work

in the Embassy I had to relearn a lot about what I thought about Mexico. The difference was that Sonorans were independent, better educated, with a higher standard of living. They also had a much different attitude toward Americans, They were much more pro-American, for the most part. They had their Communists and leftists. When I arrived in Hermosillo, the Sonora University Campus was occupied by the Army because the leftists had shut it down with a violent strike. The army sent in helicopters to occupy the campus. Every day I read the Sonoran newspapers in the morning and I had a daily subscription to El *Excelsior* from Mexico City which was the national daily, and which arrived in Hermosillo in the afternoon. I could compare on a daily basis what I knew was happening and what I read about Sonora from the Mexico City press. The differences were at times astounding.

Q: We're trying to capture the full spectrum of this. Could you talk about some of your consular cases. Everybody has consular stories, but I'd like to hear some and how we dealt with them at the time, and how we did things.

PASTORINO: The biggest responsibility was the welfare and protection of Americans. Most of my time in Hermosillo, we had a more than one hundred American prisoners in the state penitentiary in Hermosillo. It was a three hundred year old building that had been a fort during the revolution; it had been used for torture, and still was a pretty dreary, nasty, tough place. Today, it is a fascinating museum about the history of Sonora. I don't believe the US prisoners were tortured but they were not treated well. The jail was run by the inmates, the trustees, and a prisoner had to pay for food and even decent cells. If you couldn't pay anything, you got no more that a cot and bread and water. On the other hand, if you could pay you could get very nice accommodations.

I'll relate one of the cases I remember best. Normally, the Consulate would not be told immediately when a new American was arrested; but for some reason, I got a call one night from a man named Durazo, who was also known as "El Negro Durazo", who was later the infamous, hated, corrupt Mexico City police chief, under Lopez Portillo. Anyway, Durazo telephoned me, he was the Sonora State Prosecutor at that time, and I went to the District Attorney's office to see the new prisoner. He had just been picked up, within the last two hours. He was an older American, and I could tell from my experience, that clearly he was a professional trafficker, not just the normal student going down to Mexico to buy some marijuana and take it back to Los Angeles for his own use.

I talked to him. I told him I was the Vice Consul, that I could help him get a lawyer, and that the Mexicans would be very tough on him because John Mitchell, the US Attorney General under Nixon, was demanding that the Mexican put drug traffickers in jail and throw the key away. I told him I would get him a lawyer and that he shouldn't sign anything. His response was, more or less, "I don't need any advice. I only want you to do one thing for me. Out in the truck are two cases of scotch. I want you to get those cases of scotch, bring them to me,

and I'll pass them out. I'll be out by tomorrow morning". I retorted "I don't think that's going to work, but it's up to you". I told him again not to sign anything. I asked him if he spoke Spanish. He said no. I said don't sign anything and I left. I didn't hear anything for several days.

About three days later, I received a call from the penitentiary, saying the same American wanted to talk to me. I went over and met him in the warden's office. I asked him what was going on. He said, "well, they threw me in jail and they won't let me out. I gave them all the scotch and it didn't due any good". I asked what he was being held for officially. He said trafficking! I asked what they found. He said 100 kilos of marijuana in the truck. I asked whether the lawyer had come to talk to him. He said, "yeah, but kind of late". I asked why. He said because he had already signed a paper. I asked what the paper said. He said he didn't know because he couldn't read it but that he had signed it because they said they would let him go. I asked if he knew now what he had signed. He said, "It says I'm guilty of trafficking 100 kilos of marijuana". I said, "well there's nothing we can do".

I did not get emotionally hung up on most of these cases. In a few I did. In most cases, I said the Consulate would find a lawyer, and that Americans are entitled to the same treatment in the prison and legal system as Mexican prisoners. I had to tell them that the Consulate could not get them out, and no, I could not call President Echeverria, and no, I didn't think Richard Nixon would call Echeverria either. The common belief among the prisoners, especially when first apprehended was that the Consul could always get you out of trouble in a foreign country. I would tell them I would see them once a month or whenever they needed me. I told them they could buy better quarters and food if they had the money, and I would bring them the money over if it was sent to the Consulate. I could not be much more forthcoming.

Back to the prisoner I described above, I saw him on and off for the next two years. He once invited me to his cell to smoke marijuana with him. He had bought a double cell on two floors, and had a carpet, a hi-fi system, and paintings on the walls. He had a suite. Mexicans allowed girls to come in once a week if the prisoners could afford them. That American stayed at least two years. He had all the money he needed, all the drugs he wanted. Fran and I went back to visit the Museum (former Penitentiary) last year and it was a weird sensation.

Many of the prisoners were college students; I remember one from Stanford. They would come to Guaymas or Kino Bay in order to buy some dope and bring back a few grams for personal use or maybe even less. The student from Stanford was caught trying to cross the border at Nogales and they threw him into the penitentiary. He was finally released after about one year. I got to know him fairly well and when his wife came to see him, she stayed with us once. I remember when he was finally released, I went to pick him up with his wife. We came back to my house and opened a bottle of champagne and then went out to dinner. Then, he quickly left Mexico, probably forfeiting his bail.

Another horrendous case demonstrated that the US Government was not always consistent. A man and woman, unmarried, both older and mature, were picked up in Nogales for possession of drugs. He was probably the trafficker. She turned out to be a nymphomaniac and his girlfriend. They were locked up in the Nogales jail. He was on the men's side, she was one the women's side. He was selling her services to the men on his side. And, it appeared they both began to enjoy it there. Then one day we received a cable from a US Senator from New York, a Republican. This woman was the daughter of the President of one of the biggest New York insurance companies. This Senator decided he was going to get her out; that John Mitchell owed him a political debt to get her out. The lengthy jailing lasted about three months while we tried to get her released. I had to move to Nogales to keep close to this case. She didn't want to leave without her boyfriend and nobody in Washington or New York cared about him.

We were getting cables instructing me to go see her, make her comfortable, tell her we'll do everything we can, but don't try and force the Mexicans to release her. That would be against policy. Finally her lawyer came up with a legal solution. The lawyer determined that in Mexico nymphomania is a sickness. The lawyer prepared the legal documents and convinced the Judge she should be released because she was ill, and not a criminal. Finally, they let her go. To me, this was the height of inconsistency.

There were lots of other experiences. The waters of the Gulf of California, at Kino Bay on the Sonora side of the Gulf, are very rough and dangerous. The Colorado River flows in with a heavy current in certain seasons and the Pacific Ocean tide comes in with a contrary current, both meeting near Shark Island (Isla Tiburon). This creates whirlpools and eddies which can capsize and sink boats, especially when they are overloaded and operated by inexperienced crewmen.

One day I got a report that a boat with seventeen Americans was lost in these dangerous waters. I had to go out to Kino Bay (about 50 miles from Hermosillo) and become part of the search and rescue operation. I had a close friend of mine who knew the area better than anyone. He was a fisherman and ran a restaurant out there. We consulted him when the boat could not be found. He studied the tides and the water patterns and determined where the remains of the boat would be found. After about five days a human arm was found, almost in the exact location that he described, but the remains of the boat and the rest of the bodies were never found.

Q: With the Americans that were in jail, were you able to make any representations that had any effect about maltreatment of Americans?

PASTORINO: Sometimes, with regard to prison treatment, or the legal process, yes. Not very often with regard to releases. For instance, once I received a call at the Consulate from one of the better-known, higher paid prostitutes in Hermosillo.

My assistant knew of her reputation and asked me discreetly why she was calling me. “What's going on?” he asked. After I took care of his inquiry and telling my wife (so she didn’t hear it from somewhere else), I went to see the prisoner and got him admitted to the infirmary. Evidently, he could not pay for the treatment so he was not admitted. He then told me that the guards (trustees) had purposely broken his arm because he could not pay off his debts to them; they actually held him down and broke the arm to teach him a lesson. This was one example of the power of the trustee/guards; even the warden was afraid of them. I personally almost never entered into the cell-blocks myself; I would meet the prisoners in the warden’s office.

The prison was also notorious for having drugs inside and readily available. One day, the warden noticed that the baseballs which were hit outside of the prison exercise yard into the street were always retrieved by the same prisoner when thrown back. Upon closer inspection it turned out that the balls thrown back had been hollowed out and filled with marijuana. In another case, it was discovered that wooden tables that were manufactured in the prison were being returned; you guessed it, the table legs were hollow and filled with marijuana upon their return.

At times, I would go to the Mexican authorities to ask on the prisoners’ behalf how much the bail would be. Under the Mexican system, if you paid enough bail, you would often be released, no matter what you might have done. It was expected that the prisoner would jump bail immediately and go to the US, forfeiting the bail to whichever Mexican official had collected it. Jumping bail did not make the Mexicans unhappy in most cases. Someone made some money. The Mexican authorities were excellent at calculating how much a prisoner could afford or how much he could borrow from his family or friends. It would take them five minutes to figure it out and then the judge would set the bail a little higher, in order to squeeze a little bit more. At times, I would work with the lawyer to get the bail lowered. Sometimes it worked; other times it didn’t.

But I never marched in to demand that the Warden or Governor release an American prisoner. At times, this job could be a little schizophrenic, in that the US official policy was that the Mexicans should convict the Americans, lock them up, and throw the key away, this as a warning to potential traffickers. On the other hand, the consular officials were also charged with protecting the American citizens.

I learned a lot about how the Mexican legal system worked in actual practice. What I had to learn was the reality of the system, and how to work within it. Regardless of the ethics or morality of it, it was Mexico’s system. For instance, once I helped a frantic US Government (not State Department) official get his valuable house trailer out of Mexico which he had brought into the country illegally by not getting a permit. When he was ready to depart, the Mexican vehicular authorities asked for the permit, and told him he couldn’t have his RV without paying a hefty fine. Someone recognized a great opportunity for a bribe

or *mordida*.

I resolved the problem by arranging a very quiet meeting in the major Nogales hotel for the US official and the Chief of the Motor Vehicle Division, letting the American know what the appropriate payment would be. He begged me to do it for him, or at least accompany him, but I didn't want that direct involvement, so I waited outside. All went well, the official left Mexico with his precious trailer. I found out later why the Motor Vehicle Director always had a brand new car when he invited me to lunch; it had been confiscated or stolen, often from Americans, and he was using it. Much later in my career I worked on a bilateral agreement with Mexico for the identification and return of American stolen vehicles.

Before leaving the Hermosillo assignment, I should mention some personal matters which are very important in a foreign assignment to the successful carrying out of one's duties. Living overseas makes the foreign service job much different from domestic jobs. The handling and management of everyday problems is all-important to a successful assignment.

For instance, usually FSO housing is relatively nice, and always paid for by the Government, either directly, or in those days through an allowance passed on by the Officer to the landlord. Upon arriving in Hermosillo, we were assigned a house which had been leased by the Consulate, but we had to negotiate with the landlord. The house was in working class neighborhood, the only Consulate residence not in the Petit District where the millionaires lived. Our neighborhood had its advantages in that we met working class Sonorenses, and lived next to the tortilla factory, which made the delicious Sonoran wheat tortillas, and the grilled, goat meat restaurant.

On the other hand, the landlord was a SOB and my wife had to have an extraordinary amount of patience to deal with him. The house, which is a clinic today, had a 1920s wiring system which frequently blew the fuses when one used the 1960s appliances. Well, the landlord refused to fix or replace the circuit breaker. One day as the temperature reached 110 degrees Fahrenheit, and our son Steve was very ill, I had to replace 16 fuses in one afternoon, but still the breaker wouldn't hold. Finally, the Doctor ordered us to move to a motel with air conditioning. The landlord's response? He accused my wife of being a bad tenant by bringing termites to the house. We should have lifted his visa!!

Before leaving this assignment, I must note that Hermosillo was one of my favorite assignments. I learned many things, grew to love Mexico, became known as a Mexican expert, and we made some great friends. In fact, we were serenaded by the Consulate staff and a group of Mariachis at 2:00AM on the morning of our departure. Of course, we had to get up out of bed and invite them in for refreshments. Later that morning, I drove north through the desert from Hermosillo to Nogales, shedding more than one tear.

THE DEPARTMENT: ARA/ECP AND ECONOMIC TRAINING

Q: Bob, we left off in 1971, where did you go?

PASTORINO: Upon leaving Hermosillo, we went to San Francisco for home leave, and then to Washington for my first real Washington assignment. I was posted to ARA/ECP, Economic Commercial Planning, in the Latin American Bureau. ECP was the ARA equivalent of EB, the Economic/Business Bureau of the State Department. My job was an economic analyst, analyzing the economies of Mexico, Venezuela, Central America and the Caribbean, in financial and economic terms, in order to help formulate our AID policy and our advisory policy on loans in the World Bank and the Inter-American Development Bank. In addition to advising US AID, the State Department had a veto over the granting of loans to these countries from the International Financial Institutions.

ARA/ECP had about ten officers in the section, divided between those who worked on functional matters such as trade, general financing policy, overall economic assistance policy, etc., and those who worked on countries or regions. The Director was Tom Rogers, a long-time, very serious and bright FSO.

My direct supervisor was Jim Landberg, who became one of my close friends and a mentor. We worked frequently together in other assignments, even after we both retired. I will never forget, because Jim tells the story frequently, how we used to argue about the personality and performance of Richard Nixon. I argued he really was “Tricky Dick” and would be impeached and went so far, apparently, of turning Nixon’s picture to the wall in Jim’s office at every opportunity. Of course, Jim ridiculed my idea of impeachment over Watergate for many months but, he now says I was the first bureaucrat to see through Nixon and predict Watergate.

Of course, those personal feeling did not prevent me from carrying out the policy of the Administration, regardless of my personal opinion about its leadership. Being in Washington, instead of overseas, presents much more clearly, possible conflicts between personal and professional beliefs. One of the responsibilities of the FSO is to carry out the policy, regardless.

ARA/ECP also began my experience in working within the Washington bureaucracy, both within the Bureau and the State Department, as well as with other agencies within the Government. On a daily basis I worked with other parts of the US Government, most of them purely domestic agencies. While I was not known as a particularly astute or Machiavellian bureaucratic in-fighter, I learned enough to keep up with the bureaucracy as I tried to get proposals or policies approved, or courses of action implemented.

I didn’t have a lot of secrets in dealing with the Governmental bureaucracy; I wrote things down as much as possible, both for the record and to clarify the State position for others; I usually put the position on the table, rather than “playing my

cards close to the vest" as many did. I thought this latter tactic sometimes wasted more time than anything else and resulted in negotiations between US Government officials that seemed more difficult than the ultimate negotiations overseas with foreign governments. I always tried to learn who the real policy-maker was, rather that what the organization chart illustrated. And I always tried to discuss the issues privately before decision-making meetings, both to get all the available information and look for areas of compromise. Some of these rules stood me in good stead later when I served at the National Security Council.

I found ARA/ECP a very interesting job. We lived in Hillcrest Heights, Maryland, in Prince George's County, in an apartment complex with a swimming pool. We took advantage to explore the Eastern US, which was new to us. Our two kids were just beginning to go to school and went to good Maryland schools. I commuted to work on the bus and we actually learned to live again in the US after almost five years overseas. I remember being impressed that working in Washington at the State Department was kind of like having a regular office job, like in a bank in San Francisco. We had no special cultural or language problems. The Foreign Service didn't seem so sexy in Washington after having served and lived overseas.

Q: You took economic training?

PASTORINO: Yes, I went to the Foreign Service Institute.

Q: So from mid-1971 to 1972 it was economic training? Could you tell me a bit about it? This was fairly early on in that six-month economic training course. It was very highly regarded. How did you find it?

PASTORINO: I found it excellent. It was invaluable for me for most of the rest of my career through the lower and mid career levels. I received good assignments out of it, and because of it. It was very intensive. It was eight hours a day. The courses included macro-economics, micro- economics, banking and finance, economic development policy, trade policy, international economics, commodity policy, and a lot of econometrics and statistics. In those days econometrics was a very new science actually. I was lucky in that I had had some economic training at San Francisco State and at the American Banking Institute. I found that I was deepening and broadening some of what I had already learned, in addition to putting all of it into the international policy-making and implementation context. The course related all of the material to overall US economic, trade and financial interests around the world.

Q: At that time, I assume that because it was a practical course, you were looking at the situation as of that day as part of your exercises. What was the general feeling about economic and financial issues, particularly in Latin America, which was not too far away? Were you getting any feel before you went on to ARA?

PASTORINO: Well, I had already learned some of the practicalities, having served in Mexico and Venezuela and working in international banking at Crocker and the Bank of Tokyo. Loans at that time, especially from the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) were decided on political grounds. There was a clear IDB policy. Every Latin country is a member of the bank so each one had to get at least one loan every year, regardless of the economic or financial viability of the proposal.

It was also the policy at that time to lend for large infrastructure projects, such as roads, dams, highways, ports, electrical generation, and communications. Almost all of the money went directly to governments. There was not nearly enough analysis of the proposals from a profit-motive, private sector point of view, not enough monitoring of the utilization of the loans, and not enough conditionality. There was also not enough effort to collect them on the due dates. In general, the loans were concessional, at low interest rates, with long term repayment periods. While they were technically not grants, some of the recipients thought of them as such upon signing the loan agreements, and they turned out to be grants when they had to be restructured or forgiven, or formally transformed later into grants.

An example of some of these lending policies was loans which I worked on for Honduras. At that time Honduras had a horrendously long, loan pipeline, meaning that they would be given loans but did not have the capacity to utilize them, either because of lack of personnel, viable projects, or the required counterpart funds. When these loans remained in the Honduran accounts not being used, other countries which could utilize the funds were unable to borrow funds.

I decided I would try to stop an annual loan to Honduras, arguing the pipeline issue, and noting other countries needed and could use the funds. This may have been a good economic/financial argument but it was a lousy political argument. I forestalled the loan for several months, but finally it was granted over my objections, with the approval of my bosses. Whether it was ever paid back or was utilized would be an interesting study. What I got out of the issue was that one couldn't win every battle, and that political considerations were some times all important.

There were disagreements with the policies of the borrowing Latin Countries; unfortunately, these disagreements didn't stop many bad loans. At this time, most of Latin America and the Caribbean were following the statist, leftist, economic development policies of Raul Prebisch and the import substitution and infant industry theories of the UN ECLA [United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America] school; all of these theories were many years later proved to have been wrong; most were woeful failures. But, at that time, many in the US Government also believed in them. These policies basically supported one-way free trade (with the US market open and the Latin ones closed), autarky, large domestic budgetary deficits, rigidly controlled foreign investment, high social spending without serious tax collection efforts to raise revenues, and easy

monetary policies. Many also still believed in fixed exchange rates.

With regard to the lending to Latin America, I was struck by something else. In addition to the loans from the public institutions, the ones I've just mentioned, the larger portion by far of financing for Latin America was coming from the US commercial banks. The commercial banks often assumed that their political and commercial risk would be partially covered by the US government, with or without OPIC [Overseas Private Investment Corporation] or Export-Import Bank support. Commercial banks in many of those years really didn't look closely enough at whether the loans could be repaid, which led directly to the massive restructuring later in almost every country. During that time (the '70s), not many Latin Governments were careful with their resources or fiscally responsible. I remember one country which was fiscally responsible during this period, Colombia. Colombia was well-known for a Central Bank that was independent and conservative. Colombia always had very low rates of inflation and it was a long time before they had to reschedule their debt.

The US Government obviously contributed one hundred percent of official AID loans, and about sixty or seventy percent of the funds that went from the IDB, so all of this funding was subject to US policy. But we did not hold up bad loans very often.

Q: Well, you came of out of this course, both from your experience in the private sector and your experience in the Foreign Service, and then with this course, you really had, for a relatively junior officer, a pretty good idea of where things were, didn't you?

PASTORINO: In the financial/economic sector? Yes.

Q: How did they use you? Could you give me your impression of it, ECP, when you arrived and then how did they use you?

PASTORINO: Actually, as I remember, it was a very smooth transition. As I said before, I worked most of the time directly for a wonderful guy, Jim Landberg. My duties were clearly set out that I was to work on the economic/financial situation in Mexico, Venezuela, Central America, and the Caribbean. I was to be, on behalf of the Latin American Bureau, a resource-inputer, policy-recommender to the Economic/Business Bureau (EB) about Latin American issues with respect to overall US policy on finance, economic affairs, and trade policy. I was to write the briefing papers on these issues for people around the State Department and the rest of the government.

Jim, who was not very much more experienced than I was, was a fabulous boss. He was very good at letting me know there were politics involved on some technical issues. We had to have some economic justification, even though that might not be enough. When you said I was fairly well prepared, I guess I was on

the economic/financial aspects. But I was not as well prepared on the political context of some of the issues.

I had two special tasks. I had the privilege of working again with Ambassador Bernbaum. He was Special Coordinator on the project to get the Darian Gap Highway built. As you know, the Gap is the stretch of land between Panama, south of the canal, and Northern Colombia, where no highway has ever been built through the Gap. Thus, the Pan American Highway, long a US dream between Canada and Tierra del Fuego was incomplete. A Special Coordinator was needed at State because of international ramifications involving sovereignty, health issues, financing, and international trade.

It was a fascinating assignment from which to see the inner workings of the US Government. The real policy debate was not so much between the US and Colombia or Panama and Colombia; it was the policy debate between the US Federal Highway Commission and the State Department which wanted the road built, and the US Department of Agriculture that was extremely concerned (rightfully so) that the natural barrier (the Gap) to hoof-and-mouth disease (FMD) would be bridged, allowing the malady to spread north of the Isthmus.

So I spent the whole two years working with Ambassador Bernbaum. I visited Panama and Colombia, and went trekking out there in the jungle to see if we could move the project along. The real issue was whether the US Government would appropriate the money. I remember Richard Nixon saying forcefully that we were going to build this highway. And the US Department of Agriculture [USDA] quietly saying that it wouldn't be built until the Gap was better protected from the spread of hoof and mouth disease.

The required physical barrier would be the establishment in northwest Colombia of a FMD free zone, maybe a hundred miles south of the border. There would be a ring of special inspection outposts that would check the movement of cattle, make sure there were no infected cattle in that zone, and make sure that none came into the zone from outside. I remember President Somoza in Nicaragua telling the US Government that the highway should not be built because the disease would spread to Central America, infecting its cattle population and thus stopping its meat exports to the US, thus devastating the Central American economies through the loss of exports.

At that time, the US certified certain countries, as Aftosa (FMD) free, and only those countries were able to send beef on the hoof, or even canned beef to the United States. The only countries certified as Aftosa free were Mexico, where we had spent two hundred million dollars ten years before to eradicate the disease, Central America, Panama, New Zealand, and some of the Caribbean islands, as well as Canada. All of these countries were concerned that they would lose their certified status. The Central Americans sent large amounts of meat up for hamburgers and dog food. They had taken serious measures to remain FMD-free;

for instance, anyone getting off a plane in Managua had to step in a small box at the foot of the stairs containing an element killing the disease should it be on a passengers' shoes, where the microbes could live for several days. The disease was highly contagious. Mexico, for its part, sent thousands of carcasses everyday to the U.S. We were talking about hundreds of millions of dollars of exports to the US annually.

But, that part of the ARA/ECP assignment was a disappointment in that we didn't get the highway built. In fact, one still can not drive to South America because the Gap remains a gap.

Q: Well, I was going to say, the Nixon administration seemed to take certain prestigious stands and this became more a matter of saying we did it, would it have made a difference, that highway?

PASTORINO: It would have made some difference to us, in terms of travel and trade, cutting the costs of both. And, as sure as I am writing these words, the highway will be built one day. It would have made a lot of difference to the Central American countries in that there would have been a lot more tourism passing through the region heading south, as long as the meat exports were not threatened. It would have helped Panama which is a natural crosswords for the movement of people and goods. It would have helped a few thousand US tourists. I mean I would drive it, right now today, if I could drive all the way to Bogota, Lima and Santiago.

It was also a high priority political project, symbolizing the unification of the hemispheres. I guess the Highway Administration liked the idea because they were going to build it. The Darien Gap Highway would have been a significant engineering feat, building one hundred miles of road through dense jungle, deep swamps, and steep mountainous terrain, with no infrastructure to provide engineering services and supplies. I was wholeheartedly for it because of the civil engineer still in me. I thought this was an assignment that was important but I don't remember ever being frustrated with USDA. I could see their point of view.

One of the most interesting things I did was to visit the Plum Island Laboratory of the USDA, just off Long Island. Since FMD is so dangerous and spreads so easily, there was only one place in the US where FMD existed and that was in the laboratory. USDA invited me up there so I could see how we worked on Aftosa prevention and eradication research and experiments. I remember taking a little boat out to the island. As soon as I arrived on the island, I had to strip down. They gave us surgical gowns. Then we went through the laboratory for four or five hours. It was for me a wonderful scientific experience and it convinced me of the potential economic damage which could be caused by penetration of FMD into the US. Then I remember leaving. We had to take showers and then put our own clothes back on to assure we didn't carry the disease back to the mainland. I remember being very impressed, and thinking this is not something I could do if I

were a professor or a businessman.

I also had the special assignment of writing speeches for people who spoke at the Organization of American States. On two occasions, I wrote them for William Casey who at that time was the Under Secretary of State for Economic Affairs. I would deal with Mr. Casey again much later in my career.

Q: Did he mumble then as he did...

PASTORINO: Yes, but never as much as he was criticized for. But, even if he couldn't say “Nicaragua", he played a critical role in saving it from Castro despotism. I might have been one of the last people also to meet Mr. Casey, officially. When I was in Honduras, he flew down in an official airplane, which was fitted out as an office. He came down to visit the Contras. As sick as he was, he bounded out of the airplane, we put him in the helicopter, he went to the Contra camps. When we finally returned from the camps, I met with him in the airplane, and it was just a few days later that he had the stroke.

Q: You say you were in ARA. Was there almost a competing office looking at this type of thing looking, at the mega picture in the EB bureau?

PASTORINO: Yes. There were several offices in the EB Bureau. I worked closely with the Office of Financial Affairs. EB also had responsibility for trade affairs with Latin America, working closely with the trade section in ARA/ECP. Latin America had a lot to do with commodities. I did some commodities work which complemented an EB office, of which I was later the Director, International Strategic Materials. I saw EB as a collaborator. I was working on the Latin America policy component of a global issue.

One of those trade issues was the US System of Generalized Preferences (GSP), which provides unilateral tariff preferences to developing countries in order to help them compete in the US market. I toured several capitals in Latin America, explaining the GSP, usually with EB officers, and sometime with representatives of the Office of the US Trade Representative.

For me it was a valuable experience working with EB on the various global economic, financial, and trade issues. In fact, EB had a lot more prestige within the State Department and the US Government in those days, although it was already beginning to lose it. Many of its prerogatives and international responsibilities were being taken away by other US Government agencies, which often did not have the political expertise affecting the international economic issues, thus leading to the creation of economic policies that were badly formulated. While the technical economic expertise of EB could not always match that of Commerce or Treasury or the Trade Representative, it was unmatched in understanding the political repercussions of a possible policy, an understanding that was critical to US interests. The EB Bureau must regain its previous role and

responsibility for formulation and implementation of US economic policy.

I guess I should explain something at this point. I went into the Foreign Service as a political officer. After my first assignment in Venezuela, I received a biographic form from the Personnel Bureau, which listed me, by mistake, as an economic officer. I considered a complaint to change it, but when I was assigned to Hermosillo, I wanted that position and it was an economic-commercial position, regardless of what I actually did. So, I didn't bother complaining. I almost never complained about personnel assignments or procedures. I stayed in the economic cone (area) for most of the rest of my career, at least for the next fifteen years.
Q: Did you at your level feel any congressional or presidential heat in any of these areas?

PASTORINO: I knew the President's position on the Darian Gap Highway and wanted to carry out the project. But I was only the assistant to the Special Coordinator, so I didn't go to the White House. I did begin to understand not only the politics of international lending, but the politics of Washington. This was the first time I served in Washington. I think at that time I may have gone up to the Hill with superiors when they testified; I didn't testify in Congress at that time, being far too low ranking. I certainly wrote the testimony and I began to understand the various congressional interests, where they were coming from.

It was also the time of Watergate. So the Washington assignment was fascinating from that point of view. I usually didn't like Washington assignments, preferring to serve overseas. It took me a long time to get used to living in Virginia. But I certainly found the whole Watergate episode absorbing. In fact, as is probably happening now (during the Clinton impeachment process), people spent a lot of US Government funds taking time to talk about what's happening in the White House.

During long coffee breaks the first thing in the morning, everyone discussed what they had read in the *Washington Post* and then compared notes. I certainly did. Everyone would pretend to have insights directly from the White House to relate. I can see now in hindsight that the State Department is not only physically far away from the White House and the center of power, but Foreign Service Officers often don't understand the political elements of domestic politics in Washington, partially because they are overseas so much of the time. They lose a bit of perspective by not being immersed continually in the domestic situation. This is unfortunate in that it affects the understanding and implementation of policy. I have often said, and I feel this strongly, that everyone should have a couple of Washington assignments outside the State Department. Those assignments should be in other Government agencies such as Commerce or Treasury, in an Intelligence Agency, working with the Press, or working on the Hill in a Congressional Office.

Q: What countries did you have again, your particular ones?

PASTORINO: Those in the Caribbean and Central America, Mexico and Venezuela. Jim Landberg did the same job for the rest of the hemisphere.

Q: Why wasn't Colombia in that?

PASTORINO: I don't know. Jim worked on Colombia.

Q: The Caribbean countries were becoming independent. What was the feeling as far as loaning to them and their ability to repay?

PASTORINO: Actually Haiti and the Dominican Republic had long been independent, but were not very good credit risks, especially Haiti. Cuba was not eligible for US or IDB funding because of its well-deserved pariah status, and rotten economic policies copied from its mentors, the Soviets. The smaller Caribbean Islands had just become independent but they were really more the responsibility of Great Britain, given their former status, and being members of the British Commonwealth. Also, I don't remember big problems with the British Caribbean countries because I think their economies and policies were much saner. In fact, they were much richer than the Latin Islands in the Caribbean, and still are.

Q: Was Mexico into oil by then?

PASTORINO: Mexico has been a major oil power in the world since the 1920's. They were still a small exporter in the early '70s but their net exporting position was being eroded every year as their internal demand was growing, and they were not making any new significant discoveries; those would come later.

Q: What about in the Central American Republics? Except for Costa Rica, these were all military governments weren't they? What was the wisdom of the day? If you gave them money, where did it go?

PASTORINO: I don't ever remember thinking about financial or lending issues in the context that they were military Governments, or that they were stealing the money. I remember thinking about it in terms of it's not being used very well. In the case of Honduras, it wasn't used at all. In the case of Salvador, some of it may have all been going to projects benefitting the eighteen families, which by the way did create many jobs.

I don't remember ever considering rejecting a loan request because the applicant was a military dictatorship or a human rights violator. Human rights considerations hardly existed in those days. That was the policy.

Costa Rica was an interesting case. Costa Rica was of course the only democracy in the Central American region. The US did often refer to it as a political model,

but in a low-keyed manner. But, Costa Rica was financially broke as often as the rest of the countries. But they certainly had a better public relations team to conserve their good reputation and the US was always there to help, even if some of their economic policies were counterproductive. Panama was different in the policy context because of the Canal and the Zone, and its different relationship with the US and the dollar.

AMERICAN EMBASSY LISBON: COMMERCIAL ATTACHE

Q: In 1974, you were pulled out of Washington. But you went to a very important post at a very important time. I wonder if you could tell me how this developed.

PASTORINO: I got the assignment sometime in late February 1974 to go to Lisbon, Portugal as Commercial Attaché. Several people told me it was a lousy assignment, because there would be little to do. Portugal was still the backwater of Europe, still living in the 1900s, and still under the long Salazar/Caetano dictatorship. But, I was interested in commercial work and it would be an opportunity to get to Europe. My parents were living in Rome at that time.

I would still be a State Department employee but working for Commerce Department. I would have two efficiency reports written and would receive instructions from both Departments. I knew that Commerce Department had a big budget for its overseas operations and I would control it. I said fine. I started studying Portuguese at the Foreign Service Institute, being immersed in a six week transition course from Spanish to Portuguese.

There was a slight disappointment in that I was going to Europe, but not to Italy. But, it was close to Italy. Whenever State had requested my assignment preferences, I had listed Italy. When we were assigned to Venezuela, State explained there was a large Italian community in Caracas. When I was assigned to Hermosillo they said nothing. A couple times I answered the assignment preference request by listing Italy as all three preferred options for assignments. After a while I gave up going to Italy. But, it was not a traumatic issue, not being assigned to Italy, although Fran still says I promised her that I would take her to live in Rome.

Then came the March 16th, 1994, failed coup attempt. And all of the sudden the situation seemed to change dramatically, in that there might be change in the near term in Portugal. It was an attempted revolution against a reactionary regime which had been in power for forty-eight years. However, many people said that the coup attempt didn't mean anything, that the reactionary regime was strong and safely in power. In any case, I went back to quietly studying Portuguese. Then came April 25, 1974, which was the definitive "Revolution of the Carnations" which overthrew Caetano.

Q: So you're talking about the Salazar regime...

PASTORINO: Salazar had been in power for forty years and then he had suffered a stroke. Marcelo Caetano took over for the last eight years. He didn't change the type of regime at all. And, Portugal at that time looked toward Africa, where it still had its colonies in Guinea Bissau, Sao Tome, Mozambique, and Angola, and from which came many of its resources, especially Angola which could be the richest country in Africa. Portugal sat at the edge of Europe looking south and it seemed that no one in Europe really missed it. Then came April 25th and Portugal became very important, as it had been in the 15th century when it explored, conquered and ruled large parts of the world.

I took six weeks of Portuguese training at the Foreign Service Institute and received a fluency rating of 3/3. I mention this because I'm proud of it. I am not a great language scholar; Spanish was about my limit. However, the course had been taught by some young Brazilian women who taught me Brazilian Portuguese which I soon discovered was vastly different in accent from the mainland Portuguese. I later found that the European Portuguese teachers were otherwise detained, teaching Portuguese to a secretary, repeat a secretary, of a high-ranking USIS official. Not the best of examples of FSI efficiency. Then we had some regional/country orientation at FSI. We went to Lisbon in May.

Q: So, you went in May 1974 and you were there until when?

PASTORINO: Until the middle of 1977. It was the only three year assignment I had. For the record, I'll say it's the assignment I enjoyed least, for a lot of reasons. On the other hand, it's the assignment my wife and children enjoyed the most. In fact, our third child, Susan Teresa, was born in Lisbon on December 10, 1975. We made it to the hospital with only hours to spare and I will never forget I got a flat tire on the way home after the birth. We were lucky the flat tire did not happen before because the birth was very early in the morning. The two older children went to Catholic Schools in Lisbon, where they were taught in English. They still say that Portugal was a very nice place. I will admit that we lived well, and the food and drink were wonderful. We learned to drink Port wine and I gave up hard liquor. The children still say it was our best assignment.

Q: When you arrived in May 1974, let's start first about the situation as you saw it, at that time, right when you arrived.

PASTORINO: Portugal went through six attempted or partially successful coups during the 18 months after April 25, 1974. Five of them moved the country progressively to the left when the Governments became more Marxist, radical and chaotic, while the sixth coup was the countercoup by General Eanes, which brought Portugal back toward the center. The Government under Eanes and then Mario Soares remained leftist but similar to Italy, France or the Scandinavians.

When I arrived in Portugal there was tremendous effervescence everywhere. You

couldn't go anywhere without seeing political posters of every stripe. Demonstrations took place everyday, first in support of the new regime and the promised democracy, and then shortly thereafter in support of the Marxist government. The more moderate parties held their own demonstrations but they were quieter, smaller and less polemical, while the Catholic Church quietly spoke against the Marxists military captains and majors running the Government.

No one wanted to speak out about the Marxists and the drift to the leftist extreme, and those who did were tarred immediately as Fascists. The worst epitaph one could utter in Portugal for two years was “Fascist". I very quickly realized that many people, especially in Lisbon and the southern part of the country (which makes up half the country and half the population), thought of the Americans and the British as the great fascists. We were blamed for having sustained Salazar and Caetano, and the Communist propagandists such as Alvaro Cunhal and the Communist Party of Portugal never ceased to propagate that history in order to mask their own covert objectives.

Even before General Spinola, Caetano’s immediate successor, was overthrown, this perception was prevalent, especially in Lisbon. When I arrived in May, Spinola was still in power; he had been placed in power on April 25 by the coup makers, but was little more than a front man, although he tried to guide the Revolution. He was basically a right wing General who was somewhat moderate and he had written a book slightly criticizing the dictatorship, which gave him some credibility within the group of leftist and Marxist colonels, captains, and majors who actually overthrew Caetano. Spinola was very anti-Communist and it wasn’t long before he and the revolutionaries were at each other's throats. General Spinola lasted only three months and then the first coup took place, with Colonel Vasco Goncalvez taking power at the head of the *Consejo de Stado*, a military junta. There was very little bloodshed in this coup, which was the case of the whole Portuguese revolutionary period.

I saw an example of this civility on live television one day, when the farthest left group of military officers tried to take over the Lisbon airport, which was also the major Air Force base in the country. The attempted coup makers were outside the airport on one side of the fence arguing for several hours trying to convince the airport/airbase authorities to surrender. The Government authorities in power refused and each side leveled its arms at the other. Finally, each side counted noses and the number of the guns each had, and the attempted coup makers peacefully retired, noticing they were out-numbered and out-gunned.

It was hard to take some of these politicians and military leaders seriously at times, although it was clear that Cunhal and the Communists were allied with the Soviets and were enemies of the US and NATO, joining the Eastern European puppets. I never understood why it took people, including many in the US, so long to figure out that simple truth. Certainly, Portugal was a fairly peaceful place in late 1974 and 1975 from the point of serious violence and killings, but it was a

very chaotic and confused one.

I had been in Portugal twenty years before as a tourist, and I had spent two weeks in Lisbon and the south. I remember Lisbon being one of the cleanest, most sedate, quietest places in Europe. There was vice there, but it was very well hidden. In fact, to find entertainment we had to ask the policeman on the corner, and, of course, he was only too happy to direct us.

When I got back there in May 1974, it had already become the smut capital of Europe, almost overnight. And, it had become filthy as many of the public services were breaking down. We used to think that the Government people were too interested in plotting, or conserving their positions, to be able to carry out even the simplest governmental responsibilities. All of the 48 years of pent-up frustration came out and changed the country overnight. Most of the country was clearly against the Caetano/Salazar regime and it showed.

I learned very quickly that I was not going to be able to do much work as a Commercial Attaché. No one wanted to do business with the US. Many Portuguese thought that Portugal had promises of economic support and trade opportunities from their new found friends in Bulgaria, Albania, and Czechoslovakia. They were going to take the road to paradise through socialism.

We lived wonderfully well, partially because all of the old regime was leaving the country, either to Brazil, or to Fall River, Massachusetts. This allowed us to move into a huge house in Estoril. It was three blocks from the internationally-renowned Casino do Estoril, and from our back balcony we could look down on Cascais and the Tagus River as it flowed into the Atlantic. We lived comfortably (almost like the royalty that had moved out) for three years. We rented our house in July of 1974, which was the beginning of the exodus of the Portuguese and other foreigners, but later other officers were able to rent accommodations that were palaces in comparison to ours as other residences came on to the rental market. I did not resent this because we were far better off in Lisbon than in the small apartment where we had lived in the Maryland suburbs.

The opulence of the housing reached the point where Herb Okun, the DCM, had to approve each rental in order to curb the extravagance. He actually had a relatively small and poor house, because he lived in the official Deputy Chief of Mission's house, which had been leased on a long term contract much before the Revolution. It was really nondescript even compared to mine. My boss, Jim Ferrar, the Economic Counselor and one of the smartest people in the Foreign Service, lived in a palace on a hillside with a fabulous view of Lisbon and Estoril. It had a cathedral-like ceiling, with a beautiful swimming pool. Jim was a tremendous, positive influence on me and on my career. The fact that Jim never made Ambassador was one of the great travesties of the Foreign Service, but not the only one I saw.

The deposed or pretender royalty of Europe was still in Portugal until mid-1974, when they began to move to Madrid, where they were sure of Franco's hospitality. I remember I got to visit the home of the pretender to the throne of Italy, "King" Humberto, as he liked to be called. According to family lore, one of our daughter's first boyfriend's, at the age of ten, was Paul. When I asked "Paul who?", she responded, "Oh, its just Paul of Yugoslavia", who turned out to be the son of the pretender to the Yugoslav crown.

Because of the frequent coup attempts and coup warnings, we never knew when the kids were going to school because there would be street blockades and the political demonstrations which could paralyze public transportation and there was only one route from Estoril. It ran right along the coast of the Rio Tejo and was easily blockaded. They went to Catholic school in downtown Lisbon. They had to go on the school bus; sometimes Fran drove them. But, in spite of these incidents and other inconveniences caused by the Government ineptness and ideology, Portugal was peaceful generally, and we never felt in much danger.

Q: Tell me about the Embassy at that time because I think the Embassy structure is interesting.

PASTORINO: Physically, the Embassy was in an old apartment building close to downtown Lisbon. I was fond of saying that I ran the only Commercial Section in the world that had two bathtubs and two showers. At the time of my arrival, the Ambassador was a man named Scott, an old friend of Governor Nelson Rockefeller. The Ambassador was a power in the Republican Party and was a poker playing buddy of Governor Dewey. He was actually at our Air Force Base in the Azores at the time of the coup, and the DCM was Richard St. Francis Post, a career FSO. The Ambassador was isolated in the Azores and couldn't return to Lisbon for several days.

Meanwhile, Post had talked "officially" to one of the military junta members and this constituted recognition of the new Government, according to some. Post, as I remember caught holy hell for this and was accused of committing a serious diplomatic blunder. In fact, we would have recognized the Government immediately so I didn't understand the furor.

So when I got there to the Embassy, the Ambassador was being replaced and the Mission was a little bit rudderless. I guess I met Ambassador Scott only once or twice. He was going to leave anyway and he was pulled out.

Q: From what I gathered, our Embassy there was the sleepiest in Europe. All of the sudden the event of the year happened in this sleepy place, and it was essentially overwhelmed.

PASTORINO: The Embassy was famous, or infamous, for only knowing the older, senior military leaders; apparently we only knew the Generals. So no one in

the Embassy knew the new, junior military leadership which became the driving force of the new Government. I'm sure the Embassy was pretty sleepy, but then Portugal was a pretty sleepy place, still sleeping in the 19th century.

Q: Really there wasn't much contact...

PASTORINO: The staff was small and concentrated on the formal Government not on some almost invisible opposition, some of which actually developed in the African colonies. April 25 came and they weren't prepared. No one predicted the coup evidently, even after the March 16th attempted coup. To be fair, this wasn't the first time an Embassy didn't predict a coup, and what could we have done anyway. Given the regime, something would have inevitably happened to wake up Portugal.

Also, given Portugal's relative unimportance, Washington did not pay great urgency to events there, even after March 16. There was no shooting during or immediately after the coup. You didn't see dead bodies, especially American bodies. The leading Communist, Alvaro Cunhal, looked like an old, white-haired professor. As for some of these military types, half of them were not very articulate in any known language, so they were almost invisible behind Spinola.

There was real jubilation in the streets the first few weeks. It's still known as the Revolution of the Carnations, and is famous for its civility. I have a wonderful picture of my son, who was six years old, standing in between two young Portuguese soldiers. They're holding rifles, each with a carnation in the barrel and they're smiling. Steve is there holding a sign saying "Viva Portugal". From the outside it appeared different from what we saw inside. I don't think Washington really recognized what was happening in the beginning.

Q: You mentioned that other Embassies were coming. First let's talk about the Western Europeans. I understand the Socialist parties, the Germans in particular, were coming? Willy Brandt jumped on this as being a real opening. Was this something talked about at the Embassy?

PASTORINO: I assume so. As Commercial Attaché and as a mid-level officer, I went to a staff meeting only once a week. My direct boss at the beginning was a member of the old team. As Economic Counselor he wanted to analyze the economy, do the required reporting and assure that we (I) sold American goods and services. He didn't discuss the political situation. I saw at the beginning, considerable Western European influence in the economic/commercial area. Of course, Portugal had never been a major American market. As I had done in previous assignments, I read several of the local newspapers everyday, and knew that the Western Europeans had the big commercial advantage over us, but that they were quickly losing ground themselves to the new found, Marxist friends.

With regard to politics, I do remember the activities of the Germans and the

Scandinavian Socialists, along with the French and Italian Governments, partially through their respective Communist Parties. It is interesting, as we shall see, that it was the Germans who really played a major role in saving Portugal from becoming a Soviet satellite. It was Germany and the Government of Willy Brandt, and the Bundesbank.

The big change in the beginning of course was the influx of the Soviets and the Eastern Europeans. They were not there before the revolution, not having diplomatic relations. But you could see them flood in. They were all over. I saw it mostly on the economic and commercial side. But, you can be sure the political operatives and advisors were also invading the country. Anyway, there was not a lot of interest in buying American.

I remember we had a business catalog show in late 1974 or early 1975, a show where we exhibited catalogues of US firms trying to sell in Portugal. The show was part of the Lisbon International Trade Fair, which was not very large, certainly not like Hannover or Milan, but we were there. I remember I had to have special security protection for the US booth. No one wanted to be seen at the US booth except people who wanted to come up and harass us. I don't think most of my catalogs were even opened. There were people who would telephone and note their interest in some of the US products and asked me to mail catalogues. They didn’t want to come to the booth. Meanwhile, I had a lot of time to walk around the Fair and see the commercial competition, much of it from the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe.

As we were getting settled in, and I was learning that I would not be doing much pure commercial promotion work, I took time to attend some of the ubiquitous political demonstrations. The political section was always very appreciative of what information I might bring back. The press and other media, being heavily controlled from early on by the leftists, was suspect. The Political Counselor was Charlie Thomas. He helped me very much in understanding and reporting the political situation, both with respect to commerce and trade, and to the overall political scene. My political analysis and reporting skills were broadened tremendously in Portugal by people like Charlie, and Rick Melton, later a great American Ambassador in Central America.

Anyway, Charlie Thomas was a great guy and I think he was appreciative of my interest and efforts. He helped me, he told me what to look for. I had the task of knowing and reporting what the Portuguese business community was thinking about the trends of the revolution. The political section was interested in all the biographic information I could dig up on businessmen, as well as the Government officials I dealt with, some of which were at the higher levels, being among the military leaders of the Government. Also, the political section wanted to know when US businessmen were kidnapped or held hostage in labor disputes. I also remember that when the Red Admiral, Coutinho, who as Governor of Angola granted independence, and all the Portuguese in Angola began to stream back to

the motherland, I became the unofficial Angola desk officer, talking to as many people as possible about the political and economic situation there.

I also remember being able to state my policy suggestions with regard to Portugal's future and with regard to the makeup of the Government and its policies. The Embassy decided early on that the only real hope of maintaining Portugal as a friend and ally lay with Mario Soares, the leader of the Portuguese Socialist Party. He was pretty far left, but an enemy of the Communists. But he didn't support the private sector and I saw him somewhat as a fellow traveler. My policy advice that we should support the Christian Democrats or the Social Democrats was always ignored, but I gave it anyway, believing that Portugal would not progress with a Socialist or Statist type economy which I had become familiar with in Latin America. So I would counsel, "let's support the Centrists". I remember having arguments with the Political Section staff, officers who became close friends like Rick Melton and Joe Sullivan. I'd come back from my meetings with business, or Government people in the Labor and Economic Ministries, with reports of the Marxist economic policies which were being implemented, such as collectivization of the land, and the take over of the control of the factories by the workers.

Frank Carlucci became the Ambassador in late 1974. Both he and Herb Okun arrived when the Portuguese ship was already careening to the left towards the abyss. One has to give great credit to Ambassador Carlucci. He went out on a limb on policy, advising Washington we should support Soares as the only viable alternative. Secretary Kissinger was advocating a policy of allowing the Portuguese to go left in order to immunize Italy and France from a similar political suicide. Carlucci was a great leader, both as the policy-maker and as head of the Mission. He was also a great spokesman for the United States, and courageously spoke out against the Communists and the "crazies" when they were riding high. I had the great honor and privilege of working for him later in my career.

Q: W*hat was the feeling when Carlucci came?*

PASTORINO: We knew he had been a Foreign Service Officer. We knew he was brilliant and very influential. He was and is a feisty little guy. I had a particular affinity for him, being Italian American. He was clearly a professional. He clearly understood the task. He was a fighter. He was willing to speak up against the leftist, cocky Portuguese military, speaking in Portuguese, publicly on the radio and TV. His Portuguese was fluent, having served in Brazil. He also had a certain cockiness. The team included Okun who had served in Eastern Europe and was an expert on Marxism and Communism. But Carlucci was the leader. He instilled confidence and motivated the Embassy staff; he made me want to go to work every day.

The Embassy began to come around and the staff was already changing before he

got there. I remember he brought a young lady with him to be his special assistant, Marcia. And I remember there was lots of bitterness in the Embassy because as the Special Assistant she was in the office next to his. Some people had to report to or through Marcia. I was the Commercial Attaché; I was very happy to call her and ask her to check something with the Ambassador when the opportunity arose. I remember I was his representative at the US-Portuguese Chamber of Commerce, which was limping along, and I didn't expect to call him and brief him on every meeting, given his other concerns. So I thought Marcia's role was helpful to me.

Getting back to Carlucci's style, I will never forget the famous confrontation in late 1974, or early 1975, between him and Captain (maybe self-proclaimed Colonel) Otelo Saraiva de Carvalho, who was Chief of Police of Lisbon and one of the most powerful members of the *Junta do Governo*. Portugal is such a small country that most of the most important military units were based in Lisbon, and Otelo had control over many of them, which gave him tremendous political power. As a Governmental leader he was hurling political charges indiscriminately against the US and the Embassy, calling us Fascists and everything else. Carlucci went on the radio one day and challenged him publicly to a public debate, saying Otelo had lied about the US and its policies. Everyone in Portugal and the media noted the challenge. Ultimately Otelo would not debate; he backed down and lost a great deal of prestige. On the other hand, Carlucci and the Embassy gained credibility and helped put backbone into some of those Portuguese willing to speak out against the Communists.

Q: During the time you were there things were turning around? ...moving back to left of center rather then moving way out to the right.?

PASTORINO: Half way through my assignment, General Eanes led a counter coup from the center that succeeded in overthrowing the leftist radicals, both the military and their Communist collaborators in the civil sector, especially in the Government, the media, and the labor unions. From that time, late in 1975, the far left was on the defensive and basically defeated. They had made one crucial mistake; they had allowed free elections on April 25, 1975. They were certain they would win given their overwhelming control of the media and the unions, and given the atmosphere of the coup. They didn't win them and then everyone understood the Communists were not the majority, despite their control of important sectors. From late 1975 on, Portugal moved back towards the center.

General Eanes was the major military leader of the coup and became head of state. The leading political actor was Socialist Party leader Mario Soares, who became Prime Minister. Beginning in 1975, Soares and the Church were the only Portuguese who really stood up to the leftists. Soares got the largest plurality of the votes in the election. The people voted and gave forty eight percent to Soares and only twenty five percent to the Communists.

Soares and the Socialists had campaigned heavily and courageously. Soares went into the Communist strongholds in the south, risking his life, where they had taken over farms and factories, letting the workers run them... run them into the ground I must add. The Catholics in the North also came out to campaign and mysteriously, the vaunted Communist Party headquarters in the small towns began to burn down. I believe that the Catholic Church and individual Catholics got upset by what was happening in Southern Portugal. Portugal to a large extent was a conservative society, at least it was then, and many northern Portuguese decided that they must stop the military and the left. The Communist headquarters' didn't stop burning until after the elections.

There were other factors that helped to turn the situation around. The US and Germans offered economic assistance should a new Government be more moderate. In fact, I helped to set up the first US AID program in Portugal. The German Bundesbank offered massive amounts of financial assistance; Germany led Europe because the revolution was going far beyond Social Democracy and Willy Brandt was a real leader, if somewhat naïve, in fighting Communism. Offers were made to military officers close to General Eanes. If the more moderate officers succeeded, such as Melo Antunes and Vitor Alves, there would be economic assistance.

Anyway, the Eanes coup was successful in late 1975, eighteen months after March 25, 1974. I remember I had one task on that November day. As I was saying, all the important military units were in Lisbon. I had been tasked by the political section, long before, to go to a certain location outside of the base of the Chaimites (light tanks) in the outskirts of Lisbon, and watch the movements of the vehicles, in case of a coup. The commander of that base was very important in preventing any action against the Government. On the fateful day, as the coup was taking place by the Eanes forces, I sat in a bar across the street from the front gate and informed the Embassy that no movement of the light tanks was taking place. The Chaimites were stationary and were not entering into the fray, thus assuring, according to some, that the coup would succeed. Quite a job for the Commercial Attaché.

I did have one role which I thought was very important in the financial assistance after the coup by General Eanes. The new Government quickly ran out of money, none having been left by the previous Goncalvez regime, and they were going to have to default on their international debt payments. Ambassador Carlucci was in northern Portugal, and my boss Jim Ferrar was out of the country. I got a call from the President of the Central Bank. It was a Friday afternoon at about six o'clock, and he told me the Bank of Portugal urgently needed funds to make Monday's payments. They needed a large sum of funds from the US Treasury or US Federal Reserve to tide them over.

I knew how the process would work and that it would need an urgent recommendation for approval from the Ambassador. I told the Central Bank

President that I would go and see the Ambassador, prepare a telegram for his approval, and then send it that night to Washington. I went to the Bank of Portugal that night to get the necessary data on debts and payments as well as on the dwindling Central Bank Reserves. I called the Ambassador and he sent an airplane for me, which I took up to Northern Portugal. I explained the situation to him, gave him my cable recommending the transfer of funds as soon as possible, and waited his reaction. He approved the cable almost as written and I went back to Lisbon, waking up the duty officer and communicators to send one of the highest priority telegrams I had ever sent to Washington. By Monday morning, the required funds had been transferred to Portugal's account in the New York Federal Reserve Bank and the default had been avoided.

I must say I thought many of the Portuguese were the biggest whiners I had ever encountered. Most refused to stand up against the Marxists, especially in Lisbon. Many chose to leave at the earliest opportunity, and in fact, many have now become millionaires in Brazil or the US. For instance, my next door neighbor in Estoril called on us one night, begging to be taken out on the first aircraft carrier that the US was rumored to be sending in order to evacuate Portugal. He was sure it was coming and he wanted a place on it. He told me he had lots of money and took me downstairs to a bank vault in the basement; it was full of gold bars. He offered one of them to me. Of course, there was no aircraft carrier on the way and there would be no evacuation. But this was only one example of how most Portuguese were waiting for someone to save them, rather that to fight to save themselves.

Q: Did you see any political movement as the situation developed in the business community? A gaining of confidence? Or anything else?

PASTORINO: What I saw in the Portuguese business community for the most part were the biggest businessmen take their money and go to Brazil. Some of the major companies left. Some smaller business remained but it was difficult to run a business in the new system where much of productive capacity and many of the farms were nationalized, and the Government controlled economic policy. Many firms were taken over and run by workers committees, which for the most part were incompetent and basically took everything possible out of the company and then complained when it went broke.

At one time, the Government was literally paying the salaries of the workers of hundreds of companies that had been profitable two years before. In fact, the Marxist Government soon couldn’t afford to pay the salaries and ultimately many of the workers were laid off. The business people all left, some of them have never returned. They just moved the business to Brazil.
Some small business people did remain of course and stuck up for their property and rights against the Communists. One of the leaders of the rightist party may have been a businessman, Freitas do Amaral. His was a rightist, conservative, but democratic party and he was tarred as a Fascist, so he didn't really have much role

in the beginning. But, he persevered and created a political party which later had significant power.

The banks were taken over very quickly. The new bank managers were the Worker's Committees, run by the former bank employees. Members of the Worker's Committees included, sometimes as their leaders, cleaning force personnel, clerks, messengers, etc. I was dealing with former tellers who had jobs less important than the one I had in the bank ten years before; they were now on the Executive Committee or they were the lending officer or they were making lending policy. As one can expect, the banks were quickly broke and had to be bailed out. And let's remember some of those banks, such as Espirito Santo, had been among the best run banks in Europe.

There was one case which I believe summarizes the situation, one that illustrates the real aims and failures of the Revolution, which would rather be ignored by the apologists. National Cash Register (NCR), the American firm, had a factory in Lisbon for a long, long time, where they brought in parts, assembled them, and sold a few thousand cash registers and adding machines in Portugal. One day, the NCR plant was taken over by the Worker's Committee, comprised of nine or twelve people. I went over to the factory immediately to investigate, in response to a request from NCR through the State Department. To put it simply, NCR wanted control of its factory returned. That seemed logical to me. So it was either the Labor Attaché or the Commercial Attaché who had to look into it. I think I went with the Labor Attaché. They were very nice to us, gave us coffee. And then the litany began: " We don't need NCR; they've exploited us; we're now running the place, paying better wages and still making cash registers; we don't want the NCR management back, and we're not letting the place go, so you deal with us, Mr. Commercial Attaché".
First of all, I told them the US position: that they have illegally expropriated this company; that it was my job to help return the firm to its rightful owners; and that I would go to the Portuguese Government to effect the return. Of course, the Worker's Committee already knew that we had been to see the Labor Minister, Captain Costa Martins, who had first refused to see us, and then told us the Government would do nothing against the workers.

The workers asked me what I could do about the takeover. I asked how they would operate when they had no more parts from NCR, or no more operating capital to produce the machines. Well, they said, of course we're going to operate the company. We have all these parts in the warehouse, we're going to make cash registers and sell cash registers. We're going to get paid more, we're going to sell them cheaper and make more money, more profit for the workers. I said, well what about when the parts run out? Do you think Connecticut is going to send you more parts? Of course, they replied. I said, "Don't be so sure of that". Well it doesn't matter anyway, they retorted, because our friends, the Bulgarians, they make cash registers, and they'll give us the spares and replacement parts. And are those parts going to fit in with your parts? "That's a technical problem, the

workers will solve it", was the response. I said fine and I filed a report with the State Department, which then informed NCR. I had to check with the factory once in a while in order to keep Washington and NCR informed.

About eight months later, I think after the Eanes coup, the NCR worker's committee asked to come and see me. I had of course been keeping track and knew the Government had been subsidizing them by paying their salaries. There were no more cash registers for sale as far as I could tell. The Committee came to the Embassy pleading for help. They wanted me to get NCR to come back. I asked what happened to the big plans, where were the parts, etc. It turned out the Bulgarians wanted the company to purchase the parts and in fact they didn't fit into the assemblies, they weren't compatible. Well why don't you just buy the parts, I asked, showing little sympathy and probably some well-deserved contempt. We don't have the money, they responded. The government's been subsidizing us but they give us Portuguese Escudos and the Bulgarians don't want Escudos, nobody wants Escudos. Furthermore, they noted, the Government is cutting off the salary subsidies now.

They continued to plead for help and when I asked why NCR should be interested (they had written off the investment), the Worker's Committee unleashed their last desperate argument. Had I noticed that one of the original members was not present. "What do you mean?" I asked. The original leader of the committee, the instigator, the real Communist, is gone they proudly informed me. They thought that his departure should change everything and that NCR would want to return, especially since all the members of the Committee now "loved the US." Typically, they wanted to shirk any responsibility or accountability for the abject failure of the worker-run company.

I was not above gloating a little, but I didn't carry it to an extreme. I said I had to talk to the US Government and the Portuguese Government, and that I would certainly report this new situation to NCR. The Worker's Committee wanted it done immediately and wanted to see the Ambassador, to get him to get NCR back. I was sure the Ambassador had other things to do and they could deal with me, since they had dealt with me previously. Word came back from NCR that they had written off the investment, taking a tax break, and were making the cash registers somewhere else, in Ireland I believe. The take-over cost probably 200 Portuguese their jobs. The wonders of Marxism! But, as I remember it, many of them still wouldn't really blame the Communists. It was interesting also that the Americans weren't the Fascists anymore, at least not when the workers were pleading for help.

Q: What about the efforts of the Soviets and the Soviet block to make an impression there. What happened, did that just melt away like the sun after the turnaround?

PASTORINO: Well, one of the things I remember was the huge size of the Soviet

trade exhibit before the Eanes coup. The exhibit remained later, but on a much smaller scale. This was a simple illustration of the change. The Eastern Bloc and the Soviets of course maintained relations, but their Embassies were all reduced. During the first eighteen months, the Eastern Bloc diplomats and commercial people were seen everywhere. You could tell them by their ill-fitting suits and their white socks. You could spot them when you would go into restaurants in the early days; they would be the only people in the fanciest ones. There would be a table full of Poles and Bulgarians, and the rest of the place would be empty. Most Portuguese wouldn't go out to eat because of the prices, as inflation soared, or they were leaving. That type of overwhelming presence faded quickly. The Portuguese Communist Party as I remember was not ever eliminated or shut down. It continued to exist but of course could never win a fair election.

There's another factor that was being woven all through this very interesting two to three years. That was the independence of the colonies: Mozambique, Angola, Guinea Bissau, Timor, and Sao Tome and Principe. One of the great aims of the military in 1974 was to grant independence, many hoping to assure that the newly independent countries came under the control of the Communists, such as the male nurse Agostin Neto in Mozambique, and the Communist MPLA in Angola. They certainly succeeded, and today, thirty years later, we can see the results: continued civil war, poverty, abject starvation in Mozambique, and the tremendous waste of resources in Angola, potentially the richest county in Africa.

Remember my neighbor in Estoril, for instance. Most of his money came from his family's investments in Angola. His family owned huge tracts of cattle land in Angola. He was worried far more about the expropriation of his resources in Angola, than that of those in Portugal. So the whole independence movement, which was considered one of the crowning successes of April 25 has had a long term negative impact. The Portuguese were among the worst of the colonists, but look at the new African regimes since.
But some people still see independence as one of the great successes of the revolution. If you really look at it, when the colonies were liberated, they liberated ten times as many people as were liberated in Portugal and a thousand times the territory. Portugal then was tiny, maybe eight or nine million people.

I had another job which I found very interesting; I mentioned it briefly before. I became the *de facto* Angola desk officer in the Embassy. Any business people, including American investors or managers, who came out of Angola brought information, and it was my job to debrief them so that we could figure out what was happening in Angola because we shut down the Consulate in Luanda. I was briefing Washington on Angola from Lisbon. I had never been to Angola. I had to do another country study, this time on Angola.

I remember that I did not only see these people in the office, but I went out to meet with them when they returned to Lisbon. They were called *retornados*, the returned people. The Government took over the Sheraton Hotel, one of the nicest

in Lisbon, to provide housing, thus ruining the little tourism that was left. I could and did visit them there in the lobby to talk. I recognized I was getting a very biased opinion. These were people who had lost everything. They were living in miserable conditions, ten people to a hotel room. There were kids all over, and filth everywhere resulting from the crowded conditions. And the Government couldn't understand why they couldn't attract foreign tourists, even Bulgarians and Poles, who didn't spend much money, even if they came on their Socialist vacations. The young Portuguese military government people were so naive. And, I knew these people. I used to take the Undersecretary of Labor to the Estoril soccer games with me.

Of course, western tourism dried up in the summer of 1974; the drought lasting until well into 1976. Even the British who had been going to the Algarve for decades wouldn't visit.
I remember we went to Southern Portugal, to Lagos in the Algarve. We'd be the only people in the restaurants and we could get the best of rooms in the hotels. We would have the whole beach, the whole hotel to ourselves. The service was still fair. We'd go down to the Algarve and live like kings, for thirty dollars a night. These were places where the Brits, Swedes and Germans had historically gone and paid a hundred dollars per night. Tourism had stopped.

Q: As the Commercial Officer, obviously you were looking at trade, which went from something to nothing, up to something again. What about after the turning point, with German money coming in, did you find that Germany was moving in commercially?

PASTORINO: The US was never the major trading partner. We never had more than ten percent of the market. It went down considerably after April 25. It came back to where it had been, maybe more. It probably went up slightly. I remember Germany coming back to replace Albania or Bulgaria or Russia, but I don't remember being threatened commercially. I was happy to get back to where there was at least some commercial promotion to do. Of course, the Germans were pouring in funds, both from Government sources and from the private sector. My real job had been for two years not so much selling American products as it was rescuing American companies that had been taken over in one way or another.

And by rescue, I mean literally rescue. One night at three in the morning, the Labor Attaché and I went to the Goodyear plant. The Worker's Committee had taken over the plant and they were holding the Cuban American manager a hostage until he would sign a contract tripling the salaries. Cesar Balmaseda, the manager, had decided he was not going to give in to the Worker's Committee's intimidation.

The Labor Attaché and I were at the front gate. They wouldn't even let us into the factory. We were negotiating with them for Cesar's release. We had already followed the prescribed procedure, going to the district military commander to

protest the illegal takeover. He laughed. While we were at the front gate negotiating, Cesar somehow escaped by running out the back door. The workers were so interested in seeing the "fascists" (the US Labor and Commercial Attachés) in person, that they had forgotten to guard Cesar. We left after an hour not knowing that he had escaped. He later called us from home.

Q: Bob, you were saying that with all the takeovers and forced contracts, such as NCR, I mean, did Goodyear and all the other ones essentially say we can't do business here and let them die and move them to Ireland or someplace like that?

PASTORINO: Many did that. In other cases, firms remained in Portugal. In the case of Goodyear, Cesar got the factory back after a salary compromise. They probably got part of the salary increase and they kept the plant limping along. ITT owned the Sheraton and they just didn't give it any more support; I don't think they ever got it back, nor probably did they want it after two years or so of mismanagement. I remember we had a visit from Harold Gineen, President of ITT, but he couldn't convince the Government to return his property.

A lot of companies just gave up. Some of the companies regained control after suffering debilitating losses of many types, such as missing delivery schedules, thus fouling up production in other units, higher salaries, lower or no quality control, etc., most caused by abysmal management and insane policies, such as one which mandated workers should get paid without having to work. Some firms were milked dry of their assets by the workers and then returned. Some had the continued support of their home company if they could see some light at the end of the tunnel.

I saw both scenarios. I would say almost no American company came through unscathed. All were affected. I think I remember documenting eighty or ninety, most of them that had real manufacturing operations. I'm not talking about the American representative or agent who sat there and represented twelve companies. I don't know what happened to him. The manufacturing operations all went through very difficult times. I don't know how many finally just washed their hands of it, maybe a quarter. A significant amount certainly, reducing significantly employment of Portuguese. Also, let's not forget that many more European firms suffered, but that really wasn't my problem.

Q: During all this, did the Azores play any role?

PASTORINO: A political role in that there was an large and growing Azorean separatist movement which I think received lots of financial support from Azoreans in the United States. They organized the movement in the Azores, and it was used as leverage against the radical leftist Governments. There was a threat that somehow the Azores would seek independence and be supported officially from overseas. I'm not sure how much impact, if any, that had on the situation in 1975. The Azores might have been easy to detach; it's two thousand miles from

Portugal in the middle of the Atlantic, with a major American air base.

I believe there was also a separatist movement in Madeira, a beautiful island off the coast of Africa. We spent a week there in 1976 when I some little business to do. A world famous lace factory, owned by an elderly American lady, was taken over by the lace workers, many of whom worked out of their homes, being paid by the piece. The owner had some tie to an important US Congressman. I tried to mediate but got nowhere. There was no way this lady was going to compromise away the fruits of her many years. She just didn't understand the expropriation of private property, especially since it was hers. She believed she had provided lucrative employment to the workers for many years, through the sales of the lace in the US. She didn't believe any lace would have been made without her organization, experience, and marketing.

She came to the Embassy every two or three months. So I think I finally I went to Madeira to see the operation. There was not much we could do. Nobody really cared except the one US Congressman. The Portuguese government couldn't be bothered with this little company. I probably took more interest in this company than anyone else in the world, by going out there.

Q: How about Spain? There was an interesting time and relationship there at that point.

PASTORINO: I have really only two comments about Spain, which I had visited in 1960 and several times during our Portuguese assignment. I thought Portugal was a difficult assignment and what saved me was that we could go to Spain for rest and recuperation at the US bases. We went to Torreon, near Madrid a couple of times and we were treated well. We stayed in the officers quarters; I remember being treated like an Ambassador. We also went to Rota Naval Base in Cadiz; same situation. The whole family loved it, especially the kids because of American TV and movies, and McDonald's.

The other thing notable about Spain for me at this time was the speculation by everyone that the coming Revolution after Franco died would be violent. Franco was obviously going to die sometime. But it was almost unanimous that his death would bring another Spanish civil war. Everyone wanted to know why the revolution in Portugal could be so peaceful. What was the secret? Could it somehow be discovered and transferred?

Lots of people came from Washington. They came in and wanted to know about the Portuguese revolution; how did it happen? what happened? I guess that given my interest in politics and history, some of these people consulted with me. I told them what I knew about the Portuguese Revolution, but could tell them little about Spain. By this time, I had been in Portugal as long as anyone in the Embassy and had gone through the best and the worst of the Portuguese transition.

I do remember telling everyone about one difference between Spain and Portugal. People would ask about bullfighting and whether it is true that in Portugal they don't kill the bull in the ring. It is true. The first time I had seen a Portuguese bullfight I thought it was a comedy because after the *banderillas* were placed, a new group of nine or ten men (the *forcado*) enter the ring and wrestle the bull to the ground by the tail, the first man grabbing the tail and then holding on. Should he be thrown before the bull is taken down, the second man of the *forcado* tries. Ultimately the bull is thrown and that is the symbolic killing. The cows then enter the bullring and lead the bull outside, where he is immediately dispatched. So the killing takes place in private in Portugal.

I've been a bullfight fan since I was twenty and the Foreign Service gave me ample opportunity to follow the event. I saw bullfights in Tijuana when I was young and in 1960 I had seen one of the famous *mano a mano* duels between Ordonez and Dominguin, the two greatest fighters of the day. Those fights were later documented by Hemingway in an unfinished story which was finally printed many years after his death. We saw several fights in Portugal and Spain, and I later attended the bullfights in Mexico City, Bogota and Caracas.

Anyway, the transition in Spain proved to be very peaceful, so I guess a lot of us were wrong.

With that, I guess we can move on.

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May 12, 1998
New Interviewer: Ambassador David Fischer

AMERICAN EMBASSY BOGOTA: COMMERCIAL ATTACHE

Q: We ended with you planning to go off to Bogota, Colombia. That was what year?

PASTORINO: 1977.

Q: Was Colombia in those days a backwater? Was it considered a good assignment or a mediocre assignment?

PASTORINO: In terms of Latin America, it was considered a good assignment, especially from the perspective of the Commercial Attaché because Colombia had a lot of money, it was a big economy, and they traditionally bought American goods and services. And, it was an interesting, large marketplace where the Commerce Department experimented with its commercial programs in order to develop new ways to help American business.

For instance, one of the programs I installed in Colombia was a major, large-scale market research program in which I utilized a large portion of the Commercial Section. Three professional Colombian market researchers worked full time on compiling reports on sectors of the economy where we thought exports from the U.S. were promising. The section completed three or four sectoral reports each quarter, sending them to Washington where they were disseminated to American business. So from the Commercial and career point of view it was a very good assignment. Some in the State Department thought it a bad assignment for me, having to report to Commerce, thus again getting off of the classic economic or political track which hopefully would lead to the top of the career ladder. From my point of view, it got me back to Latin America, I wanted to do economic or commercial work, and I gladly accepted it.

Q: What kind of place in Colombia in 1977? This is pre-drug days?

PASTORINO: Right. Drugs were there, but it was basically marijuana growing on the North coast, on the Guajira peninsula. There was very little cocaine, as I remember. Drugs were a problem in that they were exported to the US and it became a problem affecting relations between the two countries. Violence among the dopers and druggers was beginning. I remember Ambassador Diego Asencio putting a couple of locations in Northern Colombia off limits. We had to get special permission to go to Santa Marta and Barranquilla, for instance. I remember, he actually gave me permission, as Commercial Attaché, to go to those places because there was business to be done, whether it be helping Export-

Import Bank collect loans from the Barranquilla City Government, or trade and investment interests, especially offshore in the oil and gas fields. There was no problem at that time going to either Cali or Medellin. The drug cartels were only just beginning to form and were not the powers they are today, but I would be less than honest if I did not say that I could see the power coming to the narcos, just as I had seen it happen in Sinaloa.

Colombia was a violent place, although much less than today. Some of the violence, it's interesting to note, came from the e*smeralderos*, which were the emerald dealers controlling the mining and marketing of emeralds, of which Colombia was a major source. In fact, it still is.

The only precaution I took at that time, is that when I went to downtown Bogota, which I did often, I would only tell my American secretary, so only she knew where I was. The fewer people who knew, I felt was the safer procedure. In fact, once I had a real battle with a new, inexperienced security officer at the Embassy who heard I had gone downtown. She heard there was fighting and demanded my chauffeur bring me back. I was on the spot and saw no fighting and I knew she didn't either speak Spanish or know Bogota, so I refused to return to the Embassy. I think she put me on report with the Ambassador. Of course, nothing happened to me, and there were no problems in the area, which I never let the Security people forget. I thought my job mandated my being out in the street talking to Colombians. As for Cali and Medellin, I went frequently to host trade shows and exhibits and bring trade missions. I never had a problem.

From the political point of view, Colombia was just ending two decades of the long political arrangement in which the Liberal and Conservative Parties traded the Presidency and most other offices every four years. I think that at that time, 1977, during the administration of Belasario Betancourt, the Colombians had opened up the Congress, allowing the voters to choose the majority. The arrangement had been put into place twenty years before to end the tragic period of the *violencia* which had killed 200,000 in Colombia over more than ten years.

Of course, the Marxist guerrillas, the FARC and the ELN, were still in the mountains carrying out their rebellion, and proclaiming their people's republics. So, we shouldn't forget they have been fighting for forty or more years, bringing violence and chaos to parts of Colombia, and not ever winning much support. So, let's not begin to think of them as the "good guys;" they are a bunch of Marxist revolutionaries, long supported by Castro until he ran out of money.

Q: Let me ask you politically, because I never served in Latin America, but I always had the image in the 1970's of the U.S. calling the shots. To what degree was the Ambassador, you said Diego Asencio, was this guy the number three man in the country? What was the kind of political relationship we had with Colombia?

PASTORINO: Most people would have asked actually whether he was the number two man. In the case of Colombia, Asencio was important, but not *numero dos*. It was a not a banana republic like some of the Central American and Caribbean countries. Because he was a strong Ambassador, he certainly made U.S. Government wishes known, but he did not call the shots. One must never forget that in Latin America, many governments and leaders think they know what the US wants and they may follow that policy without any influence having to be brought to bear. Also, they may want the same things the US wants: peace, stability, and economic prosperity, because they see it as their own interest. Surprisingly to the apologists, they are not being forced into those policies.

On the other hand, in Colombia at that time the domestic political arrangement was fairly cut and dried. There was relative political peace. The US Ambassador did not have to dictate anything. The guerrilla movements had been pushed far back into the jungle. They evidently had not yet made their opportunistic, nasty deals with the drug growers and the drug traffickers, which they have since done. So the guerrillas were not really thought of as a threat to stability.

Of course, one could get into trouble if one went into rural areas. In fact, there's a well-known case of the Peace Corps volunteer who was down south in the jungle, doing research on tropical birds. He was kidnapped by the FARC. He was held for about twelve months. He was kidnapped on Valentine's day and his release was effected mostly by the persistent and heroic efforts of the then Peace Corps Director, Jose Sorzano, a Cuban-American, who later became the National Security Advisor for Latin American Affairs. I was close friends with Jose. I saw him work and struggle for a year during the kidnaping, looking for a way to effect the release of a volunteer botanist who was trying to help the environment. In fact, Jose pulled it off after a year. As far as I know no one paid any kind of ransom and he was indeed released without any harm.

The only other violent political incident I remember was one that I was almost involved in. Ambassador Asencio, thirteen or fifteen other Ambassadors, and twenty or thirty other people were kidnapped while attending a reception at noon at the Dominican Embassy. They were kidnapped by Castro-supported guerrillas, held hostage for several weeks, and finally most of them were released. The Ambassadors were held the whole time, while many of the other people were released in stages. It's all in a book by Diego. It's a case where some of the Ambassadors went through the syndrome of ending up siding with and supporting the guerrillas. On the other hand, in the case of Diego Asencio, he actually turned a couple of the guerrillas and that probably led to the release.

I was out of the country when the Embassy was seized by the guerrillas. I had left two weeks before the hostage taking was effected. But as US Commercial Attaché, I had been invited to the reception, and I almost assuredly would have gone. I doubt that they would have held me very long, being relatively low ranking, but it's the closest I know of that I ever came to that kind of hostage

situation. It's ironic of course, that 20 years later, I went to the Dominican Republic as US Ambassador.

Other than those things which I mentioned, I thought it was a relatively peaceful assignment, certainly if one took precautions and remained alert. Colombia continued to boom economically, having a productive economy, prudent policies, and large amounts of private U.S. investment.

Q: What was U.S. investment, mining?

PASTORINO: U.S. investment was in several sectors: mining, especially iron ore; other natural resources; exploration and development of oil; and huge gas deposits off the Northern Coast. But in addition, U.S. investment began to grow in industry and services. And it was predominately those companies that I dealt with, the smaller companies that needed more help. It was those companies that I dealt with as Commercial Attaché and through being an honorary member of the Chamber of Commerce.
The major single US commercial activity in Colombia during my assignment was support for the US color television system. The Colombian Government was going to establish color TV and the system it selected would almost surely by chosen also by the rest of the Andean countries (Venezuela, Ecuador, Peru, Chile and Bolivia). So, it was a very important bidding process for the US and US firms. The process came down to three different and basically non-compatible systems: the French system (SECAM); the German system (PAL); and the U.S. system (NTSC, which some wags described as "Never The Same Color twice").

Each country of course was heavily supporting its own system. We went through six or eight months of hearings in front of the Colombian Congress, a whole series of trade missions and seminars, and a public relations campaign through which we described the technical aspects of our systems and hoped to convince the Colombian Government to select ours. Finally, we went through a national, real-life test, in which the three color systems were demonstrated to the President.

The U.S. clearly out smarted the other two countries because we demonstrated our system through a direct line from the Congress to the Colombian equivalent of the White House where President Betancourt was awaiting the transmission. We ran a closed circuit transmission from the Congress, where we were testifying about the system. The President saw our NTSC system in perfect, living color, especially those shots of Olivia Newton John riding horseback down a beautiful beach, apparently in the nude.

The other two systems, especially the French transmission were badly screwed up because they tried to transmit through the airwaves. I was actually accused by several people of having sabotaged the French system, the signal of which as I remember, never got to the Presidential Palace. The President evidently gave up and left his television set after waiting a half an hour. The French Commercial

Attaché appealed for a second test transmission and it was granted. That signal arrived at the Palace, but not in full color---everything was green. To this day I really don't know what happened. I didn't have anyone on my staff doing dirty tricks but you can be sure we took advantage, telling the Congress and the whole world about the “Green System”.

I actually thought the German and French systems were in some ways technically better than ours. In those days, as today, the clarity of the picture depended upon the number of lines on the screen. The more lines, the clearer the picture. We won the bid because we had a better educational and public relations campaign. We took advantage of several facts. The U.S. was already the major seller of almost everything else, especially electronic and communications equipment. Most Colombians felt more comfortable in buying American products.

We also won because Asencio was extremely astute. One day we went to call on the Minister of Communications who had a large say in the ultimate decision, together with the Congress. We noticed about six VCRs in his office, all of them of course using the American NTSC system. Asencio in his wonderful way, offhandedly remarked that he hoped that the Secretary wouldn't have to get rid of the six VCRs because they probably wouldn’t work with the French or German systems. The Minister incredulously asked whether we were serious? He asked about all the other Colombians who had VCRs, using the NTSC system. I assured him that they might work if a separate black box were attached to them, but of course the picture might be somewhat degraded. Of course all of his VCRs were made in Japan but programmed to operate on the NTSC standard.

To make a long story short, the U.S. won the bid, not by political influence or pressure, but through a successful marketing campaign, run by the Commercial Section. We won it legitimately. And, as we expected, the other Andean countries adopted the U.S. system. The importance of the campaign ultimately was not so much the money that we made, because most of the cameras, taping equipment, and VCRs were supplied by Sony and other Japanese firms. But the important fact was that U.S. programming could be shown directly from the U.S., and any programming taped in the US could be shown directly in Colombia without a black box or other mechanism which may have put our programming at a disadvantage. That was a major Asencio interest in the campaign, in addition to supporting American products and services.

Q: Let me ask you, this was before the days of the American Corrupt Practices Act or during it?

PASTORINO: I'm not sure. We did worry a lot that other countries were using unethical practices in general in promoting their goods, and especially with regard to the color TV campaign. We didn't want to use unethical practices and couldn't; I didn’t have the funds nor the wherewithal in any case. But, I do remember the French Commercial Attaché had sent seven or eight Congressmen and

Communications Ministry officials to Paris for several days to study the SECAM system. He bragged to me that the delegation had been taken care of day and night, emphasizing the night. I'm sure they were set up with girls and any other kind of entertainment they wanted. That type of treatment didn't seem strange at all to the Colombians; some may have expected it. I hope they enjoyed themselves. The U.S. government would not have wanted to be involved in that type of practice and the US firms didn't engage in it. Actually, I thought the German effort was above board.

The closest we came to doing anything unorthodox was a big party for the Congressmen one night at my house. We had hooked up a closed circuit TV system and when we invited the Congressman we made it clear they could bring any of their girlfriends, or anyone else they wanted to bring (they would have anyway). They came and they hammed it up in front of several discreetly placed, but public, cameras with their girlfriends, who all seemed to be Colombian beauty queens. Then we gave each of them a tape of the evening. They loved it although I don't know how important it was to our overall effort.
The biggest problem we had was overcoming the perceived technical deficiencies of our system. I also had to work hard with the Commerce Department in Washington to get the American companies involved; after all, they had the technical expertise and the equipment. The Commerce Department didn't have the budget and couldn't fund most of the program. Finally, through Commerce efforts in the US and our efforts from Bogota we convinced firms like General Electric, AMPEX, and Motorola to participate. They sent down their sales force and their equipment and basically they put on the seminars. I sat in front of Congress as the head of delegation and did all of the political smoozing, noting how honored we were to be invited, and then turning the hearings over to the experts.

We also put on several seminars in the Embassy. All the equipment and technical description was done by the companies. The event at my house which I just mentioned was wired and organized by the companies; I determined the guest list; my wife made sure of the food, drink and other hospitality. American companies did the campaign because they finally determined it was in their interest. It was not a high cost operation; it probably didn't cost more than a couple hundred thousand dollars. But mostly the expenses were funded by the American companies with the Commercial Attaché coordinating the whole effort. Of course, major credit went to my staff, both the Colombians, and the Americans, particularly the two assistant commercial attachés, Jack Orlando and Leon Weintraub. Leon was a junior officer rotating through the Commercial Section; he got some great, hands-on experience.

Q: You mention the Commerce Department, I mean were you working as the Commercial Attaché in those days before the Foreign Commercial Service? To whom did you report, what was the relationship between the Department of Commerce and the Department of State?

PASTORINO: It was a unique relationship but I thought it worked. I had been in the business sector before. I had been in banking. I had no problem working with the private sector. I thought it was good that the US Government was engaged with the private sector trying to sell American products and create American jobs.

I reported to both the State Department, through the Economic Counselor, who was my boss within the Embassy, and directly to the Department of Commerce in Washington by telegram. I received efficiency reports from both. I had two reports in my personnel file each year. Frankly the Commerce report was somewhat silly. I wrote most of it myself and someone in Commerce signed it. It had much to do with accomplishing certain budgetary and promotional objectives established at the beginning of the year. Of course, I took a large role in establishing those objectives. In fact, I had a formula: if I thought Commerce wanted me to sell 2X worth of products and I was sure I could sell 4X, I would establish the goal at 3X. It was not hard to surpass the goal, and then note it in both efficiency reports.

My day to day activity had much more to do with Commerce for those five years as a Commercial Attaché, than it did with the State Department. When I would go home to Washington for consultations, most of the consultations were at Commerce Department. I received instructions for the most part from Commerce in Washington, who also supplied my budgetary support. Actually, I was one of the few officers in the Embassy at that time who had to worry about budgeting, an activity that later became much more important for State Department Foreign Service Officers. I got good budgeting experience early in my career and it helped later on.

Commerce told me in general terms what commercial interests were to be covered, what industrial sector reports were of interest, which delegations to receive, what kind of projects and products to promote. I really had lots of autonomy and enjoyed it. The Commercial function was also enjoyable because it was fairly easy to determine whether you had been successful, just by measuring sales and other objective measurements, such as trade missions organized, trade opportunities generated, etc. We leased a large portion of a five story building in Bogota where we could participate in the Annual Colombian Trade Show, as well as put on smaller exhibits. We kept the space filled continuously.

The Economic Counselor was Steve Gibson who later on went on to be DCM in Jamaica and other places. Steve had never done commercial work. He gave me lots of autonomy. What I had to do most with State Department while on the Bogota assignment was when Steve was absent or on leave. I was acting Economic Counselor. So I also had to be familiar with the macro-economic issues. Steve was later replaced by George Thigpen, who became a close friend and had a positive impact on my career.

In fact, there were several trade negotiations going on with Colombia while I was

there; one was particularly complex and politically sensitive, an anti-dumping case brought against Colombian fresh flower growers and exporters. It was important because it was a trade action brought against a friendly country where political pressures were brought to bear by both sides, regardless of whether or not there might be dumping, which was illegally damaging US producers and employment. I participated in several negotiating sessions in Bogota and learned a lot about GATT and US commercial regulations

Q: Let me interrupt here because I've always been curious about this. I always found in my service that people working in commercial affairs were considered by the Embassy to be second class citizens.

PASTORINO: Neither Gibson nor George believed that at all. They did not want to get heavily involved in the commercial activity but they were certainly interested and saw it as a high priority. Asencio also basically understood the need to do commercial promotion and gave me great support. In fact, Diego would always be willing to open an exhibit, cut a ribbon at a new plant, or advocate for US firms when necessary with the Colombian Government. And, even the political officers in the State Department were beginning to understand the importance to US interests of international commerce and trade. No, I did not consider myself a second class citizen: I certainly didn't act like it, and I don't think I was considered a second class citizen in that Embassy.

Q: Got an interesting question for you just off the top of my head. You were on a first name basis with the Ambassador. When did the custom change from calling someone Mr. Ambassador to using his first name?

PASTORINO: I always called him Mr. Ambassador. He called me Bob. But I could call him at any time and he would take the call. I would see him outside of the office frequently, at his house at receptions or when he would come to what I would consider my events, commercial events. He would come to my house. And he was very responsive. It was a good relationship because he wasn't in there nit-picking but he was there when I needed him. I knew I shouldn't bother him unless it was extremely important. I was and am a great admirer of Diego and I saw him frequently later in my career. Another case of being fortunate in working for a great career foreign service officer.

I also had a relationship with him as acting Economic Counselor so I often went to the staff meetings and I knew him in that context also. But I did call him Mr. Ambassador. Today I would begin a conversation calling him Mr. Ambassador, and then it becomes Diego.

Q: How formal were Embassies in Latin America? How hierarchical?

PASTORINO: It was hierarchical. Most of the Embassies where I worked were in Latin America. There were formal staff meetings, a formal chain of command. I

worked for some wonderful gentlemen. I already mentioned Maurice Bernbaum in Venezuela, Diego Asencio, and Frank Carlucci. I later worked for John Negroponte and Ted Briggs. They were all consummate professionals in the Foreign Service sense. I was still a Foreign Service Officer as Commercial Attaché. Asencio knew there was a job that had to be done. It was on his watch and he wanted the job done right. It was formal organization. As it should have been and as it still should be.

It was the kind of formality in my case that was very flexible. I could call upstairs when I needed something. I didn't have to go through the Economic Counselor. I didn't have to go through the DCM, if it was really important.

The DCM in Bogota was Ted Briggs, who became a close, close friend. I worked for him several times. And he replaced me later at the NSC. Ted had never done much commercial work and it wasn't one of his highest priorities in Bogota. He basically said Bob, if you need the Ambassador, go to him. Don't worry about putting everything through me.

Q: You're giving this interview in San Francisco and you're a native San Franciscan. I'm curious about when you came back here. When you came on home leave your family is here, did anyone care about your work?

PASTORINO: With regard to the family, it took maybe an hour to brief them on what we had been doing the last year and that was usually the end of it. After all we were never really out of communication, given the telephone. We would talk some about issues and what I was doing but it was not intense. I do remember one time, I gave a formal briefing on the Contras and why the US should support them to my extended family, especially my sister and brother-in-law and nieces and nephew. I'm not sure I convinced them of anything.

When we came back we spent the time with family. I never went out and made public appearances in San Francisco. No one in San Francisco knew who I was. We basically saw family and friends. I lost touch with my boyhood friends who would not have been very interested in foreign affairs. Anyway, I was on vacation, and expected to forget about work, except when I came home as Ambassador.

The only time the job came up outside of the family was when we would be introduced as diplomats and then there was sometimes fifteen minutes, at the most, of interest. That was fine for us.

Q: That raises an issue. You were in Colombia from 1977 to 1979 and people who are going to be listening to this or reading this live in an age of e-mails, cable television and whatever. To what degree did you feel isolated? Not isolated from day to day events in Colombia but from friends in the United States, even from family. How long did it take the mail to get to you? To what degree did you

feel you weren't really part of what was going on in the U.S.?

PASTORINO: To some slight degree but not such that it really made the assignment negative. I do remember we looked forward to getting Monday Night Football films from Pan-American. I remember struggling with my short wave radio to get the Forty-Niners or the Golden State Warriors, for instance. We had no cable TV, not even in black and white. But Bogota was close to home. We always felt we were close enough to Fran's elderly mother so we could get home in case the need arose. I did have one bad experience. My mother passed away in Italy when we were in Bogota. But the State Department paid my way to go to Italy and help my father do what had to be done. So I didn't feel too isolated.

Also, I was living in a culture that's very close to an American culture and an Italian-American culture. Braniff Airlines flew directly to Los Angeles and we could get home literally in twelve hours. I liked Colombia and I liked the culture and I liked the country. There was an American school for the kids, a pretty good school. We were worried a little bit about marijuana in school. Several Embassy parents had problems with their kids. Shannon and Stephen were there in the lower grades and had no problems. At that particular time in that school, marijuana didn't really begin until the junior high and high school. We had a maid, we lived in a nice house, so there was not a great sense of isolation.

Colombia was a great place to travel with good accommodations, great beaches, colonial and pre-Colombian sites, and good travel infrastructure and we took advantage of the opportunities, both in conjunction with work and on a purely personal basis. And, I liked Colombians very much.

Q: Does your wife speak Spanish?

PASTORINO: Yes.

Q: Was she trained by the State Department? How did she learn Spanish?

PASTORINO: She learned it partially at the Foreign Service Institute and she says she speaks "kitchen Spanish"; she learned it from the maids and friends. She did not do a lot of charity work. We had three kids and the youngest was one year old and the oldest was ten years old. She was busy with the kids. I don't remember that there were a lot of Embassy programs for wives, but I am sure there were the usual ones. I do remember that Nancy Asencio, who was a wonderful lady, was not very demanding of the dependents and wives. Every once in a while she called in the wives, but not often.

Fran did get involved with an orphanage that took in young criminals. One of the things that happened in Bogota and happens to this day, is that criminals would train young boys, eight and nine years old, to be pick-pockets, or to run up and grab jewelry, especially earrings. That happened all the time. There was a priest,

an American priest, who set up an orphanage for both orphans and the "*gaminis,*, the young criminals. The "*gaminis*" were actually very good, very successful at their criminal activity. The priest bought some land outside of Bogota, built an orphanage and my wife and several of the wives participated there by collecting and donating clothes etc. Basically trying to give the priest the wherewithal to carry on his effort.

Q: Anything else you want to talk about in Colombia, your time down there?

PASTORINO: It was good for my career in that I met Ted Briggs and Diego Asencio. As I mentioned above, the experience with Commerce Department, especially in planning, programming and the budget, was also good for my career. At that time Foreign Service Officers didn't get this type of experience at State. All that helped me later when the State Department began to adapt some of these hundred page papers and programmatic outlines. As I also noted above, I got very good efficiency reports for two years in Bogota.

I did represent Commerce. I was not torn between the two departments. The rivalries that might have gone on in Washington did not go on in either of the two Embassies where I was Commercial Attaché. So I thought the Commerce program worked very well.

For the record, and I have put it down on the record many times over the years, including by official letters to Congress since I have retired, I don't think the transferring the commercial function to Commerce from State was a bad idea. I don't think Foreign Service Officers have the time to devote to the commercial promotion program. The Commercial program is a technical one in many ways. You've got to understand business, be able to talk to businessmen, and most importantly it is a function that must be done continuously to really learn the markets and the programs. Foreign Commercial Officers can do it full time, not every few years as it was often done when Foreign Service Officers were detailed to the function for short periods of time.

Of course, Commercial Officers should be part of the Embassy Team and subject to guidance about political issues from the Ambassador. The trade promotion function is not entirely technical and the Ambassador and other Embassy components can be very helpful in selling American products and supporting American business overseas. There are times where commercial interests may outweigh other US interests and that should be recognized. I think the commercial function is well off where it is now.

I also want to say for the record that I don't think all State Department Commercial Attachés were failures. I thought some of us did very good jobs. Several of us were recruited by the Foreign Commercial Service when the function was transferred to it. Some of us transferred and several didn't. I didn't because I thought my future was with the State Department, although my

negotiations with Commerce reached a point where we discussed a possible assignment in Rome as Assistant Commercial Counselor. In fact, Commerce offered me the position as Commercial Counselor in Madrid, and Commerce officials couldn't understand why I would hold out for the Deputy position in Italy. As the negotiations progressed, I received a Foreign Service promotion and that ended my negotiations with Commerce. Several of my close friends did make the transfer, immediately getting higher level jobs and promotions. But, I did not want to do commercial work all of my career. But, the commercial experience helped me in several ways, including the supervision of the commercial function much later.

The other thing I would say is that Bogota was my first introduction to trade negotiations. In some cases the initial trade talks were done by the Embassy and for some reason the Commercial Officer was tapped to do it.

We negotiated agreements with Colombia on countervailing duties, dumping, and entrance into the Generalized System of Preferences (GSP). In fact, I got a wonderful opportunity to travel because someone got sick and I was picked to travel around to two or three Andean countries leading a delegation from Washington to explain to these countries what the Generalized System of Preferences was, and how could they get these zero duty preferences for up to a certain amount of each individual product. I got to go to Quito and Lima. And, I took the delegation all over Colombia to five or six places which allowed me to do business, promote American products, at the same time as I was describing a trade policy of the United States which gave these countries free access to the U.S. market.

The GSP was somewhat complicated because there were varying levels and quotas on different products, depending upon competitiveness; if a country was already selling in the US, it certainly didn't need a tariff preference. Plus, some products were not eligible because of domestic political concerns, such as textiles, watches, shoes, etc. But it was free access to the U.S. market for many products, without, I repeat, without reciprocity. GSP was designed to assist in the economic development of developing counties. So it was an economic policy, a form of an aid policy and it was certainly the trade policy of the United States. In fact the U.S. was the first country in the world to have a system of trade preferences, which was then followed up by the European Common Market and Japan. I did a lot of work with European Ambassadors and the Colombian trade people to explain how our policy worked. It helped me in what later became a career as a trade negotiator.

Q: Tell me a little bit about the Foreign Service Nationals, locals as we called them in the old days. Clearly you must have relied heavily on them in a place like Colombia and a job like Commercial Attaché. But what was the relationship, how did they view all of this? Or, were you just kind of an interloper who they had to put up with for two years before they had to train the next guy? What was it like?

PASTORINO: In Colombia the Commercial Section had three Americans, the Attaché and two Assistant Attachés. Then I had twelve to fifteen Colombian Nationals, all had been in the Embassy longer than I had been. All clearly knew more about Colombia and how to do business in Colombia than I did. But the relationship was very professional in that I had the guidance to give them. They did need guidance and they took guidance. I would say: "Okay, Washington wants us to do a industrial sector report on the telecommunications sector. Who are the people we have to interview? What information do we need? This is the deadline; I would like to see the first draft by "x" date, I will go with you on some of the interviews. I will take you to the government". Or, I would say: "An important American firm has some problems with the Government. How do we solve it? Who do we see? What to do we say?" And I would follow their advice. We proceeded on that basis and it seemed to work. I included them in most of the planning; I thought that was a key element.

All of these people were very bright and very hard working. They were paid very well in the context of Colombia. Most of them viewed the job in the U.S. Embassy as prestigious. They were professionals in that they were marketing majors or economists, or had come out of the business community. Some thought of themselves as the elite in the Embassy because they weren't one of the hordes of Nationals in the Consular section or one of the minions in the Administrative Section. They were professionals. Several of them became friends. I had them over to the house not only for official functions but they came to my kids' birthday parties, for instance. In turn, they invited us to their places. I tried to give them credit as much as possible with the Ambassador. I wanted the Ambassador and the upper levels of the Embassy to know that if I did a good job or if our junior officers did a good job, it's because Joaquin did a good job and Luis did a good job.

I had one suspected corruption problem and had to begin an investigation. There were rumors that one of my National employees was using his position at the Embassy to get outside contracts for himself as a private consultant. It turned out later that he had done that. I think he was fired and may have actually gone to jail. The Colombian court system punished him. I also should mention that I supervised several locals in our consulates in Cali, Medellin, and Barranquilla.

Q: Well I had no idea the American presence was so large in Colombia in terms of numbers of Consulates. What was the relation between Consulates and the Embassy?

PASTORINO: At my level very good. I visited the Consulates, taking trade missions or other types of business. In a certain sense, I was a resource for the Consul. They had no time to do commercial work. There were two Consulates General, Cali and Medellin, and the Northern Consulate, Barranquilla. The Consuls normally had very little time for commercial affairs so they depended on

me to make sure the commercial office Nationals were doing what they were supposed to be doing. So I was satisfied, the Consular General was satisfied, and Ambassador Asencio was satisfied. So our relationship was very good.

Q: How many of those Consulates are still open (we are doing this interview in 1998)?

PASTORINO: I don't believe any of them are open now. Two of them, Cali and Medellin, were closed, at least in part, because of drug problems and security problems. Barranquilla was already on its last legs. Barranquilla is a port on the north coast and historically had been there because it was a port for U.S. vessels. I think Asencio kept it open to be a listening post for the drug situation.

During my time, Cali and Medellin were Consular posts with some commercial interests because both locations had significant industry and business. Colombia was not a place with only one business center as some countries. Bogota was more a cultural, governmental, and educational center, rather than a business center. Cali and Medellin were really strong business locations. At one Post, I remember the Consul General was an Economic officer. He didn't have time for much commercial activity but he knew what was going on. The other two Consulates were headed by either Consular Cone or Political Cone officers but they were always cooperative. I didn't get into their consular business and I understood their other priorities. If they told me I could only have ten percent of their time on a trip, I was satisfied.

Q: Finished with Colombia?

PASTORINO: I think so.

THE DEPARTMENT: OFFICE OF MEXICAN AFFAIRS (ARA/MEX)

Q: So you went back to Washington and became the Deputy Director for Mexican Affairs?

PASTORINO: Right. Ted Briggs was named Director for Mexican Affairs. I was in Colombia on a three year assignment when he was named. Ted told me he had never worked on Mexico and he knew I had some experience there, as well as the trade and commercial experience, which was very important in our US-Mexican bilateral relations. He asked me to go with him when the Deputy Director slot opened up.

I was happy to do it; in fact, I was ecstatic about the opportunity. We had been in Colombia for two years, it was long enough. I was ready to go home to Washington after five years overseas. Getting to work on Mexican Affairs was perfect. Ted Briggs was so professional, and I knew that he would be a great boss. He became a very close friend. His wife, Sally, is the most wonderful person in

the world. It was a perfect assignment to get me back to Washington to really figure out how Washington works. Ted told me that he knew the politics and the State Department and he wanted me to know the policy.

So we went back. I served three years as the Deputy Director. Ted left after two years and I then served with a man named Frank Crigler, who later had an interesting career history.

I was Deputy Director, although at times I thought I was Acting Director in that Ted gave me great leeway on many issues. With regard to the whole economic side, the trade side, the financial and commercial, I had a major role. On the political side I also had tremendous inputs. I knew Mexico from school days in California, and from my assignment in Hermosillo.

It was a unique assignment in that in addition to having a US Ambassador in Mexico, first former Wisconsin Governor Patrick Lucey, and then Julian Nava, President Carter created the office of the Special Coordinator for Mexican Affairs, which had Ambassadorial rank. Carter appointed as Special Coordinator former Congressman Robert Krueger from Texas, who was a brilliant scholar, businessman, and a recognized expert on gas and energy issues. He was from central Texas and a Democrat. He'd attended Duke and Cambridge. Of course, at that time energy, especially the natural gas trade, was a serious U.S./Mexican issue. Bob Krueger was recognized in the Congress as an energy expert; he had chaired the subcommittee. His family was in the farming and automobile business in New Braunfels, Texas. The Krueger family was a long-standing traditional, central Texan family with a German background in a German community. He had been a leader of the Texas Democratic Party and there are still Krueger protégées in Texas politics.

Meanwhile, Governor Lucey already had been US Ambassador in Mexico for two years and the Mexicans were often confused, although in all frankness, they frequently took advantage of the dual Ambassadorial situation to appeal to one when the other wouldn’t help. Lobbyists in Washington did the same thing.

Once President Reagan took office, he named Jack Gavin as Ambassador. Ambassador Gavin was an outstanding all-around person. A political appointment, he had clear credentials for dealing with Mexico. He was a Mexican American on his mother’s side (she was a Sonorense from Sonora), he spoke perfect Spanish and all of its dialects, and had a Master's Degree from Stanford in Latin America economics. Of course, he was also well known as a film actor, which unfortunately typed him for many people as a lightweight and ill prepared for one of the most important diplomatic posts in the world, especially liberals who didn’t want to look any further than his acting background. In addition, he had been the President of the Screen Actors Guild, replacing Ronald Reagan. If you ever had an Ambassador who could tell you that he or she could pick up the phone and call Ron, Ambassador Gavin could do it, and he did it very effectively.

During my first year working on the "Mexican Desk", although it was actually an Office in itself (ARA/MEX), meaning it was responsible for only one country, as opposed for instance to Central American Affairs which covered seven countries, there was also the Special Coordinator's Office. This unique situation made the ARA/MEX Director position very interesting, complex, and delicate, always trying to balance between the regular State Department bureaucracy, and the interests of the Coordinator's Office, which was actually on paper located in the White House. Bob Krueger sat in the White House, but his staff sat with us in the State Department. In total, the combined Office of Mexican Affairs/Coordinator's staff numbered more than fifteen persons at times, probably the most number of people working on one country at that time.

The whole day to day operation at State was run by Ted Briggs as Director, who was also Deputy Coordinator. Ambassador Krueger's staff included a media person, an immigration expert, an economist, who was an expert on the Mexican economy, a political expert, and two or three others. All of the people were talented, most with Hispanic names like Cervantes and Flores, and while they didn't know the State Department, they did know a lot about Mexico, domestic politics, and the situation along the Mexico/Texas border. Ted Briggs had a big job, which he partially turned over to me, in making this hybrid office operate efficiently in order to help formulate and carry out our Mexican policy.

Q: What were some of the issues? You talk about energy and immigration, but just tick off what were the three or four major policy issues?

PASTORINO: Well, given it was Mexico, there were actually nine or ten major ones. There was the whole overall relationship and how to manage it, both from a process and from a substance point of view. How should Mexican government and the U.S. government interrelate given their history and the fact that each Government suspected the other. I learned that process can be more important than the problem. Without having the right forum to talk to one another, not much gets done. And both countries were very jealous of their sovereign and individual prerogatives, and never let the other one forget it. The presidents did not like one another and there were continual clashes of policy.

Q: Who was the Mexican President?

PASTORINO: The Mexican President was Luis Echeverria Alvarez, then Lopez Portillo. Echeverria was a leftist, although not a Marxist, who thought he was, and was perceived by many, as a God in Mexico, which meant he ranked far above the President of the United States or any other American that might be sent to Mexico. At the time of Echeverria, I would note that our Ambassador was Patrick Lucy, a political appointee not nearly as well versed in Mexico and things Mexican nor in Mexican-American relations. Lucy never did learn to speak Spanish.

To get at the process issue, we created the first of the US-Mexican Binational Commissions, comprised of about seven or eight subcommittees, each responsible for an issue or set of issues.

There was of course the Border Committee. The border had a myriad of controversial, sensitive, everyday issues which could never be solved, only managed. There was the issue of where border crossing should be built, how they should be operated, how should crossings of people and goods be controlled, etc. There was crime along the border, the environment, tourism, visas and passports, etc. There was the relationship between the border communities which was both very cordial at times, and at the same time, very competitive, especially when there was an election on one side or on the other. Border politicians used to love to make foreign policy, or at least criticize it. There were a bunch of cheap-shot artists, on both sides.

You had the relationship of Tijuana and San Diego, where Tijuana was a totally Mexican community trying to interact with the small Mexican -American community of San Ysidro, the actual border post located right on the border, and the huge Anglo community of San Diego, located 20 miles away. There were lots of Mexicans in San Diego but they didn't have much influence. This relationship was different from the "*Los Dos Laredos*" or "*Los Ambos Nogales*". Nuevo Laredo is on the Mexican side with Laredo in Texas, a similar situation at Nogales; both often had Mexican-American Mayors and other officials. The latter two were generally very good relationships. Then there was the El Paso, Texas/Ciudad Juarez, Chihuahua situation. El Paso is Anglo-Mexican mixed. And you had the smaller communities: Eagle Pass, Ojinaga, Agua Prieta/Douglas, Brownsville, San Luis Rio Colorado, Colombus, and many, many more, most of which I visited at one time or another, often to work on diplomatic cross-border problems. So you had all these border problems. The one thing in common was that there were large populations which interacted on a daily basis.

You also had the whole gamut of economic, trade, commercial and financial issues. This included trade negotiations, where the Mexicans were accused of dumping or subsidizing their exports to the US, thus jeopardizing US jobs, according to many Americans. Those same Americans did not recognize that cheaper products from Mexico lowered the cost of living in the US. I negotiated several of these issues, and in fact we signed agreements on some of them such as tomato trade, intellectual property rights, and other generic trade issues. Long before the NAFTA, the US and Mexico were negotiating trade agreements. They were complex given the huge amounts of trade and investment, the tremendous economic interests involved on both sides, both having substantial access to their governments, and the tremendous disparity in the size and quality of the two economies.

You had the problem of American investment in Mexico. Where could you

invest? What was the treatment of the investment? What special conditions might be posed by the Government of Mexico? What types of investments were encouraged and desired, and which ones were approved? How were the workers to be treated, and what was the relationship between the US headquarters and the Mexican subsidiary? And did the rules change and what were the repercussions of those changes? It was still the beginning of the maquiladora program, operating under the special Mexican legislation that allowed them to be a hundred percent (100%) foreign owned, and which allowed them to act fairly independently, especially in not having to pay certain tariffs and duties.

There seemed always to be less corruption with regard to the maquiladoras (also known as assembly plants, where US components were sent to Mexico to be assembled and then returned to the US) within the Mexican Government. The maquiladoras seemed to be a good deal for both: jobs and salaries in Mexico; and cheaper costs for US manufacturers, allowing them to better compete internationally.

There was the whole tourism issue. American tourists were sometimes treated badly in Mexico and constantly complained to the U.S. Government. The simple answer would have been to put on a travel warning, which would have seriously harmed the Mexican economy, given the fact that tourism was its second biggest earner of foreign exchange. And, a travel warning would have been perceived as "unfriendly" to Mexico, even if it was protecting American tourists.

The issue of crime in Mexico and how it involved tourists or Americans who went down there to deal in drugs was always on the front burner. In fact, it became much more important as the cultivation and production of drugs for export to the US increased. I believe we already had a Bilateral Commission sub-committee on criminal activity, an issue which was so sensitive because it involves both country's sovereignty.

There was the energy issue. What right did the US have to utilize Mexican energy resources? The US clearly was running out of energy resources and had become a major world importer of oil. Mexico also had huge natural gas reserves, both off-shore and onshore, which could be easily transported for use to the US, if legal and political issues on both sides could be resolved. The Mexicans, of course, treated energy as just another product, wanting to receive the highest price possible without giving long-term price or supply guarantees. On the other hand, who wants to build a multi-million dollar pipeline without any assurance there would be gas to flow though it and its distribution network. Both sides of course never forgot the oil exploitation early in the century and the oil nationalization by the Mexicans in the 1930s. Certainly, there was no shortage of politicians or nationalists to keep reminding us of the history. Of course, if you don't have a market for the energy products (Mexico's market was much too small), it doesn't make much sense to develop energy reserves or produce products. So both sides needed the other, but it was hard work getting to solutions. That was a tremendous

issue.

We had the whole consular-immigration issue, separate from the day to day border issues. What should be the US immigration policy, and how would it and should it effect Mexico which was one of the largest, most important sources of immigration, both legal and illegal. We had had the Bracero program, which had been phased out by LBJ in the sixties.

We had a very special consular/immigration document which was the border crossing card, the famous "*mica",* unique to Mexico, and all important to daily life along the border. Many Mexicans living on the border possessed the "*mica"* which they had had for thirty years; it allowed them to cross the border daily with no hassle to work or shop. We got more and more restrictive in issuing them. It was only supposed to be issued to Mexicans who lived on the border so they could come across the work, shop, get their hair done, and visit. The border crossing card allowed them technically to come no more than fifty miles into the US for no more than three days. No Mexican wanted to recognize the limits of fifty miles or three days. Some thought they had a God-given right to the "*mica",* or to other types of visas for that matter, not understanding that it was not an obligation of the US to issues border crossing cards. And, to complicate it a little more, Mexicans in Mexico City didn't understand why they couldn't have a border crossing card.

You had the whole Mexican domestic political issue, which we tried to stay out of as much as possible, but were always dragged into it, by both Mexicans and Americans, each advocating one position or another. Some people early on began to call me the "PRIista" in the State Department, the representative of the PRI. I personally thought that the long political stability in Mexico was good for the United States. I also didn't think we had a right to be trying to affect human rights issues in Mexico. Mexican political stability had avoided a Cuba, and all its unrest and failed policies. We sure didn't want guerrillas running around Mexico or another civil war. If the vehicle necessary to maintain that stability was the "Partido Revolucionario Institutional-PRI'"", and the Mexicans chose it, that was their choice and we should recognize and respect that, and above all not interfere with it.

At that time there was not much local opposition. There were a few guerrillas running around in the mountains once in a while, and the government and the PRI took care of them quickly. There were several political parties but they had little power or support. There were no human rights investigators to figure out how Mexico controlled the disloyal opposition. I knew how it was done. I knew that when a bus went over the cliff in Guerrero, carrying the guerrilla leader Lucio Cabanas with it into the deep gorge, it probably wasn't because the driver fell asleep. But that's how Mexico handled their problems, and I considered that was Mexico's business. But we still had to answer to academics, the media, people in the State Department, US busybodies who had no business interfering, and

Mexicans living in the US. They would continually ask how the system worked, and why didn't somebody fix it? So that was another issue. Those are the main issues.

Q: You know though, we've always had this very strange relationship with Mexico. On the one hand as you said this is a big office, you have fifteen people working and yet on the other hand, Mexico has always been seen somehow as a distant second cousin which we confront only when there are problems. What was the attitude of the Desk? Did you have trouble getting Mexico on the top of the policy agenda?

PASTORINO: No, because there were some serious issues. Also, we had an advocate in the White House. That was Krueger during my first year. Krueger's basic job was to get issues with Mexico in front of the President. The rest of my time of the Desk was with Jack Gavin as the Ambassador to Mexico and when he thought an issue should be raised to the President, it got raised to the President. It might not always get treated in the State Department with as much priority as the White House gave it. Of course, it was more difficult to get Congress to deal with the issues.

Ted Briggs did a masterful job of staying on the good side of the 7th Floor at the Department as well as on the good side of the White House. So Ted was the person who had to walk the tightrope of personalities and bureaucracies. I stayed out of that part of it almost completely, although I had to be prepared when he was absent. I worked a lot on policy, where I was always heavily involved, trying to balance US domestic and political interests. There were times when I could go to meetings in the Department Economic Bureau or the Consular Bureau and I would put on my Krueger hat, telling the group what the "White House wanted to do." In many cases that was enough to carry the day.

I didn't find it difficult to espouse those policy positions, except that the process might take two hours if I were working in the normal Desk office, but it would take considerably more time to get both the necessary White House and ARA approval for a position. I also had to worry about other US Government agencies which Ambassador Krueger on paper was supposed to coordinate. Some of these agencies resented State's role.

A key State Department person in this complicated policy process was the then State Assistant Secretary for Latin America, who was Bill Bowdler. Bowdler had tremendous confidence in Ted, and normally just wanted Ted to brief him on what was going on, which Ted could do at the regular ARA staff meetings. So for a time, we had real power in State, but at the same time more than one master. There were times when I would brief the Assistant Secretary at six thirty in the morning or eleven o'clock at night so that he would never be surprised by events.

When Reagan took power, the Assistant Secretary became Tom Enders. Enders

was not as willing to sit back and depend on Briggs and the Mexican Desk. (Krueger of course left when Reagan came into power and there was no more Office of the Coordinator.) Tom Enders wanted to run our Mexican policy which put him into direct confrontation with Jack Gavin in Mexico City. And when Ted Briggs was transferred, Frank Crigler became Office Director and Enders' point man, especially in relation to Gavin in the rivalry to run the policy.

As a Foreign Service Officer on the Desk, my role was to get the policy papers moved and to get the operational things done; prepare and clear the briefing papers; talking to the Congressman; taking care of Mrs. Smith of Iowa if something happened to her kid in Mexico; make sure the Embassy was informed on policy developments and Washington desires; etc. It always involved informing several parties and making sure they all approved of actions and that all the agencies agreed on policy.

Q: Yes, but I don't think you can talk about the Mexican Desk without talking about the Gavin-Crigler fight.

PASTORINO: All right, I was and still am friends of both. I admire Jack Gavin very much. He always looked out for my career and offered to help me. I didn't need it but it was very much appreciated. Frank Crigler was a consummate professional. Brilliant guy. Very strong willed and he and Enders thought that ARA ought to run US Mexican policy and tell the Embassy what to do. It became a clash of wills and personalities. Jack Gavin wanted to get things done and didn't see why he had to defer to, or go through, and sometimes be delayed by the bureaucracy (in this case the Desk or the Assistant Secretary). He also was impatient with the often slow reaction of the State Department. Remember, Jack Gavin could go directly to the White House; an Ambassador does represent the President and Jack Gavin and the right relationship with President.

Gavin was very serious about helping to formulate and then carry out US policy. It was Ronald Reagan's policy, and Gavin wanted to implement it, and quickly. Reagan policy was to make sure US interests were served, while keeping up the best possible relationship with the Mexicans.

Q: There was no effort in those days, I mean in terms of trying to introduce market reforms, privatization?

PASTORINO: We talked about market reform and private market capitalism but we did not try to force it. We were interested in our businesses and that they be allowed to operate. We also wanted an open Mexican market, being a large and lucrative one for US firms, which were the logical ones to supply it with every type of goods and services. Jack Gavin was a private sector guy, and understood clearly that State-run economies didn't really work. He may have talked about privatization but it was not an official policy. That was considered the Mexican's business. I personally thought that's the way it should be.

What was important to Gavin was the constant criticism of the US by the Mexican Government and media, often as a knee-jerk response to anything the US did, or as a good nationalistic tool in local politics; in any case the US was a wonderful scapegoat, for everyone, including the PRI. Well, the Mexican statements were clearly heard by Americans, both official and unofficial; and many of the agencies took the Mexicans at their word when they criticized us in unfriendly terms. Many of these Americans did not want to turn the other cheek, or didn't understand some of the real reasons for the constant carping. The criticism made cooperation difficult.

Ambassador Gavin ultimately made it clear to the Mexicans that they could not have it both ways if they wanted "the mature relationship," a relationship which they constantly demanded of the US. They wanted to be equals, very understandable, but not all Mexicans wanted the responsibility or obligations of equality. The Embassy made it clear that the US would feel free to criticize the Government of Mexico when criticized. Or on the other hand, there could be a situation in which neither side criticized the other.

Of course, Ambassador Gavin was the principal Embassy spokesman, always at the mercy of the press, which often misquoted him to make a bigger story. Being fluent in Spanish, and being Mexican-American and understanding the Mexican mentality, his criticism hit home. Of course, most Mexicans were not willing to be criticized and gave it back, many calling for him to be fired, or declared *persona non grata*. Needless to say, the Mexican criticism didn't really stop but the Gavin policy did make many Mexicans begin to understand better what a mature relationship should be.

Q: What were some of the policy issues? You described the broad range of policy issues we face but there wasn't any single, massive thing where there were differences, were there?

PASTORINO: No. They were not major, substantive issues. There were differences in how to present them to the Mexican Government, how to negotiate, how to express our positions publicly. Gavin always wanted to be firmer and wanted to press more strongly for our interests. As I noted above, he also didn't want to have the US Government constantly have to accept the often unwarranted criticism, while always wanting to "hold the US tongue," for fear of insulting Mexican policy.

As I began to say above, when we criticized the Mexicans, it increased the tension. It increased the amount of sparks. We ended up criticizing each other much more. That would drive the State Department up the wall. Gavin would make a calm, completely factual statement, and State Department would ask why he had to say it that way. Then of course, the State Department briefer would have to make a response. And, he obviously couldn't repudiate Gavin, for both

diplomatic and policy reasons, and for local domestic political reasons. Not with Gavin's prestige in the White House.

There was the process problem, which at times was as simple as using the right channels. Ambassador Gavin illustrated what he thought was the correct channel when, coming back to Washington for consultations, he went to see the President, the White House, or the NSC first, and then he went to see State Department, often telling them of a new policy.

I remember when he used to come to Washington. Actually, at the earliest moment, I was put in charge of the process of preparing then Ambassador-designate Gavin for the confirmation process. I took him around for his pre-confirmation hearings and many of his preparatory meetings within the Administration. I quizzed him the night before on the questions he might get during the confirmation hearing. I was the one who asked him, "Mr. Ambassador, you're an actor. What makes you think you can be an Ambassador." He rehearsed it the night before. He said disarmingly with a smile: "Congressman, if you'd seen any of my movies, you'd know I wasn't an actor." And sure enough one of the senators asked him the question.

So there was that kind of a clash. There was actually a time when the State Department and Embassy Mexico City just about broke relations. There was almost no contact for a short period of time. There were orders given on both sides not to talk to the other. I thought this was kind of silly and I had a close friend in the Embassy who was Gavin's Executive Assistant, that person being Don Lyman, which presented another complication. Don had been a State Department employee, a brilliant Foreign Service Officer, who had resigned. Gavin had taken him to Mexico City as his Executive Assistant, given Don's tremendous knowledge of the State Department and of U.S.-Mexican Affairs. Lyman could be very direct in his dealings, and was anxious to carry out the Ambassador's instructions, which caused some serious problems between him and the Foreign Service personnel in the Embassy (some of who were loath to recognize Gavin's credentials and position).

There were about ten days in which Don and I were the only communication channel and both of us were under instructions that the Department and Embassy shouldn't be consulting. I remember I would go home sometimes and call Don and he would go home and call back. One day Crigler asked me how I knew something that had gone on in the Embassy and I got caught. The communication crisis died out after a few days.

Actually, with respect to US-Mexican relations, the whole time I was on the Desk, we were in the mode of damage control. We never made tremendous, successful breakthroughs as we did later when Bush and Salinas were the Presidents. My time on the Desk was a period when you worked hard to control the damage, not let relations deteriorate. I used to ask myself at night: "what good did I do today".

To keep from being totally frustrated, I had to remind myself that we had controlled the situation, or limited damage during the day, and that made me feel better. That was just the way the relationship was.

Q: But you know, when I was in Washington at the Department, I had a guy in my carpool who I think was in the Economic Bureau, but he spent most of his career working on the Mexican tomato. I knew more about Mexican tomato negotiations than I ever cared to know. But it always struck me that this was a unique relationship in that micro managed issues such as tomatoes which would rarely pop up in U.S. -French or U.S.-Japanese relations I suppose.

PASTORINO: And that was the guts of many of these economic issues. When I talked about economic issues, I didn't mention very many. There were dozens of these kinds of issues, it is hard to remember all of them today, although some of them existed for many years. Fishing problems involving shrimp and turtles; and dolphins being caught accidentally by US tuna boats, or even more bizarrely, canned tuna eaten by Americans which may have been caught in nets that also captured dolphins. This latter of course led to a long boycott of Mexican tuna; you can imagine how that boycott along with the special labeling requirements affected the Mexican Government which was trying to improve the Mexican economy through increased exports and employment.

There were all kinds of fruit and vegetable issues, including diseases which might affect the US agricultural sector but were interpreted by Mexicans as protectionist efforts by the US to keep Mexican products out of the market. There was mango infestation, but only in some parts of Mexico, so we had to determine how to isolate the infected areas, which could have caused the disease to spread to US mango producers, especially those in Orange County, California. Newcastle's disease affected chickens, which were a major Mexican export, so we had to protect US chicken producers. It was always difficult to convince the Mexicans that some of these protections were for sanitary, health, and technical reasons. They of course saw it has protectionism.

One of the most controversial, difficult, and time-consuming problems was that of the tomatoes. We had tomato wars and the Mexicans burned tomatoes on Mexican highways to protest US treatment. Both Governments were heavily involved even though most of the production, transportation, processing, distribution, financing, and retailing was done by the private sector. Florida tomato growers, suffering from Mexican competition in the winter, when Mexico’s growing season could produce tremendous quantities of high quality tomatoes for export, relied on the US Government for support. The Mexican growers of course appealed to Mexico City to protect them against “Uncle Sam.”

Mexican vine-ripened tomatoes were and are better than those grown in Florida. Mexican tomatoes are grown differently. Mexican tomatoes were allowed to ripen on the vine so that all the flavor is produced before harvesting. Florida tomatoes,

for a lot of reasons, mostly labor costs, were picked while still green and then gassed. They turned just as red and looked just as pretty but I think had a little less flavor.

Florida came to the Agriculture, Commerce and the State Departments with the most outlandish proposals on how to protect themselves from the competition. One idea was a legal marketing order in which any imported tomatoes would have to be square, so they could fit perfectly in a square box. Or, they could only enter at certain times, but not in the winter season so as not to compete with Florida.

The US Government had to listen to these people. We had a whole series of negotiations with the Mexicans on how to regulate the trade. We also had tremendous negotiations with the Florida tomato growers long be before we talked to the Mexicans. Remember we belonged to the GATT and there were certain trade provisions which must be respected. One of the reasons I went so often to Mexico was on these kinds of negotiations. Intrinsically, being a free-trader, I believed it was better to try and negotiate it out rather than just raise import barriers. I didn't want to stop the flow of tomatoes, it would be bad for the US consumer (raising prices through limited supply), and against our own and international trade regulations.

On the other hand, I didn't want to see Americans in Florida go broke. We gave the Floridians good advice many, many years before they finally took it: sell the tomato fields in Daytona and Palm Beach and put up condos and you'll make much more money. But, many of the Florida growers had been in business for many years; they were family holdings; they were profitable; and most did not want to be property developers. But, many of them have since gone into the condo business.

We used to negotiate with the Mexicans to try and resolve a crisis before it became it extreme, and led to a serious deterioration in the US-Mexican relationship. This was a severe problem which may have only involved a few Americans directly but they were Americans and the crisis threatened to spill over into other issues. We constantly debated among ourselves whether to treat problems individually on their own merits, or to discuss the problems as a package, thus permitted trade-offs between the various issues.

As US Government officials, we had to be cognizant of the perception of anti-trust problems. The growers, for instance, really had to limit collaboration among themselves or there could be the appearance of price fixing. The US Government had to be careful of being caught between the various interest groups, given there were US groups allied to the Mexicans, border shippers, for instance, or consumers' groups. We had to be very cautious on how we talked to our own tomato growers. We couldn't include our tomato growers in the same room with the Mexican tomato growers at the same time because of trade restraint considerations. One time, I was actually warned not to talk to a tomato grower

alone, even in the bathroom because it might be construed as illegal. I do remember though thinking about how interesting the actual substance of the dispute was: the size of tomatoes, either 13x15, or 6x9; how many would fit in a box; the difference between cherry tomatoes and red ones. All minutia, but extremely relevant to the negotiations.

Q: But the minutia, many outsiders don't realize that that is the substance of our policy.

PASTORINO: Exactly, it's minutia but it's not minutia. Most of these issues we didn't really ever resolve. We put them off. Which meant that the negotiations were continuous. We negotiated many agreements; I even helped to sign some. But, many lasted only one season, and the problem came up in a slightly different guise the next season, with a new marketing order, a countervailing case instead of a dumping case, etc.

My first real introduction to trade negotiations was tomatoes. It was US interests (the Floridians) that brought a dumping case against the Mexicans because they claimed the Mexicans were dumping their tomatoes in the US market, thus getting an unfair trade advantage. In this case, we developed about nine possible formulas on how to prove whether it was dumping or not, and if so, at what levels so that anti-dumping duties could be levied on the product. And these formulas came up with levels of dumping anywhere between zero and twenty five or thirty percent. So according to the legal process, there had to be a preliminary finding which was done by the bureaucrats. And the bureaucrats determined that there was a preliminary finding of dumping of about fifteen percent.

At this time Governor Lucey was the Ambassador, President Carter was in the White House and a Herbert Kahn was the anti-inflation czar. The tomato dispute and its conclusion were important in that it taught me a very interesting lesson about trade policy and politics. The case finally came down to a final determination: will dumping be found or not? The determination reached the highest levels of the White House and the case became at least partially domestic and political in addition to an international trade issue.

I remember I went and briefed the NSC and I was in meetings day after day with Commerce and Agriculture. Which of the formulas was the correct one and how and when should it be used? (The difference in formulas involved different production costs, financing channels and costs, shelf life of goods subject to spoilage (perishability), shipping times, etc., all of which were treated only vaguely or not at all under the dumping regulations, but all of which could be interpreted or construed as unfair trade practices.)

Just two or three days before the determination had to be published (in fact, the determination was already written but without specific numbers as to the level and possible duties), Ambassador Lucey came up to Washington. We went to a

meeting with Mr. Kahn, the inflation czar, and then Lucey went to meet with President Carter. One afternoon late, Ambassador Lucey telephoned the Desk. He told us there would be no finding of dumping, giving me the formula that was to be used. Anti-dumping duties would have increased tomato prices to US consumers, and that would increased the already high inflation rates in the US, thus harming the US consumer. And that's how that trade dispute was solved in favor of the US consumer and in this case also in favor of the interests of Mexican tomato growers.

I think that last fact probably illustrated one of the things I learned during my period as Deputy Director. I learned a great deal about how Washington really operates. State had relationships with all the other agencies, especially US Customs, INS, DEA [Drug Enforcement Agency], Treasury, Commerce, Agriculture, the NSC, the Labor Department, etc. I also learned there should be a close relationship between the Department at the Desk level and academia. Academia can provide background information, precedents, and expertise, although they are usually woefully behind the times. That is what they like to get from the US Government, up-to-date information.
I also learned that the Desk should really be the key spot in the State Department for a country, the spot through which everything should be filtered. No decisions are made definitively on the Desk nor are policies ultimately decided upon, but it must be a primary input into policy making. A good Desk officer should have his hands on every issue and in every pie. He should spend much of his time outside the State Department, relating to local and domestic interests involving his or her country, as well as constantly talking to the Hill, to the media, and to academia.

Q: To what degree did Mexican-Americans try to exert pressure? Were they an effective lobby group or not?

PASTORINO: They tried to a great extent but they were not very effective. With regard to the Mexican Embassy, in those days they thought they should only talk to the Secretary of State and the President. They did not deal with Congress, partially because the Mexican Congress was a rubber stamp. They certainly did not want the U.S. Embassy dealing with any Mexican interest group except the Foreign Ministry in Mexico. So they did not want to be seen in the US as dealing with anyone but the State Department and the While House.

Some pressure was brought by Mexican-American groups like LULAC, which is still in existence, and MALDEF, as well as local Mexican-American office holders. The year the Mexican Coordinator position existed, Krueger and the Office attracted these people in great numbers. Actually, that was part of his job, to be in contact with these people. Most of these groups voted heavily Democratic.

However, it was also true that Mexican-Americans historically have not voted in large numbers. Mexicans didn't become citizens readily. Even when they did, they

didn't vote. So they could not bring as much electoral power to bear as they might have. Krueger, as a Congressman, probably had very few Mexican-American voters in his district. Of course, there were a few powerful Mexican-American Congressmen or those who represented districts with lots of voters, who had real influence in the Congress and in the White House, Kiki de la Garza being one of them. He was extremely effective in taking care of the concerns of his constituents, many of those concerns involving US-Mexican relations. Another was Alberto Bustamante of Texas.

So there was some pressure but it was not very effective. But the pressures were something I thought we should be cognizant of, and respond to. They should not be ignored. And, I wanted to know everything there was to know about Mexican-American relations. I wanted to be as knowledgeable as possible; I thought it was my job. These interest groups could tell you what was going on, especially on the border. You had to take into consideration what they were saying and they often provided information that no one else could or would provide.

Q: Ok, anything else you want to say about the assignment as Deputy Director for Mexican Affairs.

PASTORINO: Only that I once helped Ambassador Krueger teach President Carter how to give and receive an *abrazo,* a big Mexican hug. Carter was going to Mexico for a meeting with Lopez Portillo and Mexican protocol ordained a big, public *abrazo*. Some around President Carter were worried about how that would look on US television, being hugged by another man. In the actual situation, President Carter pulled it off expertly and I never heard of any backlash. I only mention this to illustrate the number of diverse things I did on the Desk. Another was to greet and welcome to Washington the new Mexican Ambassador at that time, Don Bernardo Sepulveda (of whom we will hear much more later in the narrative). Finally, I spent one whole Sunday afternoon trying to convince Kennedy Airport to allow the flaky Mrs. Lopez Portillo's car on to the tarmac so she could carry her New York shopping and poodle back to the Mexican Presidential plane.

ECONOMIC/BUSINESS BUREAU (EB): INDUSTRIAL AND STRATEGIC MATERIALS (ISM)

Q: You went on from that assignment to the EB bureau, Economic and Business Affairs. What did you do over there?

PASTORINO: I went as the Director of ISM (Industrial and Strategic Materials) and as a negotiator in the commodities agreement area. I worked for Assistant Secretary Mike Callangart, a long-time FSO named Joe O'Mahoney, and a political appointee brought into EB. There were nine FSO's in ISM, and three clerical personnel. I had an expert Deputy, David Wilson, and ISM was responsible for access to such strategic materials such as titanium, manganese, molybdenum, tin, tungsten and others, as well as materials such as gold, silver,

copper, platinum, ferro alloys, etc., in addition to some others such as tropical timber, and most importantly, natural rubber.

ISM was part of EB in State, but I spent much of my time dealing with other USG agencies, especially the US Trade Representative, Commerce Department, and the Bureau of Mines. Basically, the US attempted to gain access to strategic materials and important products through international commodity agreements, as well as to provide appropriate support for private US purchasers. In addition, I had a role in managing the US Government stockpile of strategic materials, and I directed the State Department Mining Attaché Program, supervising and directing the work of those Attachés overseas in Embassies in about 12 key minerals producing countries, such as South Africa, Russia, Peru, Mexico, Brazil, China, Malaysia, Indonesia, and several others.

Q: There was a very famous woman there in EB, who was she?

PASTORINO: Francis Wilson. She was gone by the time I got to EB but she had been famous for discovering young officers, offering them jobs in EB, and then promoting their careers as long as they remained in economic or financial assignments. I was in the economic cone and I had never worked in EB. I looked for that assignment in EB because I wanted to have EB experience at that time in my career. At that time in 1984, I didn't really foresee that I would reach Ambassadorial level. What I was striving for was the position of Economic Counselor in a large Embassy. Economics was always a great interest of mine and I wanted to work in that area.

Part of my job was to supervise the section of nine people, as I noted above. Our people were the negotiators on behalf of the State Department for a whole series of commodities including tropical timber, coffee, tea, natural rubber and several others which were already subject to international commodity agreements, or in the process of becoming so.

ISM was the State Department representative at the commodity agreement meetings, and on some of the commodity organizations. When there were meetings of the Coffee Council or the International Natural Rubber Organization (INRO) General Council in Kuala Lumpur, my staff and I made Department policy inputs and then attended the meetings. The State Department input was usually into an inter-Agency Group headed by the US Trade Representative (USTR), which included Commerce, Labor, Agriculture, and others. Commerce and Agriculture would provide technical inputs about production, marketing information, international market conditions, etc. The State input involved the possible impact of policy internationally, either in a global context or in a country specific bilateral context. USTR was usually the arbiter and headed the delegations.

At this time, EB was already becoming clearly less and less influential on these

issues because Commerce had all the technical information and all of the people, and Commerce was responding directly to US interests, such as Firestone and Goodyear, or the plywood importers, or Hills Brothers Coffee Company of San Francisco. And, USTR was organizationally the President's negotiator for trade issues, and commodities were an important trade issue, and USTR was an appendage of the White House, similar to the National Security Council. So in most of the commodities agreements, USTR was the head of the delegation; Commerce provided the technical input, and State provided the political input. I have provided some of this detail to set the context because much of my two years as a commodities negotiator was taken up with inter-agency squabbles.

I again learned a lot about how the inter-agency process works. USTR wanted to be the czar but sometimes their people were not competent enough to even know the issues. They were not at times powerful enough to dictate to the other agencies. So, the policy process became a free for all at times.

I have lots of stories about bureaucratic in-fighting and most of them are sad stories. I spent many an hour shuttling from hotel room to hotel room in Kuala Lumpur at INRO meetings to resolve policy or bureaucratic disputes between Commerce and USTR, for instance. Sometimes the issues involved the specific price which should be advocated for rubber, a legitimate exercise, but many times it was over which delegation member should speak, what should he say, or even why wouldn't our delegation members talk to one another. This was my form of Kissinger's shuttle diplomacy. I earned my money on some of those days in which the dialogue between the agencies might go as follows: "I should speak on this issue; I am the head of delegation." "No, you don't know the facts of rubber and the pricing mechanism, and it is very sensitive and a misstatement could screw up an agreement I have negotiated". "You shouldn't be out there negotiating agreements, after all I'm the head of delegation". "Maybe, but Goodyear and Firestone want me to speak, they have confidence in me, I went to their plantation." "Well, but I represent USTR and the President." And it would go on and on.

Q. But did the United States in those days, I mean how much were we dealing with essentially products and commodities of which we were the principal consumers? Did we call the shots worldwide in these negotiations or did we really have to negotiate it?

PASTORINO: We couldn't and didn't call the shots. We negotiated. It often came down to competition between consumers and producers; or between the producers themselves, or the consumers themselves. In almost all cases, we were not the only consumer.

First, we were dealing with all types of products, some of which I mentioned above. Some were important for strategic and military reasons, while others were important to the US as consumer items, for which we should try to get the best

deal for US citizens, holding down costs and maintaining quality, getting a timely supply, and avoiding market disruptions. For some of the products there were not feasible or cheap artificial substitutes.

Secondly, it was US Government policy that we should utilize commodity agreements where possible to achieve our legitimate economic and commercial goals; that managing the market through commodity agreements or bilateral negotiations was a legitimate way to participate in the market. It was certainly better than having to revert to force, or be faced with long gas lines, or not have materials needed for strategic uses.

Through the management of the market we wanted to get the best we could for our consumers. Many of these agreements and their organizations broke down into two opposing groups, although not necessarily unfriendly groups since both sides could benefit from market management: the consumer group meaning us, the Europeans and the Japanese; and the producer group, which unfortunately was usually made up of the primary producers of commodities, which were often the developing countries. This last fact tended to move the debate into international North-South issues of development, political exploitation, capitalism, etc. Each group would manage itself through often interminable caucuses, both during and before the meetings.

For instance, when our delegation would go to Kuala Lumpur, we would probably go by way of Japan or Hong Kong so that we could check with other members of the consumer caucus, or the Europeans would meet somewhere before arriving in Malaysia. At the same time, the Malaysians would be meeting in Indonesia or Thailand to determine producer positions. We of course would also visit the producer countries to get a feel for their positions. So the INRO plenary meetings often came down to tremendous battles: first world versus third world; consumers versus producers; Europe versus the US. In almost every case, the essential issues involved how best to help our consumers without upsetting political relations too much with Malaysia and Thailand, or some other producers, such as Bolivia in tin, or the Central Americans in coffee, or South Africa on strategic materials.

We were also interested in providing for the economic development of the producing countries. At that time, Thailand and Malaysia were still becoming the Tigers they became and primary products were still important to them. The same goes for Indonesia. But, we wanted to make sure that commodities policy reflected the interests of the consumers of the US as much as possible; that we achieved US interests first and foremost, and that's fair, that's legitimate. I was not being paid by rubber growers in Malaysia or some Bolivian tin magnet. I was being paid by the taxes of tire producers and consumers in the United States. And let’s not kid ourselves, the producers often knew very well what they were doing. They were frequently very good negotiators.

It is true that most commodity agreements have been proven not to work very

well. Countries were not willing to put up money or the raw materials to create buffer stocks which could help to stabilize prices or supplies during disruptive cycles. Without well organized, strong agreements, as we saw ultimately in the case of OPEC, the consumer is usually the stronger party and almost always wins ultimately, even if it takes a few years. The consumers usually have the money and financial resources. We must never forget that a country can produce all the product it wants, but if no one will buy it, what will they do with it? Usually their own market is too small or to under-developed to absorb much of it. Yes, OPEC won for a few years, until the consuming countries began to find their own sources of oil in Mexico, Canada, Norway, all non-members of OPEC. Or, the consumer develops new or synthetic products and the original raw materials go wanting. That is the way the modern global economy works.

Q: I just have to interrupt to tell you one story. I don't know anything about commodities but I was at one time Director for East Africa when Coca-Cola switched it's formula to New Coke, which didn't use vanilla. The entire economy of Madagascar was about to go down the tubes because Coke was the largest consumer of vanilla in the world. So these things do have an impact on the local economy.

PASTORINO: Yes, a tremendous impact. In my case, back to rubber; for Thailand, Malaysia and Indonesia, rubber was at that time a major export, like some of the OPEC countries, where oil was their only export. But in the long run, in the case of oil, we conserved oil, and we found new oil. In the case of rubber, we did have synthetics. Synthetic rubber made from oil based products will replace natural rubber today in almost every use, although jet pilots landing on carriers will argue that point. Even in those days it replaced almost everything, depending, and I repeat, depending on its price and availability. In the short run the producing countries had a strong position, especially when oil prices were high because that increased greatly the price of synthetics, making natural based rubber products the cheaper alternative. In the longer run, they were in a weaker position.

Another issue: in those days, there were still the tremendous economic development issues between the third world and the industrialized world. The developing countries were continually alleging exploitation and demanding higher prices, purchase guarantees, etc. Many of them were state-managed economies and very inefficient, and they believed the industrialized countries were not only to blame for their problems but were responsible for fixing them, no matter what the cost. On the commodity issue, many third world countries advocated commodity agreements as long as they managed them to provide for the highest prices.

The INRO, on the other hand, actually worked quite well for a while because the consumer countries put up three or four hundred million dollars to buy rubber and take it off the market when the price was low. That jacked the price up. Then we

paid to store it. Storing rubber costs money. You don't just throw it out in the empty lot. You've got to keep it covered and keep the water out, etc. I became fairly expert on all aspects of the rubber industry and trade.

The producing countries agreed that INRO would then sell rubber from the stocks when the price got too high. That reduced the price to Goodyear and Firestone and all other consumers. The INRO developed and agreed to a formula about buying and selling rubber when and at what price. It was a formula at which at "x" price, when the price of rubber was too low for all the countries, INRO would buy rubber to take it off the market. The price then rises. At "z", the price becomes too high for the consumers, so INRO sells some rubber until the price goes back to "y". Establishing "y" was of course the tough problem, the crux of the successful agreement. One has to take into consideration producer costs, substitutes for rubber and their price, the grade of the latex, storage costs, financing and credit costs, and many other variables. That was the technical battle. The real battle was that the consumer wanted the lower price and the producers wanted the higher price.

Q: But wasn't the issue again, the consumers in the case of corporations wanted some stability in the market and they were willing to trade off in theory of how this is supposed to work?

PASTORINO: Both sides wanted stability. And the consumers are not only the corporations like Goodyear; we the people who buy tires everyday are the ultimate consumers. And, some of those US consumers also owned stock in those corporations. The producers wanted stability because rubber trees take seven or eight years to mature and produce. You've invested large amounts for six or seven years of no return. You need the demand and the market seven years from now, if you plant today; you have to replant also with some degree of confidence because the trees do die after twenty years. So there were a tremendous amount of converging trends not only in the rubber industry, which made these agreements important. Non-rubber sector trends could affect the market.

Q: Let's take a commodity like rubber, which was terribly important to an economy like Malaysia. To what degree did the State Department's political role become paramount or terribly important because we were looking at strategic relationships in South Asia and those other kinds of issues.

PASTORINO: To a considerable extent, but it was always a battle to bring the political considerations into the policy debate. The State Department voice was always heard. I often went to see Malaysian PM Mahathir’s staff alone, not as a part of a delegation, but rather as a State Department person to determine possible effects on the relationship between the US and Malaysia. At that time I would go with the American Ambassador for instance. So we did take possible political impacts into consideration. I would then bring that information to the inter-agency meetings or to the delegation level in Kuala Lumpur [KL]. Political

considerations might affect the election of INRO officials, as well as price levels and storage policy, for instance. The Commerce Department would get perturbed at the State Department, usually stating that State was advocating a policy that was totally illogical or even counterproductive from the point of view of affecting the rubber market, or worse was taking Malaysia's side on the issue.

Q: You were also seen by virtue of the function as being the Malaysia's advocate.

PASTORINO: Some in the State Department and the rest of the Government may have seen me as a Malaysian advocate, although it obviously depended upon the context of the issue. Most of the State Department understood the aspect of the bilateral relations. Actually, there were times when our interests were similar on the technical issues. Many times there was not really any politics involved. And I certainly wasn't seen as their advocate by the Malaysians. I hope that they respected me for listening and taking into consideration their interests, but it was always clear whose side I was on. Plus, Mahatir himself is a very difficult person; in fact, an impossible person. He has delusions of grandeur, and was quick to blame the US and the United Kingdom [UK] for all of his problems.

During the second year of the assignment, I was elected as President of the Council of the International Rubber Organization. During the first year, I was a member of the US delegation and our delegate to the Administrative Committee, which normally dealt with personnel, and with financing and budget issues within the INRO organization headquartered in Kuala Lumpur. We would meet every quarter in KL and my primary task was to attend the Administration Committee meetings. I also had a major role in Washington making sure the US paid its annual dues, and more importantly, increased contributions to the buffer stock financial fund, if the Council decided new contributions were required. All in all, as I remember it, the INRO was a fairly, well managed organization, not a money waster like the UN.

As President of the Council, my task was to chair and run both the semi-annual and the frequent special meetings of the Council, which were called to establish the international rubber policy. These meeting also supervised the Executive Office of the INRO in KL, and decided everything else of a policy nature to make the INRO operate.

It was an accident that I was elected, and in fact I did not campaign for the job. It was the furthest thing from my mind, especially since it involved so many frequent trips to Kuala Lumpur, a trip of 18 hours with at least two stops. I seemed never to get over jet lag. And, KL has very few redeeming values as a place to spend two weeks every two or three months. Luckily, we could visit other parts of Malaysia, or Singapore.

Traditionally, the President of the Council would represent one group (consumers or producers), and the Vice-President of the Council the other group, with the

Vice President slated to move up. During my first year, Mr Almaguer of Indonesia, a fine gentleman, was the President, and the delegate from Japan was the VP. So there was no question that after one year the Japanese diplomat would take over as President; it was as simple as that. He was unopposed among the consumer caucus; in fact, he was our candidate. Very surprisingly, he told the caucus at the beginning of the Council session which was to elect the new officers, that he could not stand for election. Japan did not want the position, which often became entangled between consumers and producers, because they did not want to jeopardize their relations with the producer countries.

The announcement threw the consumers into a tizzy; the worst of all outcomes would be to have no candidate and defer to the producers. A logical candidate, the representative of Europe, a Belgian who was one of the world's experts on rubber, was disliked by the producers, who stated their concern that he would be disruptive. I was not the logical US candidate since I was the junior member of our delegation, but the producers and consumers finally decided that a diplomat, even if he was from the US, would be the lesser of evils. And, most of the Government officials, and INRO delegates, knew me from my activity. Thus, in a late night session, I was unanimously elected as INRO President for the one-year term, subject of course, to Washington approval. I requested that approval by telegram and it was granted the next morning.

Being the President of an International Organization was a wonderful experience in diplomacy; it was more than analysis and policy formulation, it was action. There was ample opportunity to bring Council members together during the two to three week Council sessions in order to form a consensus on the major policy issues. I also had a major role in dealing with the staff of the INRO in Kuala Lumpur, whenever there was a session. And, as President, all countries wanted to consult before and during the meetings, in order to influence my decision making. I always thought of myself as still a member of the US delegation, but with the extra responsibility of pushing towards a consensus. Of course, my own delegation always had a specific policy they wanted approved and made sure I didn't forget it. I obviously knew the policy, because I had had a major role in developing it in Washington.

I remember that most of the Council sessions went smoothly with issues resolved amicably and to the relative satisfaction of all parties. This was mostly because it was an organization with goodwill and a genuine common need to find solutions, after getting past the politics. However, my last session as Council President is interesting and enlightening in illustrating what a US delegate might have to do as head of an international entity. The major agenda issue was to decide on whether to propose a special session to review and re-negotiate the basic INRO Agreement. The decision had to be made at that session in order to leave negotiating time before the Agreement expired. Everyone agreed the special session should be held and there was unanimity that the Agreement would be continued, possibly with some minor changes.

As at many of this type of meeting, the decision on calling for the special negotiating session was the last item on the agenda, which gave ample time for discussion, politics, mischief and a thousand ideas about adding positions and policies to the simple agreement to call for the special session. None of this surprised me but on the last day of the two week regular meeting in KL, a Friday, it became clear that, while the special session item would pass, it would be a long, contentious discussion before it was finally approved and we could all go home. I resolved early on Friday morning to be patient and to listen to every delegation at the plenary session, and to permit discussion of collateral points. As the day moved on, the Council was far from finishing its discussion, and the pontificating went on from all sides. We broke for lunch and then for dinner, and upon returning from dinner, I announced that there would be no recess that night because, as Chair, I thought we could reach the approval without breaking up.

As midnight passed, the session was still proceeding. I refused to allow a recess; delegates went out and took naps, leaving at least one member of their delegation to remain at the session. When I was beginning to become discouraged and consider the possibility of the session going on to Monday, complicating even further a simple matter, I found out that most of the delegates had airline tickets to leave early Saturday afternoon. Only the Malaysians had no travel commitments. With this information in hand, I kept the session going all through the night. Sure enough, the Council reached the nice simple, clean agreement to schedule the negotiating session for two months hence. Everyone made their plane, and I received credit for chairing the longest running session ever of the INRO - more than 24 hours without a break.

I would mention one other point about this assignment. As head of ISM, I was responsible for supervision of the Mining Attaché program overseas. This put me into constant contact with other agencies of the US Government such as the Bureau of Mines in the Interior Department, and the US Stockpile Commission, which was comprised of the major US agencies, including the Defense Department. In supervising the program, my office was responsible for providing guidance on reporting and analysis to the Embassies overseas, training and selection of the Attaches for the overseas assignments, and a large inter-Agency policy role. As part of the training, I spent a wonderful week at the Colorado School of Mines in Golden, Colorado. I studied during the summer with some of the Attachés from overseas and with many of the regular students to learn geology, mineral processing, smelting, assaying, exploration techniques, environmental protection, etc. The highlight was spending time in one of the deep Colorado coal mines, learning real mining techniques, including operating the jackhammer and setting the dynamite charges. To this day when I see a mine, it is still a thrill.

Q: Did you enjoy being in Washington? Were you seeking a job overseas? Did you want to go overseas? Where did you prefer living, overseas or in Washington?

PASTORINO: I preferred living overseas but my family preferred living in Washington. During this latest five year period in Washington, we bought our first house. Fran did a lot of research, looked at innumerable models and existing homes and finally suggested we buy a Ryan house in Fairfax, Virginia, just across the street from Woodson High School. It was a semi-prefabricated, four bedroom home which was built on a lot not far from a lake and the development's tennis courts. It was a great thrill seeing the Ryan company bring the house on one or two trucks and then seeing the foundation poured and the house assembled, all in about three weeks. It was a good location, given the ready access to the Washington Metro, which I took to work. We were living in our own home for the first time. I came from a family whose greatest ambition after education was to own their own house.

The three kids went to great schools there in Fairfax. At that time, two of them were teenagers so they enjoyed being in the States. I did not enjoy working in the State Department dealing almost constantly with other Americans as much as I enjoyed working overseas, dealing with foreigners and other cultures. But, we were not unhappy in Washington, far from it.

AMERICAN EMBASSY MEXICO CITY: ECONOMIC, POLITICAL COUNSELOR

Q: Your next assignment was in Mexico City?

PASTORINO: One night over the dinner table in Fairfax, I received a phone call from Ambassador Gavin, asking whether I would like the assignment as Economic Counselor in Mexico City. Actually, being Gavin's style, I remember he told me the air tickets were on the way and he was anxious that I arrive. I said to Fran immediately: "let's go". I was a little tired of the commodities assignment, of the in-fighting, and the daily lessening influence of EB. It did not have strong leadership and lacked resources.

Q: How long did it take your teenage kids to start talking to you again after they learned they were going to Mexico. They must have been pretty unhappy.

PASTORINO: Well. I don't remember any traumatic scenes, Fran might, but I remember there was some unhappiness. Fran agreed to go and she was great at managing the family. We told the children that we were lucky that we were moving during the summer after the school ended; that they wouldn't suffer educationally, that they would be going to a good school; that they would live in a big house; and that they would have some friends who they had known in Washington.

As in most of these personal decisions, it was great to have such a supportive family who all sooner or later understood the need for such a decision. And above

all, Fran was there to manage this part of the family life. Actually, in case I forget to say it later, none of the children expressed a likeness for overseas life while they lived it; in fact it was usually the opposite. But it is unanimous now among them that the overseas life was good for them, and they have mostly fond memories.

The third time we went overseas one of my kids didn't go with us; Shannon was in college.

Q: Mexico was not considered a hardship post?

PASTORINO: No it wasn't. For me it was like going home. I had already served in Mexico, I'd been on the Mexican Desk; I knew everyone in the Embassy, I knew how the Embassy worked and I knew the issues. And, I knew Ambassador Gavin.
Q: It didn't hurt that Gavin had asked you to come down?

PASTORINO: Gavin had asked for me. My friend Don Lyman was leaving and that situation had calmed down, although it would not have seriously affected me. It was a perfect assignment. The DCM, John Ferch, I knew very well. So it was good. I don't remember worrying about what anyone else, especially State Personnel, thought about it. I don't think it harmed my career.

Q: What was Mexico like in those days?

PASTORINO: Mexico was then ending the Lopez-Portillo Administration, and entering into the six year term (*sexenio*) of Miguel De La Madrid. It was still run totally by the PRI. It was still peaceful. The oil boom was on. It was growing in population at a tremendous rate, and the economy was booming. Mexico City was still the political, geographical, and cultural center of the country. Some people found it a difficult place to live then, and in certain aspects, traffic, noise, congestion, smog, it was; but today in 1999 it's far more difficult. During this second period of mine in Mexico, 1985/1986, Mexico City was still peaceful. It had smog but there was little crime. I rode all over the city in those little yellow VW cabs which are now off limits, according to the State Department. I walked the city day and night. It was a fascinating city for business, entertainment, history, archeology, social activity, sports. The World Cup was there in 1986.

As part of my job I traveled all over the country. I made speeches, Ambassador Gavin sending me out to speak frequently. The Ambassador and I actually had a bet who would see each one of the thirty-two states of Mexico first; I won the bet. Of course, US-Mexican relations were still difficult and had to be managed carefully. The issues were the same. Overall, it was a relatively easy assignment. It was a bit frustrating, knowing we were not going to have a major policy breakthrough with the Mexicans. I felt comfortable in that I knew what I was doing in all policy areas, probably better than almost anyone else in the Embassy,

given my long experience on Mexico. The only untoward thing was the earthquake.

Q: Tell me about that, where were you when it struck?

PASTORINO: I was in the Embassy in my office at 7:30 AM in the morning. I was one of the few people in the building. The marine guards of course were there. The building shook like hell. Since I'd gone through earthquakes in San Francisco, and the big one in Caracas in our first assignment, I wasn't scared or nervous. It shook for thirty or forty seconds. I let it shake (what else could I do) and when it stopped I decided to leave the building, have a cup of coffee for twenty minutes, and then go back to work. I took the stairs down to the lobby, and went across the street to the Sheraton Hotel. I didn't notice any great panic and couldn't see any damaged buildings on that block.

I went back inside the Embassy and upstairs to my fourth floor office after the twenty minutes like I had planned. But then I began to see the destruction from the windows and we began to get reports that parts of the city had been seriously damaged, with many major buildings downed. I was lucky in that the phones were still working and I called home and found that my family and the house were unharmed. The phone system failed almost completely shortly thereafter.

It turned out I was in charge of the Embassy. Ambassador Gavin was on his way to Europe on vacation and Deputy Chief of Mission Morris Busby was in Northern Mexico on fisheries negotiations. They had left me in charge of the Mission but Washington didn't know that.

Anyway, I came back into the Embassy at about eight o'clock. The security officer came in. Together we walked throughout the building, inspecting it for damage. The Embassy didn't open until nine o'clock so there was nobody there. We ascertained quickly that there was no damage. The Embassy in built on a set of floating water tanks, which sit on the mushy, old lake bottom. It was built and designed by Mexican architects and there was really no damage. The only thing we found was one slight crack on the back stairway, and we weren't sure it hadn't been there before the quake. We went down to the sub-basement to where the tanks are and we went on the roof which held all the communications gear. There was a little shed to cover some of the more sensitive equipment and everything looked perfect. So, we opened the Embassy.

I had been officially appointed by the DCM when he left, to be in charge. The Ambassador was to get on a plane that morning in Washington to go to Europe on his home leave. So the DCM/ Charge officially appointed me. The Administrative Counselor, Doug Watson, a tremendous help and calming influence, came in at 9:00AM and we had to decide what to do.

The first thing, the highest priority, was to determine that all of the Embassy

people were safe, that all official American personnel were safe. The Embassy had a telephone network, in which everyone calls everyone else in a certain order. We hurried through the calling because we knew the phone system in Mexico City was progressively failing as the central exchanges were literally falling down. Ultimately, most of the exchanges were badly damaged or destroyed. But early that morning, some lines were still open.

I got on the phone about 10:00 AM, when we found out everyone was okay, and tried to call Washington and tell the State Department that the American and Mexican Embassy personnel were unharmed. That took some doing because I couldn't get through readily. Finally, after some trying, some genius in our Communications section patched me through to Washington through Louisiana, and Atlanta. I told the State Department Operations Center that I was speaking on behalf of the Charge and that the American staff was fine. I asked them to please alert all of our families that we were okay, because phone communications from Mexico City would be problematical. I then assured the American staff, all of whom had come to work, that their families were being informed and we shouldn't be tying up the few Embassy lines that might still be operative. I really caught hell for that from the staff later because the Department neglected to tell anyone or inform our families. Even my own sister and aged father in San Francisco weren't sure of our condition for two days. At that time, all the lines went dead.

Within the next couple hours, we made sure the local Mexican staff was ok. Most of them came in to the Embassy to work. I was amazed. Some of them came from homes that were damaged. As far as we knew, no staff person's home or structure collapsed and no staff person was hurt badly.

Doug Watson suggested that I call everyone together at about eleven o'clock in the big, Embassy central patio. To this day, Embassy people remember that event and the talk I gave. To this day I can't remember a word I said. But, people said I calmly addressed the group, telling them what had happened as best we could determine. Some people said later that I was too calm and didn't appear very sympathetic. Maybe that was because I had been through many earthquakes before, including one just as serious. I told the Mexican employees they could return home, if they thought it was necessary. I told them we would need them in the Embassy, but their personal considerations were clearly more important.

Most Mexicans actually stayed to work that day. Many stayed till midnight, and for long hours on the days thereafter. Only one American staffer refused to come in. A sad commentary. We found out later, he had spent the day at the Ambassador's residence at the swimming pool. I couldn't do anything about it even when I found out because he was a special appointee of the Ambassador. Anyway, what was so starkly true was that of the hundred and fifty Americans, one hundred and forty nine came to work.

Q: When did you know how bad the earthquake was? Could you see damage?
PASTORINO: At this time, early in the morning, people were coming into the Embassy and telling us. Then I went onto the roof and I could see buildings collapsed within two or three blocks. I really got my appreciation for the damage at eleven o'clock that night. I went to the airport to meet the Charge d'Affaires, Morris Busby, who was returning from Northern Mexico. Then I went back to the airport at three AM to meet Ambassador Gavin.

I took advantage to ask the chauffeur to go through various neighborhoods where we heard there was great damage. The most vivid memories of that night were of the Mexican people digging frantically in the piles of rubble, with no lights, no electricity, and no help from the government. The digging went on amid continuing screams from within the fallen buildings. They were digging with their hands, or small shovels, but with no heavy equipment, by the light of automobile headlights. Soup kitchens were set up by the people to keep the diggers working. A lot of people were saved that night by the digging, survivors being dug out minute by minute. Then I took Gavin through some of these neighborhoods. I think we actually got out in several places. It was the only time no one paid much attention to the American Ambassador. They were busy digging; it was dark. Gavin, who is very compassionate about these things, really felt the tragedy. It turned out later that one of his close friends, Placido Domingo, lost some his family in a collapse of a twenty five story building. He and Connie Gavin did a tremendous amount of fund-raising and charity work then and later in helping the victims.

So that morning of the quake, we determined that everyone was fine; the building was Okay. Then about noon, I left the Embassy to go find the Mexican Foreign Minister and tell them that we were okay and we're ready to help.

I found Bernardo Sepulveda, whom I had known when I was on the Mexican Desk and he was the Mexican Ambassador in Washington. I found him sitting in the front of the beautiful, renowned Foreign Ministry Building in Tlatelolco; it had been badly damaged and evacuated. I told him the US Embassy and it personnel we're okay, and ready to help. His words almost verbatim were: "Well, thank you. When we need help, we'll call you. We don't need help." Of course, he didn't fully realize the extent of the damage, but I think it was a knee-jerk Mexican reaction saying we don't need the help of the *gringos*.

Then, I couldn't contact Washington again for another four or five hours.

Q: You didn't have in those days a tac-sat phone?

PASTORINO: We did not. But we received right away, that same day, an offer from AT&T to send in a whole satellite telephone unit. In fact, it had plenty of extra lines for Mexican use. The Mexicans refused to let that unit enter for several days because of "technical" reasons; I think they were worried about control of

communications. Sporadically throughout the next few days, we got a hold of Washington. So I was never sure when I would be able to talk with them. Upon his return, Ambassador Gavin asked if I would remain in charge of several of the tasks that had to be carried out.

There wasn't a lot to do during the first day. We dealt with all the American citizens who came through and wanted to tell their families they were all right. Of course, we couldn't send any messages the first day; we had them write one sentence telegrams, which we promised to send to the State Department. We set up tables outside of the front of the Embassy on the Reforma.

Q: How many Americans were living in Mexico City?

PASTORINO: We probably had twenty five thousand resident Americans and many, many American tourists. It was autumn, September. So there was probably one hundred thousand tourists. And neither one of these figures probably counted Mexican-Americans or Mexicans that have family in the States. So I don't know exactly, but we had twenty five thousand officially registered. We had to take care of them. We had to worry about the American School, the American Hospital, and other American institutions. And we began to prepare cables about the situation. In the beginning we prepared sit-reps on an hourly basis. We weren't even sure they would be able to be sent the first couple of days.
Of course, the US television networks were telling the US about the situation, and as usual it was vastly overblown, probably unnecessarily scarring American with friends or relatives in Mexico City. I remember Dan Rather telling the world that Mexico City was completely destroyed. Of course, he wasn't there that first night, and was reporting the disaster based on pictures from a few neighborhoods.

As for me, I was frequently told that I remained fairly calm the whole time. The momentum carried me; there were things that had to be done. Every minute, people came into my office to ask about a myriad of subjects, both personal and professional. The Embassy had ten or twelve other physical facilities around the city. We had the Marines Residence, the Military Cemetery, the Defense Attaché's Office, our military people at the Mexican Defense University. We had dozens of calls and cables coming in from the Consulates, from all over Mexico.

We also have to remember that there was a major aftershock thirty six hours later, about seven o'clock at night the next day. I stayed in the Embassy the day and night of the first quake until about 4:00 AM. I think I went home at 4:00AM and came back at 6:00 AM. I didn't think that was very strange. I don't remember feeling sorry for myself. It was my job.

So I was in the Embassy the next night at six or seven o'clock when the major aftershock came. That one wiped out much of the remaining communications and then collapsed many buildings that had been severely damaged the day before. The aftershock was almost as strong as the original quake and may have done

even more damage outside of the City than the original shock had done.

What the aftershock did was make many people really panic. A lot of people hadn't panicked the first day; the aftershock though brought many to the edge of desperation. What could one do to stop the quakes? It did more damage to some of the Embassy's residences, fortunately, not mine. I remember the back wall of my secretary's apartment just fell out into the back yard. If she wanted to go to sleep it would have been in view of the elements. This created a wonderful story that Mary D'Adam was living with her boss; in actuality she came to live with me and my family for three weeks and I could tell the whole world that I was living with my secretary.

That second night I was in the Embassy until one or two in the morning. But I was more at ease because Ambassador Gavin and Busby were both back. I think that on the second day shipments were already beginning to come in from the States. The airport runways were thought to be damaged on the first day. The control tower operation was down so the airport was closed. By the second day I think it could take airplanes because the runways were indeed not damaged. As you know, Mexico City airport is very close to the downtown, and thus very close to much of the damage. In fact, some of the neighborhoods close to it were badly damaged.

Americans are very generous and they immediately began to collect and provide goods to load up airplanes. Usually it was items that were needed, but sometimes Americans rush to clean out their basements and send whatever is available, and then they feel good and take a tax break. Most of the items were legitimately needed, although during the first few days even the Mexicans didn't really understand the extent of the damage and what was needed for relief. As grand and as wonderful most Mexicans were during those first few days, digging in the rubble, supplying food and water, taking people in, etc., some in Mexican customs reverted to form. They were holding some relief shipments because they wanted the *mordida*, the payoff. I think it was on day three that Ambassador Gavin sent me to the airport to see if we could get certain goods released. I don't think I succeeded and he had to go to the Foreign Secretary, and finally to President de la Madrid. On the other hand, on one of the first days, I called a Congressman in Los Angeles and asked him not to send a plane load of supplies, because they were not things that were needed.

What was especially needed was machinery to cut through the concrete reinforcing rods, oxygen, the sniffer dogs to search for survivors, tents, heavy machinery to move some of the rubble, lighting systems, and communications gear. One of the things that was most important were inflatable bladders for water. The water system was destroyed in much of the City. This is a City and urban area of twenty million people in the valley, of which seven or eight million people were directly affected by the loss of services; the loss of electricity, water, sewage facilities, all of which began to cause disease problems. Problems were

compounded because the Government disaster relief office was destroyed and several of the largest hospitals collapsed during the first day, including the Juarez General Hospital where I went with the Ambassador three days later while they were still rescuing survivors, although each hour the number of corpses rose and survivors dropped. The deaths were so numerous that they had to use the baseball stadium as an outdoor morgue. They needed that much space to lay out the corpses.

Q: How many Americans were killed, do you know?

PASTORINO: No official Americans and just a few American citizens. The number of Mexicans who perished is still controversial and probably will never be know for certain. I believe it was thirty or forty thousand. Ambassador Gavin was taken up in a helicopter the day after the quake to survey the damage in order to get a sense of the assistance that would be needed. He landed and said to the press that he thought there might be more than twenty thousand deaths. To this day, the Mexicans say it was less than 20,000. They were perturbed at the Ambassador's estimate for some reason, but I am convinced the real total was closer to his estimate. Of course, the Mexicans refused to accept his figure.

I remember many stories about heroism during those next few days. One is of two American Embassy officials who attempted to save lives of people caught in downed buildings. A DEA official and a Foreign Service Officer happened to be downtown in a hotel for a breakfast meeting when the quake struck. These two guys heard screams and dove in to the flooded basement waters of the severely damaged hotel trying to save drowning hotel guests. There were American guests at this hotel and one of the officials actually pulled out bodies.

I also remember some cases where overwork and exhaustion caused Embassy people to almost crack. Many worked most of the first 72 hours straight, either in the Embassy or outside. One threatened to jump off the balcony because of some issue. We convinced him not to; another small task accomplished. But for the most part, American government officials acted with great courage. But, the greatest credit goes to the thousands of Mexicans that dug those first few days, saving hundreds of people.

The next ten days sort of run together. We made contact with the Government and began to deliver the required assistance. We worked to get it distributed to the right places. We were constantly working on crises in trying to get one or another type of equipment. One night at eleven o'clock I went to a meeting of the dog team handlers. The French handlers, the Americans, and several other groups couldn't decide which dogs should go to which piles to seek survivors. There was actually a rivalry, even thought there was plenty of rubble to go around. So I had to try and mediate.

Then, I'll never forget, one of the American dogs escaped. Because of the type of

work and the rubble, the dogs could only work at sniffing for about two hours or something like that. Well, one of the American dogs escaped from the Embassy pen. Of course, these dogs, each and every one of them, were invaluable given their talents and extensive training and we had ten people out looking for this dog. People said he was stolen or the Mexicans killed him. He just escaped and we found him.

I remember we let every American, tourist or resident, come to the Embassy and write a one page telegram. I remember doing up the format. You had one sentence. I am so-and-so and I'm ok. This is the address to send it to. We couldn't allow too much more detail because to the difficulty of transmission and the number of telegrams, and then we couldn't send them by the regular cable system because it was down. We had to put thousands of telegrams in a huge sack and have them carried to Laredo to be sent out from there. It was a Foreign Service Officer who had to load these sacks and take an airplane at night.

I remember there was a big deal when we brought down to Mexican City an American company to implode buildings. Some of these buildings were ready to fall down and they were dangerous. There was a huge controversy. "Here come the Americans to blow up our Mexican buildings". Would it work? We had to give the Mayor of Mexico City a video presentation of how the implosions were done in the US. Almost always no smoke, no dust, and every brick falls right where it's supposed to. But, we did worry that it wouldn't go right and we'd kill some Mexicans standing and gawking. The first implosions were the biggest event of the week. I remember helping develop a security plan of where to put the police lines to keep the people an appropriate distance away. The event was televised nationwide, and in those parts of Mexico City which had electricity. I am sure the implosions, which were successful, saved many lives. That was due to a tremendous effort on part of Embassy people to coordinate the activity, efforts which of course were invisible to the outside.

I remember going to the National Children's Hospital, which was badly damaged and partially collapsed. We put on masks for obvious reasons, this being the fourth day. There was a television crew on hand when the rescuers carried out two little babies, maybe four days old, who'd survived for four days. Part of the success of some of the rescues was due to a new development: a television micro-camera which could be slipped down into the rubble and could transmit back to the surface signs of life. I think the Mexico City disaster was one of the first uses of this technology.

Q: Let me interrupt because I get the sense here that throughout this whole conversation, the earthquake and the aftermath didn't do much to cement good Mexican-U.S. relations.
PASTORINO: Between the Governments it probably didn't. But the Mexican people recognized how much the Americans helped by sending assistance and helping in the reconstruction. Later, the American Chamber of Commerce of

Mexico City, led by John Bruton, collected large sums of money and rebuilt schools. I had the great honor to cut the ribbon at one project where I went with Henry Cisneros and Bob Krueger because San Antonio, where Cisneros was the Mayor, donated the money to rebuild a school.

Connie Gavin set up a foundation, very quickly, within a month, and collected money to bring kids that were badly maimed for re-constructive surgery in Los Angeles. That continued for five years. You could see the appreciation of the families of these children as they went to the airport to welcome their children back.

Q: How were U.S.-Mexican relations during that period? Again, what you are describing is pretty prickly.

PASTORINO: It was difficult. Ambassador Gavin had to go to De La Madrid on some issues in order that we could help effectively. And, even when Presidential orders were given, they were sometimes not followed, or could not be followed. As I noted above, the Navy Secretariat, which was in charge of disaster relief, was destroyed on the morning of the quake. Even if it had not been destroyed, it didn't have much equipment and expertise. A lot of countries don't plan for earthquake. Mexico certainly did not plan for earthquakes. I hear bad things about how San Francisco plans or doesn't plan for earthquakes. I later briefed the San Francisco emergency committee on the need for being prepared. Of course, this was a huge quake, and one in which no one would have been adequately prepared.

There were hundreds of Americans who went to Mexico to help: fire brigades, structural engineers, dog handlers, nurses, communications people, and disaster relief specialists of all kinds. AID sent many of them because it was in charge of our disaster relief at that time. Most of these people interacted with Mexican lower level government officials and with the Mexican population. Ambassador Gavin went to see Placido Domingo and his relatives for instance at a building that was destroyed so he could console surviving family members. I knew that many Embassy people took in Mexicans and donated things and sympathized. So, it may be that people to people relations were actually improved. Individual, private American were given awards by the Mexican Government. During the San Francisco earthquake in 1989 the Mexican Government responded immediately by offering to send some of the now well trained digging teams to help. Incredibly, the authorities were going to refuse until I told the Governor’s Office of the stupidity and gross insensitivity of a rejection.

Q: Beyond the earthquake, how were U.S.-Mexican relations at this time?

PASTORINO: They were still difficult. It was not yet the glory days of Carlos Salinas. De La Madrid was far less corrupt then Lopez-Portillo, was not a populist, and not an enemy of the US. But he was also trapped by the system and he could not radically change policy, as Salinas was to do later. De La Madrid

will become an almost forgotten Mexican President. He was not charismatic in the Mexican political sense and came across as very meek. It is true that he began some of the policies that were to free up the economy, reducing the overwhelming role of the State. Even the first steps of political opening domestically came from, the De La Madrid Administration, but all were very small steps, very tentative changes.

The Embassy's relations with De La Madrid were very good. He received Ambassador Gavin. We were beginning to talk about NAFTA at that time but it didn't progress. We did some small trade agreements, especially in the area of intellectual property rights. Trade went up; investments went up; the maquiladora program continued. We began to bug the Mexicans on human rights.

The people who were digging in the rubble after the earthquake soon became activist community groups who opposed and ignored the Government. They saw the government didn't help them after the earthquake so they tried to help themselves. They formed themselves into political interest groups, almost all outside the PRI, and tried to empower themselves. Most of them were quickly taken over, co-opted, by one group or another but they did have a taste of more power, at least for a short time. The PRI as a party was actually fairly slow in attracting these groups. The leftists took over most of them.. But the leftists couldn't carry these groups very far. They didn't have the resources.

These community groups did leave the legacy that the people could organize themselves, that it could be done, if only for brief moments. The feeling that if something were going to be done, this could be a model. Some of the opposition parties utilized these people. And, after the earthquake the US began to talk to some of these groups and to Mexico more about human rights, democracy and economic opening, etc.

Q: But U.S. policy during this period was relatively comfortable with the idea of Mexico as a one party state? Stability was our policy objective rather than democracy and whatever? How closely tied were we to the oligarchies around Mexico, group of a hundred whatever they're called in Monterey?

PASTORINO: First of all, the Embassy and the US Government was not closely tied either formally or informally with the oligarchies. Neither was the Mexican Government tied very closely to US policy; they certainly didn't follow our policy prescriptions very often. Sure they sold oil to the US but they needed the market and we needed the oil, and continuous, uninterrupted sales were in their interest. Those sales do not somehow mean control or pressure, as the conspiracy theorists like to imagine, always without any proof or evidence that can not be interpreted exactly the opposite from their interpretation. And, in many cases they had their facts demonstrably wrong. It is up to the conspiracy theorists to prove their conspiracies, especially since they have been so consistently wrong.

American business was closely tied to business in Mexico, but not only the oligarchs. They owned some of it, but for instance they did not own or have any control, formally or informally, over the Federal Electricity Commission (CFE), or PEMEX [Mexican Petroleum], two of the large Mexican companies. Even then, Mexican small and medium sized business was growing and expanding, competing with the traditional Mexican oligarchies. We should ask ourselves, "What part of the US was tied to what part of Mexican business". Some American business was very closely tied to the oligarchy because they had joint investments with the large Mexican companies and financial groups. Also, large Mexican firms were selling to the U.S. and had ties to the US purchasers.

But there were many other groups on both sides of the border who were tied together. For instance, the beginning of Mexican human rights groups or the border activist groups were actively tied to groups in the US. Was that okay? Or, was that somehow US control of Mexico? These types of relationships, and ties, have always been part of the US-Mexican relationship. They were not acting politically, they were not influencing US policy; or were they? There have always been educational ties between universities. Not much influence on policy formation from these relationships, but lots of noise and criticism, rarely very constructive.

Were we tied to the oligarchy? Yes, in some ways. The American Chamber of Commerce was an influential one in Mexico, but certainly not the Mexican economic/financial czar, as some still paint it. Some in the Chamber might have wished that be the case, but clearly it wasn't, which anyone with minimal analysis could see. The American Ambassador was the Honorary President of the Chamber; I was one of the Honorary Vice Presidents. I helped to make the policy of the American Chamber. There was nothing wrong with that. It was supporting American business.

Did we have relations with the political opposition. Yes. I knew and met with PANistas, leftists, including Marxists, Cardenistas, labor leaders, etc. I was not the only one in the Embassy that knew and met with all parts of the political spectrum. Just to leave the correct impression, I also knew and met with the PRI, the Government, and even some of those known as the oligarchs, or even the dinosaurs.

One of the stories I relate was the time I came back to the US, either when I was economic or political counselor. I came to the US on a Government program with a politician named Adolfo Aguilar Zinzer. Adolfo was a radical leftist, but a brilliant, dedicated young man who was the epitome of the peaceful opposition; he became a good friend. We toured several University campuses and Chambers of Commerce in Ohio for several days, doing what became debates on US-Mexican relations. He had not yet then been elected to any office because he was on the outs with the PRI, and he couldn't get elected even as the legitimate opposition.

We went around to college campuses for three days, debating Mexican-American relations. I later knew Adolfo when he was kidnapped and severely beaten and held for three days in Mexico City. Aguilar Zinzer today is a Senator for the Green Party from Mexico City. So we had contacts with those people. Incidentally, if I remember correctly, he won all the debates on the campuses, and I did pretty well in those at the Chambers of Commerce.

I knew Cuauhtemoc Cardenas and his people in those days, so that when Ambassador Negroponte came to Mexico five years later and wanted to meet the opposition, I hosted a breakfast in my residence, privately, with Cardenas and his aides. Actually, I met many of the opposition when they were still members of the PRI and in high places in the Government, especially in the Foreign Secretariat, the *Cancilleria*. In fact, I dealt daily with some of them on issues such as Central America, the Manzanillo initiative by Mexico to start peace talks, and many United Nations issues, to say nothing of bilateral issues.

Having served in Hermosillo, Sonora, a hotbed of the more conservative PAN, I knew many of these people when they came to Mexico City ten years later. In fact, when I served in Hermosillo, I knew and worked with a PAN Mayor in the city. When we negotiated with the Sinaloan tomato growers, their President was the man who later became a PAN candidate for the Presidency, Manuel Clothier.

So we had contacts with all sides, but, as diplomats and US Government officials, we used whatever influence we had with the government. Although, and here's the great misunderstanding, we didn't influence Mexican policy that much. On some issues we did get what we wanted, which was in the interest of the US and Americans. We didn't get the Mexicans to do everything we wanted.

No, they never joined OPEC. That was a major US victory, and had a role in stabilizing world oil prices. We made it very clear to Mexico that if they joined OPEC, it would no longer get trade preferences in the largest market in the world. That's the US law whether one likes it or not, approved by the US Congress, and signed by the US President. And, I was representing the US people and Government and not Amnesty International, or some do-gooder group, with its own selfish, self-centered ends. Mexico never joined OPEC. They did however abide by many of OPEC’s pricing decisions. But they made those pricing decisions based on Mexican concerns, and never did threaten to embargo oil shipments to the US. Whose interest would that have helped? Also, contrary to what some theorists may believe, I never did go to Echeverria to tell him who to select as the next Mexican President. If I had, I sure wouldn’t have said Jose Lopez Portillo.

On the drug issue, we used to have to argue vehemently to convince the Mexicans to do what we thought was needed to stop drugs and drug trafficking. I will say right here that drug production is wrong, and more importantly, harmful to the

US. That is the bottom line and I make no apologies for following that policy. To do otherwise would have been to disregard the law and ignore US policy interests, and I would defy critics of this policy to justify their seeming support for the drug producers and traffickers, where ever they are, be it in Humboldt County California, Culiacan, Sinaloa, or Cali and Medellin, Colombia. But, we never convinced the Mexicans to cooperate fully; that was probably impossible to do. They did not see it as a high priority of their own. At that time the narcotics business was not hurting them. (That came to change drastically.)

During this assignment I did very little on the drug problems. I could talk about them and I did with Mexicans. I knew Colombia, I had lived in Bogota and I saw the narco-traffickers and dopers take over whole parts of the country and look at Colombia now, or even five years ago. Now teetering again on the edge of chaos and civil war, much of it controlled by the unholy alliance of the narcos and the Marxist guerrillas. Both are despicable groups, no matter what some of their ideological or other supporters might want us to believe. Even five years later in the late eighties, when we really knew what happened in Colombia, we could not convince Mexicans that this was going to happen to them.

I also knew the narcotics situation from having lived in Northern Mexico. One of my responsibilities for commercial work was the state of Sinaloa, one of the first Mexican marijuana and poppy production areas. Between my Colombia experience and having seen what was happening in Sinaloa, I could tell the Mexicans what would happen to large parts of the country.

I also knew about the supposed heroes, for instance, Rafael Caro Quintero who had a major drug production area in Caborca, Northern Sonora, and who became a minor hero to some Mexicans because of his wealth; they even wrote ballads (*corridos)* about him. He was nothing but another gangster. For each child he gave a desk to in a badly supplied elementary school around Caborca, he probably addicted ten Mexican kids who saw their lives ruined.

Ambassador Gavin had some success in alerting people to the threat by going public, but we couldn't get much more cooperation, except in certain cases. For instance, when the Guadalajara drug cartels kidnapped, tortured, and killed the DEA Agent Kiki Camarena, the US Embassy and US Government put great pressure on the Mexicans to find Camarena, attempt to save him, or at least apprehend the killers. Mexican cooperation was greatly lacking during and after the kidnaping, although we did get them to search finally and find the body. In fact, a Jalisco state-owned helicopter probably carried the agent from Guadalajara to the farm nearby where he was tortured and killed. One of the kidnappers hid out in Mexico City near the Embassy and was not apprehended; some say he was allowed to escape, after the Government was alerted to his location. He later escaped to Honduras. As we shall see later, he finally paid for his crime and still is languishing in a Florida jail.

And there was the case of the Mexican medical doctor who participated in the torture by reviving Kiki Camarena before he could die, so he could be tortured further. Later the Mexican Government and its allies went to court in the US to get the obscene doctor returned to Mexico from the US where he had been imprisoned after have been lured to the US and detained. In what was a great travesty of justice, he was returned to Mexico by a US judge, where of course, he was released, probably to carry on his torture of others. I had little part in the developments surrounding the Camarena killing. I had met him on my trips to Guadalajara. Finally, I had to accompany the Ambassador to Calexico for his funeral with his family. One of my most difficult Foreign Service experiences, but worth it to honor a great American hero. And, before we snicker, Kiki Camarena was a DEA agent formally and officially invited to Mexico by the Mexican Government to work on the drug problem. This was no covert operation; it was a joint US-Mexican program.

Q: How much did you travel around during that time as Economic Counselor?

PASTORINO: I traveled extensively. I went out of the Embassy and out of Mexico City to observe the economic situation, to make speeches, to visit with business people, and to talk with Mexicans in all parts of society. We had lots of consulates at that time: Merida, Guadalajara, Mazatlan, Hermosillo, Monterey, Laredo, Tijuana, Ciudad Juarez, and Matamoros. There was ample reason to go out to visit them. I was student of US-Mexican affairs, I had a responsibility to be knowledgeable, and I wanted to see everything.

For instance I visited Chiapas on the Mexican/Guatemala border. I visited the refugee camps that the United Nations established in the lake region close to the frontier to house Guatemalans fleeing the violence and civil war. They were beautiful lakes and the camps were well organized and managed, with the refugees getting good treatment. In fact, Mexican rural farmers complained because the refugees had services, such as potable water and electricity, which they themselves did not yet have. I toured the camps because we had heard that they were being used as sanctuaries, rest and recuperation areas, for the Marxist guerrillas. I spent several days there, traveling by small plane and jeep, so I saw that part of Chiapas, where the current rebellion is taking place. I wonder how many of the current "experts" on Chiapas have ever been to Tapachula, Tuxtla Gutierrez, or the remote rural areas near the frontier, or to the Blue Lakes, or to the Bonampak area. I have actually spent the night with the Lacandon Indians in the heart of the Chiapas jungle.

Q: But what about the widely held view that people stayed in the Embassy? Or did the Embassy people get outside of Mexico City?

PASTORINO: Many people spent most of their time in Mexico City or at the beach resorts. The Embassy did have an organized program to send Vice Consuls outside of Mexico City to provide consular services on a regular basis. But, in

some cases the trips were canceled, and when some of the officers went, they were only interested in consular affairs. As DCM later, I tried to install a program, where they would also report on other developments in the consular district, some of which they heard about during their regular business. The only need was to write down their impressions of what people told them: what were the new businesses? what was the labor situation? why did so many people want visas? I didn't care if it was an Administrative section officer going to Guanajuato, he or she could report on what was going on. I don't think it was a totally successful program. Many people didn't really care, or understand what was going on in Mexico; they were just there to do their own assignment and nothing more.

On the other hand, there were a lot of us who did care and did travel. I remember the AID Director, a wonderful, hard working officer, Sam Taylor. Sam knew that country like the back of his hand; he knew it so well, he could go sit in a plaza in Zacatecas, or Torreon and know many people and he could tell you what was happening in the area. He could tell you where the best restaurant was in that town and he could tell you where the lumber mill was; and he almost assuredly knew the owners of both.

Sam was basically a one man American AID mission, who was probably four days out of five on the road. Sam was a close advisor of Ambassador Gavin; the Ambassador listened to him because of his extensive knowledge of Mexico and the Mexicans. Sam, I must also point out, was one of the heroes of the earthquake disaster relief effort, receiving a large bonus for his efforts. Our AID program was small, without large investments. It involved small amounts of money for population programs, technical assistance for health, normal disaster relief, and start-up assistance for small investments, such as printing shops, cooperatives, small factories and foundries, etc. The AID program often gave us an entree into a sector or state Government that we might not otherwise have had.

Another great traveler was the Treasury Attaché, Jack Sweeney, the person who at that time probably knew more about Mexico than anyone else in the Embassy. He was expert not only on financial and commercial affairs; Jack knew a lot about everything in Mexico and was an invaluable Embassy asset, something which even the most jaded State Department Officer had to recognize. And Jack knew everyone in the political and economic area. Most importantly, they were usually often anxious to share their information and concerns with him. So a lot of people did travel. The Ambassador traveled a lot which was good, but his travel was more restricted. He could not go to the places that other officers could.

Q: One last quick question. Did we develop in the State Department a cadre of Mexican experts as opposed to people who were Latin American experts. Are there people, were there people in the eighties who as you had, made Mexico their primary focus?

PASTORINO: No. I think I was probably the exception to the rule; I did make

Mexico my primary focus. As you know, I had three assignments in the country and two other assignments in Washington dealing completely with or in part with Mexico, not including what I did at the Pentagon and the NSC, where Mexico was part of my Hemisphere-wide portfolio. I can count myself as being one of the most knowledgeable, maybe not the smartest, but most knowledgeable about what's happened in Mexico and what was going on while I was there.

By being a member of the joint Border Commission established to investigate frontier crime, especially killings of illegal immigrants trying to cross into the US, often by the "*polleros*" who they paid to guide them, I learned about that aspect of relations. I accompanied INS and Border Patrol officers at night in helicopters over Otay Mesa (in the US) with night, heating seeking visual equipment, and was actually involved in the detaining of illegal immigrants.

With respect to economics, as Economic Counselor, Ambassador Gavin informally made me the head of the Economic Team in the Embassy, which included the Commercial Counselor, the Treasury Attaché, the AID Director, the Agricultural Attaché, and at times even the Labor Attaché. It was an informal appointment because I was actually outranked by some of the other components of the Team, who were appointments of their respective agencies. And, in fact, a formal appointment was not necessary; the job basically was to coordinate, motivate and assure cooperation between the disparate agencies. But, the task gave me great experience in coordinating the various interests and agencies.

As further evidence of broad experience, after one year as Economic Counselor, Ambassador Gavin asked me to head the Political Section. When the State Department balked at this unorthodox personnel assignment, at least partially because someone wanted to stop the political appointee (Gavin), the Ambassador threatened to call the White House. Of course, he didn't have to actually make the call; State quickly backed down. Anyway, I think that at that time I was one of the few persons in the whole Foreign Service to have held both the Economic and Political Counselor positions in an Embassy as large and as important as Mexico City.

As you can probably tell, I love Mexico and Mexicans, but they can be very difficult to get along with, both personally and in a policy sense. Mexico City was not and is not an easy place in which to live. I think we now have tours limited to two years. While I may understand some of the reasons, short assignments are not good for US Mexican policy. It is hard to do a good job in only two years. It takes newcomers at least one year to gain a rudimentary understanding of the place, and more importantly how to operate there. So, we didn't and still don't have a cadre. And, we suffered. We have new people come in and then we have to train them all over again. They don't know the history.

In the Embassy right now, there are probably not ten people who can name half of the President's of Mexico since 1940. And have never met even one of them. Or,

who can tell you that there have been two or three economic miracles. They think there's only one because they're going through it. Or, that have never been to Chiapas. And it's too bad. The only silver lining is that we bring new people in who look at the issues a little bit differently.

AMERICAN EMBASSY TEGUCIGALPA: DCM/ CHARGE D'AFFAIRES

Q: Bob, we got finished with Mexico. Anything you want to add to Mexico?

PASTORINO: No, I think we have amply covered Mexico, even though there is much more to say, it being such a large, important country, and so important to the US.

Let's talk about the assignment and our transition to Honduras, Tegucigalpa, in 1986. In about May, 1986, I received a call from the Department asking me if I'd like to go to Tegucigalpa as Deputy Chief of Mission, working for John Ferch. It didn't take me long to say yes. John and I were friends. I had supported John when he was in Mexico as DCM and I was on the Desk. John was an Economic Officer. The only thing Fran and I worried about was how to bring up two kids in Tegucigalpa. But I found out the schools were minimally acceptable and the living conditions fairly adequate, although clearly it would not be like Paris or Mexico City. I had some qualms about going to a banana republic after having served in a country like Mexico.

I did not have any qualms about the US policy of supporting the Contras, the Nicaraguan Democratic Resistance, in Honduras, even after a possible difficulty for my career was pointed out to me by John Gavin, who obviously knew more at that time than I did about what was going on. The main issue in Honduras for the US would be the location and support of the Contras and the effort to train and equip them to reenter Nicaragua to fight the Marxist Sandinista Government which was threatening the interests of their neighbors and of the US.

Ambassador Gavin had just come back from Washington and told me very frankly about the controversy then raging in the Capital over Contra policy. He noted it could be great for me, would be a very interesting job, but it could also harm my career, given the controversy. People were looking at this whole program through a microscope. They would be looking for scapegoats. The hundred million dollars which was voted by Congress to legally support the Contra operation had been approved, but Speaker Tip O'Neill, all by himself, was holding up the appropriation for as long as he could. Ambassador Gavin suggested I think very carefully whether I wanted to get into something so controversial which might adversely affect my career. I thought about it and believed in the policy. Therefore, I said let's go for it. As usual the family was supportive. And, to this day I very much appreciate John Gavin's concern.

Q: Did anyone ask you if you believed in the Contra operation?

PASTORINO: No. Only Ambassador Gavin seemed to be concerned about my career or my real views on the issue.

Q: Did they know it?
PASTORINO: Did they know whether I did or didn't support the policy? No, I don't believe they did. Certainly Personnel didn't, and I doubt that it should have been an assignment issue. After all, Foreign Service Officers are paid to carry out instructions, and follow policies. But, I still appreciated the Ambassador's concern.

Q: Were you ever asked in your career, as part of an assignment process, we'd like to have you down here but do you believe in our policy?

PASTORINO: No, not that I remember. My personal feelings should not have had an impact. On the other hand, there is a point that Personnel ought to know and tell you what you're getting into. But, since my views of the whole State Personnel operation are not flattering, it did not surprise me. Unfortunately, some of the people in the assignments section were marking time until they could get their own good, follow-on assignment. I have long considered that Personnel is the one place where Foreign Service Officers should not be assigned; rather those assignments should be left to professional human resources types.

Anyway, I thought about it for one night and then went back to the Department and said yes.

So, it began as a normal transition. We were scheduled to leave Mexico in about two months, get some home leave, and arrive in Tegucigalpa in August. Out of the blue, I received a telephone call from Washington, from I believe Elliot Abrams, maybe on the 25th of June saying the Department was thinking of removing John Ferch, and that we should go right now. I was shocked. The family was shocked. We were living very well in Mexico City. Then, shortly thereafter, I received another call telling me it was imperative that I arrive almost instantly because John Ferch would be removed on the 5th of July.

Q: What were the reasons?

PASTORINO: No reasons were given to me at that moment over the phone, but that I would be briefed upon arriving in Washington for consultations. Fine. So the timing allowed us to have but one week in Washington in which I did all my consultations. I had only been to Honduras once. But Fran and the family arranged everything for the move. We moved. The children were already out of school and Shannon would not be going with us. The DCM's house was empty in Honduras so that was no problem. Somehow, our furniture was packed in Mexico and the physical move was actually pretty smooth.

About three days before our departure from Washington, I had breakfast with Elliot Abrams. I consider Elliot Abrams a gentleman, a foreign policy expert, and a wonderful boss. He is a nice man and has been seriously wronged by criticism from the foreign policy community. He had come from the Hill and had great experience with Congress. Some in the State Department saw him as an outsider and not very diplomatic but he was the Assistant Secretary of State for Latin American Affairs, and a very good one. He was good at it, making tough decisions, and being aggressive within the US Government.

Now, given that I was going to Honduras as Chargé d'Affaires (with Ferch's imminent departure), I went to Elliot offering the position back to him, should he feel more comfortable with someone else filling it. It now had become the key position in Honduras, with control and responsibility for the policy in Honduras and the rest of Central America, and he didn't even know me. He said he knew my background, and given that I was a professional, he was sure I could do the job. It was a great vote of confidence. And, that it why we appoint Deputy Chiefs of Mission, so that they can take over in the absence of the Ambassador. And this, unfortunately for John's sake, would be a permanent absence. I did feel a little ill at ease, making acting number one because of the circumstances of John's removal, but that was neither my fault nor my decision. And the US needed someone in country. Ferch's DCM, who should have served as Chargé for a little while at least, was allowed to leave the day after Ferch on a normal reassignment.

Then Elliott went into what became the official explanation for the removal. There was a serious morale problem. Mrs. Ferch has gotten on the wrong side of the Embassy Staff and on the wrong side of the staff of Vice President Bush. The Vice President had been in Honduras recently and she had rebuffed requests of the staff and the Secret Service. I knew Sue Ferch and I thought she was a wonderful person. I had stayed with the Ferches in the DCM's house in Mexico City more than once when he was DCM. She had always treated me wonderfully. I thought she was a great representative of the United States. People later told me I didn't see the real Mrs. Ferch.

I believed what I saw of her but others obviously had different perceptions. There were claims by Embassy staff that she had used general administrative funds assigned to Embassy housing for beautification of the Embassy residence, instead of for a water truck to deliver potable water to Embassy housing.

Elliott alluded to but did not detail other reasons for the removal. He said he would visit Honduras in the near future to personally brief President Azcona for the reasons for the change. He didn't think I had to know more at that time; that my job was to get on top of the situation and run the Embassy and the programs. Remember, I was a friend of John Ferch's and everyone knew it. I was satisfied to know what the US policy was, and indeed I had a lot to do. I sure didn't have the time to investigate. And, I was assured that USG policy or US-Honduran relations were not seriously affected by anything John had done. And, I never saw anything

in Honduras that led me to believe that John was not carrying out that policy.

Elliott did tell me that John was perceived in Washington as being not totally supportive of the Contra policy. There were questions by many people about how the Contra policy would affect US-Honduran relations; perhaps the bilateral relationship would be damaged and perhaps that relationship should have priority over Contra policy.

Now, to get into the substance of the policy, Honduras was already the site for the Nicaraguan Democratic Resistance groups. There were probably already seventeen thousand Nicaraguan fighters, rebels, Contras, whatever you want to call them, in training and refugee camps within thirty or forty miles of the Nicaraguan/Honduran border. They had had some semblance of training, first from Argentine intelligence units, and then from the U.S. agencies. Geographically, the border is the Rio Coco, it's dense tropical jungle, it's hilly, and there were very few passable roads, none paved into the area of the camps. This was the Danli Province of Honduras.

There were three or four camps in which the Contras actually lived in mud huts and wooden shacks. They had training grounds in a couple of them. All of these were within thirty or forty miles of the river, which was the border. This is where the bulk of the seventeen thousand fighters worked and trained within the same valley. There was the training ground, an obstacle course, helicopter pads, the intelligence operations, the food warehouses, the armory, the communications buildings, housing for families of the resistance fighters; all these were there at Yamales. There were some other small camps where Contras lived on the outskirts of this valley, and in other parts of Honduras.

At Aguacate, in Central Honduras, there was a landing field for airplanes and a hospital facility. This had been built by the US and the Honduran Government. One of the first visits I made, probably on my second day in Honduras, was to the hospital at Aguacate. There must have been twenty doctors there, on a rotating basis, many of whom were volunteers from the United States. That hospital was later supported by the legal, Congressionally appropriated one hundred million dollars, but at that time the funding came from rich, private benefactors who cared deeply for the Contra cause and were anti-Sandinista because of their Marxist policies. Some of the doctors were Cuban Americans. Aguacate also served as a re-supply depot where small shipments of goods were being flown into Nicaragua by the Contras, being air dropped into the mountains for the very small resistance bands. I learned how to load the pallets for transport and airdrop, the first of many lessons I would learn over the next year about military affairs and low intensity warfare. I also learned a lot about the misguided policies of the Sandinistas.

There were a couple of other Democratic Resistance sites in Honduras. There was the headquarters of the Resistance in Tegucigalpa. There was another training site outside of Tegucigalpa. Then there were Mosquito Indian Resistance sites. The

Mosquito Indians are a tribe of Indians that live in the Nicaraguan-Honduran border area. They don't recognize any borders. They cross back and forth. Some of the Mosquitos were fighters, unfortunately not very good ones, but they were fighters and they had to be supplied. So there was another little landing strip there.

This was all somewhat haphazard, but it was a whole complex of sites. The Honduran Government and most Hondurans were very amenable, on a policy basis, to the Contras. Honduras was threatened by the Sandinistas and their Marxist policies, and the Contras provided some protection and a viable force to help change Sandinista policy, thus ultimately alleviating the threat. Also the support for the Contras entailed some sums of money being spent in the Honduran economy. And most Hondurans were conservative and opposed to Communism. The Honduran military was involved in supplying the Contras; the Contras had permission from the Government of Honduras to establish the camps, which were also refugees camps for Nicaraguans having to flee the Sandinista dictatorship, a fact the UNHCR refused to recognize.

But, Honduras was really being dragged into the vortex of this international controversy. The scope of the Contras in Honduras was much larger than anything in Salvador, where there were only supply shipments out of the airport in San Salvador, or larger than they were in Costa Rica, where there were much smaller camps. When I arrived in Honduras, there were about 17,000 fighters or more; when I left more than 15,000 were in Nicaragua fighting for their freedom.

Q: So you arrive down there, I want to stress again for the listeners, this is a legal operation. You have a hundred million dollars appropriated by Congress and you've got no questions as to rogue operations or whatever. This is all approved.

PASTORINO: That's right. So for my part, I had no qualms carrying this out. I was totally in favor of the ultimate objective and of the policy. All of the actors in Honduras with whom I was dealing were aware of the policy and supportive. I had the responsibility of seeing that there were no violations of human rights and that there were no rogue operations. With $100 million dollars, there was no need for rogue operations. There had been some small Contra operations in Honduras already for four or five years. As noted above they were originally started by Argentines.

Q: You arrived in Honduras as Chargé, DCM, running an operation that was huge and growing. To what extent were you the tail of the CIA and Defense Department dog? Who was there in terms of agencies and the numbers of people involved?

PASTORINO: First of all, let’s put this into context. I was no one’s tail. I thought I had three basic jobs. One, as Chargé d’Affaires, I was the US Government’s official representative to the Honduran Government and President Jose Azcona. In that context, the US Government had a whole series of programs with

Honduras, such as AID, the Peace Corps, USIA [United States Information Agency], the DEA, intelligence agencies, in fact, all the regular Embassy programs that would have been there whether the Contras did or did not exist. In fact, Honduras had always been a large AID recipient, as were the other Central American countries. Honduras had been an important AID target during the Alliance for Progress.
Those programs were all growing because Honduras was becoming much more important. For instance, the Public Affairs Office operation had three or four officers in it. Why? Because the international press was there. It was interesting in that I never presented my credentials to President Azcona because I did not have an Ambassadorial appointment and thus did not have the necessary rank. Whenever, the diplomatic community was assembled by the Honduran Government, the US Chargé was at the end of the line. In fact, I believe a special letter was sent by Secretary of State Shultz to President Azcona introducing me and advising him of my status, since both Ferch and the DCM departed before my arrival.

As part of that task with the Honduran government, there was the responsibility to maintain the Honduran Government's support for Contra operations. Now, the two entities (the Government of Honduras and the Contras) were basically mutually supportive. They were both intensely ideologically against the Sandinista government. They saw the Sandinistas as a threat from the South. President Azcona was a conservative civil engineer, who had been democratically elected; the military still had a very, very large role in running the Honduran government. The Honduran military was very conservative.

Legally the Hondurans had permitted the Contras to be in Honduras; legally we were providing support. But there were many, many everyday issues about the Contra operations and I had to deal with those issues with the Honduran Government; for instance, who should make public announcements? the Honduran Government?, the Contras?, or the Embassy? How should policies be justified simultaneously? Who should visit the Camps? Who should deal with the political aspects of the Democratic Resistance? How should possible disputes between the Contras and Hondurans be handled? So there was a lot to do in the context of bilateral relations. There were the large, normal US government programs in a developing country, and then this issue of maintaining Honduran Government support for and cooperation with the Contras.
My second job was managing and operating the US Embassy, with all of its traditional State Department sections, as well as managing and supervising all of the many agencies which were there, some of them growing by leaps and bounds. Embassy Tegucigalpa became one of the largest Embassy complexes that we had in Latin America. Running it effectively was a major task of systems management, financial and resource protection, morale, policy-making and implementation, and the hundred other tasks large and small which make an Embassy function effectively and efficiently, always within the glare of lots of publicity. Strange as it seems, when I arrived there was no Ambassador, no DCM,

no Political Counselor, and several other positions were vacant. Rather than worry I decided it was my job to fill as many of them as possible. Luckily, I had experience in most of those areas, although not in the Honduran context.

And there was my third task: to oversee the program to outfit, train, equip, and prepare the Contras to reenter Nicaragua and carry the fight to the Sandinistas; and a tough fight it would be, given the equipment, personnel and support the Sandinistas had from the Soviet and Cubans allies. Under the law appropriating the hundred million dollars, the CIA and the DOD (Department of Defense) were to supply and train the Contras, to provide their supplies, to provide their intelligence, and to provide guidance. There was a provision to detail officials of one agency to others in order to carry out the program approved by Congress and signed by the President.

Q: Were there restrictions on what the agency could do?

PASTORINO: The law was written very tightly. The provision of intelligence was key to the fighters when they returned to Nicaragua; intelligence about Nicaraguan military dispositions, the location and activity of Cuban and Soviet military components, the location of equipment such as the huge Russian Hind helicopters, the locations of targets, etc. Of course, the Contra fighters when inside collected and transmitted large amounts of intelligence to Yamales for analysis and the Agency helped to coordinate these efforts.
US Government officials were forbidden from crossing into Nicaragua under any circumstances; they could not cross the river. They could provide all the uniforms, food, medicine, ammunition, guns, and training that the $100 million could buy. They could support the hospital and landing strip, and all of the communications operations so necessary to manage a military operation over great distances.

The regular Military Group in the Embassy was in Honduras supplying regular, normal, routine supplies and training to the Honduran military, as well as participating in joint defense maneuvers. I had to see to it that this group was not at all involved with the Contras. In fact, I had to send one Attaché home because he wouldn't stay out of the Contra program; it was too bad, because he was a great Cuban-American patriot who had fought at the Bay of Pigs, but the law was the law.

With regard to my third task, liaison with the Contras, some people thought I should be the Pro-Consul, giving the orders, carrying out the battle plans. Of course, I couldn't do that because I did not have the experience and we had people well-trained and efficient who could work on those issues. That was their job. Mine was to make sure that the guidelines for the use of the hundred million dollars was followed: to make sure that their relations with the Honduran Government were smooth so that the Contras could operate in Honduras and not upset the Hondurans too much; to worry about the human rights aspects of what the Contras were doing; as best as it was humanely possible in Honduras, to keep

all of the factions of the Contras working together. At the same time, the Contras had their own relationships with the civilian side of the Honduran government as well as with the military part of the Honduran government. So I tried to keep on top of that as best I could.

In sum, as Chargé d'Affaires, I tried to coordinate all aspects of the US Government, through the Embassy, in carrying out as what I saw were my three tasks: run a large, complex Embassy, liaison with the Contras, and deal bilaterally with the Honduran government.

Q: What was the Honduran government's interest in all this operation?

PASTORINO: As I noted above, the Honduran government was ideologically opposed to the Sandinista, Marxists-Leninist dictatorship in Managua and felt threatened by it, that was interest number one.

Interest number two, they were going to make money out of this situation, if at all possible. There were aspects of corruption in the Honduran government, including the military, and they wanted to make money. They also wanted to get as much US assistance as possible for their own Honduran development programs.

They also had an interest in making sure the Contras didn't draw too much on the resources of Honduras. They had to make sure the Contra operation didn't destabilize Honduras. There were some in Honduras that worried that this major effort would impact negatively on Honduras if it wasn't controlled. I myself often thought of how the operation would change the country in many ways, modernizing it in some, changing the society in others.

So that's situation when I arrived. As far as I could tell, the coordination of all the U.S. agencies was efficient. Most of the credit goes to the agencies; they and all of people in the Embassy had the same goal and the same objective. We had a hundred million dollars, to help the Contras take back their homeland from the Sandinistas, who were massively supported by the Cubans and the Soviets, and who were threatening their neighbors as well as us.

How were they threatening the US? For one thing, the Russians were building a massive air base in Managua. The Managua airbase became so big it was two miles long so that Russian Bear Bombers and intelligence planes could fly all the way up to California to carry out espionage activities off the coast of the United States, an unfriendly act. It was not far fetched, people don't like to believe this, to see the Sandinistas as a potential staging area for a threat to the United States. It was reality for those who could open their eyes to it. So we all had the same goal in mind. Also, the Sandinistas were threatening their other neighbors in Central America, countries which were our friends.

I made it pretty clear at the first staff meeting that I was there charged with

running the whole U.S. government presence. I obviously wasn't going to get into the minutia of operations but I wanted to know what was going on. I was not going to micro manage operations. I had enough to do with all the programs of the Embassy. I saw my big job as making sure everyone worked together, that the guidelines vis-à-vis the Contras, were carried out.

I got to know all the Embassy people there very quickly. Those were twelve and fourteen hour days the first couple months. I visited all the operations. Early on I learned that the best way to learn about something is to call five minutes before my arrival to say I was on the way. With respect to the Contra camps, I would get the helicopter without advance notice to take me to Yamales or Aguacate. But again, most of the credit for the cooperation goes to the US Government personnel; we all had the same goal and they were very competent, dedicated people.

I didn't detect any friction and I believed all guidelines were being followed. Before I was later confirmed as Ambassador to the Dominican Republic, the US Iran-Contra Special Prosecutor provided a letter to Senator Dodd saying that I had never been and was not either a subject or a target of any investigation for anything that happened during that one year that I was in Honduras, especially the eight months when I was in charge. In fact, I talked several times to the investigators while I was still in Honduras.

There were a couple incidents that did happen and I fixed them. One I found out about later: under the guidelines we could not transport Democratic Resistance fighters in our helicopters; even badly wounded Contras could not be carried in U.S. helicopters, even from the border to the hospital. That was only the last fifteen miles, after the fighters had probably walked or ridden hundreds of miles from deep within Nicaragua. In one instance, two fighters coming into Honduras, literally bleeding to death, were carried by a helicopter to the hospital. The person who did that, who arranged that, was later punished.

The guidelines were strict. I knew what they were. I had State Department calling me making sure I was checking. But, the basic point is that we had a hundred million dollars, nobody had to cheat. We were awash in funds, energy and personnel.

Accurate and timely intelligence was obviously all-important. I think we had a successful intelligence operation. For instance, I used to fly every six to eight days, sometimes more often, to the camps in Yamales by helicopter. On normal days it was a forty-five minutes flight. That part of Honduras was rolling, jungle covered hills. The weather was often bad, foggy and rainy, so we'd have to land down in one valley or another to await atmospheric clearing over the next ridge. But I was always confident because we had experienced pilots, and we maintained the helicopters. Once we landed before reaching Yamales and then had to return to Tegucigalpa because intelligence indicated that some Sandinista

military units had infiltrated into Honduras, with shoulder to air missiles (SAMs), an obvious target being our helicopters. We flew back to Tegucigalpa rather than take the chance. It would have been embarrassing to have the American Chargé shot out of the air. Normally, the pilots flew at treetop level because they thought the SAMs could not reach and damage a chopper at such as low-level.

Another time, the Contra scouts posted around the Yamales bases discovered a relatively large infiltration of Sandinistas; hundreds of troops coming across the river into Honduras. This was obviously illegal; but not unexpected by the Hondurans, who feared a Nicaraguan invasion to knock out the Contra camps. Several people thought this large force of several hundred might be the first wave of the invasion. I used to go to the Embassy at six thirty in the morning. The first place I would go was to the war room, look at the maps, with all the pins locating the Contra units and any enemy units. This one morning there was lots of Sandinista pins on the Honduran side of the border, all moving towards Yamales and the camps. Washington was informed and we informed the Honduran military. We had a commitment to the Hondurans to support them in case of an invasion from Nicaragua. After the message went to Washington, there were expressions of support from Washington to the Honduran Government. There was a major leased U.S. base which we shared with the Hondurans at Palmerola, so it would have been easy to fly in a large contingent of troops and supplies.

Later during that day, we got word that several large Russian Hind helicopters had been blown up on their pads at a Sandinista army base in northern Nicaragua. The base was clearly inside Nicaragua, at a place called Wiwili, maybe forty or fifty miles south of the border. The Nicaraguan government of course raised their voice in protest; everyone assumed right away that the U.S. had carried out the action. I remember getting a call from the highest levels of the Honduran government, I believe it might have been from the President, asking about the situation. I told him it was not a US action, although I was glad it was successful. In fact, it turned out that the Honduran Military, led by General Humberto Regalado, who was Chief of Staff of the Armed Forces, had carried out the operation. Whatever the exact details, we began to immediately see the pins on the map turn tail and head back south to Nicaragua. Clearly the Nicaraguan Government thought it was the US and they got worried.

These Hind helicopters were so large, had such range, and they could carry so many missiles, that they could decimate a Contra patrol instantly; which they did frequently in Nicaragua. They were a key weapon in the guerrilla war. It wasn't until the Contras got SAMs that these helicopters became vulnerable and they became less of a threat. It turned out that Honduran bombs had knocked out the helicopters and the airplane returned safely. And, most, if not all the Nicaraguan infiltrators as far as we could tell from our intelligence quickly returned back to Nicaragua.

Ultimately, I'm going to get the question of whether the Contra support by the US

was a waste of US time and effort. Of course, we usually hear that it was unsuccessful. Well that is pretty clearly wrong. The whole effort, in this first stage, by the Contras was to destabilize the Sandinista regime and stop it from subverting its neighbors, or at the least keep the Sandinistas from consolidating their regime without holding elections, which is what Castro did in Cuba. Well, lets look at history. The *pericuaco* (Sandinista) thugs were not able to consolidate and were forced to have elections. And we all know the result; they were thrown out of power. As an aside, that is probably why Castro has refused to hold a Presidential election in forty years. I'm not saying the Contras by themselves defeated the Sandinistas; that was never the plan; but they certainly were a factor in keeping them from consolidating their Marxist authoritarian rule. Apologists for the Sandinistas of course dispute this, but let them also read history.

Q: How good were these guys as fighters? I mean were they dedicated? You talked earlier about having seventeen year old kids off some farm somewhere in northern Nicaragua.

PASTORINO: They were very dedicated and became good guerrilla fighters. They carried the fight to the Sandinistas all over Nicaragua, and within one year they were able to win *de facto* control over large parts of Northern Nicaragua. They were untrained in the beginning. Contrary to popular belief, most of them were young, illiterate kids, not former National Guardsman. They were fighting to get their lands back, after having had it expropriated by the Government. Some were eight or ten years old when Somoza was overthrown so they couldn't have been Somoza henchmen as the are portrayed.
Even, Colonel Enrique Bermudez, who led the Contras, was out of the country in exile when Somoza was overthrown. These young fighters had basically turned against the Communists in Managua. (For those who don't want to believe the Sandinistas were Communists, just read their materials.) Yes, they were good fighters, and patriots. They got basic military training at Yamales over several weeks; most important they received weapons, ammunition and communications gear. They had a command structure and they had leadership. Some of the trainers had been in the Nicaraguan military, like the man who was in charge of all training. Most importantly, they were fighting for something and morale was high. And when they returned to Nicaragua they had the support of the rural people. They must have done something right because they had the Sandinistas worried within a year.

Q: You're running an operation out of Honduras. But of course there was a very famous guy in terms of the Contras, Eden Pastora, and he was operating out of Costa Rica.

PASTORINO: I never met Eden Pastora. I would have liked to given our similar names. No, I never met him. My only ties with his operation was that there was cooperation between the units. But, by my time in Honduras, Pastora had lost a lot of power. He was after all an opportunist who changed sides several times. I think

Pastora's group was pretty weak the year I was in Honduras although his people might have collaborated when the Contras cut the main road between Managua and the Caribbean in Southern Nicaragua, close to Costa Rica, meaning that the Russian and Cuban supplies could not then get to Managua where the military could utilize them.

There is a point here when you mention Pastora. The anti-Sandinista operation was always very factionalized. Perhaps less so in Honduras, than in other places, and especially after the $100 million appropriation. But there were factions even in Honduras. Certain groups of fighters were getting support from certain exile resistance political groups. There were those who were loyal to Bermudez, *Comandante 69*, because he was the National Guard guy. There were other guys who were more loyal to their own *Comandantes*, men with whom they had gone into Nicaragua on operations.

But the greatest factionalization was in Miami. That was the headquarters of the Contra Directorate, the Contra bureaucracy, and the Contra political movement. In Honduras, I only saw the ramifications of this from afar. It was not until later when I went to Washington, when I had to get involved in holding hands with some of these factions in order to keep them together, that I saw the internal disputes. In Tegucigalpa, I had to know which Directors supported which groups, and I would take them to the camps for visits. There were many factions, from liberal to conservative. Of course, that just perfectly mirrored the situation in Nicaragua before the Sandinistas. People don't like to believe it, but there were more political parties in Nicaragua under Somoza than under Daniel Ortega. Often your political affiliation depended upon what part of the country you were from, Granada, Leon or Managua, or from your family background. These rivalries persisted in Miami. But, they all agreed on the main objective: that they had to get rid of the Ortega brothers, Tomas Borge, the butcher, and the rest of the Marxists.

In addition to the factions that I just described, there were the Mosquito Indians; they didn't listen to anyone as far as I could tell. But they did collaborate with the Contras in some cases. But, even the Nicaraguan and Honduran Governments could never control the Mosquitos for any great length of time. I knew many of them in Tegucigalpa. They were often included in political discussions, but they never got along with the Honduran Government.

I never forget the first time they came to my house to call their headquarters in Washington to discuss some issue they considered important. My eight year old daughter Susan offered to hide under the bed to listen to their conversation. We considered that but then broke up laughing when we realized they were going to talk in Mosquito. The leaders were such people as Brooklyn Rivera and Steadman Faggoth, interesting guys, but not very effective fighters. In fact, we had to sanction Faggoth severely because he had a poor human rights record.

Much of factional problems came down on the plate of *Comandante* Bermudez, who was trying to run a combined military operation. I don't think he'd ever been a field commander. The Nicaraguan army under Somoza didn't fight very well against the Sandinistas. Bermudez was somewhat acceptable to us. One, because a lot of people followed him. He was there on the spot in Honduras and he was dedicated and hard working. He was also a leader, in the sense of getting people to work together. He had been in exile for some time. He'd been the Military Attaché in Washington. Washington people knew him. He escaped some of the taint of *Somocismo* because he had been out of the country during some of the worst Somoza excesses. Anyway, Bermudez in Yamales, the Miami Directorate, Washington, and us in Tegucigalpa to a certain extent, had to sort of merge all this. It was a complicated political problem. I didn't realize when I was in Honduras, actually, how complicated it was. I got deeply involved in the factional disputes when I got assigned to the National Security Council.

I remember one time when I went to Yamales on some assignment. The Contra meeting headquarters was in a long, wooden hut, with a long table, the walls covered with maps. Beer was served, and we sometimes ate meat, although most of the time it was rice and beans. More than once we had horse meat for lunch. Anyway, on this particular visit, all of a sudden, a Nicaraguan civilian, who had clearly just come down from Miami, started talking and giving orders. I didn't know who this guy was. I had to ask. It turned out he was some minor Contra official in Miami who thought he could come to Central America and win the war with his suggestions. He was given short shrift by Bermudez and his staff, even though he had contributed some funds.

Q: I've got to ask you a question. Were you ever in the military?

PASTORINO: No.

Q: And did you find that a handicap, never having served in the military?

PASTORINO: A little bit. But not so much from the tactical, strategic point of view because that's not what I did. I didn't go down there and say attack this place or that. I had trouble in the beginning understanding the tactics because I wanted to know all the details about what was going on and why. I think in the beginning I might have had a little less credibility than I wanted to have among the military and the Agency people. But I did not try to tell them how to target or what weapons to use. I think I gained the necessary credibility fairly quickly.

This question of my being at a disadvantage not having been in the military was not really so important. There was a lot one can learn quickly. Since I was interested in knowing as much as possible, I asked and received lots of help. For instance, I wanted to know about the air resupply and how it was carried out from Honduras. I went up to Aguacate, where they loaded the supplies on palettes on planes to be dropped in Nicaragua. I asked how do you do this? Someone took me

through it. For three hours, I helped load guns and whatever else was in there, foodstuffs, radios, uniforms on the pallets. They showed me how to load them on the pallets, how to load them on the plane. Then they showed me how to push them off the skids. How the back door opened. That doesn't take a genius to figure out once you've seen it. I did not go on the flights.

Q: Who was flying the planes, Americans?

PASTORINO: No. The resupply operations from Honduras were flown by Nicaraguan pilots.

Q: When was Hasenfuss arrested? This was the American that was shot down?
PASTORINO: Eugene Hasenfuss was arrested during my time in Honduras. It's probably one of the times I was most nervous. By coincidence, that day I was having lunch for all of the foreign and Honduran correspondents in Tegucigalpa. The Public Affairs Officer had set it up. Lunch was going wonderfully well. Suddenly, I got a call; it was Elliott Abrams. He said something had happened in Nicaragua. A plane's gone down, we don't know whose it is; we're not sure what the circumstances are. It did not fly out of Honduras. You'll be asked right away and that's what you're to say.

As I went back to the table, the reporters had found out also. Elliott saved me, in that I knew exactly what to say. Did I believe myself that instant, that's what had happened? I didn't have much time to think about it. They asked the questions and I gave the answers I was supposed to give. Well it turned out that most of the answer was true. It did not come out of Honduras. The Hassenfuss plane flew out of San Salvador. Yes it was sponsored by the U.S. government. It was a government operation. We're talking about real time. It was noon in Tegucigalpa when we were having lunch and the plane had been shot down at ten thirty. So, maybe Elliott didn't have all the details. That was the end of my dealing with the Hassenfuss incident except when the press asked me. If we had more information I told them. The Honduran Government of course was most interested in knowing the details so it would know what, if anything, to say.

Q: You mentioned earlier the name of a man who was widely associated with the whole Contra operation and that's Colonel Oliver North? At this period, was North involved? Did you know him? Was he taking charge of Contra activities?

PASTORINO: I had met Ollie North once before at a regional Central American meeting when I was serving in Mexico. During my time in Honduras, Ollie was at the National Security Council. He was still heavily involved although he was on his way out. Again, I don't know that he had to do anything illegal at that time since he had a hundred million dollar appropriation. As far as I know, he never came to Honduras. He certainly never came to the Embassy. I knew who he was. I later had meetings with him in the context of a large Ambassadorial meeting or other policy meetings. I went up to Miami once during my Tegucigalpa time and

was with him in a large meeting.

People ask me what do I think of Ollie North. He was very capable. He was a military guy. I thought his heart was in the right place. He may have taken advantage at the National Security Council of other people who should have been checks and balances, but either were not as knowledgeable or as hard working as Ollie. Some people maybe didn't want to get too deeply involved. Ollie went right up to the limit of his instructions, but he was following the policy of the US Government, to stop the Sandinistas. Being a good military man, I don't think Ollie very often superseded his instructions. And remember, he worked at the third level of the NSC, for the Deputy National Security Advisor, and the National Security Advisor. I knew exactly where he worked because I later took over part of his portfolio at the NSC.

Q: Which in those days was who, Poindexter?

PASTORINO: Poindexter or McFarlane. They were military people. I don't think North was as rogue as he was made out to be. I'm pretty sure he was always under instruction. He might have come up with creative ideas, but someone had to accept them and say go do it. He was very creative. It turns out most of his criminal convictions were later overturned. As far as I know the only thing he's ever been found guilty of is taking a free garage door to provide security to his house in Northern Virginia, something the Government should have provided given his controversial position and persona, and the number of policy experts in Washington that double as intellectual terrorists.

Having said all that, I am not an intimate of Ollie North. I did replace him later at the NSC in the sense that I had the responsibility for what had been his Central American portfolio. But all his files were gone, taken over by whomever investigated him. So I can't say that I could tell from his files what he did or didn't do. Since it took dozens of investigations and prosecutors and everyone else to find out what they think he did, I sure would never have had the time to do it. And, I do know he did not come to Honduras to visit the Contras when I was in charge, either in his name or under any alias.

Q: Now, you were Chargé for half a year, and then Briggs was named Ambassador?

PASTORINO: Yes. For the first two or three months I didn't know who was going to replace Ferch as Ambassador. I knew I would not be appointed, even after having done the job for several months, and I didn't expect to be named. It was not a bad situation to a certain extent because I really was my own boss, at least temporarily. In a personal sense, I could wait for my own Ambassadorial appointment; it didn't have to be immediate. On the other hand, I was a caretaker to a certain extent, but didn't know for whom so I couldn't really take the next Ambassador into consideration as to his preferences and style on how to run the

Embassy.

As soon as I found out it was Ted Briggs, it was wonderful. I had worked for him twice. I knew what he wanted. I knew how he ran the Embassy. I knew what his ideology was. I knew I could always talk to him. I didn't have a lot of contact with him for the next three months. I think I was in Miami with him when he received a call from President Reagan asking him to be Ambassador. He may have been the Deputy Assistant Secretary at that time. Anyway, I felt comfortable in that the way I was running the Embassy would be the way he would want it to run.

The transition was very easy. Going from Chargé back to DCM was not that difficult. As Chargé, I turned over the Embassy to him. I met him at the airport, I hosted the receptions to introduce him. I took him to see President Azcona, who he probably already knew. He was a better diplomat than I was. He had far more experience. He was a Deputy Assistant Secretary and he knew what was going on in Washington. It was a very easy transition. I will admit, in some ways, I was not that unhappy to relinquish some of the burden of the responsibility. Ted being Ted never treated me like number two. I continued to do much of what I was doing.

For instance, when we began to consider using Swan Island, he allowed me to go out there on one of the first flights. In fact, it was so primitive we had to signal the Honduran caretaker of the island so he could chase the sheep and cattle off the dirt runway. We toured the facilities which had been built by the US Government many years before as a weather station when we had sovereignty over the island. It was amazing. There were calendars from the 1950s and the radios were the old cathode tube size, many of the tubes being a foot long. Most of the machinery had been removed but the caretaker, in reality a Honduran rancher, had maintained some of the services. Swan Island had a wonderful little harbor and a pretty beach but was not much more than a sand spit. But, it’s location was important. That was a day when we went back in time.

I remember only once he overruled something I had done. A plan had been developed with the Hondurans to seize and then turn over to us, Enrique Ballesteros, who was a Honduran and major drug trafficker. He was part of the Colombian Mexican cartel. As far as I was concerned, he was one of the worst because he had been one of the perpetrators of the kidnaping, torture, and killing of Kiki Camarena, the DEA Agent, in Guadalajara. We had a plan which I had approved and discussed with the Honduran Government, with the President as I remember. The Hondurans were going to capture him as he went jogging one morning. Ballesteros was a tough target. When the heat was on him, he moved into the penitentiary in downtown Tegucigalpa and had all the protection in the world. We could not do very much to get him out of the penitentiary. The Hondurans were not going to release the guy to us. A lot of Hondurans, especially the ones that he had bribed, were supporting him.

So as long as he was in the penitentiary, there was no getting him we thought. But

he had ten or twelve homes in Tegucigalpa, one of which we found out to our horror the Embassy was renting, and we had an employee living there. In fact, he owned a whole series of homes in one cul-de-sac. I got this young officer out of there in about two hours, bag and baggage, and we found a new residence for him.

The plan was within a week of being implemented when Ted arrived as Ambassador. He was very cautious and probably as he should have done, he stopped the plan so he could consider it. Within the next few days, circumstances changed so that we couldn't carry it out. I was a little disappointed, after the work that had been put into it. I'd really gone over it in all of its aspects. Was this legal? Ethical? Who might get hurt? The plan would have worked. It did in fact work later, six months after I was gone. To this day Ballesteros sits in a Miami jail, out of the drug trafficking business. Of course, that punishment is much less than he deserves. On the other hand, it is better, from our point of view, than were he to be sitting in a Colombian jail, where he could still be running his drug operations.

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE: DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY FOR LATIN AMERICAN AFFAIRS

Q: Bob where did we leave off?

PASTORINO: We left off with me about to leave Honduras. I got a telephone call from Rich Armitage from the Pentagon, who was an Assistant Secretary for Policy in the Office of the Secretary of Defense. A great patriot, Nestor Sanchez, was about to retire as the Deputy Assistant Secretary for Latin America and Armitage asked if I would be interested in replacing Nestor. I was kind of taken aback because I had never thought about going to another agency, least of all to the Pentagon. As a youngster I didn't have the highest appreciation of the military, although I was never out there protesting against it.
I also didn't know what State Department would think about it. I would have been relatively satisfied to stay in Honduras now that Ambassador Ted Briggs was on board. The State Department said fine if you want to make the move and DOD wants you. So I went up and interviewed with Fred Ickle, who was the Undersecretary of Defense for Policy Affairs and a well-known, well-respected Conservative and anti-Communist. People had told me a lot about Ickle, that he was very conservative, not a nice guy. I found out he was a gentleman, which was contrary to the opinion of many, most of whom did not know him. His conservative ideology was more conservative than mine, but that didn't seem to get in my way. After a one hour interview with Fred, I went down to see Rich Armitage. I'm not even sure I remember that interview; Rich had already made up his mind. Within one month we were packing our bags, leaving Honduras. I went to the Pentagon on a detail.

Q: Let me stop here and ask you. You'd been DCM in Honduras, were you angling at this stage of your career for Ambassadorial assignment? Did you think that was realistic? Did you do anything to promote that idea?

PASTORINO: No, and in fact, I later heard the real story of my appointment. It had its basis in Honduras, ten days after I had arrived. Armitage, Ickle, Sanchez, and a high-level delegation of a dozen came to Tegucigalpa to meet with President Azcona to discuss the Contra cooperative program. I took them to visit the President and then held a major luncheon for President Azcona at the Ambassador's residence.

Later, I took the group to Yamales, and arranged for meeting there with the Contra leadership, and then a large open meeting with thousands of the Contra fighters. The Washington delegation addressed the whole group, with me doing some of the interpreting, adding the appropriate messages of support here and there. I remember I referred to the Sandinistas by some to the derogatory names they had earned, and this brought a standing ovation.
Evidently, at some point, Armitage had asked how long Pastorino had been in Tegucigalpa since he appeared to know everything and everyone. An Embassy person told him the story of my recent arrival and Rich evidently was impressed. Ten months later he remembered it. Of course, most of the arrangements for the visit were made by the staff but I received much of the credit. It does pay to be in the right place at the right time, but on the other hand I had visited every site and met every leader within those first ten days.

Anyway, no, I wasn't really angling or working for it. I was taking a different tact. I was trying to do as good job as possible, exceeding expectations wherever possible, despite possible risks or political pitfalls. I was convinced that as long as I got a promotion from every job, a move upwards, and could broaden my experience, staying in Latin America, I thought that would do the trick. If it didn't, it didn't and so be it. I was able to support my family pretty well and was always doing interesting and important work. I had never had, and still didn't at that time, an overwhelming ambition to be Ambassador. If someone would have asked me at that time, I probably would have said: "Well, I'm closer now than before and closer than I ever thought I would get. But, I would settle for a job something like DCM in Mexico City".

Anyway, I became Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Latin American Affairs. It was a position in which I advised the Secretary of Defense, Cap Weinberger, an old and dear friend of my Aunt Blanche in San Francisco, about the political and other ramifications of military policy or military actions. Whether that position was really necessary I am not sure, but it was a subject about which I knew something, especially as it involved out relations with Central America, the Caribbean and much of South America. It was largely about how we should deal with the military in the region, and how we should coordinate military and political objectives and interests of the United States. No one ever asked me to make military tactical policy. So I felt comfortable on the substance of the politics and the international relationships.
I didn't feel so comfortable at the Pentagon. It took a while to get settled in that

massive building and bureaucracy. I tell the story that for the first two months I laid down little seeds so that I could find my way back to my office. I was in the C ring, I think, one of the most important of the five concentric rings that make up the building, one of the largest office buildings in the world. I had a great staff of eight or nine professionals, all but two of whom were military. My Deputy was a Brigadier General, Pete Brintnall, a great expert on Brazil and a genius on many issues, including and especially how to get around the bureaucracy. He was a West Pointer, and sadly, his career might have been truncated because he concentrated on strategic policy and on Latin America, instead of military command billets.

I must say I found my staff extremely knowledgeable about military affairs, protocol, and how to get things done in the Pentagon. They were gentlemen, and they accepted me right away, I thought. Of course, Armitage and Ickle put their stamp of approval on me, and the Pentagon does understand and respect rank; in fact, much better than do State Department people.

They were of great assistance in helping me deal with the military. They introduced me to the Joint Chiefs of Staff operations, as well as the Service commands and bureaucracies. And the services are separate in many ways. Most of my dealings but not all of them, were with the office of the Secretary through Armitage and Ickle. But I also dealt with the Joint Chiefs, military commands, etc. In some ways, I hardly knew the difference between a Captain and a Major. But, the staff kept me out of trouble. Most of them were Colonels, Majors and Captains, [even] the clerical staff [was military, NCOs]. I dealt personally with Central America, Haiti, Cuba, Mexico, and Panama. I spent a little bit of time on the rest of the hemisphere, delegating much of the work until it came time to go to policy debates in the Secretary's Office or at the White House. I made time to deal with Mexico, which got little attention by most people because it was not a crisis, such as other areas. It was my interest and I thought it was important. I left Brazil completely to my Deputy, the General. He did an outstanding job as Deputy and on the Brazil issues.

Most of the issues were the ones I had been dealing with: the subversion of our allies and friends in Central America; the Cubans both in Cuba and the relationship in Guantanamo, as well as their subversion around the hemisphere; and Noriega in Panama, who was not yet indicted but was getting close to it for drug trafficking. The specific issues that my office dealt with were US military equipment sales, the management of the Panama Canal and the Canal Commission, training of Latin American military, strategic cooperation, military assistance issues, etc.

Much of the work on these issues dealt with Congress and how to get policy authorization and then appropriations. I was at the Pentagon a year and spent much of my time on the Hill, dealing with Congress on increasing military assistance or at least maintaining previously voted levels. Our policies needed

political justifications and I testified several times before Congressional committees on budgetary matters, such as selling F-15s to Honduras, to balance the threat from the Sandinistas; the operations of the Panama Canal, and the transition called for by the Carter-Torrijos Treaty to return all the facilities to Panama on December 31,1999; drug trafficking in Peru, where the US military was trying to help the Peruvian Government; military cooperation programs in Central America; and the situation in Haiti, which as usual was in crisis and getting worse. That side of the job, the liaison with Congress, was new and would come in handy later in my career, even if it was not particularly enjoyable, especially testifying in front of committees who sat on a dais looking down on the witnesses, arrogantly from on high.

Human rights came up frequently in the Central American context. I paid particular attention to human rights violations which might be caused through the utilization of the equipment and assistance we were providing. In addition to that, violations by the Guatemalan and Salvadoran military that did not involve our assistance were of immense importance because they influenced how the Congress voted on some of the important issues.

It should be noted that the Central Americans were fully capable of committing human rights violations on their own, without our assistance. They didn't need our assistance, and would have done it with or without us. In fact, I am sure we were able to ameliorate some if not most of them, because of the legislation that came out of the Congress. Of course, respect for human rights played right into the hands of the guerrillas, who violated them at every opportunity, witness the Sendero Luminoso in Peru, for instance, a Marxist group comparable to the Pol Pot killers in Cambodia. Only the politically correct didn’t recognize that the Marxist guerrillas, supported by the Cubans, committed more that their share of violations throughout the hemisphere. Of course, they didn’t publicly flagellate themselves over it.

So it was a one year, extremely interesting, assignment. I traveled all over South America, meeting military and civilian leaders, trying to promote democracy, and trying to sell airplanes as well as trying to buy airplanes. I went to Argentina to look at their jet trainers that we were going to buy in addition to trying to sell our airplanes. I spent five days in Buenos Aires, meeting with President Alfonsin and touring the country with the Minister of Defense, visiting the Argentine aircraft manufacturing industry in Mendoza. At that time Argentina was becoming much less of a political problem. They had a democratically elected President. They were investigating human rights violations and from all reports the violations were ended by the democratic government. Also, the repercussions of the Falklands/Malvinas Islands war were receding.

I also took advantage to try and trace some of my relatives who had immigrated from Italy to Argentina in the 1890s and who had been lost track of. Before leaving, I gave a description and some details to the Argentine Ambassador in

Washington, who asked the Foreign Ministry to check for some Pierangelis, which was my mother's side from Lucca. They had no luck. But, upon arriving, and later, I began to get calls from lots of Pastorinos, my father' side. All swore they were my cousins, and then asked for a visa to the US. I don't think there were any relatives there, certainly not those millionaires which I had heard about.

One of the other things I did was to be the Secretary's host for delegations of Central American military and civilians who came to the Pentagon. They came asking for more help, more equipment, etc. I remember I hosted a luncheon which Secretary Weinberger attended in honor of the Guatemalan Defense Secretary General Gramajo and his delegation. I also hosted several meeting and luncheons for the El Salvadoran military. Future President Christiani came to see me to talk economics.

With respect to Salvador, Guatemala and Honduras, I made several visits to Central America, meeting with the leadership, going over the military assistance programs, and the strategy to win the wars against the Marxist terrorists. I paid a visit to Honduras to see President Azcona. On at least two of those visits, I was part of Secretary Shultz's delegations to the region attempting to solve the Central America peace problem. These were visits which were part of the Esquipulas Negotiations, begun by Costa Rican President, Oscar Arias, for which he won the Nobel Peace Prize. We were still a major actor in all of these issues: peace in El Salvador and Guatemala; maintenance of Honduran sovereignty; and the containment of the Nicaraguan Communist Government.

I also spent a lot of time, as Deputy Assistant Secretary, in continuing to aid the Democratic Resistance in Nicaragua. Unfortunately, most of the assistance, early on in my tenure at the Pentagon, was turned into humanitarian assistance because the Congress would not vote a second year of lethal assistance for the Contras, a serious though not as it turned out a deadly mistake. Much of that time was in fighting to get the lethal assistance renewed, and when that failed, to work on getting as much humanitarian assistance as possible; we finally got Congress to approve about thirty million dollars. This involved considerable time on the Hill, either meeting personally with Congressmen and their staffs, or on the telephone from the Pentagon to talk to them.

During my tenure at DOD, I was informally detailed to the National Security Council to help pull together US efforts in Central America; I would spend two or three hours each afternoon at the White House, after my day across the river at Defense, working with General Powell and the NSC staff.

Q: Why do you think that that effort failed?

PASTORINO: The $100 million dollar appropriation had originally passed the year before with the most minute majority, maybe five or eight votes. So there was a tremendous amount of resistance from the start to a second year of lethal

assistance.

Then, the Contras didn't win the war right away; of course, we didn't expect them to but the opposition utilized that fact to maintain that the assistance was wasted. Unfortunately, expectations were too high, especially in view of the fact of the massive Cuban and Soviet aid. Also, there was a faction of liberals among the Democratic leadership in Congress that didn't want the Contras to win; this group actually favored the Sandinistas, somehow believing they were something different than Marxist-Leninists trying to instill a dictatorship and subvert their neighbors. They also couldn't stand the idea that President Reagan might have an effective policy. Of course, many of these people didn't express those reasons for their obstinate opposition but relied on mushy concepts of non-intervention, as their activities in effect ended up supporting the Communist regime.

And, we could never convince the Congress or the American people that the Contras could have a positive influence in Nicaragua, or ultimately win. We could never convince the Congress or the media that the Contras were the good guys. Most could never see past what they thought was a bunch of Somoza national guard people. The media was particularly at fault, not reporting the war and the Sandinista threat accurately. Finally, let's face it, it was a Republican administration with a Democratic majority on the Hill. Some of the opposition was purely partisan politics. I can name one, Barbara Boxer. No matter what we tried to do to explain the policy issues, she refused to even listen. She knew nothing about foreign affairs and was afraid to learn. She was one of the few who wouldn't even give us the time of day. Even John Conyers and Ron Dellums would at least listen, both of whom I talked to. So it was a combination of those things.

The situation in Central America was difficult at best. There were some human rights violations by the Contras which were given great publicity, although the same sources would not spend much space on the proven, indisputable torture and terrorism methods of Tomas Borge, Sandinista Interior Minister, who was in charge of the jails. Of course, Borge had long been a committed, admitted Marxist. He used to receive US peace delegations, or the coffee pickers who were going to save the Sandinista economy, and then promise to release prisoners. Of course, he would re-arrest them the next day when the delegations left. The media knew this but didn't report it very notably.

Q: Let me ask you; we often hear that the executive branch, in an effort to sell its policy to Congress or the American people, tends to exaggerate. Was the success of what you were trying to promote, or what the policy was going to accomplish, an issue in the aid to the Contras? Were we promising or telling Congress things that were exaggerated, or were we really giving the whole and unvarnished truth?

PASTORINO: I think we were giving them most of the unvarnished truth; unfortunately, too many people couldn't accept it because of their preconceived

notions so we had to repeat it frequently. There were successes, and if anything, I wouldn't say we exaggerated the success but we tried to exaggerate the perception of it. For example we had a whole campaign to convince Congress, including a daily summary of all the Central American news, which we sent to every Congressional office.

It was also difficult to demonstrate complete success in a short time. The Contras were fighting in rural Nicaragua in a hostile environment, far away from Managua. They didn't need reporters tagging along, especially clearly biased ones. And the Sandinistas were not permitting the international press to see their losses, which were taking place. Some able, dedicated reporters did try to go with the Contras but it was a difficult endeavor. They of course used to love to visit the camps at Yamales, but that was not where the action was taking place.

Plus, there was a tremendous campaign against the effort to help the Democratic Resistance. The Contra failures were exaggerated. Whatever was reported, it was an indisputable fact that within one year, the Contras were effectively holding large parts of northern Nicaragua. That shamed the Washington Post and New York Times because they said it couldn't be done, and so they wouldn't admit it. The Washington Times certainly reported those successes. One should go back and compare the reporting. In reality the whole battle was one of politics and perception. The Ollie North problem with Iran/Contra also didn't help. It was a political battle. The administration wanted to do it, but the Congress didn't. Not all of the Congress obviously. Much of the Democratic majority was in the hands of radicals who would not consider continued lethal aid on any grounds.

It did teach me one thing. It showed me, a Foreign Service Officer, how important Congress was. I had come into the Foreign Service, believing that the Executive Branch, made and carried out foreign policy and you just told Congress about it once in a while. But, ten years into my career, I found out that you have to do more than just tell Congress about it, you had to bring them along. And, later in my career, I recognized and better understood that Congress are the ones who vote the money. So Congress has to be a partner. It's unfortunate because Congress is not very expert; it often has a very short term view; and it can be very partisan. There are staff people who have to be approached and dealt with but really don't have much knowledge and don't care in many cases. A very important committee once had a key staff person who listed "Marxist" as his political affiliation when hired. Plus many place their highest priority on the reelection effort of their bosses over and above US interests and the public policy.

Q: When Congress did not vote the hundred million dollars of lethal assistance, it was the beginning of the process that Oliver North began to find substitute funds?

PASTORINO: No, Oliver North actually found his funds before the hundred million dollars was appropriated by the Congress. Part of my detail to the NSC at this time was to do some of the things North was legitimately supposed to be

doing vis-à-vis the Congress and the NSC. It was during my time in Honduras that the scandal blew and North resigned.

Q: Did you have any knowledge, pre-knowledge of it? What were your attitudes?

PASTORINO: I didn't know anything about any money coming from Brunei. I didn't know anything about trips Elliott or Secretary might have made. I didn't know about whatever the Secretary might have done. There was not a lot of talk in the Pentagon. At this time, everyone in the Pentagon was not completely behind the Contra effort. The people in the low intensity conflict (LIC) section, a civilian office, and the regional and front office were for it. But there were a lot of people on the Joint Chiefs staff that were not for it. They did not want to muck around in these little wars. They opposed it or didn't throw their whole weight behind it, not so much on the basis of ideology, but they just didn't think this is what the U.S. military should be doing

By the time I got to the NSC all of the files had been removed. I learned later that I was using the same computer, the same memory capacity that Oliver North had used. I understand that he had deleted some of the information. I guess the NSC had a redundant backup system. Also, just because one deletes material doesn't necessarily mean the deletion is for mal-intentioned reasons.

Q: What about Rich Armitage? Armitage had the reputation as a guy who reveled in and relished the idea of low intensity conflicts, guerrilla warfare. He was a very gung ho kind of a guy.

PASTORINO: Yes, Rich was totally behind the program. There was no question. He was a patriot and an insightful, analytical policy-maker who deservedly had the total confidence of his superiors. He had come down to Honduras to see it on several occasions. He had a lot to do with the low intensity concept. He was a distinguished military career person, who knew the ins and outs of conflict and appreciated it realistically. Far better, I might say, that many people on the Hill. Also, few people had better contacts with all levels of official and unofficial Washington.

Armitage was a favorite of the uniformed military. He was not as well liked by some civilians in other parts of the government. He gave Skip Gnehm, later to be our Ambassador to Kuwait, and Director General of the Foreign Service, and a great diplomat, and me, somewhat of a hard time when we were both Deputy Assistant Secretaries. Skip was the DAS for the Middle East. Rich used to try and read the riot act to us when he thought the State Department did something wrong. He would do that in a staff meeting. I would just speak up. I'd say that it was not true and this is why. I got along well with Armitage, and consider him a great American, who has been badly mistreated by Washington and the media.

Q: Were you at this time, I don't want to say reporting back, back channel, but

were you in your dealings with the State Department, passing on information to State? If someone wanted to know what was going on in the Pentagon, would they give you a call?

PASTORINO: No. They may have called and asked what kind of gossip and stuff was going on but I didn't have time for that. I doubt that I told them anything if they asked. Did I report to State out of channels? No, not really. Much of what I did was done jointly with State, the CIA and the NSC. Several meetings were chaired by Jose Sorzano who was at the NSC. Or Elliott or Mike Kozak.

And, I didn't worry that my State "Masters" might be angry at what I might recommend, or would retaliate when promotions or assignments came up. And, I think I was right in not worrying. In fact, I thought I did a pretty good job of getting along with everyone, utilizing the concept that policy-makers should share information, and certainly not waste time back-biting. Or, for that matter spending an inordinate time worrying about the next assignment, as some officers did.

I didn't see a lot of this secrecy amongst the agencies. I didn't see a lot of back biting. I guess there were times when the Pentagon people didn't tell me things thinking I'd run to State. But I think I had the reputation after Honduras of having been pretty straight up with the military and the other agencies. I think there was a modicum of trust. It might be different on other issues, but for the most part for most of the issues, we were in this together. It was more of a cooperation. There were times we didn't agree. There were times when I would say in the Pentagon, this is not going to work because State will never agree to this. But I didn't see a lot of sneaking around.

And as far as people not telling me things, most people at most levels find out there is a time when people have to come across with information, either in writing or verbally. Or get out of the policy discussion. Plus, I was no dummy. I didn't just believe what my staff told me. I didn't just stick to talking to civilians or military. I had fairly good contacts in the whole government as long as the issue was Latin America.
Also, I was a Deputy Assistant Secretary, and I depended on an Assistant Secretary to provide guidance and tell me what was necessary. I was not a free agent; I was a member of a team. And Armitage was not shy about calling me at four in the morning or Saturday afternoon. There were times when Rich and I actually went to Ambassador Carlucci's home to discuss issues and get instructions. Carlucci became Secretary of Defense about three or four months after I got there. So I thought I was included in what was going on. Certainly I had the confidence of Carlucci. I thought I built up confidence with Armitage and Ickle.

Q: You mention Noriega and the Panama problem. What was the U.S. policy towards Panama and especially towards Noriega at this point? How were we dealing with these issues?

PASTORINO: This was about five or eight years into Noriega's authoritarian rule in Panama. We had supported him for a long time, even before he was President. He had trained in U.S. schools. He had been head of Panamanian Intelligence and we had worked with him on other things as a leader of the Panamanian military, especially with regard to the protection of the Canal. He'd offered to help us with the Contras, which in most cases we turned down. We found out later that he was giving us drug intelligence that he wanted to give us because it undercut his drug competition.

When I got to the Pentagon it was pretty clear we couldn't deal with him any more on any basis. Part of my job was to try and figure out a way to ease him out. I didn't come up with this policy on my own. This was under guidance from much higher. Some of the uniformed military, the DEA, and the CIA, who had dealt with him for so long, didn't want to end the relationship. But they came around to the conclusion that we could not work with this guy anymore.

The Reagan Administration was making every effort to support democracy in the hemisphere. This is the time and policy of President Reagan of which we should be very proud. Most Americans were proud, actually, although some wouldn't admit it. But someone must have voted for him; as I remember he won both Presidential elections by overwhelming majorities. I remember his famous map which showed Latin America, almost completely colored red in the late 1970s, indicating all those countries run by Marxists or other reactionary authoritarian governments, both left and right. By the end of the Reagan Administration, almost the whole map was colored in green, signifying regimes that had been elected and were more or less democratic. In fact, it was the whole hemisphere, with the exception of Haiti, Nicaragua, Panama, and Cuba. What bed partners!! So Noriega was no longer the type of regime we would support.

No one really wanted to drive him out physically through violence. So the policy was to try and convince him to leave voluntarily, offering him whatever incentives we might be able to offer. As we shall see, the policy didn't work although in a certain sense we gained time and thus saved many lives. This is a good spot to remind all of us that in most situations it takes both sides to compromise, in order to effect a peaceful outcome; and often they can't. We have several foreign policy critics who like to point out Government errors, not recognizing that the other side won't always cooperate.

At the same time we discussed a peaceful way out in Panama, there were efforts to undercut him among his own people, especially the Panamanian National Guard. One might ask at this point what US interest was involved that made us want to see Noriega leave. Very simply, we still had sovereignty over the Canal and the Zone facilities, an important national interest. And they were not safe as long as Noriega remained in power. There was our policy effort to encourage or aid or promote democratic change. We talked to a lot of the Panamanian

dissidents, there were many, both civilian and military. We were always on the look out for the right group or person who we might be able to support, although more importantly, what we wanted were free elections, and we would learn to work with the winner. Certainly, many Panamanians approached us to be that person or group. In fact, they came out of the woodwork. I spent lots of time on the Noriega issue while at Defense, especially before he was indicted for drug trafficking.

I remember one case in which I talked to him personally for four hours in a very private setting and made no progress. As was traditional, the US Government, in this case the Defense Department, was invited to send an official, high-level delegation to Mexico City to celebrate Mexico's National Day. All of the rest of Latin America was also invited. No one at DOD wanted to head the delegation. Of course, I jumped at the chance. The Pentagon provided a plane and I headed a delegation of eight or ten Generals and several civilians from other parts of the government to participate in the ceremony and meetings. Fran accompanied me. I don't remember there being any formal meetings, but there were many ceremonial and social events. We all presented a big floral arrangement at the Monument of the *Ninos Heroes*, the young cadets who committed suicide in 1847 defending Chapultepec Castle against the US. That ceremony always seemed a little ironic as far as I was concerned. But the US always appears at these ceremonies in Mexico.

General Noriega headed the delegation from Panama. Clearly this would be an opportunity to talk to him should he want to talk. I had talking points ready if I needed them. Not surprisingly, the Mexicans did everything to put Noriega and Pastorino together at every opportunity. Since he was a five star general and far out-ranked me in accordance with protocol, which Mexico normally respects, the togetherness was unexpected but probably contrived. I suspected the Mexicans may have been trying to embarrass one of us, or both, as the Mexicans love to do at times.

Lo and behold, on the first day, Noriega was trying to get close to me in the photographs and ceremonies, perhaps to gain some credibility? I didn't have the chance nor instructions to stay away from him; we still had full diplomatic relations with him and the Panamanian Government. Anyway when we were thrown together I'd talk to him. I had already met him once. Quickly, he asked to meet privately with me. I agreed and invited him to come to my suite in the Sheraton Hotel, where he was also staying, and we could just chat for the afternoon. I made sure the meeting was approved by the Pentagon which responded by immediate cable in the affirmative. I had the talking points.

The only condition I placed on the meeting was the attendance also of the US Commander of the Southern Command, based in Panama, General Fred Werner. Noriega demurred, asking for a one on one meeting. I wanted Fred there, because he was dealing on a daily basis with Noriega and we thought he should be

involved in any discussions. After two days of back and forth, he agreed, and brought Colonel Purcell of the Panamanian Air Force. In other words, I had to negotiate in order to arrange a negotiating session, whatever it might be termed.

We had a four hour meeting in my suite, the two of us with the two Panamanians. Fran arranged it all and then retired to the other room. We chatted for four hours. He gave me a three hour lecture on how democratic Panama really was, how good he was for the country, and how much the US had loved him and supported him, and why we should continue to do so. I got one hour in to explain to him about our concept of democracy and how we were no longer going to support him. I made it very clear that he was being investigated for drug trafficking and that the relationship as it had been in the past was over. I suggested we should find a mutually satisfactory solution and provided some recommendations. The meeting led to nothing. I made a full telegraphic report that night. Clearly he was not changing his position. General Werner followed up on this meeting, and he didn't see any movement either.

So, we continued to maintain the public position that it would be beneficial for bilateral relations if he were to leave the leadership of Panama. The Pentagon cooperated in the drug investigations taking place, especially the one by the Justice Department which was looking to indict him. They were gathering evidence for the Grand Jury.
We had other chances to talk him out of a confrontation. At the end of the year, we decided we should talk to him once more before any indictment was brought against him. I thought it would be much more difficult to talk to him for legal reasons should he be under indictment. You can't always be sure when an indictment will be brought but it seemed to me to be imminent.

We arranged, through the Southern Command and our Ambassador in Panama to have Noriega invite us to Panama and talk there at the highest level. Rich Armitage and I flew down the day before New Year's eve. I thought it was going to ruin the holiday for my family and me, and for Rich's family. We flew down in the morning and met with him at his headquarters in old Panama City, which was later destroyed in the invasion. I did not resent Armitage going. He was the boss. He wanted to go one on one to see if he could convince Noriega. I'm sure he had met him but he wasn't an expert on Panama. We of course invited our Ambassador to Panama, Art Davis, to attend with us. We all went to the *Commandancia* sometime shortly before noon. I had briefed Armitage completely about my previous meeting, and we had Washington-cleared talking points and positions. I even told Rich that before we left the meeting, Noriega would offer to introduce us to Ms. Panama, for who knows what reason. He always had six or seven Ms. Panamas next door.

So we went into the meeting, Armitage, Ambassador Davis, and me. We started off the discussion, going over our position, similar to that presented in Mexico City, with possibly slightly varied recommendations. He received us with only

one assistant at the most. There were no note takers, just the five of us. Just the regular meeting room of the *Commandancia.* He brought out a bottle of scotch and something to eat. He poured the scotch and in typically Latino diplomatic style we drank some of it.

I think at that time we recognized that he had done some positive things for us. We recognized what he had done for Panama and that as military leader of the Panamanian National Guard, he was reaching normal retirement age. We understood that the retirement date was coming up in about six months and we thought a retirement with high honors would be very appropriate. We thought that fair, open, democratic elections could best be held if he was outside of Panama during the campaign, but we had no conditions on whether he should or could return after they were finished and a new President were installed.

We emphasized his responsibility in maintaining the peace and stability of the Panama Canal. We noted and tried to convince him that there would be no US retaliation against him in any way, either in Panama or overseas, and that we would not try to extradite him, there being no indictment at that time against him. We knew he had large assets overseas, and we let him know we were not after them, nor would we try to attach them. I well remembered that several months before he had threatened to confiscate two thoroughbred race horses in Panama, belonging to President Eric Arturo Del Valle. Del Valle had fled into exile in Miami but had retained the Presidency and we recognized him. In fact, Del Valle would be very helpful to us in that capacity when economic sanctions were later levied against Panama. We had reminded Noriega his house in Paris might be vulnerable and he had backed off quickly on his threatened confiscation.

So those were the arguments we made in the meeting, which lasted maybe three hours. Noriega didn't reject them. He never rejected them. He was very street smart and a good negotiator; he had been negotiating all of his life. He never said no. He wanted to draw you out and see what was in it for him. So we went back and forth. He made his points. He did maintain that the Panamanians really wanted him there, really needed him. He was really a friend of ours, he repeated over and over. He said he didn't deal in drugs and noted all the druggers and dopers he turned over to us or on whom he provided important information for our investigations, including the Colombians.

Nothing came out of this meeting except some very bad publicity. Someone put out the story two days later that Davis, Armitage and Pastorino were at the *Commandancia* with Noriega drinking Scotch and smoking cigars. Of course, the newspaper article only reported these details, not any of the substance of the meeting, nor the context. Only, that we went to drink scotch and smoke cigars. Actually, before you can ask, they were Honduran cigars. We took his cigars. But, that's Latino style. Anyway, the upshot was that Armitage and I flew home the night before New Year's Eve.

Early the next year, I was summoned to a Justice Department meeting to represent Secretary Carlucci. Elliott Abrams, someone from the CIA, and someone else from State also attended. The meeting was with the Assistant Attorney General who asked us whether any Department would recommend that the indictment which was about to be brought against Noriega be quashed for foreign policy reasons. I understood that only the President could quash the indictment, and that authority could not be delegated. Did anyone want to recommend to President Ronald Reagan that he should quash the indictment?, we were asked. We all said no, all of us under instructions of our superiors. Shortly thereafter, he was indicted for drug trafficking and other sundry things. The indictment was publicized and then we turned to other methods, all legal and approved through the right channels including where necessary the Congress, to convince Noriega that his departure would be best for US-Panamanian relations.

Q: On the one hand was anyone concerned that Noriega would retaliate by doing something in the zone to the canal? Or were people looking for that as an excuse to use military force to drive him out?

PASTORINO: There was a clear fear on the part of the Canal Commission, on which I served in an ex-officio capacity by virtue of being the Deputy Assistant Secretary. There was a concern that he would try to sabotage the canal or try to sabotage or takeover our legally constituted bases in Panama. The canal as you may know is very difficult if not impossible to defend against a sabotage attempt against the locks or other facilities. Any Noriega threat against the bases were also considered. We did have him out gunned and out numbered but precautions were taken.

So we put a lot of pressure on at this time and later when I went to the NSC. We controlled the Canal Commission both because of the American members, and because the Panamanian members didn't like Noriega. They just wanted to run a canal, they didn't want to get mixed up in politics. There was a large and very important study, financed by the U.S. and Japan, being done on how to enlarge the canal to bring it into the twenty first century, keeping ahead of the competition. As part of our economic sanctions we collected and remitted to a bank account in escrow the canal tolls, as well as the revenues from the cross-Isthmian oil pipeline which crossed northern Panama.

So we were careful and he was careful. We did not provoke him. In the end, he did seriously harass American military officials and their spouses, affecting American interests. He actually publicly stated he was at war with the US.

This whole issue of Noriega and Panama was complicated and almost unique in some ways. We dealt with his puppet President the whole time on certain issues in certain circumstances. We certainly kept the canal and the canal commission running. At the same time, when I was transferred to the NSC, we were dealing with President Del Valle who had taken up residence in Miami. I remember at this

time I was dealing in Washington with the Panamanian Ambassador who had been appointed by Del Valle, and I was actually making trips to Miami to see President Del Valle in his Miami hotel suite. There were times when Del Valle signed laws or regulations that allowed us to help him do things in Panama even if he wasn't in Panama, such as what to do with the pipeline and canal revenues, for instance. It was a unique situation. People often became frustrated and say "why don't we just go into Panama and take him (Noriega) out." We couldn't do that at this time, for a whole variety of reasons, including the American public, the Congress, and the military.
I remember a study was done at the Pentagon early in my assignment to determine what casualty rates might be if there was an invasion at that time of Panama. I remember the estimates were very high, far higher than the actual casualty list when the invasion finally took place almost two years later. In my own mind and I think everyone went along with me, or I went along with others, no invasion should be considered at that time. It was not worth a large number of American lives.

So, it may have looked like we were spinning our wheels and doing nothing. But, while we were carrying out our efforts, we were buying time as he was losing both the control of and his support within the National Guard, his political party, the Democratic Revolutionary Party [PRD], and other sectors in Panama. Of course, not all of that reduction in power emanated from the US Government. There were National Guard officials who hoped for his departure; some worked on it actively, and made recommendations to us. The *Cruzada Civica*, a volunteer, all civilian, peaceful organization, heavily influenced public opinion against Noriega and his regime. The economic sanctions began to have a real bite, reducing support for Noriega. And, many Panamanians just got fed up, and became more vocal when they became convinced the US was serious in seeking new leadership and a new trend in the US-Panamanian relationship.

So, again, maybe it wasn't a completely successful policy from day one. Maybe it took two years for a successful policy. But, it did help in removing Noriega, ridding ourselves of a petty dictator and a major drug trafficker, at a relatively small loss in American lives. Of course, even twenty lives was too many, but it was far less than it would have been two years earlier.

Q: One last thing on the DOD assignment, one issue which interests me. You talked about Cuba and Guantanamo. There was no effort to change the situation or protect Guantanamo? The Cubans had left it alone or pretty much so?
PASTORINO: My only dealings as Deputy Assistant Secretary with Guantanamo was to make sure that all of the provisions of the treaty granting us rights in perpetuity were followed, and that the political policy guiding our relations with Castro was implemented. I worked hard to assure that we continued to isolate him so that he couldn't subvert our friends or spread his enormously failed economic policies which brought Cuba to its economic knees, especially when the daily multi-million dollar subsidies from the Russians disappeared. So, I did spend a lot

of time on Cuba and Cuban related issues like Cuban subversion in Central America and the ties between Castro and Noriega. There were ties. As to running Guantanamo, I didn't spend a lot of time on that. I didn't even have reason to visit it until later when I was Ambassador to the Dominican Republic and I went to see the Haitian refugees which were being housed there.

Q: Anything else you want to talk about on that job?

PASTORINO: No, the time at the Pentagon was an eventful year, it was very educational, it was interesting, and I saw another aspect of US Foreign Policy and how it is made and implemented. It demonstrates another thing a Foreign Service Officer should do, if at all possible; that is to take an assignment in another Agency depending on his expertise. For instance, with my economic background and knowledge, I probably should have gone to Treasury. I would have liked to go to STR. But, a political officer or a strategic policy maker should spend time at the Pentagon or the CIA so that you actually get to know that policy atmosphere in addition to getting to know the people. So I enjoyed the year.

NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL: ASSISTANT TO THE PRESIDENT FOR LATIN AMERICAN AFFAIRS

Q: What came next in your varied career?

PASTORINO: After about one year at DOD, I got another surprise telephone call affecting my career, and again, I guess I was at the right place at the right time. Rich Armitage came to see me, or called me. I think it was late one night. He asked me if I knew what had just happened at the NSC. I said no. He said they had just fired my friend Jose Sorzano as the Presidential Assistant for Latin American Affairs and his assistant. He said he understood there had been a policy dispute with Ambassador Negroponte, who was the Deputy NSC Advisor and an expert on Latin America in his own right. He said Colin Powell was interested in whether I would transfer to the NSC on a permanent basis.

I was flabbergasted and asked Rich what he was really saying. Was this just a question or was it an order from above. To tell you the truth, I had finally learned my way around the Pentagon. I had a great relationship with Armitage. I enjoyed the things we were doing. One doesn't always have his own plane to fly around the hemisphere. I traveled frequently with delegations headed by Secretary Shultz. Rich said, “let's see what happens”. Colin of course had seen me at the NSC and knew of my capabilities. Rich added that General Powell needed someone right away, like in a few days and had seen me operate since I had been there during the last few months. And frankly, I knew Colin needed someone right away. Finally, I knew there were a lot of people who didn’t want the job, with only a year left in the Administration, and very controversial issues, such as Haiti, Panama, and the Contras.

I went home that night and didn't have much time to think about it. Then I got a call from Colin Powell the next Monday or Tuesday asking if I would make the switch. That was the first close, personal contact I had with Colin. But, he asked me in such a manner that I didn’t feel one could say no; so I said yes. Actually, it wasn’t such a big move. We didn’t have to move from our house in Fairfax; it wouldn’t upset the lives of Fran and the family. And, I had been spending almost every day at the NSC anyway.

I was at the NSC permanently within the week. Again I asked State and State was not about to say anything negative. I moved into the NSC office, heading a section which had a paper complement of three; but for much of the time, I was alone and then finally hired my old friend from the Pentagon, Pete Brintnall. When Pete retired, I hired a young CIA officer who was a whiz on Latin America, especially Central America. No one could say I played favorites. As I tried to do throughout my career, I picked the most effective person, regardless of his Agency or Department.

Q: What were the issues there?

PASTORINO: At the NSC? The issues were almost exactly the same ones that I had been dealing with. I was just dealing with them from a different perspective, from a different location. I was supposed to be the Government-wide coordinator. Colin Powell and John Negroponte did not want the NSC to run everything. They wanted the NSC to coordinate. They didn't want the NSC to make the decisions and carry them out. They wanted the NSC to coordinate which is the way it was first set up. That was their charge from the President. It was an obvious reaction to the previous time when McFarlane and Poindexter were perceived as running it differently.

Now, it's hard to <u>just</u> coordinate in the classical sense when you have expertise and you have to respond immediately to the President. At that time the NSC advisor met with the President every morning. Colin Powell did and it continued when I worked for General Scowcroft for the second six months. Brent Scowcroft replaced Colin when President Bush replaced President Reagan. So you have to respond immediately and it is more than just coordination. But by the time I got there, Carlucci had been there. He had revamped, restructured, redesigned the NSC to be what it was supposed to be and Colin was continuing to implement that design.

So I arrived to work full-time at the NSC at the height of the very same issues: Central America: money for the Contras; end the communist aggression in Salvador; help Panama regain democracy; continue the promotion of democracy throughout the hemisphere; do something about the basket case which was Haiti; promote the protection of human rights; and do something about the authoritarian, Marxist, failing Cuba, if anything could be done, in order to help the Cuban people, who continued to flee the workers paradise in Havana for Miami and points north, etc.

So the issues were similar except that I was coordinating the Government-wide effort. Suddenly, I was on a different level when dealing with State, DOD and the CIA, or for that matter with USDA, the DEA, Treasury or any other of the many US Government agencies helping to make or formulate policy as it related to Latin America. I was also in a position of not really doing papers or analyzing issues myself. I wasn't coming up with ideas myself. My biggest job was to chair meetings or task people to make the inputs and/or recommendations which then could be vetted and cleared within the US Government. The policy papers would come to me first and I would get them ready for approval by the NSC Advisor and ultimately the President. During the first part of my NSC assignment there were not a lot of new ideas because we were in the last year of the Administration, as obviously it was an election year.

Q: Of course, it was the eighth year of the Reagan administration.

PASTORINO: It was the last six months of Ronald Reagan. My time at the NSC

was unique for me in that it was the first time I had to worry so much about the domestic political impact and the impact on the upcoming elections. I began to learn this at the Pentagon: which Congressman represented which district? And what were his domestic interests? How did he come down on the policy issues and how could we, the Administration, work together with him or her? As a Foreign Service Officer I had not been so concerned about that aspect of policy.

Of course, I did get into some of that while still at the Pentagon. I had a significant success when I had gone to convince Congressman Stephen Solarz, who didn't vote for the Administration very often, that he should vote for the sale of F-16 fighters to Honduras. I actually went to his office, bringing some charts and then just sat down and discussed the issue's various ramifications. Basically, we thought that Honduras needed the planes as a deterrent to the Sandinista Air Force which was threatening the Hondurans. I guess I had a positive role, or was persuasive, because Solarz voted for the appropriation, being the swing vote on the committee against his Democratic colleagues. Solarz had come to Honduras and I had taken him to the Yamales camps, so he had some familiarity with the situation and the Nicaraguan threat, as well as with the Honduran fears.

This close interaction with Congress was another positive development I got from the NSC. I remember I went up to the Hill two, three, four days a week, sometimes with Colin Powell or other White House advisors, or just by myself.

I want to go back for a second to amplify something involving Congress which I previously touched upon; I missed something which I consider important. When I was at the Pentagon, it was the first time I ever testified before Congressional Committees. It was one of the tasks I disliked. State Department officers only testified when they reached a fairly high rank. As a Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense, I testified on several issues. I went with Elliott several times, or as a member of a three or four member panel.

I testified on my own several times on Panama, both in executive session and in open, public session. For instance, once on the Noriega and Canal issue, I testified in closed session and then discussed what I could testify to during the following open session. Congress usually, but not always, respects the rules of secrecy and confidentiality, which are all-important to successful diplomacy.

I also testified in front of the super-secret Intelligence Committees, which are an important arm of Congress and key to the relationship between he Administration and the Hill. In fact, there is legislation that provides for this relationship, which is needed in order to protect confidentiality and to discuss such activities as covert action, where the Congress has an approval and oversight role.

I mentioned my testimony before Congress while at the Pentagon, because while at the NSC, as many times as I went to Congress, I never testified. The NSC normally doesn't testify unless it's an investigation. Even in that case, many times

they don't because they are considered personal advisors of the President and are covered by executive privilege on most issues.

I dealt heavily at this time also with the Congressional staff. There were policies or aspects of policy that I would work out with Congressional staff people, and then I went to my bosses and they went to theirs. I thought that was a very important part of that job and an interesting part. Of course, there were things we could not work out with the Congress. We did get humanitarian assistance for the Contras. We did a lot of things to support democracy. There was more aid for democratic programs in Latin America. And, during the first few months of the Bush administration, working for General Scowcroft, I was involved in making certain refinements of the Central American policy. President Bush didn't take power and completely change the foreign policy of Ronald Reagan, but he did make some changes which turned out to be very successful.

Q: I thought that Bob Blackwell, during the first months of the Bush administration, did ask for government wide review of foreign policy. Didn't that take place with regard to Latin America?

PASTORINO: Well, a review maybe. But, that happens at the beginning of every Administration. The transition teams like to do it, partially because many of them are angling for jobs. I don't remember any earthshaking developments with regard to Latin America. Of course, as the situation changed, and the makeup of Congress changed, one has to refine or in some cases change the policy. I really remember only one major effort during the first few months. Some newcomers, together with some of Castro's allies on the Hill and other places, tried to convince President Bush to take some measures which would have killed the embargo. Fortunately, some of us were able to stop that ill-advised attempt.

Q: To what degree, as a State Department employee of relatively low State rank, were you resented by your colleagues in the State Department who may have outranked you in terms of your personal rank, and yet more or less had to follow your bidding?

PASTORINO: I didn't see any resentment. I don't remember any. Again, because it was Latin America, I had worked with these same State Department officials during my whole career. I was a junior officer with some of them. I had worked with them in Portugal, in ARA/ECP, and on the Mexican desk for instance. One Deputy Assistant Secretary, I had worked with on fisheries issues on lower levels when he was in the Department's Office of the Legal Counsel. And, remember, during my time at the Pentagon, and on the Mexican Desk I had worked with almost every single Agency of the Government. So I didn't sense any resentment. I don't think it hurt me. I had a job to do. I was frank with these people. I would never call and demand; I would discuss, or go over and visit for a one on one discussion. But it was true that I could, and did, send instructions to Ambassadors. Once I remember I called Elliott Abrams early on a Saturday morning at the

behest of General Powell to talk about a critical timing issue involving the plebiscite in Chile which was ultimately to lead to Pinochet's departure from the Presidency and the return of democracy in Chile. While I am not going into details, we developed and carried out a strategy which basically forced Pinochet to go ahead with the plebiscite which he knew he would lose and which he contemplated postponing. Yes, during the Reagan Administration we were promoting democracy, perhaps not in the headlines but with hardheaded practical measures. Of course, there was not a lot of publicity for this type of activity; perhaps it would have ruined the media's image of Reagan.

The one thing I did notice is that my calls from the NSC were always returned immediately, no matter whom or at what level I called. The responder may not have agreed with me, but the calls were certainly returned. There is a certain emphasis, when one can say within the US Government, that the White House, or the West Wing, or the NSC is on the line. That was a necessary perk of the job when urgency was needed on a pending policy decision or a pending operational matter.

One occasion was the time that US Customs Officers in New York found poisoned grapes in a shipment from Chile. They had been injected with arsenic, and Customs had discovered them. Colin asked me to look into it and determine what to do. I immediately called the highest levels of Customs and the FDA, and within hours talked to everyone concerned, such that by that same afternoon, we had a signed document embargoing shipments of grapes from Chile. It was drastic measure, and unfortunately it was allowed to remain in effect for years, but a necessary one to protect the American people. No one could know that those were the only contaminated grapes entering the US, as they eventually proved to be. Actually, that was a textbook case of NSC coordination.

Q: Talk a little bit about how Powell operated the NSC. I mean were there morning staff meetings, even though Colin Powell's major interest was elsewhere. Did he delegate authority, how did it work?

PASTORINO: Colin Powell at the time I was at the NSC was most worried about relations with the Soviet Union, about the summit meetings with the Russians, visits to Moscow, and the whole realm of disarmament issues, as well as other geo-strategic cold war issues. He couldn't pay a lot of attention to Latin America except for the Central American issue, which never went away. And, that issue also involved the Soviets, given their support, and that of their Cuban puppets, for the Sandinistas. Also, lets not forget that John Negroponte was his Deputy and he was all-knowledgeable about Latin America. Even John didn't worry that much about Latin American, he had lots of other problems. So, yes there was significant delegation of authority.

At the outset I would say I remain a great admirer of Colin Powell. I was very disappointed when he made the decision not to run for the Presidency; he would

have made an outstanding Chief Executive of our country. Colin was easy to work with; if he had confidence in you, you only had to get a paper to him at the appropriate time with talking points and he would use them.

Sometimes those were the famous 3x5 cards which President Reagan used, and used very well I might say. The President made the talking points beautifully. He gave them far better than they were written. He didn't expand much on them, except on a few issues. Not because he wasn't knowledgeable, he just didn't have to provide details; that was someone else's job. The President should be paid to focus on broad policies, providing guidance and direction, and not get bogged down in detail so he misses the forest for the trees, to quote an oft-used expression. We had had Presidents who focused so much on details, they failed on the over-riding issues of the day.

General Powell held a staff meeting in the situation room of the West Wing of the White House very early every morning with the advisors for each geographical region, as well as the advisors for the functional issues, such as disarmament, economics, congressional affairs, etc. So there were probably twelve to fifteen of us every morning in the staff meeting. It was very early I think seven thirty in the morning. It was quick, usually a half hour. We went around the room, with Colin asking about the latest development in each person's area of responsibility. Colin Powell was a very good at determining strategic, long term policy. He did a lot of that. Although when I was there, there was not much forward planning for the rest of the Reagan Administration on Latin American issues. He also was very good at determining what are we going to do today and this week. What does the President need? What do I need when I go talk to the President later today? So, assignments would be made. They'd be carried out.

I didn't have to stay too late at night. Most of the time I left by six thirty or seven. There were very few nights was I there until nine or ten; I had worked much longer hours on the Mexican desk or overseas. I had a special telephone I could use at home if it was necessary. The White House Communications people could always get a hold of me and I could get to them instantly through a telephone patch.

Colin Powell is a very personable person and very considerate of his staff. He knew everyone's name. Once a week he held a meeting of all of the NSC staff, including communicators, clerks, security, and secretaries. Everyone attended. There was about eighty of us. General Powell was masterful. He knew everyone's name and what they did, and he would frequently call on them to see how they were doing, how they might be handling problems and issues. The staff appreciated this very much.

Back to the main meetings in the situation room; he knew a great deal about most of the issues. He never forgot where you left the issue two weeks ago or ten days ago. I was not one of the most active persons around that table because I didn't

have a lot of major issues.

I do remember the morning after the 1988 Mexican Presidential elections when Carlos Salinas was elected. The media reported that the computers had broken down, and there was great speculation about the situation. Colin asked what did I think about the situation, and what we should do? Before I could even open my mouth, some other regional advisor said we should not recognize Salinas' election, in effect by not sending the Ambassador in to congratulate Salinas as was traditional. Three or four of the other advisors jumped in, taking the same tack. I didn't say a word for a while because I knew Colin in the end would ask me. He did, and I recommended that we congratulate Salinas as soon as possible because he would be the next President of Mexico and we would be dealing with him. I said I didn't know whether he would get forty nine or fifty one percent, or whatever percentage, and we might not ever know, but Carlos Salinas would be the next president of Mexico. I was then authorized to call the Ambassador and approve his sending of congratulations. That is how General Powell operated, decisively.
Some of my issues were not as easy. That one was a slam dunk. He knew I knew most about Latin American issues. He took my opinions. Others of my issues had been going on for so long, there wasn't much to discuss. We still had to continue to convince Congress to vote funds for the Contras. And, yes, we had to work hard to continue to promote democracy in Panama.

What I didn't have enough time to do at the NSC was forward planning, real policy making with a long term aspects. This is generally true of the whole government, there was never enough time to really do forward planning. There was not enough time to pay attention to countries which are not in crisis, even thought they be very important to the United States. I use Brazil as the great example of this inadequacy.

In my two and a half years between the Pentagon and NSC, I probably spent no more than an hour on Brazil each month, if that, even though it is the most populous, largest country in the southern hemisphere. Brazil was not in a crisis. The same case would have applied to Mexico, except that I was interested in Mexico and could recognize and understand its importance. So, I carved out as many hours as possible to work on Mexico. Unfortunately, we get caught up in he current crisis, and tend to ignore many important issues. I was as guilty as anyone; you're forced to focus on the crisis. That emphasis comes down from the top. Clearly, we run into crises that we could avoid if we paid more attention to them before they become hot issues. I'm not sure how to fix this problem; it is not only dependent upon resources, both personnel and others, although that is a contributing factor. Perhaps it needs greater leadership.

The NSC worked very well at the time I was there. Only about eighty people; it was compact. Everyone knew everyone else. We all worked very closely with one another. It was an agency that wasn't too big. That eighty persons included

communicators and secretaries. So it was not a huge bureaucracy. On the other hand, the only reason it did work is because we could task any agency in the government to provide us what we needed.

I didn't see that most people in the agencies saw the White House as a competitor. I think a lot of this is overblown, the so-called competition between agencies. Most people that I dealt with on my level in other agencies saw dealings with the NSC as part of the job. I must say I was proud to work with the great majority of the people in the other agencies. In fact, if I was successful, many of them should receive a great deal of credit. They worked overtime to get those papers and recommendations to us. It wasn't always what we wanted to hear but they wanted to work with the White House not against it; with the NSC, not against it. On the other hand, there were tremendous policy fights, often between the Secretaries of State and Defense and their Departments. But, they were fights over policy, not personalities or turf, even if at times some of the policy makers threatened to resign in order to win a policy battle. I don't remember seeing very many resignations.

There is a perception that the US Government should operate internally as it is designed on paper, or as the academics perceive it should operate. Remember it is made up of human beings, and policy disputes and personal problems are certain to arise. Academics, who may not have served in the Government, or who don't understand the policy process, are wont to be critical and look for scapegoats. While some of their criticism is "constructive", some of the proposed solutions are striking in their ignorance of the real policy structure or the issues. As for the press, which also often harps on the way Governments don't work, it is usually just trying to sell newspapers or television time. After all, they need to have something to say during the hundreds of hours weekly of supposedly "informed opinion".

Q: Let me ask you about the NSC though. You were there for the final months of the Reagan White House. Now, were talking ten years later, there's some supposition that Reagan's Alzheimer's disease affected his ability to focus on events, he had already by that time deteriorated a lot. To what degree in the White House or the NSC did you ever talk about it?

PASTORINO: By the time I was at the NSC, he'd been in office for seven years. Things were done Ronald Reagan's way; the staff loved and respected Ronald Reagan. He was personable. He invited the staff to events. My family went to a Christmas party at the White House. I ate in the White House mess, as did my family. I briefed Ronald Reagan. I sat in meetings with him. He at times chaired the NSC meeting. I attended some Cabinet meetings. He was personable, he was a gentleman, and people were loyal to him. So the people I worked with thought highly of Ronald Reagan. As to his style, he set forth the overall policy and depended upon people to carry it out. This is the way he did it. He very clearly delegated. He didn't care about details.

I tell a story which I think is illustrative. I had known Vice President Bush in the White House and then I worked for President Bush for four or five months at the NSC. They were tremendous opposites when it came to foreign policy. Bush not only knew the big picture, he knew all the details and he was interested in the details. Ronald Reagan wasn't all that interested in the details. He was interested in providing for US security interests, leading the American people, keeping the Communists at bay, and winning for the good guys, meaning American citizens and their interests. George Bush was interested in the long-term objectives; he led the effort to establish them, and he was also very interested in how they were being carried out. He'd been everywhere, done everything in the foreign policy arena: the NSC, the United Nations as US Ambassador, Ambassador to China, Director of the CIA, a Congressman. It was hard to find a better, broader resume anywhere in the Government, at any time. So he not only knew the process, he knew all the facts.

I'll never forget the time I escorted the Trinidadian Ambassador to the Oval Office to present his credentials to President Bush. Ronald Reagan normally took care of this ceremonial occasion in a few minutes, at least in those in which I had participated. He had the 3x5 cards and he used them. When I took the Trinidadian, it was the first credentials ceremony I had attended with President Bush. So I wrote the talking points. (I don't think we did it on the cards anymore.) And George Bush covered the talking points smoothly in five minutes, and then, surprisingly to me, we went on for another half hour discussing events and developments in the Caribbean and what role Trinidad would play. The President inquired and discussed the oil situation, Trinidad being a large exporter. “Where is the oil price going?” “How should American companies be involved?” “What about OPEC?” Some of this came from his personal background. It turned out that George Bush had gone through his navy basic training in Trinidad and he knew Trinidad.

In response to your original question, I didn't see any indications of any disease affecting Ronald Reagan. Let’s remember he was one of the country’s most popular Presidents; he won some of the largest majorities; and he won the cold war, and a lot of other important issues. A particularly important accomplishment was the way he regained our credibility in the world after the Carter years. Too many people refuse to admit some of these facts.

I was on the phone with him several times when he talked to the President of Mexico. I was both the interpreter and the monitor of these conversations. Ronald Reagan did a masterful job on the subjects he was talking about. Reagan got our points across, what we wanted and what our interests were. Salinas understood that very well. But Reagan wasn't going to tell Salinas how we were going to go about doing it. That was left to George Shultz and the Ambassador and the rest of the Administration.

Q: How about Scowcroft? He was there about three months?

PASTORINO: Yes. I was there with him at the NSC for about three or four months. We had staff meetings. I mostly remember the NSC at that time as a hiring hall. Everyone of the regional and functional advisors departed, except for me. Of course, I had resigned as had the rest of them. And I made it known that I was ready to leave and return to the State Department. I was actively engaged in finding my replacement. I did not like the NSC job as much as some of my other assignments.

Q: What didn't you like about it?

PASTORINO: I didn't like the pressure and making the decisions. I didn't think I had the staff to do it. Sometimes I had one person, and much of the time I had no one, and we were trying to handle a whole hemisphere. And, I didn't like the type of assignment in which I was responsible for many countries or topics. Rather, I liked to specialize and concentrate on one country, such as Mexico, where I thought I could become expert on everything pertaining to that country or issue. Anyway, I was ready to leave the NSC. I don't remember a lot of what happened during the transition and those first few months of the Bush Administration. General Scowcroft is a grand gentleman and very knowledgeable. I don't have a lot to say about him because I didn't work for him for very long. During the time I was there he treated me very well.

It must have been in April or May when John Negroponte called me and asked me to serve with him in Mexico as his DCM. I was John's second choice. He knew I wanted the job. I knew I wanted the job. He called me one day and asked me to see him the next day in his office to have a serious talk. He said he wanted to talk about the future. I knew right away what he wanted. I went over there. He warmed up with a twenty minute introduction, trying to convince me to take the job. Finally, I couldn't remain in my chair any longer and I think I blurted out that I'll take the job and was very grateful. I didn't need any convincing. And, I remember I went home very proud that night, having achieved a long-time ambition, in fact, getting the job I had wanted for sometime.

As I said, I don't remember a lot about those last four months at the NSC. The issues continued. The place didn't fall apart. A major concern at the NSC was to bring the new team on board. With regard to my job, the transition team talked to three or four people to replace me. These people called me and asked what kind of job it was. Some were academics; some were from other government agencies. I knew some of them and could quickly find out about those I did not know.

Finally after two or three months, no one seemed to want the job. Or, the General couldn't find the right person. Latin America is, I guess, a difficult job for some people. There were also domestic political considerations and concerns that I heard about. It certainly wasn't that I was irreplaceable, although I also heard I

was a great least common denominator because, since I was relatively apolitical, in other words a technocrat, I would be acceptable to many of the interest groups who were interested in the policy aspects of the position.

Just at the time Ambassador Negroponte asked me to go to Mexico, Brent Scowcroft called me in and told me they had decided to ask me to stay in my post at the NSC. I knew it would have been difficult to decline had I not already been approached by Ambassador Negroponte. I told the General I was very appreciative of the offer, but I had just received another one I couldn't turn down, explaining my background and intense desire to continue working on Mexico.

Q: How about the transition? To what degree did you see that, witness that? This of course from a Republican to a Republican administration? Was it pretty much automatic?

PASTORINO: The thing I remember most about the transition was just continuing to work on the issues. I don't remember preparing very many papers. I remember talking to someone on the transition team who wanted to know everything about my position and what it entailed. I don't think he was head hunter. I think he was trying to figure out how to reorganize the NSC.

I saw a very different transition when I was on the Mexican desk in 1980. That transition between Carter and Reagan, I remember that one much more clearly. I wrote a thousand papers about the various issues. That was a major transition both in personnel and policy and in the State Department there were some very nasty personnel changes. I remember the 1980 transition team had an office at the State Department and I remember going there day after day. During the 1992 transition, being the incumbent and not having been replaced, I continued to carry out the policy of the Reagan Administration with some minor exceptions. We should remember also that in most cases at the NSC the outgoing advisors physically left during the transition period to be quickly replaced by new people. My case was different. I had a job to do and I did it until I departed to go to Mexico.

You also understand that Congress is not in session during most to the transition period so there is less to do on that front.

I didn't go to the inauguration itself. I was working. I didn't have any great need to "meet" the President. I already knew him. I thought I knew what his policy would be. With some certain refinements or differing emphasis he went along with many of the Reagan policies. Some Reagan policies were Bush policies. I didn't think I'd see much change.

The only real change, a refinement, that I remember was one we had already worked before President Bush had taken office. At one point, General Powell suggested we sit down and think about what to do in Central America. What we've been trying to do wasn't totally successful, though it had stopped the

Sandinista/Castro subversion from spreading and succeeding. I did have several meetings with people, both within the Government and on the Hill. I talked to a lot of people. Incoming Secretary of State Jim Baker gave more emphasis to negotiations in Central America; the objective was similar but the means somewhat different. Over the next couple years, after I was long gone from the NSC, and with the situation on the ground changing we paid more attention to the Central Americans, such as President Arias of Costa Rica, who were trying to solve their own problems. But, we continued to give aid and support to the friendly Central Americans. Also, the international situation changed dramatically with the reduced power of the Soviet Union.

Q: This is a general question and I'm not certain I can articulate it. Maybe it might be a little off the wall. The fact of the matter is, the people who are the policy makers and you as foreign policy experts whether it's in the NSC or Secretaries of State, or people who do not have Latin American experience, they tend to be Europeanists, they tend to be people who either come out of European background, knowledgeable about Europe. Or perhaps they come from economics or are increasingly Asian. But Latin America is a void in their knowledge. You were a Latin Americanist. Is that frustrating to you? Does it give you greater flexibility in terms of formulating policy? I guess my point is guys like Colin Powell or Brent Scowcroft or George Shultz were people whose attentions were on other issues and Latin America was usually a peripheral back water that occasionally would be of some interest. That's a reflection of the larger political problem in America of our unwillingness to deal with some of the issues in the hemisphere.

PASTORINO: I can answer that in several ways. One, the high level focus on other areas didn't bother or frustrate me. That was reality and we had a job to do, in spite of it. And, it was always possible to educate the people whose focus had been elsewhere. For instance, I spent a lot of time briefing VP Quayle before he made his first Latin American trip. I went and briefed him daily for two weeks. I didn't mind that, I saw that as part of my job. I thought no one can be an expert in all regions. Certainly, I didn't "resent" them coming into "my" territory.

Also I found that the people who were new to the region were not just depending on Bob Pastorino. They were talking to a lot of other people, a lot of people who were influential and knowledgeable to a degree, such as academics or business people. Many of the new people learned about the area by talking to the media.

Also, most of the high-level policy-makers understood the importance of the issues in a general sense and could relate Latin America somewhat to their own expertise. They were bright enough to know they have to find solutions and listen to people with experience.

AMERICAN EMBASSY MEXICO CITY: DEPUTY CHIEF OF MISSION

Q: Okay, so then it was off to Mexico. So you finally made it. You really were a Mexican specialist. By the way, let me ask you were you seen as Mr. Mexico?

PASTORINO: I was not seen as Mr. Mexico but I think I was recognized as someone to talk to in order to learn about Mexico, about the issues and especially about the history of the issues. I knew for a fact that there were not many people who had served twice before in Mexico, including in the interior and on the border, and had worked several years in Washington on US-Mexican relations and issues. I had worked on almost every issue: politics, trade, economics, welfare and protection of Americans, the drug war, the border, finance, cultural activities, etc.

Anyway, returning to Mexico was a little like going home. I arrived only days after Ambassador John Negroponte. We moved temporarily into the DCM's house on a main street in Lomas de Chapultepec. It was a nice house but too noisy and we quickly decided to move out and find another house. Fran searched diligently, looking at two dozen houses, and finally found one in a good location (in Lomas de Chapultepec, not far from the Embassy) that was the right size and was great for entertaining. The kids went into the American School, where I had been on the School Board. So it was an easy transition basically. Two of the children, Stephen and Susan, came with us.

Working for Negroponte was not difficult. We had a very good relationship. Actually, as I shall relate this was one of the best assignments that I had from the substantive point of view. There were lots of issues (no new ones) and lots of opportunity to run the Embassy and the Consulates. Our diplomatic complex in Mexico City and the rest of the country was one of the biggest US Missions so I was kept busy. And, we lived well, in spite of the noise, congestion and pollution of Mexico City, which in my opinion, is still one of the world's great cities.

Q: I should ask you what years was this?

PASTORINO: This was 1989 through 1991, the beginning of the George Bush administration. Again I would say that working for the Ambassador was easy and very pleasurable. I probably knew a bit more about Mexico then he did when we arrived. But Ambassador Negroponte was a very quick study. During the first year, I'd say he came to me for advice. After that he didn't need that kind of advice nearly as much. He allowed me to run the Embassy to a large degree. He gave me a say and input on everything. He turned over much of the drug program to me, the whole law enforcement thing. He also gave me a large role on everything economic and again I visited every corner of the country, especially visiting and supervising the Consulates.

I remember that we didn't have many policy differences. I did make one mistake in the beginning. Within days he called a meeting of the whole staff in the Embassy patio where he introduced me and I spoke to the Mexican staff as old

friends; in fact, we had gone through a lot together during the earthquake and its aftermath. I mentioned those days, and I think there was some feeling I might be trying to upstage him. But, I think that went away quickly.

The issues were the same. The drug enforcement operations were more intense, larger and more complicated. There was more growing of heroin and marijuana in Mexico, more processing, and much more trafficking through Mexico from South America. Also money laundering became a major problem. Also, as the drug business grew, corruption grew and became more pervasive so it was difficult to know who one could trust and work with. Whatever you did in Mexico you had to worry about whether they were working with you or against you. I often feared I might give important intelligence to the wrong people who might use it for their own ends.

Some of the economic issues were the same, always close to becoming serious trade or investment disputes, and they threatened to become more serious as trade continued to increase significantly. One of the first things we did was help Mexico again restructure the debt. I had begun to work on the debt restructuring at the NSC. Actually, during the transition in the US, I had met at the Watergate Hotel with the Mexican Secretary of Finance and then worked through the NSC to cooperate with the private bankers on an ultimate settlement of the private debt which of course impacted on the official debt of Mexico. In fact, a couple of memos which I wrote had significant impact on the settlement and the ultimate debt rescheduling and restructuring, both public and private.

Trade was an issue as always, with the minutia of individual disputes on mangoes, tomatoes, steel, concrete, etc. But then President Salinas came to us and suggested we do the free trade agreement, a suggestion of Ronald Reagan many years before, which the Mexicans before Salinas had scoffed at. I remember the evening the Ambassador came back from a meeting with President Salinas and told me that Salinas had proposed what became the NAFTA. I was quite surprised, hoping that we were hearing Salinas correctly and that it was not another Mexican tactic. But, at the same time the Mexican Ambassador was proposing the same thing in Washington. It was an exciting cable that we sent that night to Washington. While the NAFTA negotiations started slowly, and much of it was done by USTR, this broad trade issue became preeminent. One of the first things I did was coordinate a cable to Washington analyzing what the Mexicans would ask for and what the US objectives should be. It was not such a difficult cable since we had been living these tendentious trade issues for years. It took almost two years to get the negotiations going, given the need for Congressional consultations, consultations with business and industry, and internal US Government coordination.

The border was an issue as always. Violence on the border. Who perpetrated the violence? What was the cause of the illegal immigration? How to stop the illegal entry into the US with the Mexicans refusing to cooperate when we really needed their assistance. Then there was always the question of who was at fault when the

illegal aliens were killed crossing the frontier, sometimes dying of thirst in the desert, drowning, or getting lost. Often these tragedies were caused by the *polleros*, the Mexicans who guided them. Several illegal aliens were actually killed by their Mexican guides, far more than by the Border Patrol, which incidentally has one of the most difficult jobs in the world.

Consular issues were the same. There was always a long line at the Embassy and the Consulates for visas, everyone thinking the US had an obligation to give a visa to anyone who applied, regardless of US legislation and law. The line caused unseemly traffic jams in front to the Embassy, and fraud was of course prevalent amongst the applicants. There was even more welfare and protection of American citizens, which the consular people had to carry out without messing up US-Mexican relations. If I remember correctly, there were still eight Consulates, at least four of them were large Consulates General, larger than many Embassies. I think I had to review the annual performance reports of all nine Consuls and Consuls General, meaning that I had to visit them (a pleasure usually) and keep appraised of what each Consulate was doing and how they were doing it.

What many people told me would be a major problem for me turned out to be exactly the opposite. People warned me about Mrs. Negroponte, who people thought would be the real DCM, thus making it impossible for me to do my job. I guess this may happen at times in the Foreign Service. Diana Negroponte was, and is, a wonderful, intelligent person. She was a well-known Washington trade lawyer, who was very expert on the sometimes changing and always arcane trade law. I was in Mexico to help run the whole economic, trade, finance area and to run the Embassy. Would we clash in any way?

She's very strong willed and people thought I would be number three in the Embassy. I said let's not worry about it. We had no problems, but great understandings. When it came to running the official residence and all that, Diana told me and the Administrative Counselor, Tom Fitzpatrick, a wonderful guy, what she wanted and I went along. On trade issues, we worked together very well as a team. She went out and made speeches, but we always coordinated on them; we consulted. On at least one occasion I substituted for her when she couldn’t appear.

So it was two years which I enjoyed, the family enjoyed. I got to do all the things that DCM's get to do. I was Honorary Vice President of the American Chamber of Commerce in Mexico. I received what I considered a singular honor when I was asked to become an Honorary VP upon my return to Mexico because normally at that time only the Ambassador and Economic Counselor were asked. But, they asked me back. With my economic background, I was an asset on their Board and so it was partially in their interest. But for me it was still a great honor. Some of our closest friends in Mexico came from the Chamber, the Brutons, the Jordans, the Donnellys, and many more.

Again, I was on the Board of the American school. I made the commencement address when our son Stephen graduated, together with the then Mexican Secretary of Agriculture. I got all the opportunities I needed to tour the country by speaking all over Mexico. I usually tried to get invited to speak on a Friday so that I could enjoy a weekend in Guanajuato, or Acapulco, or Hermosillo, or Chiapas, or Merida.

So I saw the country and knew people everywhere. Number one, it was a great assignment from the personal point of view. Number two, I had a real role and I had something to give and I continued to play a key factor in running policy.

And, three, it was finally a much more constructive assignment, given our cooperation with President Salinas on many important issues. Salinas wanted to cooperate. He didn't have the usual hang-ups about the Gringos. Although born in Mexico City, his family was from Northern Mexico, in Monterey, and he knew the US, including Texas, which was of course George Bush's home.

The two Presidents understood and appreciated each other and were able to carry out the historic NAFTA agreement which promised to, and in fact has benefitted both sides, regardless of the opinions of the critics, many of who study only parts of NAFTA, usually the parts they don't like, rather than the global impact of it. As I have mentioned, in all my previous assignments in Mexico we were always running to catch up, to do damage control. At the end of the day if we saved ourselves from a further crisis I thought that was great progress or achievement. In this assignment, as Deputy Chief of Mission, we did a lot of constructive things. We began the negotiations on NAFTA, restructured the debt, and made a lot of progress setting up things on the border.

Q: George Shultz once told me people ask him what were the most seminal events when he was Secretary of State. He laughs, he says a lot of people think that when the Berlin Wall came down that was a moment of history for me. But, it was when Mexico decided to privatize its telephone company.

PASTORINO: I agree totally with Secretary Shultz, although I would also emphasize the NAFTA Agreement. We had a role in the privatization. We had a brilliant guy as Treasury Attaché, Jack Sweeney. Jack and I served together several times between Mexico and Colombia. Jack had the confidence of the Secretary and Under Secretary of Treasury. Jack knew Mexico because he'd been there in private and public sector capacity for twelve years. He always knew what was gong on in the Finance Ministry, which ran much of the privatization effort. The head of privatization had been a long time friend and his wife worked for our tiny AID mission. So we knew what was going on. Of course, Salinas didn't need a lot of advice. He knew what he wanted. He was an economist. He was a planner. And he made money hand over fist for Mexico from the sales of the inefficient public companies. There is still some privatization to take place in Mexico, but Mexico was one of the world leaders in this field. Many countries have copied

Mexico.

Q: But what made Salinas break the mold? Was it Mexico's dire economic condition? He really was the seminal of both economic and political change.

PASTORINO: The ground was first tilled somewhat by President Miguel De La Madrid. De La Madrid chose Salinas, who had been in his Cabinet as an undersecretary of planning and then Secretary. They were both technocrats and basically free market kind of people. They could see that the old system was not working. They could also see that the world was changing. They had to be more competitive.

I think Salinas looked at the whole issue from the economic side; basically how to make Mexico more competitive when globalization became the norm. And, he realized he was sitting at the door of the biggest, most lucrative market in the world, the US, so why not take advantage. He supported free trade, and privatization, and freer flow of capital and investment resources because it would force Mexico to become competitive. And, he understood that some would suffer in the process, just as under NAFTA both Mexican and US companies had to either compete, give up, or change. Salinas also came to the conclusion that the old PRI system was not working as well as it had for seventy years and had to be reformed, or democratized. As you can imagine there was tremendous opposition to that. De La Madrid made small moves but Salinas made the earthshaking ones, both economically as well as politically, for instance when he chose Luis Donaldo Colosio to succeed him.

Q: Were you in Mexico when Colosio was killed?

PASTORINO: No. By then I was in the Dominican Republic as Ambassador. But, I had known Colosio and he would have made a great Mexican President. Of course, he was a Sonorense, and he would have been good for Mexico and good for US-Mexican relations. His killing was a real tragedy.

Q: Were you in Mexico for the elections for Salinas?

PASTORINO: No. For Salinas' election I was at the NSC. I think I already talked about that, when some advisors didn't think he would take office, and that we shouldn't support him.

I had always understood that US-Mexican relations wouldn't be stable and easy. They can't be and shouldn't be. There will never be a great love affair between us. Our two countries and peoples are different. We Americans are many types of people, some close to Mexico, such as the Hispanics, and some vastly different. We must be careful to think about who or what Americans are. Some of the US, such as Texas and California, is much more like Mexico than is Boston and Michigan. They'll never be a great love affair because economic conditions are

different, cultures and backgrounds are different.

But I thought our relations under Presidents Bush and Salinas were very constructive. Salinas knew what we wanted. He didn't have hang-ups about appearing to be doing our bidding because basically he was doing his own bidding. He thought what he was doing for Mexico, privatization, restructuring, opening up the economy, lowering the tariffs, encouraging foreign investments were good for Mexico. Previously foreign investment was encouraged in Mexico as long as it stayed within very limited parameters, not threatening Mexican firms. Salinas could see that this policy and attitude was not going to attract all the foreign investment that was needed. He opened up Mexico to foreign investment and modern technology, and it was not only US investment.

Salinas faced a major problem, given an economy like Mexico's, so large and diversified, and controlled in some sectors in almost medieval, or oligarchic ways; he couldn't turn it around in only six years. Mexico does have the benefit of a six year Presidential term but major changes take many years. It will take another couple of administrations, assuming that Mexico continues on the policy that Salinas carried out and which Zedillo is more or less implementing.

Q: What's the relationship between an American Ambassador like Negroponte and a President like Salinas in terms of is there really access, was he called over occasionally for a really hair down straight forward discussion? Was it formal relationship?

PASTORINO: It was formal, but it was close and constructive. President Salinas understood who the Ambassador represented and what the policies were that he was carrying out. Anytime the Ambassador wanted a meeting he got it. Of course, the Mexican President is a very busy man and still has to make sure that he's not perceived as taking guidance from the Americans. We worked through the Chief of Staff of the President, a man named Pepe Cordoba, who was somewhat equivalent to our NSC advisor, although he also worked on domestic policy. Many of the things that we talked about, we went over with Pepe Cordoba. The Ambassador also did not want to go the Palace all the time either. He didn't want it to look like he was going over there to give instructions. Plus, we did much of our daily business with the Foreign Secretariat, the famous *Cancilleria*. Just as Ambassador Petriccioli (perhaps a distant cousin of mine) in Washington did not drop in on George Bush daily, but rather dealt on a daily basis with the State Department, we did likewise.

I tell one great story. The bane of our existence as usual, and as it had often been, was the *Cancilleria*, the Secretariat of the Foreign Relations. Many of its officers and diplomats, some of whom were brilliant and dedicated, were educated at the leftist National University of Mexico City, the infamous UNAM, with its 400,000 students, many of whom spent very little time on campus, but all got a large dose of anti-Americanism. The Secretary of Foreign Relations, Javier Solana, was not

anti-American but he didn't really deal directly with U.S.-Mexican relations. That was left to a career diplomat, Gonzalez Galvez, who was the Under Secretary. He was a gentleman, and a scholar but very suspicious of the United States.

For years and years, we had tried to get Mexico to vote with us or at least abstain in the UN on resolutions condemning human rights violations in Cuba. In 1990, we decided we were really going to change Mexico's vote this time. The situation was different now, with Salinas and Pepe Cordoba at the Presidential Palace.

When it came time for the vote, the Ambassador was out of the country but I knew what the instructions were. I went over the Foreign Ministry and asked for their support on the vote, knowing full well what the answer would be. As I had expected, I was sort of diplomatically thrown out of the Foreign Ministry, but in a gentlemanly manner.

So, I went back to the Embassy and called Mr. Cordoba. I went to see him, made the talking points, and said we really would like the Mexican support. Sure enough the next morning at the UN, the Mexicans abstained on the resolution, making history. That afternoon I was called over to the *Cancilleria* and royally chewed out. They knew what I had done and told me they didn't like it. I dead panned that they should be talking with Mr. Cordoba, because as I understood it, he had made the decision. That was the end of that meeting. The Mexican vote may not have been because I was so persuasive; it was because the Mexicans decided they wanted to get along with us. They didn't see it in their interest to create little squabbles.

The access we had to the President allowed us to do things like this.

On NAFTA, we didn't work with the Foreign Ministry. We had our own contacts through the Secretariat of Commerce and Trade, through Cordoba, and through the Treasury and other Secretariats. But we did spend an extraordinary amount of time keeping the Foreign Ministry informed and at least apparently involved. The two countries created a series of joint commissions and the Foreign Ministry was always included. But much of the real work was done with the other agencies. I don't doubt that if the *Cancilleria* would have been the NAFTA policy maker, we wouldn't have a NAFTA, even today; we would probably still be negotiating it.

Q: I was going to ask a question about whether or not people in the Embassy, particularly from domestic agencies or people not imbued with the spirit of the Foreign Service, were always denigrating Mexico, the air is dirty, those lazy Mexicans, and all those kinds of stereotypes, was that prevalent? was that a problem?

PASTORINO: There was some of that, but it was not prominent. At least I don't remember it. It didn't give us a lot of problems. A couple reasons why. For some people it was their second or third time in Mexico. A lot of these agencies'

foreign components aren't very large so they go back to the same place for follow-up assignments, and they become better acquainted with the country.

Many of the staff were Mexican-Americans, especially from the other agencies, who knew how to get along with Mexicans, so that ameliorated the tendency in some ways. Clearly, Mexico is not the easiest place to live, but one learns to live there; many learn to love it. The Mexicans are charming and many of the differences are just policy differences, and nothing more. We could argue all day, but become close personal friends after work, or at the beach, or on the weekends.

Finally, one could easily go to Cuernavaca or Oaxaca or San Antonio or San Diego and get out of the smog and congestion. A weekend in the US was easy, not like what I imagine it would have been from Angola, or Burma, or for that matter, even from Portugal, where we stayed three full years without going home because of the cost. So you didn't live in Mexico for very long without getting back to the States or at least outside of Mexico City.

The U.S. government supplied housing in the best parts of the city, with security. The U.S. Embassy had a commissary, which was a small, one stop store at the Embassy complex on the Reforma. I thought the prices were higher in the Commissary for many items than outside on the Mexican economy. The Commissary Association actually made money hand over fist. We had so much money at times we couldn't decide how to invest it. The American School was pretty good, with a campus better than many urban US high schools. It had a pool, a gymnasium, and a football field with teams playing both American football and soccer. All the services you needed were there in Mexico City. There was a British hospital that could do almost anything you could get done in Houston. I didn't think it was difficult living. Depending on when you lived in Mexico, it was either cheaper or more expensive depending on what was happening to the peso.

We had in some ways more problems in the Consulates, which were more isolated if they were not the border ones, and didn't have all of the services provided by the Embassy. The assignments for many people were not as interesting as those in Mexico City, most of them being straight consular jobs. I really don't remember too many morale problems, although I did have to face the domestic dispute and violence problems, some non-traditional sexual relationships, and others. There was one corruption problem within the Embassy in which several articles of furniture disappeared and I didn't catch it.

Q: How about the issue of security? Did you feel threatened? Was security a major issue in the Embassy?

PASTORINO: It was an important issue. We had two or three people on the security staff. We had bomb threats. The worst security problem I remember involved a car bomb that had been placed on the side street between the Embassy

and the Sheraton Hotel. I believe Mexican security discovered the suspicious looking vehicle and informed the Embassy Security Officer. He called me and for some dumb reason I went outside with him to check the vehicle. I stood there while the Mexican police disarmed the bomb. I thought about that later and marveled at what Deputy Chiefs of Mission are expected to do. Seriously though, it was large enough to have done serious damage to that side of the Embassy housing the Ambassador's and DCM's suites.

We frequently had demonstrations in front of the Embassy, usually, but not always, directed against the US Government. The Embassy fronted on the Reforma, one of Mexico's main thoroughfares, also known as the Mexican Champs-Elsyées. We had an agreement with the Mexican police that they would keep the people across the sidewalk, across an adjoining, narrow, lateral street and a grassy area in front of the Embassy, a distance of about forty feet. The Embassy was usually a key place for demonstrations. No matter where the demonstration might have started, the marchers almost always found a route and reason to stop in front of the Embassy.

I can remember once having to go out to the front of the Embassy, just inside the locked front gate, to accept a petition from a group of rowdy demonstrators and then tell them we wouldn't be able to honor it. I think on that occasion someone proceeded to throw a bottle and broke one window. That's the worst damage we ever had. I guess that also was a good job for the DCM. I didn't mind doing it. I probably argued with them verbally as best I could, knowing I would never win an argument. I had tried that once before in the heart of the National University (UNAM) when I had been invited from Washington to speak about strategic materials. I evidently did so well in that debate that the Marxist Professor ended the class when it looked like I might convince some of the students that what he described as the "invasion" of Grenada was really the "liberation" of Grenada.

Personal security was beginning to become a problem at that time. But, not nearly as bad as I understand the situation is now in 1999, when one is not supposed to even ride in taxi cabs, not even the little, cheap VW ones with the missing front seat which used to take me all over Mexico City. But houses had bars and gates and people were told to be careful. Most people had at least a rudimentary knowledge of Spanish. In fact, some of the other agencies who sent their people overseas like Customs and INS looked for people who could speak Spanish. So that eased some of the security problem because the language facility can make one more aware of his situation and better able to cope.

A major problem was petty corruption, especially with such incidents as the police pulling you over and wanting a bribe. I remember one time Fran was pulled over, right on the Reforma about twelve blocks from the Embassy. She was driving our own car with diplomatic license plates. The policeman charged her with doing something and expected a bribe. It would only have been five or ten dollars, but rightfully, she got on her high horse and refused to pay. Her excuse

that her husband worked at the Embassy didn't faze the policeman in the slightest, who reiterated to her that she would have to pay or go to jail, the standard line. She said "fine, let's go to the Embassy. Do you want to drive the car or want me to follow you?" He told her it would be bad if she went to jail. She said, "let's go to the Embassy and find out". Fifteen minutes of discussion later he got fed up and sent her on her way. I'm sure he then stopped the next two cars who were probably easier targets. I'll bet that happened on Friday afternoon, which was a bad time with the police because they needed extra money for the weekend.

In my own personal case, Mexico being so large, no one knew who the Deputy Chief of Mission was. Ambassador Negroponte had lots of security, as he should have had. But as DCM, I only had a driver. I'm not sure we even had a guard on the house. I often took the *peseros* (jitneys) to work and often, even as DCM, took taxis because they were faster than the large, chauffeur driven vehicle. I would jump into on of the little yellow taxis. Since I knew the City very well, and I knew the best routes, I could go anywhere dirt cheap, so cheap I wouldn't even turn in the vouchers. I did all kinds of political and economic homework on the way, talking to the taxi drivers, and getting to know the residents of Mexico City. So I don't remember security as a big problem for me.

When discussing Mexico and US-Mexican relations, I may be a little bit biased now since I think of Mexico as a second home. One of the biggest problems I had personally while serving there was to make sure I was not taking a policy bias towards Mexico. I obviously never said then what I would say now publicly, that Mexico is my second country. I would never say that then for obvious reasons. I would often second guess myself and give myself a pep talk on not taking the Mexican side. Although I thought I knew better than most people that often what's good for Mexico is good the U.S., and visa versa because the two countries are so closely tied, I was careful and disciplined.

Q: How about the Consular posts? Mexico is a country that attracts enormous amounts of American tourists and American residents for that matter. Was there a problem of people getting killed? My mother for example died in Mexico. We got very nice treatment from the Consulate in Guadalajara. That kind of thing.

PASTORINO: Many Americans died in Mexico, almost all from natural causes, a few from accidents, very few from crimes, although the latter received all the publicity. These things happen to tourists and expatriates living in Mexico. Especially to older, retired people living in places like Lake de Chapala and Cuernavaca and in Baja California. But this was a problem that was manageable. This was a problem that happens in whatever country, it just happens more in Mexico.

There are also circumstances when Americans are unfamiliar with Mexico and can get into trouble. You have a criminal element in Mexico as everywhere which sometimes preys on Americans. You of course have retired people who live in

Mexico because it is relatively cheap and they sometimes don't take very good care of themselves. We had a network of eight or nine Consulates, we had Consular agents all over the country.

So, there were problems but I don't remember that they very often got raised up to the country team level. I remember a couple cases where American citizens were killed or disappeared at the hand of the drug traffickers. There was at least one tragic case of being in the wrong place at the wrong time. Two young religious proselytizers knocked on the wrong door in Guadalajara; it was the residence of the drug traffickers and these two young people seemed suspicious; they ended up dead.

I was interested in the Consulates and Consular activities because it is one of the sections that gets closest to the host country and knows a lot about the country. During my time in Mexico, we were lucky to have excellent Consuls General in Mexico City and conscientious principal officers in the Consulates General and Consulates. While in Mexico City, I tried to keep track of what was going on in Consular Affairs that was part of the DCM's job. I frequently walked around the Consular Section in the Embassy, probably everyday, paying special attention to the Junior Officers who usually spent their first assignment in the foreign service in a Consular Section, given the overwhelming demand overseas for visas to the US. General oversight of these young officers also was part of the DCM's tasks, and I took it seriously.

I was also all over the country visiting the consulates and I probably visited every Consular agent. And I wasn't shy about picking up the phone and calling. I did this because I also wanted to know what was going on politically and economically outside of Mexico City in addition to the consular issues. I never got on the phone just to discuss one issue.

One of the Consular issues I got involved in was Consular closures. During one regular budget cutting exercise, mandated by Washington, Ambassador Negroponte decided that rather than the time-honored strategy of cutting every budget item in the whole budget by a little, it might make sense to make some big cuts, eliminating whole programs, but saving the rest from being nibbled at, making all of them less efficient. One of those big cuts was to be the complete closure of the Consulate General in Guadalajara. I saw great risk in this, given the number of Americans there, the probable Mexican reaction (anger at being slighted), and the fact it was one of the largest and oldest US Consulates anywhere in the world. It was located in an important part of Mexico, the State of Jalisco. I agreed with the Ambassador's overall concept, a few big cuts rather than a lot of nibbles. But, I was scared of the Guadalajara closure.

I had one idea myself: end the management of the American Battle Monuments Cemetery in Mexico City. Very few people, even those living in Mexico City, knew about it or ever visited it. We could have saved $200,000 annually. Wow!!

what a mistake! I learned a quick lesson, because the Department and Congress jumped all over us. It took me about five minutes to rescind that recommended budget cut. I actually learned another lesson. The Cemetery was a beautiful place hidden in Mexico City which is peaceful and so symbolically important given the graves of the US soldiers who died in the Mexican War. I was ashamed because as well as I thought I knew Mexico, I had never visited it previously. Anyway, it is still there and we are still managing it; I suspect that will be the case for a long time.

Getting back to Guadalajara, the Ambassador decided to just close down Guadalajara. I suggested we shouldn't do it. He took into consideration my concerns, especially about reaction in the US. He understood very well that concern and decided we would only do it if the Department, which could gauge US opinion on the matter, would back us up. We got on the phone to the Assistant Secretary for Administration who guaranteed us Department support. So we went ahead.

The Ambassador sent me to Guadalajara to break the news to the Governor of Jalisco, to the Chamber, to the Consulate General, and most importantly as it turned out, to the American community. I did and the firestorm hit immediately. When I say firestorm, I mean it was all over the press. The Governor castigated the US and immediately complained to President Salinas. More importantly, all those retired Americans in Guadalajara and Lake de Chapala, and all those employed at companies like IBM in Guadalajara, complained bitterly to Washington, most to their Congressmen through an organized, and gigantic, letter-writing campaign. I'm not sure who their Congressmen really were, but they wrote thousands of letters and every single letter arrived promptly in Washington.

One of the leaders of the campaign was a wonderful, elderly American, Adolph Horn, of the American Chamber. He had owned the best ice cream company in Mexico and upon selling it had retired in Guadalajara. But it was a very active retirement. Everyone knew and loved Adolph, and he knew everyone in the Guadalajara Consular District, which also was comprised of several Mexican states in addition to Jalisco.

We knew about the letter writing campaign of course and after a couple of weeks I checked with Washington to see the reaction. The Desk told me that State Department people had actually privately told the Hill that State was not supporting the closure; in fact they were saying it was a "crazy" idea. So much for our guarantee from the Department. As I remember, the Ambassador didn't quit easily and he sent me back to Guadalajara to talk to the people and figure out how to close the place, or at least reduce its size in a manner satisfactory to everyone.

To the Ambassador's credit, and given State's mandate to reduce the budget, the idea was not totally bad in a budget sense. We were talking about twelve or

fourteen State Department employees, another twenty or twenty-five if you count DEA and the other agencies, plus probably seventy-five or a hundred Mexican national employees. And there were significant infrastructure costs in the buildings, communications, logistics, national employees, etc. So I went back out to Guadalajara and made the rounds of the interested parties; the idea was even more poorly received on the second trip.

The long and the short of it is that we had to give in; in the end we reduced it minimally and so had to nibble at the rest of the budget. I went back a third time and explained to everyone that we were not going to close it after all, only reduce it slightly.

Q: But this goes to the point. I have seen this happen and certainly in the times since you and I have been retired. What's the role of Consulates today? I mean a lot of Ambassadors sitting in the capital sit there and say we don't really need so and so out there. You've served in a Consulate and I've served in a Consulate. How valuable do you think they are?

PASTORINO: I think we need them badly, but a somewhat different type of Consulate, one that responds more to US needs and less to the host country's needs. I think Consulates are very valuable but I would operate them differently, given the always present budgetary considerations.

Those operations which the host country needs, like visas, should be centralized and concentrated in a few large Consulates General. We shouldn't have to be obligated to respond to every visa request over and over again, despite refusals of obviously ineligible applicants. We shouldn't have to guarantee response so quickly to applicants. And, we should return to the concept that no applicant has a right to a US visa; it is a privilege granted by the US and should be granted on our terms. If the applicants can afford to go the U.S., they can afford to go to Mexico City or one of the big Consulates General on the border for their visas. Or use the mails. That would save lots of money in infrastructure and personnel costs. So, I would scope downward the non-immigrant and immigrant visa side, while staying within the overall parameters of US legislation which permits and welcomes foreigners to visit the US.

A lot of the passport and social security operations overseas you can be scaled down through new technology and better communications. If you need a passport, send it to the Embassy. The welfare and protection function is still needed because Americans need help, even if they have committed crimes, but that assistance doesn't necessarily have to be so quick or frequent. US citizens leaving the US should be warned about Mexican laws and the possibility that Americans will be jailed. And, importantly, the US should have a presence in the politically and economically sensitive areas of many countries.

Presence is most important in Mexico but it must be just as important in other

countries that I don't know as well. I conceived of another type of consular operation and actually submitted it to the Department for consideration in Mexico but it would have worked in other countries as well. I went back to a concept we had used decades earlier, a one-person, Special Purpose Post. Ultimately, the concept was shot down for two reasons. It smacked too much of the CIA, and the bureaucracy didn't like it, I think because it would have cut some jobs.

My idea was to create a corps of a few well-rounded officers, who could live and function independently of a large supporting staff. Locate him or her in a sensitive place, a state capital, a community with a large US business or residential presence, or near a conflictive area, such as Chiapas, for instance. Give him a car and a house and a visa kit for emergencies.

His basic constituency would be the American community, and as importantly, the Governor, or the military commander, and other host country leaders. He or she can closely follow the economic and political situation, and would be there on site should a major emergency occur. Make the investment in the Special Consul and the operation as small as possible which then could be moved easily should the area decline in importance and priority. I even listed some of the places where a special purpose post would be very helpful in Mexico: Oaxaca, Tuxtla Gutierrez, Veracruz, and Tampico, for instance. Taking Oaxaca as an example, we had a Consular Agent, who happened to be in business. The agent had no idea what was happening in Oaxaca; I knew because I called a couple time to get some local political information. He did not have an inkling. He was really only interested in selling his artisan goods.

We had another guy like that, in Chiapas. Chiapas was particularly important. In Chiapas we had a Consular Agent who was an anthropologist I think. Didn't live in the capital. Lived out in San Cristobal de las Casas. Wonderful person at anthropology or sociology who had the Indians' interests uppermost in his mind. But, I sure couldn't call him to see what the Governor was up to, or would there be a strike in the U.S.-Mexican fruit-fly production plant.

I got a cable back from State in response to my suggestions. The Department began to correct my idea, expanding on it. The special person post will need a communicator! Won't it need a secretary and clerical staff? What about secure communications? Obviously the consul needs a chauffeur and a bodyguard. And, you can't expect the consul to give visas, he will need a vice-consul. All of a sudden, we were back to a regular Consulate, over-staffed, with a large, permanent infrastructure. I dropped the concept.

One more thing about the Consulates. Often we did not have the right people there. Many were too narrowly focused on consular issues, ignoring everything else, or were there for other reasons, such as family or health. They were there, especially in Mexico, for personal reasons, usually because it was close to the US. In one case, one of the worst cases of dereliction of duty I ever ran into, the

Consul was there as punishment for a previous performance. Even Consuls General on occasion were uninterested in the political situation, or in providing representation, or in knowing the leadership and power brokers in his or her district. Unfortunately, sometimes Consul General slots were reserved for Consular Cone people, who might have been excellent consular officers but lacked skills in the other areas necessary to perform adequately.

Q: One last question on Mexico and maybe in general about the career. Did you engage in mentoring young officers? Was mentoring a big part of your job? Did you deal with junior officers much?

PASTORINO: Yes, I dealt with them to a great extent. I thought it was one of my most important tasks, especially as DCM, and I enjoyed it immensely. I am beginning to read about Ambassadorial appointments of people who I might have helped sometime early in their career. I didn't really consider it mentoring in a formal sense, in that I didn't call them in and say let's have a class. I talked frequently to the Junior Officers because I wanted to know what they doing, how they were doing it, what were their aspirations. This might have been even more important in Mexico, which was a visa mill, which all Junior Officers had to endure for two years at the beginning of their careers. The US Government had made an investment in these young officers and the boredom and tediousness of visa work truncated many careers at an early stage.

The Junior Officers, in my experience, were extraordinary. I thought they were just top notch. But, I could see these people's enthusiasm deteriorating, rotting on the vine, as all they did all day was visas. No matter how we tried to arrange things, they ended up doing visas, sitting at the visa window all day listening to the same falsehoods and going over the same fraudulent documents, being charged by US law to determine truth from falsehood in 2-3 minutes. Rotation within the consular section, or between it and other Embassy sections often was for too short a period, or was not carried out, because there was always too much demand on the visa line.

I tried to alleviate this. Frequently, when I went to the Consulates or to make speeches or official visits, I would take a junior officer from the Embassy. At times the Consul General in Mexico City would be a little bit perturbed because it meant he wasn't getting two hundred visas done that day. But I thought it was wonderful training. I was never surprised, after my first experiences that junior officers knew what was going on. I used to encourage them, or bug them, to report what they were hearing on the visa line, or in their other contacts with host country nationals.

I always saw to it that young officers visiting the Embassy from the Consulates attended Embassy meetings. I worked hard on developing and implementing rotations which were as fair and as frequent as possible. I did this because I had had a wonderful Ambassador my first assignment, Maurice Bernbaum. He saw to

it that junior officers did a little bit of everything, thus learning about how the Embassy and the Foreign Service really operated. It goes without saying, of course, that young officers are the future of the American Foreign Service.

I found that almost all junior officers were amenable to the rotation and diverse tasks. They wanted to do more. I remember one case in Mexico that a visa officer on the visa line asked the right type of questions about financial remittances to and from the US, such that she did a report which was so impressive, she was asked to brief Congressional staff on the findings.

Another Junior Officer, this one in the Dominican Republic, came up with valuable intelligence and prepared a briefing book about drug dealing in San Francisco de Macoris, a center for the drug trafficking gangs moving between the DR and New York. I suggested that the intelligence guide be used when interviewing applicants from San Francisco de Macoris, an idea some mid-level officers said was stupid because it took too much time. Unfortunately, I saw some cases where middle level consular officers didn't want their junior officers "wasting time", traveling with the Ambassador, or carrying out non-consular functions. These middle-level officers were jealous of the time spent, or in some cases, felt over shadowed by young officers performing tasks they themselves couldn't or wouldn't.

AMERICAN EMBASSY SANTO DOMINGO: AMBASSADOR

Q: Well, let me ask you then. How did you get named an Ambassador?

PASTORINO: In all honesty I continued to play the waiting game. I thought by now a Mission of my own would come and I figured, "if it comes, it comes. If it doesn't, it doesn't." Actually, I was having the time of my life in Mexico, doing one of the best jobs I did anywhere, in one of the most important positions in the American Diplomatic Service.

When the Ambassador had offered me the job back in Washington he had assured me that he would help me obtain a Mission. He was good to his word. Every time he went back to Washington on consultations he would look around and let me know of the possibilities. I remember he came back after one year and said there were a couple possibilities but they're not really ripe yet. I thought to myself: "Fine. If that's what he says, that's okay. If it comes, it comes."

Then he came back after another six months and said there were some great possibilities. "How would you like to go to the Dominican Republic?" he asked. I wasn't sure how certain he could be, he did not make the appointment certainly, but I didn't argue, saying the Dominican Republic sounds fine. Even at that, there was still the long process of being selected by State and then going through a vetting at the White House, including the possibility that some political campaign contributor might want Santo Domingo. I wasn't sure what would happen and I

didn't start packing my bags. But, in the end, it all went very smoothly.

The Ambassador must have sent a cable back or called back to Washington, saying Bob's interested. I didn't do anything. He said I didn't have to. A few days later, I got a call from a good friend, Bob Gelbard, who was in ARA. He asked if I wanted to be on the list for the Dominican Republic, which was to be sent to the White House. I said yes. A month later I got the okay and the papers effecting the transfer back to Washington. It was about two years that we had been in Mexico. In many ways I was sorry to be leaving Mexico; I thought I was doing a good job and I loved the job. But, I was not going to turn down an Ambassadorial appointment. The career must go on. The family of course had to look at another move, and Fran had to contemplate being the Ambassador's wife, a situation that I had no doubt she could carry out to the great credit to the US Government and people.
The process was fairly smooth but because of no fault of my own, took quite a while, almost six months in Washington. I didn't have a controversial background except, perhaps for some, my assignment in Honduras carrying out the US Government approved assistance for the Contras. I was told by Foreign Relations Committee staff, one of Senator Dodd's people, that I should obtain a statement from the Special Prosecutor that I was neither the target nor the subject of any investigation having to do with Iran-Contra. It took me three days to get that. I visited the Special Prosecutor's Office in downtown Washington and they checked the files and found I had been interviewed in Honduras. The files showed I was neither a target nor a subject and I was given the required document, which I turned over to the Foreign Relations Committee which carried out the first step of the Ambassadorial confirmation process.

Because of circumstances having nothing to do with my appointment, we waited around Washington for six months, between late July and the end of 1991. It was a little frustrating; I had no real job or tasks, except to prepare for the confirmation hearing.

I will explain the delay. It's one thing that is wrong with the confirmation process. My name was sent up to Congress for confirmation with three other names: Curtis Kamen, who was to go to Bolivia; George Jones, who was going to Guyana; and my long-time friend Mike Kozak. George Jones had somehow gotten on he wrong side of Jessie Helms, who was the minority Chairman of the Committee and who had the reputation of being tough on the State Department. I believe George had done something while in Costa Rica which Senator Helms did not approve of. And Kozak's nomination was being held up for his activity on the Central American issue, I understood. Neither Kaman nor I seemed to have any problem with either Dodd, who was the Democratic leader, nor with Helms.

The committee decided in August or September that they would not consider any of the names until all could be approved. I had a good contact on Senator Helms' staff who assured me that no one had any problems with my nomination and I was

ready to be confirmed. I had a private lunch with Senator Dodd, where we discussed several issues involving the Dominican Republic, which interested the Senator very much because he had served there in the Peace Corps. He also assured me I had no problem. In fact, the meeting with Senator Dodd was over a sandwich in his office, a very informal setting and one I appreciated very much.

Thus, I was never in doubt about my confirmation, only about the timing. Not only is the nomination subject to the Senators' concerns, it is also subject to the Congressional schedule, in terms of when it would be brought up for a hearing and then votes of the Committee and the full Senate, but also because a nomination would die if it was not acted upon before Congress adjourned.

I didn't need much time to learn about the Dominican Republic, or to do the other preparations for the hearings. I sat in the Caribbean Office in Latin American Affairs in the State Department, meeting everyone interested in the Dominican Republic, and learning the issues in detail. After about a month, there wasn't too much more to learn. So I enjoyed four or five months of relaxation, almost vacation, although I did spend about six hours daily in the Department. But, it was a little frustrating for us, because planning was impossible without a definite departure date. We did have to worry about school for Susan, as well as other family plans, including Fran, who was working.

Once, the committee confirmation hearing, the first step, was literally postponed at two o'clock in the afternoon, two hours before they were scheduled to begin. And I had to change all the plans of the family who were on their way to meet me. I believe one of the Senators had expected one of the nominations to be withdrawn and when he found out it wasn't, he postponed the hearing. At two o'clock we were told, "don't come up to the Hill. The hearing is canceled". So it went on through September and October. There was some concern because the Congressional session was nearing its conclusion. Paul Taylor, who was the Ambassador at that time in the DR, had his plans also up in the air, but evidently he was just as happy staying on a little longer. No one at the Department seemed to be very concerned. Several people suggested I go to the Committee and get myself removed from the package of four nominations and then be considered on my own. I didn't, because I didn't think that fair to my colleagues, who were also friends.

One of the tasks I did during this period was choose my Deputy Chief of Mission, Mr. Manuel Rocha, a close, great friend and an excellent diplomat and Foreign Service Officer. Manuel will become an Ambassador and continue to serve with great distinction. Manuel is a person to be emulated and can serve as a model for professionalism and integrity. Besides that, he was brilliant and he knew the Dominican Republic. We had served together three times previously, and I had promised him in Mexico, that I would ask him to be my DCM should the occasion arise. When I returned to Washington from Mexico, there was a DCM in place in Santo Domingo and there was no need for me to select someone. Then, tragically,

the DCM passed away.

I immediately called Manuel and asked him to come to the DR with me. Then, there began a three-month ordeal in which I had to negotiate with the Director General of the Foreign Service and the State Department to get Manuel assigned, even though tradition dictated that the Ambassador should himself choose his Deputy because of the overwhelming need for trust and confidence between the two officers. As noted above Manuel was perfect, except that in the Director General's eyes, he was too low ranking, not yet a Senior Officer.

This, according to the Personnel minions, made him ineligible if not unacceptable, and they demanded an open, formal selection process. They began the process by sending me three names. I interviewed all three officers, and rejected them, despite some pretty impressive credentials. I told them I still wanted to select Rocha. The bureaucracy then sent me another list of three. I repeated the process and maintained my preference. This went on until I actually threatened not to have a DCM. When that didn't seem to work, and a stalemate was in the offing, I had to play my trump card, which I had held off. It worked and I can say that one of my best decisions in my whole term as Ambassador (or Ambassador Designate) was the selection of Manuel Rocha. I think I may have ruffled some feathers in the Department but it worked out in the long run.

Finally, back to the confirmation process, I believe the Kozak nomination was withdrawn, and then two nights before the Congress was to adjourn, the Department satisfied Senator Helms about George Jones, and the hearings were scheduled for the next afternoon. I received a telephone call at 11:00PM telling me the hearing was set for the next day. My family and I went to the hearing. Senator Helms wasn't even there, the Republicans being represented by Senator Richard Lugar, a wonderful man and a real foreign policy expert. Senator Dodd was there to chair the hearing. Lugar asked me one question. Dodd asked me the same three or four questions we had discussed several months before. Curt got two questions, I believe. Most of the inquiries were for George about the up-coming elections in Guyana. We all answered correctly I guess, because the three of us were approved by the Committee that night and our nominations sent to the floor for the Senate's last day, probably about December 15.

Then I waited for a little while, but not for long. The nominations were sent to the floor and voted on sometime in the middle of the night with probably no more than two Senators on the floor. Thus, after waiting almost six months the process was finished and I was confirmed as US Ambassador to the Dominican Republic. After being sworn in by the Under Secretary of State and hosting a small reception at the State Department, we were ready to take up the assignment. I do remember being very proud at the swearing-in ceremony with all of my family present, including my sister and her family, and my elderly aunt who had flown in from San Francisco, her first plane flight in her life. We were still living in our house in Fairfax and we left for Santo Domingo after the holidays, arriving in the

Dominican Republic on the 10th of January. We stayed about two and a half years.

Q: Let me ask you first, what surprised you most? We were all DCMs, were career Foreign Service Officers. Was there anything that surprised you about being an Ambassador?

PASTORINO: I don't think so; I have not really thought about it in those terms. I was surprised at the Ambassadorial residence in Santo Domingo. It was one of the old, traditional palaces of the old Foreign Service, basically a colonial mansion; kind of like those in the movies which disparage diplomats. The residence sat on a whole square block in downtown Santo Domingo, two blocks from the Dominican Presidential Palace. The Embassy was situated on one part of the property, the house in the other part; the house had expansive porticos in the front, a curving driveway, several expansive public rooms, a dining table seating 24, four bedrooms upstairs, a library and sundry other features, including a massive curving stairway.

The property had a tennis court and swimming pool, and two pool houses. Some of the trees on the property were actually national monuments because of their age and beauty. Everything was green, flowering, and well taken care of. We had a guest house separated from the main house. I remember it must have taken us three or four days to explore the whole estate. We had a staff of six or seven, including a resident American who supervised the staff, and did all of the complex accounting which the US Government demanded to keep our personal funds and Government funds separated.

Of course, not all was perfect with the house and grounds. Being old, the infrastructure was ancient and almost beyond repair. The water and electricity frequently failed; I remember once that I was going to fix some wiring myself. In the process Fran and I pulled literally hundreds of yards of electrical wire out of the walls and conduits. It had been replaced by other wiring but no one had ever bothered to remove it. Fran did a wonderful job of making sure the upper floor was the comfortable living quarters that we were used to.

The treatment of the Embassy staff did not surprise me. It was an excellent staff and they were prepared to provide the traditional excellent assistance to and cooperation with the Ambassador. Being the big boss, and being number two person in the country in the mind of many Dominicans, also didn't surprise me, nor did it phase me. That's how it'd been in Honduras. I already knew the traditional perception of the US Ambassador in many of these Latin American countries; the press and media attention was overwhelming but everyone told me that would happen, and I expected it. And, I knew I would be assisted by an outstanding Press Attaché.

Upon my arrival I was not really worried about the substance of the issues, or how

to act as an Ambassador, or how to run an Embassy. My only concern was how do to deal with an eighty-six year old, blind man who had been the Foreign Minister of the Dominican Republic before I was born. That of course was President Joaquin Balaguer, who had already been President five or six times, both as a Trujillo appointee, and as a democratically-elected President. He was President, a father of the country, and beloved by many Dominicans. While much like the typical Latin American *caudillo*, he was also a democrat, having won five out of seven elections; and having lost the two, he had left office, turning over power to the opposition.

So that was my only nagging worry, and this was not something you could study or figure out in advance or go consult a text book, or even check with the Foreign Service Institute. After all was said and done, I need not have been so concerned. It turned out to be fairly simple. He was a gentleman. I think we came to a quick understanding. He always received me when necessary. Obviously, he understood the U.S.-Dominican relationship. I didn't get everything the U.S. government wanted out of the Dominicans, partially because they are good negotiators and they have an independent streak, even though they are still dependent on the US. It turned out to be very easy to deal with President Joaquin Balaguer.

I presented my credentials within four days of arriving, not because of any great policy need or pending negotiation, but because by tradition the American Ambassador presented credentials as soon as possible. I hardly had time to get fitted for the four hundred dollar white, tropical suit which was a requirement for the credentials ceremony, and which I've worn only three times since.

I brought the whole Embassy Country Team to the Palace with me and we had at least forty-five minutes with President Balaguer. Most Ambassadors when they present their credentials get five or ten minutes. The President and I talked about baseball, his long history in the politics of the Dominican Republic, and only peripherally about any outstanding issues. I'll never forget the main ballroom in the Presidential Palace, with its gold-leaf decorations. It is a long room with mirrors and windows overlooking the Caribbean Sea, and not much furniture. The President and I, with his cabinet and the Embassy Country Team sat along the far wall, our teams spread out in opposite direction from us, as we all sat in large chairs. I must have looked like a little boy sitting next to the old gentleman; old but extremely distinguished.

Balaguer treated me with the respect he had for the United States and the American Ambassador. Right away I told him I would never do anything or say anything without telling him. I told him I wanted to work together. I had complete access to him. Whenever I needed an appointment, I had it within a half hour. In the next two and a half years, I met with him at least once or twice a week. Sometimes, for no other reason than to just discuss what's going on; a few times when I called on him under instruction to ask him some serious things or say some serious things. Being that President Balaguer was a perfect gentleman and

master diplomat, often all I had to do follow his lead. Even I could act like a gentleman in those circumstances.
The first couple of times I met with the President, I took the DCM, Manuel Rocha. Manuel Rocha had served in the Dominican Republic as a Political Officer several years before. He knew everyone in the country. It's a small country but it still was not easy to know everyone, and not in the knowledgeable way in which he knew them and their background. He was friends with many of them. More than anything else, he knew the politics, the inside information about politicians, issues, events, U.S.-Dominican relations, and other important information which is not in the briefing papers.

The first time I went to see Balaguer, there was no major issue, but I remember I actually rehearsed. Balaguer has written great books in Spanish and about the Spanish language; many consider him one of the great authors of Latin America. So, I wanted my Spanish to be as perfect as possible, not the Spanish I had learned to speak on the border.

In these meetings the President always made me feel at ease. Of course, there's one thing unique about being with a blind man; he can't see, and he was totally blind. There were no cameras. There was always a guard outside on the balcony. Often it was just the President and me in the meetings. At other times, Rocha would go with me and he could actually give me hand signals if I was making mistakes. Manuel is like Pastorino, a demonstrable Latino. So I didn't make many mistakes.

Balaguer knew the Dominican Republic like the back of his hand. He had not been born blind, and in fact only lost his sight in his later life. He would tour the country to determine what was going on. People said he would get out of his limousine in the main plaza in a little town he had not visited in years and would ask whether Jose's pharmacy is still on that corner. Are people satisfied with the bridge? Why was the gas station two blocks from the plaza removed? He has a photographic memory and an extra perception. People knew better than try and fool President Balaguer. He depended greatly upon his two sisters, never having been married. He trusted them politically and personally to be his eyes. For instance, his slush funds were controlled by one of them.
I accompanied the President on trips to the hinterland, when he inaugurated dams and roads. He liked having the American Ambassador there and I liked being there to help cut the ribbons and see the country. Being 86 years old, he knew every event that had happened in the country in the last fifty years. He was the best Desk Officer the Dominican Republic could hope to have.

During the whole time I was there, he had a Foreign Minister who was an old style politician, who knew very little about U.S.-Dominican relations, but everything about Dominican politics. I remember, just before the credentials presentation ceremony, I went to call on the Foreign Minister and I sat in his office for two hours listening to street politics in the Dominican Republic and

how the Foreign Minister had campaigned and won his several elections to Congress.

But, in the end, it was President Balaguer who ran policy in the Dominican Republic, whether it be international or domestic. When I went to see the President, I knew that I could finally get a decision. Often my staff or I would talk to cabinet officials, including Ministers, or Congressmen, and they would ultimately refer us to the President. Many did not want to risk making a decision which Balaguer would disagree with.

We negotiated several treaties and agreements, aid loans, investment agreements, the textile accord, etc. I would go talk to the Secretary of Commerce, Bello Andino, a nice guy, but with the perception of being a kind of a bagman. Many also complained about Bello's human rights record in a previous position. But, he did have the President's ear on some issues. But even he, the Secretary of Commerce would tell me: "I can't decide that Mr. Ambassador. You have to go see the President. Please tell the President for me that I think it's all right, but…" In fact, I had Cabinet Ministers coming to me at times asking me to go to the President to get their programs approved or carried out.

Q: So really the American Ambassador was the number two guy?
PASTORINO: In some ways, yes, and many people perceived it this way, but I tried to draw us back from that perception and situation. I didn't think that should be part of American diplomacy. In other ways, it was not true because the Dominicans did demonstrate some independence, and US policy had changed. We intrinsically wanted a different type of relationship, and the major global policy issues had changed and most of our interests were mutual. On the other hand, it was almost impossible to change the relationship and the perception of the U.S. Ambassador and his role. No matter how I tried to act, I was the U.S. Ambassador and nothing would change that.

In a personal sense, I could not do anything privately; I had almost no privacy of any kind. I tested the system early, only a couple of months after arriving. On a quiet Sunday afternoon with nothing on my schedule, and in spite of the beautiful compound at the Residence, I decided I wanted to go to the basketball game. There is a Dominican Professional Basketball League, comprised of both Dominicans and Americans; the Dominicans are good players, some have played in the NBA. The gymnasium was about eighteen or twenty blocks away. I wanted to walk, and go without the chauffeur and the bodyguards. There was really no security threat.

First, I had to figure out how to get out of the compound. The guards, my personal guards, had the day off and I didn't call them in. But I still had to figure out how to get out of the gate without someone calling the security officer to provide protection. I did it by going to the Embassy and coming out that side of the complex, not returning to the grounds by that entrance. Pretty soon all the

compound guards were confused, if not asleep, and finally I was outside by myself.

No more than six or eight blocks away I saw a Dominican policeman following me. I knew he was following me because I used a simple trick: you go up one side of the street; then, you make a U-turn; if he also makes the U-turn, you know he is following you. I stopped him and asked him what he wanted. He said the Dominican guards at the gate had found out I had departed and called headquarters to get protection for me. I gave up and asked if he liked basketball. All Dominicans love sports and he went to the game with me. He again followed me at a distance on the walk home.

On the 20-block walk home to the Residence, a Dominican Air Force Colonel recognized me, stopped me, and asked if I wanted him to accompany me as protection. Quickly I gave up trying to have some privacy and when we really wanted to be by ourselves, out of the glare of the media and publicity, we would get on the plane and go to Puerto Rico or Miami. I learned to like San Juan more than Miami. San Juan was closer and it was more Latino and we could do what we wanted.

So, there was no way I could not be the American Ambassador to the Dominican Republic while on the island. On a professional basis, it was not much different. The Dominicans expected US policy to be such and such; they expected demands or requests; they understood the relationship. And in fact the U.S.-Dominican relationship was perceived as normal and beneficial for the Dominican Republic, and most Dominicans didn't want it drastically changed. Sometimes, it is the perception of unknowing Americans that the relationship should be changed; often these Americans, who have their own axes to grind, don't understand the relationship as it really is. Often they mistake small groups for the majority in a country they don't know or understand.

I was well known as an individual. Many people in many countries make it their business to learn about the US Ambassador, sometimes in order to benefit themselves, either directly or through use of a relationship or special knowledge. In some ways, I was not hard to get to know. I thought Dominicans should know me and something about me, to demonstrate a little what Americans were really like. I thought that was part of the job in selling the US and even the US culture.

I love baseball and I became known as the San Francisco Giants Ambassador to the Dominican Republic. I often talked baseball with the Dominicans, both personally and publicly, I realized a long time ambition, to meet Juan Marichal, who I had watched many years as a Giants fan. Marichal had an annual charity golf tournament at Casa de Campo, a world class golf course in the Eastern part of the country, to which I was always invited. I had the opportunity to meet other guests such as Stan Musial, Orlando Cepeda, Harmon Killebrew, Al Kaline, Brooks Robinson, the Rojas Alous, etc. Many were Dominicans, and many came

to the Residence. This always generated publicity and some Dominicans decided Pastorino might be a regular guy, not a CIA Agent, since they were also sports fanatics. I was asked to appear on sports talk programs, and I threw out the first ball on innumerable occasions. I visited many of the baseball academies organized by Major League baseball teams, including the Dodgers camp, which I hated to admit it was one of the best. The Vice President of the Dominican Republic, Carlos Morales, owned one of the best baseball teams and often invited me to his team's games. I threw out the first ball for the Caribbean World Series.

My attendance at baseball games was sometimes difficult. People would come up to me in my seat and ask for visas, or just to talk, or to give me advice. It was not much better in the luxury suites of the ownership of the teams because their friends would always have an excuse to talk to the Ambassador about visas or some other problem. Of course, most of those people who had access to the private boxes already had visas, they probably had green cards, but access to the US Ambassador to get a visa for someone else was a real badge of prestige.

Only once was I ignored at a baseball game. By the second inning one night, I noticed the fact that I was not being approached and I asked the guards what was going on. It turned out that Tommy Lasorda was at the game and for the first time, I was not the most important American in the Dominican Republic, at least not that night at the ballpark. Lasorda was a national hero in the DR, having played and managed there earlier in his career.
Speaking of Lasorda, I must tell one more sports story. One afternoon I invited Tommy Lasorda, Billy Russell, and several of the Embassy Junior Officers to the residence for an informal lunch. Lasorda knew I was a rabid Giant fan, and by definition a Dodger hater, and he came loaded for bear. From the minute of his arrival we got on one another about our teams, him telling me about all the Dodger World Championships, and me talking about the few Giant victories and about the abuse we gave Lasorda in Candlestick Park. It didn't come to blows but he actually told Fran I would go to the devil if I didn't become a Dodger fan. However, we seemed to get along, both liking the Dominican Republic, and both being Italian-American baseball fans. He even told Fran her spaghetti was almost as good as his commercial brand that he advertised. It was an enjoyable afternoon.

So, I thought the two and half years was very enjoyable. While I had never lusted after a Mission or for being Ambassador, I certainly enjoyed it and am grateful I had the opportunity.

Q: What about the issues? Were there many? How complicated were they?

PASTORINO: A little bit about the issues. We had about ten or eleven issues. The Dominican Republic is a small country but we have a relatively large Embassy because of a huge visa workload, their economic dependence on the U.S. for trade, assistance, and finance, and the one million Dominicans who live in the US, most in New York City. There were a lot of American assembly plants, in

pharmaceuticals, telecommunications, data entry and processing, and textiles and clothing. Much of the investment in the assembly plants was American, from Puerto Rico. There were also many Dominican Americans who had retired back to the DR, and so there was social security considerations. Sugar was still a major export, and the Dominicans were always very concerned to conserve their sugar quota. It was interesting because much of it would be lost should Cuba get a quota again.
And, there were incipient drug problems, given the DR's geographical location and potential as a shipping and transit point. I was proud that we did a fairly good job of keeping the drug problem to a minor scale although I understand that now might have changed. The narcotraffickers did not take over the DR, allowing them to send drugs to kill Americans, under my term in Santo Domingo. We did a lot of work with the Dominican equivalent of the DEA, and with the Dominican Attorney General, to increase their capabilities to fight drugs and to help them maintain the fight. I was very active working with the authorities, helping to manage our joint drug enforcement programs, and in keeping up a public discussion of the threat. I used the visa tool to fight drugs in a very public way by not granting visas to drug dealers, or lifting them if they already had them.

Other major issues became Haiti, and the Dominican Presidential Elections of 1994, which became in some ways tied together.

Q: How Haiti?

PASTORINO: Before I turn to Haiti, let me a note another reason for the importance of the U.S. Embassy in Santo Domingo: the one million Dominicans living in the U.S., a great number in Harlem and the Bronx in New York City, and also some in Miami. There is tremendous traffic back and forth, both of persons and of money and even some drugs. It was another reason for having a large Embassy.

The Embassy in Santo Domingo was the only diplomatic entity; there were no consulates. We had a library in Santiago de los Caballeros, the second largest city and a business center. It was small country that I could ride from one end to the other in a few hours. As I had done in Mexico, I went all over the country. There wasn't a week that I didn't travel outside of Santo Domingo. I would have enjoyed it more if I could have had a private part of my trips. In certain ways I don't know the Dominican Republic as well as Mexico and as well as I'd like because I never saw it as a private person.

One time our cousins came down and we met them on the north coast in Puerto Plata, where the casinos are located. I wasn't sure I wanted to go to a casino because I wasn't sure of the signal it would send to the Dominicans, but we finally went. Fran and I both like to gamble. We played the slots and roulette and I had a pretty good evening, won some money, maybe a hundred dollars.

Q: You don't think the dealer was told to let you win?

PASTORINO: No. The story is more interesting than that. While I was playing, I saw someone watching me very closely. In my own mind I was deciding whether or not to approach him. Finally I got up and moved to another table. He went with me. I asked who he was. He told me he was from the Dominican internal revenue service and was watching to see how much I was winning. He said he was going to report it to his superiors, but when I asked, he admitted I would not have to pay taxes on the winnings. To make a long story short, he told me I was well-liked in the Dominican Republic and he hoped I would win more money. Finally, he also asked me for a visa for his family. Anyway, he followed me around for another half-hour.

Anyway, to get back Haiti, it was probably the hardest issue I faced, and one in which I spent an inordinate amount of time. I sometimes thought I was our Ambassador to Port-au-Prince in addition to Santo Domingo, partially because we did not have an Ambassador in Haiti for much of the time. The last few months the situation was eased because we had a great Ambassador there, Bill Swing.

My assignment in the Dominican Republic with reference to Haiti was to keep the Dominicans supportive of our policy to help return President Aristide to power, from which he was removed by a military coup after having been democratically elected. In a few words, that was the summary of my objectives, my mission, with regard to Haiti. As you know, the Dominican Republic and Haiti share the island of Hispaniola, so when we later talked about embargoes, political support, refugees and other issues, it was difficult to separate the two countries.

Of course, relations between the two had never been close, and in fact, Haiti had once controlled the Dominican Republic for 20 years back in the 19th century.

Q: But Aristide must have been opposed by Balaguer?

PASTORINO: You took the words out of my mouth because Aristide was hated by the Dominicans. They perceived him as a Communist and they knew he was a defrocked priest; some thought he had been excommunicated by the Vatican. That proved to most Dominicans that he was a Communist; he was perceived as a threat to the Dominican system. In addition, there were some Dominicans who were a bit racist, whether they admitted it or not. There were economic reasons also separating the Dominicans and Haitians. The latter crossed into the Dominican Republic to pick sugar, and many did not return to Haiti at the end of the harvest, remaining permanently in the Dominican Republic, where the Haitians could live better than at home. Of course, they accused the Dominicans of exploiting them on the sugar plantations, an accusation somewhat accurate. On the other hand, the Haitians continued to immigrate, both legally and illegally to the Dominican Republic.

Regardless of the real situation, the US had determined to support Aristide's return to the Presidency and the removal of the usurpers. Aristide was a symbol of our support for democracy in the hemisphere, even if he was not a great friend of the US. In fact, many policy-makers suspected him of being a Marxist, and he frequently criticized the US for its global policies. Some believed he was not appreciative of the assistance we provided. But, we did support Aristide and because of the relationship between the DR and Haiti, we needed the Dominicans support, especially in a political sense. We certainly wanted the Dominicans to support our efforts in the Organization of American States, and in the UN. The US did not want to use military force to remove the Generals, but hoped that political persuasion, and then a series of economic and other sanctions would do the trick.

A large part of the US effort involved the Organization of American States (OAS), keeping the whole region on board, so that it didn't look like a unilateral Yankee effort. Part of the OAS effort was comprised of innumerable meetings, proposals and resolutions which were voted on at the OAS.

I had to go constantly to the Dominican Government to make sure they voted the right way. Most of my contact with the Government was done through the Undersecretary of Foreign Relations. Another fabulous guy, Don Fabio Herrera Cabral. He was about eighty-two and had been in their Foreign Ministry for a thousand years. He was a political and personal friend of Balaguer. He was a member of the Balaguer Party. He had no political ambitions for himself, but knew all about domestic politics. I was usually on the phone with Don Fabio twice a day. I met with him in his house, in his office, in restaurants, in his club, at my house. We were sometimes inseparable. He was always very honest with me, several times noting that the US tactics wouldn't work with the Haitians, who he had known very well for many years. At times, he also served as the unofficial contact in the Dominican Republic for the Haitian military factions. The Dominican Government recognized the Haitian Ambassador who had been sent to the DR by Aristide; thus it had no official relations with the military rulers in Port au Prince.

As I said, most of the technical, detailed work on Haiti was through the Foreign Ministry, but I always discussed the issue with Balaguer, probably once a week. I would go to Balaguer when the Department wanted Dominican assurances directly from the President, although they knew that Don Fabio was speaking for the President. Of course, it was easier to work with Don Fabio, especially since the President did not want to be too closely identified with the policy of supporting Aristide, who Balaguer did not like and only met with once in two years that I know of.

I did have access to Balaguer at his home or at the office. That was made clear to me and to Dominicans shortly after I arrived when one of Balaguer's two sisters died. The funeral was in the Balaguer private residence, and it was almost a state

funeral. She was laid in State in the Balaguer private residence, three blocks from my residence; it was not a big house. The whole diplomatic corps was invited as a group to attend at noon. We received a special message inviting me to pay my personal respects privately just before the diplomatic corps. When I arrived, probably about 11:30AM, the family, cabinet ministers, and long-time friends were asked to leave so I could go in alone to see the President. The military and the police escorted me directly into the house, through the large crowds milling around.

I was invited for the private appearance for two reasons. It showed there was a special relationship with the American Ambassador. So that was my access. And, it demonstrated to the country the special relationship with the United States.

Q: This is obviously a small country; the American Ambassador had enormous clout; what does this do to the Political Section or Economic Section? So much of the dealings were personalized at the Ambassador/Head of State or cabinet level, that what did these other people do?

PASTORINO: Okay, and then we'll get back to Haiti. We had a very good economic section. I had an Economic Counselor who was outstanding on the substance of the issues but who tended to wait for my guidance before acting. I'm sure he thought he was being overshadowed by the Ambassador, not only me but my predecessor, who in fact was also an economic officer. There were many times when I would talk to the President about the general outlines of an issue and then turn over the details to the economic section to negotiate with the Dominican Government, but always keeping a close watch over what was going on. In fact, Economic Counselor and the Commercial Counselor did most to the negotiations on the textile treaty and the new agreement of automobile tariffs which had discriminated against the US, those negotiations taking place both in Santo Domingo and in Washington.

The Mission had an outstanding AID representative, Ray Rifenberg, who ran an active, creative AID Mission which was very influential in developing policies and programs and in their implementation within the Dominican Republic. I didn't have to push him at all. He was out there in front as much as he wanted, actually developing and implementing new economic developmental assistance concepts and theories. For instance, he strongly believed that programs wouldn't work without the approval of the people and he developed mechanisms such as Embassy/community task forces to design assistance efforts. As part of this, he directed most of the assistance toward non-governmental organizations (NGOs), which he hoped, and I agreed, would lessen the corruption quotient, because the government was not as directly involved. These concepts were in the vanguard and utilized in other programs around Latin American and the world.

The Commercial Section as I noted was active on the automobile issue, for instance. The Department of Commerce wanted to get rid of the discriminatory

tariffs on American automobiles which were helping Japanese exporters and dealers. The Commercial Attaché, Larry Eisenberg, came to me with a strategic plan and program to achieve our objectives. He carried it out, using the Ambassador where necessary and we were successful within one year of changing an onerous situation that had harmed American interests for many years.

Larry obtained the cooperation and involvement of the US Congress, and he negotiated with the Dominican Ministry of Commerce and the Customs authorities, as well as dealing with the Dominican auto dealers which were distributing Toyotas and Hondas, rather than Fords and Chevrolets. It was really shameful, with Puerto Rico just a few miles away, which was fully capable of supplying new vehicles, as well as replacement equipment, service, and all the accessories, both original and replacement. But, US and Puerto Rican suppliers could not compete when the US vehicles and components had to pay duties ten times higher that those on Japanese goods.

As part of the program, I went to the President, letting know of our concerns and letting him know of our program, both with the Commerce Ministry and with other interest groups. I could have demanded the tariff reduction, I guess, but we didn't want to be so overbearing. When our program seemed to bog down after a few months, I went to see Balaguer again to gingerly prod him. Six months later, the Dominicans changed the tariff rates such that the playing field was leveled, and American cars and components could be imported again into the Dominican Republic. The commercial section did all of the work, including the design of the necessary customs changes and their relation to the competitive needs of the American exporters.

The political section was excellent, and kept very busy in supporting me in the Haitian effort; in following and reporting on the very contentious electoral campaign; in investigating the human rights situation and preparing the necessary but burdensome human rights report; in maintaining everyday contacts with the political parties and other interest groups that became so important in the democratic electoral campaign; and in generally maintaining contact with the Dominican Executive, Congress, and Judicial branches, as well as with the State and Municipal Governments. As we all know, behind the public face of the Embassy and US Government, there are hundreds of reporting requirements to the Department, international treaties to keep track of, diplomatic notes to write, memorandums to compose, contacts to maintain, and, in general, active representation to carry out. So the sections were busy; there were lots of issues; the US really had a role; and there was a fairly intense relationship to manage.

The Consular Section was probably the busiest. Polls showed that 70-80 percent of Dominicans readily admitted they would rather live in the US than in the Dominican Republic. Most of them showed up regularly at the US Embassy Consular Section, which was in a separate building close to the Embassy, to requests visas, even those who had just been turned down.

In fact, I think we turned down about 70%, if I remember correctly, of the visa applications because the applicants were clearly ineligible. Since so many Dominicans went to San Juan or New York on Embassy-granted tourist visas and never returned to the island, it was easy for Vice Consuls to disbelieve applicants who swore they were going for ten days to visit friends. We knew they probably wouldn't return. The situation was somewhat similar to Mexico, where people can cross the border illegally without a visa, although it was much more difficult in the case of the Dominican Republic. They had to cross the dangerous 30 mile-strait to Puerto Rico, which they did in all types of boats. Once they arrived in San Juan, it was as good as being in New York, because one doesn't have to pass through US immigration; San Juan/New York is a domestic flight. While I paid lots of attention to the Consular Section, I certainly couldn't do all their work.

Certainly the DEA and Customs had large responsibilities, and scarce resources in Santo Domingo, so they were also very busy and had many dealings with the Dominican Government, and in some cases with US Authorities in both Washington and San Juan. I remember working with their representatives in both Miami and San Juan on issues of interest to these agencies. Of course, anything which I did had to be supported by many hours of their preparation and operational activity.

All of the sections of the Embassy were relatively small sections. I don't remember any complaints that they didn't have enough to do. I had an agreement with them. Be creative, give me your ideas, go ahead and follow through once a decision has been made, and you'll get a good efficiency report. I believe several section heads received promotions.

Thus, the Embassy ran pretty well and Manuel and I didn't have major problems, except with the Consular Section. I'm not going into details. Basically, some of the middle level officers didn't want a heavier workload, especially if it involved anything non-consular in nature. For instance, I wanted all sections to be involved in the drug fight against the traffickers, whether it be intelligence, the sharing of information, or in the case of the Consulate, extra precautions against giving visas to drug dealers. Admittedly, this last task made the consular officers life more difficult. They had thousands of applicants which they had to process daily, and needed to do extra checking to determine drug ties, whether it be longer interviews or more detailed document searches and verification, or better knowledge of the drug culture and trafficking *modus operandi.*

This extended their day and put pressure on them. But, I considered it part of their job, and once greatly embarrassed them when in an extended interview I actually obtained a confession from an applicant that he had been convicted in New York for dealing cocaine on a New York street corner. When I tried to install better interviewing techniques, or a better background data base on the drug traffic, I was opposed by middle level officers. I thought the Junior Officers were more

than cooperative. This whole issue somewhat poisoned the relationship between the front office and the Consular Section and actually ruined one friendship which I had maintained for several years.

Going back to Haiti. The first task was to keep the Dominicans on board with the US and OAS policy. The next stage was an operational one when the OAS finally voted and implemented the trade embargo. There were two ways of shipping goods into the Haiti. One was by sea, which was the route for much of the contraband; that method did not generally involve the Dominican Republic although there might have been some off-loading into the DR and then marine shipment around the border in shallow waters.

The second route was over the land border. That was not easy but it was a traditional smuggling route for small shipments and had been used for many decades, with the Dominicans making big money. Both main roads to the border were two lanes and paved, but not very good, especially for large trucks. One became an unpaved road on the Haitian side. The DR/Haitian border is about two hundred miles long. It was mapped but not much more. There was very little easy access through the mountains and jungle away from the roads, but goods and products had always crossed readily. Much like any border in the world, and especially where there is an economic disparity between the two sides, as there is in this case, there are great incentives for smuggling. Haiti is basically an economic basket case. The Dominican Republic is a little more advanced.

Historically the border has been relatively open, and there are innumerable family relationships which span the border. For instance, Francisco Pena Gomez, who ran for President, was part Haitian, his mother having been born on the Haitian side, although she lived most of her life in the Dominican Republic. There were lucrative economic markets and ties. Haitians crossed to work and some to buy goods they couldn't get at home. The Dominicans had goods to sell to Haiti. On the other hand, if you wanted some wonderful artisan goods and paintings from Haiti, one could buy them in Santo Domingo, much of which was smuggled in.

Some Dominicans of course were happy to close the border, but many others made money out of the smuggling. And, even if the Government wanted to, it was difficult for physical and corruption reasons. The most important item in the embargo was fuel, which we embargoed in an effort to weaken the Haitian military. But, at times, so little fuel was needed to maintain the military and the Haitian economy that people carrying five or ten gallon cans across the border could meet large parts of the fuel demand. So it was almost impossible to stop small shipments, even if the border officials wanted to, which sometimes they did, but at other times they were willing to look the other way, regardless of what the Government in Santo Domingo mandated.

The Dominican Government did make honest efforts at times to close the border. They made a commitment to us and a public one in the OAS to implement the

land embargo. Corruption, unfortunately, reared its ugly head at times. The military that guarded the border made some money on smuggling. While we offered small amounts of equipment and resources to police the border and supplied a little intelligence, we never considered a major action like sending Americans; thus, we were dependent upon the Dominican Government.

So I had to utilize jawboning and persuasion with the Dominicans. We did not threaten them with dire consequences if did they not uphold the embargo. I personally did not think that the Haitian situation, which was not caused by the Dominicans, warranted strong-arm tactics against the Dominican Republic, and indeed Washington's general policy with Latin American was against it. I made frequent public statements to the press; I constantly talked to the President, the opposition, the Congress, whoever would listen; I coordinated with Latin American diplomatic community.

I forcefully made Haiti an issue whenever I made public speeches, including the three intensively covered, annual speeches to the Dominican-U.S. Chamber of Commerce before National TV and live audiences of more than 500 persons. This Chamber speech was then repeated in the other large cities where the Chamber had a presence. Dominicans got tired of hearing about the Haitian issue; USIS was tired of writing the issue into the speeches; and frankly, I got tired of saying it.

I went and paid very public visits to the border. I told President Balaguer about the trips in advance and he never demurred. In fact, I think I probably asked whether I could go. I was pretty sure he would not say no. On the other hand, I also told him about the time I went to a small fishing village in the Eastern Coast of the island which was a center of smuggling of illegal aliens the 30 miles to Puerto Rico in small boats. I made a very public appearance, brought the press with me, showing my face hoping to drive the smugglers underground. I actually visited some of the boats that had been confiscated. I drove the smugglers underground that day, but I'm sure they reappeared a few days later, or moved their boats to other tiny ports nearby.

I remember one time I went up to the Haitian border, at one of the dirt road crossings. There was a small bridge over the creek, which served as the frontier. When I arrived, the border area was clean, it was almost empty. No one was crossing, either over the bridge, beneath it on foot through the shallow water, nor were they crossing a mile or two up and down from the bridge, sites we also checked out. I walked half way across the bridge and up and down the stream, always staying on the Dominican side. I had a big public meeting with the military officials on the bridge. Lots of media, and lots of *abrazos*, and I'm sure lots of speeches. I talked to the Haitians across the border. I talked to everyone, especially the media, both the press and the television reporters.

I had meetings with the Dominican Military Commander, the Governor, the

Presidente Municipal (the Mayor of the town), the customs people, etc. I think I even talked to Peace Corps volunteers in the area. Everyone assured me that this border site was hermetically sealed. Of course, I knew that the border here might be sealed for two or three or four days, but it would open up later. There was not much else I could do, unless we were going to offer to police it ourselves. I couldn't move the Embassy to the border. However, on the broader question of the land embargo, I do think we had some positive impact. It was always clear that the major fuel movements were by ship from international waters, nowhere near the Dominican Republic. But, there was a slow down across the land border, if even only temporarily. It certainly cost people more to smuggle; it slowed down shipments; it changed the transport methods, so there was some impact.
Finally there was another level of dealing with the Haiti issue. As part of the persuasion effort, I worked closely with the Aristide-appointed Haitian Ambassador in Santo Domingo. He needed assistance because the Aristide Government in Washington to which he haphazardly reported, couldn't provide him information or guidance on a regular or reliable basis. Much of his news and instruction came through me, relayed from the State Department. The Haitian Ambassador was very effective when he had the right information and instructions, especially with the media. In fact, we became a somewhat public combination; we were together frequently. There were positions and points of view to be made publicly which were more appropriately made by him, just as there were things I could better say.

He was a competent, friendly, well spoken person who had an almost impossible job. He was an academic, not a diplomat. He had lived in the Dominican Republic so he spoke perfect Spanish. He also spoke French and Creole and English. So I spent a lot of time meeting with him and telling him what our position was and what we were going to say. Also, I spent time with him because he wanted to know what he was supposed to do next. His communications with Aristide in Washington were not very reliable.

For much of the time the US Government did not have an Ambassador in Port-au-Prince. We had a very effective Chargé, but some Haitians only wanted to talk to an Ambassador. Also, they didn't like what they heard from the Mission in Haiti, so some of them, on more than one occasion, thought they might hear something better from the US Ambassador in Santo Domingo, or maybe I would give them a more favorable hearing.

I got one call from the Dominican Government in the middle of the night saying the brother of the Port-au-Prince Chief of Police wanted to see me in Santo Domingo. At that time the Chief of Police was one of the most unsavory of all the military, and one of the grossest of the human rights violators. I did not know the brother who wanted to see me. I informed Washington which considered this a pretty unorthodox channel but they advised me to meet with him quietly and report. The telegram also gave me talking points which basically were: say nothing, just listen. Since, I had followed the Haitian situation closely, being

involved in it at the Pentagon and at the NSC, I had a good handle on the background and the recent reporting kept me up-to-date on the current situation.

Well, on this particular occasion there was a comedy of errors. I had told the Dominicans I would receive the brother at my house at noon. Evidently, he came on time and saw my guards, and got nervous. He wouldn't drive through the gate, driving around the block three times. The guards of course remained at their posts at the residential entrance. He finally entered at about 12:20 PM. Meanwhile, coincidentally, I had been called over to see the President at 11:45 AM. I went and we had a forty-five minute meeting. I was sitting there, getting worried although I figured that Fran would invite the visitor into the library and keep him company until I arrived. Here he was one of the worst guys in Haiti, and I visualized her having coffee with him. When I arrived about 12:35PM, sure enough she was talking to him about Haiti and the Dominican Republic. This was the kind of person I didn't really want to be alone with myself, but she had received him, had told him I would be a little late, and was calmly entertaining him.

Anyway, I finally walked in and relieved her. He made some proposal on how to make peace in Haiti, which would satisfy the Haitian military. It was not new. It was something they had already offered to the Chargé in Port-au-Prince. I guess they thought the Chargé in Haiti didn't transmit it, or if I sent it to Washington, it would go to a different place. Of course, I said I'd transmit it to Washington and tried to get more details. I met with him about two hours, and sent a cable. I got instructions later, filling me in on the proposal as heard next door, and was told to ignore this channel in the future. I of course told Don Fabio about the meeting, who passed it on the President.

Another "channel" was a woman who was Haitian/Dominican, who had been mixed up in some kind of criminal activity. She had betrayed somebody somewhere and was perceived as a dangerous person. She was sent to me as an emissary, in this case from the General in Port-au-Prince. I had met the General at one time much earlier in my career. It was arranged that we would meet in a Santo Domingo Restaurant. But nothing came of that channel either because she had nothing new to add.

I went to Port-au-Prince only once while I was in the Dominican Republic. I went up the border and looked across a few times when I was there on other business; for instance there was a US mining investment near the southern frontier, and we had Peace Corps volunteers in the border area. I went once on a joint country team visit to Port-au-Prince, which the Haiti country team later reciprocated. I had suggested this type of meeting since we were facing the same issue on both sides of the border—the return of Aristide. I took four or five section heads, and we were given a short tour of Port-au-Prince. When the Haiti Country Team came to Santo Domingo, they went shopping and stocked up with things they couldn't find at home.

Meanwhile, Presidential elections took place in the Dominican Republic in the summer of 1994 and that became a major U.S.-Dominican issue, which kept the Embassy very busy. President Balaguer was going to run again, for the seventh or eighth time, and he had strong opposition, Francisco Pena Gomez.

Pena Gomez was a black, populist, brilliant, long-time politician. About 50 years old, he was the youngest of three principal candidates. His party was styled somewhat along the lines of the Mexican PRD of Cuauhtemoc Cardenas. I had good relations with Pena Gomez. He was no longer anti-American, if he had ever been. One of the tasking I had from the State Department was to get to know Pena and Juan Bosch to determine whether we would have serious problems in the relationship should either one be elected President. Both were considered by some to have been Communists earlier in their careers, and both had spoke admiringly of Castro and his policies. Pena Gomez, I understood, had once been saved from possible execution by an Embassy political officer many years before when he was detained by Trujillo's henchmen. The Foreign Service Officer, who was a friend of Pena's, walked into the detention facility, amid lots of chaos, and calmly escorted Pena to safety, evidently using his Embassy status as leverage.

Let's get back to the elections. One candidate was Pena Gomez and the third major candidate was Juan Bosch. If Balaguer was old at eighty-six, Juan Bosch, who many called the Professor was eighty-three years old. Bosch was thought to be slowing a bit mentally but physically he was very active and enthusiastic; he was still very charismatic. Bosch had been President, duly elected in the 1960s, and had been overthrown by a military *junta*, accusing him of turning the Dominican Republic into a Communist regime along the lines of Castro. To this day, I believe that Bosch believes that it was a CIA plot that put the military up to the overthrow.

Juan Bosch and his party had now become centrist. I reported quite quickly after meeting him and many others that the US would be able to get along with Bosch. There would be some historical and perception problems but we would have to work them out. Very shortly after my arrival, I made a name for myself when I went up to speak to him at a Seminar we were both attending. The media saw us talking and the short conversation made front page headlines, especially since, out of respect for his past position, I called him Mr. President. That salutation really interested all those Dominicans who then and throughout the campaign truly believed that I was going to choose the next President of the Dominican Republic. Bosch publicly did not like the American Embassy and publicly did not like the American government, because of the coup in 1965. Evidently, he had never met since with a U.S. Ambassador, certainly never in public and certainly never at the Ambassador's residence.

Upon his overthrow he had gone into exile in Puerto Rico, and then returned to his homeland several years later. He had later run for President again. Bosch was

a revered public figure, renowned in the Dominican Republic and in much of Latin America, both for his political leadership and for his many wonderful books. But, he still did not deal openly with the US. I had determined that none of this would deter me from meeting with him if he had no problems. It was actually fine that the first meeting was so public. During that first meeting, I introduced myself with the famous "Mr. President" saying "I'm Ambassador Pastorino, and I'm very pleased to know you. I have read your books, I know about your background. It's an honor to meet you". As I remember, President Balaguer asked me about the meeting the next day. There was no criticism and it didn't affect my relationship with the President.

The next public meeting with Bosch was also very interesting. A couple of months later, the Secretary of Commerce of Puerto Rico brought a trade mission with Puerto Rican products to the Dominican Republic. I hosted a large reception at the residence to honor the Secretary and the trade delegation. As they often do, the Puerto Ricans like to act as though they are a sovereign country, which makes the situation a bit tricky, but it was a good opportunity to promote the US and have a big reception. Dominicans and Puerto Ricans have similar backgrounds and many family ties.

Unbeknownst to me, Juan Bosch had lived in the house of the father of the Secretary of Commerce when he was in exile, and he had been put on the guest list, probably by Manuel, who saw this as a good opportunity. On the other hand, perhaps he had always been on the guest list and had never come to the Residence; I of course noted his name but, if I thought anything, I thought he probably would not show up, in spite of the fact that we usually had close to 95% acceptance rates for Embassy functions.

All of a sudden, there he was standing in the doorway, with his aide. I couldn't believe it. Since we would normally allow the media, at the behest of the Press Attaché, into the foyer but not in to the rest of the house, the media were right there all over us. Juan Bosch, cordial as always, said graciously "Mr. Ambassador, thank you for inviting me". He of course then swept over to the Secretary of Commerce and gave him a big "*abrazo*". It was like uncle and nephew. And that was that. Bosch came in and chatted with the guests. He stayed fifteen or twenty minutes. Again, there were tremendous headlines the next day, and it got major television coverage, with all of the attendant speculation. Some thought I would endorse him for the Presidency. Of course, since some reporters were paid if their articles appeared on the front page, speculation about Bosch and Pastorino was money in their pocket.

There was a fourth candidate, from the PRI party, who had been Vice President at one time. He was well known but definitely the outsider in the race. The PRI was small, an offshoot of Balaguer's party. In order to not appear to be playing favorites, Rocha suggested that I institute a regular series of luncheons with the three candidates. I would invite them and their aides to lunch every couple of

months, being careful not to hide it, and taking care that they all were treated equally, even though they were separate luncheons. We used the lunches to talk about the international issues, such as Haiti, and they would always talk about their Presidential campaigns. So the political counselor had an easy memorandum of conversation with the candidates. The public and politicians knew I did this and pretty soon it went unnoticed. Of course, the media was not invited. It also gave me a wonderful opportunity to really get to know the candidates, and we often went far afield from politics and foreign relations.

I will never forget the first time that Juan Bosch came to one of these luncheons. Remember, he was eighty-three years old. Manuel Rocha briefed me about Bosch's interests, and even his attention span which was thought to be very short. He thought the luncheon should be held to about an hour and fifteen minutes and I had Fran plan the luncheon like clockwork. I think I gave her a formal briefing and a schedule. Bosch came that day with two or three aides and I had one or two of our people. It went like clockwork. We discussed politics, economics, the history of Latin America, U.S.-Dominican relations, etc. He never once brought up the controversial past history.
After almost exactly an hour and fifteen minutes we had finished desert, including Fran's homemade chocolate chip cookies, which we served because Manuel knew Bosch liked chocolate chip cookies. Well, I'm ready for the luncheon to end, although I'm enjoying it immensely, and the Professor begins to eat the cookies. Another thirty minutes passed and he is alert as ever. After another twenty minutes or so, his aides leave. One of those by the way was Leonel Fernandez, now the President of the Dominican Republic. More than two hours have gone by and pretty soon the Embassy people have also left. I think we went two and half-hours. He didn't miss a thing in the conversation; I hope I didn't either. It's funny what cements relationships, but the chocolate chip cookies seem to have cemented ours. I think he asked Fran to go into business with him making the cookies. He used to mention them whenever we met.

That was part of the run up to the elections. There were not many major issues. A principal issue was Balaguer's age. Both Pena and Bosch talked about changing various policies, especially getting rid of the corruption that they perceived. Pena Gomez, being younger, talked about modernization and generational change. Haiti was somewhat of an issue because of Pena's background and speculation how he would deal with the military, and how he would cooperate with OAS policy on the embargo and the return of Aristide.

For the US, the campaign revolved around whether it would be a clean election. The opposition charged fraud before the election even took place, and asked the US to guarantee its fairness. In effect, the opposition was utilizing offense as the best defense against possible fraud. Of course, this put us in a difficult spot, with Balaguer and his people assuring us and the whole world they had never stolen elections and would not this time. We were very interested in a clean election because of our policy of supporting democracy. It was also interesting politically

because Balaguer, Pena, and Bosch had been running against one another for years.

The Dominican Republic had an electoral commission which managed the electoral process and counted the votes. It had some credibility because it had been in existence for several elections, and had several clearly impartial members, including a well-know priest, Agripino Nunez Collado, who was the Rector of the Catholic University in Santiago. US AID gave some technical assistance to the Commission for registration, computerization, etc. And the OAS provided electoral assistance also, including the sending of observers to the headquarters of the Electoral Commission during the campaign. One of those observers was responsible for monitoring the computerized vote counting operation, including obviously the computer room at the Electoral Commission Headquarters.

At the campaign drew to a close, charges of fraud flew from every direction. The Electoral Commission members began to split in accordance with the parties that had named them, although the biggest fear was that somehow Balaguer would figure out how to steal the election. The priest, whose contact was AID Director Rifenberg, was a genius at settling disputes. In fact, he was a type of national mediator, who was called upon whenever any kind of dispute arose, especially those in the labor/management sector. As well as he did, he still called the Embassy regularly requesting our help in damping down the electoral disputes, and providing credibility to the outcome.

Several times, I went publicly to the Commission to hear about the latest problem. That news would become public and some Dominicans were reassured that the election would be clean, at least that is what I was told. I must say that in all this time I never really discussed the campaign with Balaguer, nor did he ask me to do anything, except that I told him of the great, overwhelming US interest that the campaign be fair. To this, the President responded that was also his over-riding interest, both as President and as a Candidate. Of course, I continued to meet with him regularly, especially given the Haiti problem which was intensifying in the Dominican Republic as the embargo became strategically and politically more important.
The campaign itself went on for several months. It had all the trappings of a US campaign, with the Latin salsa added. Each candidate and party had committee organizations in every town and village. Each put on massive meetings and demonstrations almost without end. This entailed parades, get out the voter events, registration rallies, free food and drink, instructions on how to vote, song-girls, baseball heroes, some of whom were candidates, slogans, fireworks, everything one could imagine. It reminded me of my early days in Venezuela when I covered the Presidential campaign in 1968. The political campaigns were fun in the Dominican Republic. It was real democracy in many ways, and I enjoyed it although I had to be so careful to be seen as neutral.

I had attempted to convince the Dominicans of my neutrality long before the

campaign started. As soon as I arrived the media and the politicians were asking me who the US Government was going to support. I would get that question at every opportunity, when I was visiting American factories, going to ball games, making speeches, etc. Deep down I think I knew I would never convince some of the people that the US didn't have a favorite. To some Dominicans it was impossible to believe that the US wasn't backing one or another of the candidates.

I finally got fed up with the questions and became very dramatic at a wide-ranging, street corner, improvised press conference. I began to describe the qualities the US was looking for: maturity, loyalty, intelligence, etc., all of which could have described any of the four candidates. Finally, after going on for about five minutes, I told the media that I personally would support, and then I left a pregnant pause. With the microphones in my face, with the pencils poised, with great expectations, I broke the silence and said, "I support George Bush."

I had really surprised them, and I got bigger than normal headlines the next day in the press and on the evening news. But they didn't get to write the stories they wanted to. And, I'm not sure whether it saved many questions. The rest of the campaign I told them I was supporting George Bush, which got me in trouble later when President Clinton was elected. Someone came down from Washington to investigate that statement, before I was blessed and allowed to continue my mission as Ambassador for the first two years of the Clinton Administration.

The election turned out to be extremely close. It was very clear it was going to come down to a battle between Pena Gomez and Balaguer. Each would get thirty-five to forty percent of the votes. In the end there was a one- percent difference between them with Balaguer having about 20,000 votes more. There had been close elections before in the Dominican Republic. Charges of fraud had been hurled in most of them, no matter who won. This case would be no different. The elections did take place very peacefully. Everyone voted.

There was one serious problem which happened just before election day, possibly ten days before. The OAS observer at the computer facility was asked to leave by the Electoral Commission and in fact her entrance was barred to the facility. She actually left the country quickly, having been threatened by someone. Meanwhile, for two days the facility had no observer, and there were charges that the electoral lists were tampered with, thus making some voters ineligible, while allowing others to vote more than once. I think I heard about the observer being barred the morning after it happened; in fact, I met with her later that day. I immediately informed Washington and discussed the situation with the Commission and the Government, I think with Balaguer. The Commission invited the OAS to send a new observer the next day, but OAS bureaucracy and the new observer's personal plans prevented him from arriving for almost a week. During that them the facility was "unobserved".

A large OAS observer team was in the country for election day, as were many

media, and observers from private organizations. Our Embassy people were out in the field also, watching the process. The OAS delegation was all over the country, but there were thousands of polling booths. One of the leaders of the OAS team was a well-known U.S. Congressman. All of the observers wanted my opinion as to what happened and who won. They thought I had to know every detail. I was on the phone, as was my staff, for hours on end during the next week after the election. Of course, the most urgent time was the next day, because all of the various observers and teams wanted to draw their conclusions immediately, whether they had good information or not.

Ultimately, President Balaguer was declared the victor and after long negotiations among the influential groups in the DR, he was inaugurated. Along with his declaration of victory, it was decided that his term would be two years instead of four, thus fashioning a political compromise. Elections were held two years later; Balaguer could not run because the Constitution had been changed to prevent immediate re-election by a sitting President as part of the compromise with the length of the terms. Actually, I believe the genesis of that idea had come from AID. Leonel Fernandez of Juan Bosch's party won the next election. The next election will be in 2000, and it looks as though President Balaguer will once again be a candidate. I missed all of the final negotiations and outcome, my assignment ending in mid 1994, thirty months after I had arrived.

The Haiti issue and the elections came simultaneously and the two issues had to be very carefully balanced. On both we wanted the Dominicans to do something. Instructions came slowly from Washington at times, because there were conflicting opinions on what the US Government should emphasize.

I remember one issue in which I couldn't get any instructions. I asked for instructions by cable and by telephone. I knew the issue was important and I knew Washington was having difficulty deciding on what instructions to send. As on many issues, there were various opinions with several offices and agencies expressing their positions, including the Office of the Vice President. I had often thought earlier in my career about what I might do if I were to find myself in this position. I finally sent a highly classified cable telling Washington that I would do the following if I heard nothing from Washington. I still received no answer and so I went ahead. I'm not even sure today what the issue was but have described this predicament to show that the Ambassador can be left to his own designs at times. Evidently, my action didn't have major repercussions. I didn't get fired. I don't even remember what came of it.

Given the controversy of the Haiti and election issues, we had several congressional delegations visit us in Santo Domingo. I found them not to difficult to take care of, especially when they were delegations returning to study the same issues. There was a lot of detail work to do in the preparation of meetings; they all wanted to see Balaguer, and he was most gracious in seeing them; the preparation of papers; protocol; logistics of transporting and housing the Congressmen; the

social activities; etc. We also received delegations from Washington who came down to either negotiate or sign agreements.

One of those I most remember was one chaired by New York Congressman Charlie Rangel, who came to look into the Haitian issue. I think I escorted him up to the border and to other parts of the Dominican Republic. Like many of the other delegations, he then went on to Haiti.

I had fairly frequent dealings with Congressman. When I went to Washington for consultations, I would visit the Hill. One of those visits was to Robert Torricelli, Congressman from New Jersey who is now the distinguished Senator from that State. I went to see him about a specific and difficult issue: one of his constituents had been requesting his assistance in getting me to force the Dominican Government to pay off the constituent for some powdered milk he had foolishly sent to the Dominican Republic and then had released from a bonded warehouse before receiving payment. The Government had evidently used the milk to sway voters in a previous campaign.

The constituent had been a Peace Corps volunteer in the Dominican Republic in his youth, and thought he could finally get payment the "Dominican way," through a bribe. He had then bribed not once but twice a member of Balaguer's inner circle, who had taken the money and done nothing to make the milk payment. Anyway, Torricelli's staff was irate because I couldn't or wouldn't do anything. I suggested that the Department advise the staff of the constituent's problems, especially that of the Corrupt Practices Act, which prohibited bribery. State refused to, I think because someone feared the wrath of Torricelli.

On one of my trips to Washington, I paid a visit to the Congressman, explaining the situation and the political problem the Embassy was faced with in supporting the constituent. Torricelli told me to proceed within the law. He was not furious and he said he understood. This milk problem reared it ugly head later when the constituent was finally indicted, after a cable from the Embassy detailing the details as prescribed by the Corrupt Practices Act. A judge asked that the Embassy to depose the Dominican taking the bribe, four weeks before the Presidential election. The immediate deposing was stalled.

The Haiti issue had other repercussions. It was a partial cause of a public polemic that I had with the Dominican Cardinal just before I departed. The Cardinal was very unhappy about the US policy to support the return of Aristide and he never tired of criticizing it, usually whenever I made a speech. He was a very political churchman, frequently influencing Dominican domestic politics. Actually, he was quite powerful. And, he had aspirations to be elected the first Pope from Latin America. He didn't keep this ambition to himself; people knew about it. Anyway, after one of his attacks on the policy and me, I got a little frustrated and wrote him a letter challenging him to disavow all the American assistance the Church received in the Dominican Republic if he was so unhappy about US policy.

The letter was meant to be private and he had it published in the press, which led to an immediate taking of sides by Dominicans. A polemic between the Cardinal and the American Ambassador was almost better than a baseball game. The reaction was interesting. The diplomatic corps supported me almost unanimously, although not publicly, with so many of them representing Catholic countries. As usual many of them were somewhat anti-clerical and many thought the Cardinal should have been taken down a notch or two. Within the population, a public poll showed that more than 40% of the respondents actually supported the US Ambassador. Of course the media had a field day, with the issue remaining in the headlines for more than a week.

My other relations with the Catholic Church were far more rewarding. We had the good fortune to be in the Dominican Republic for the 500th anniversary of the discovery of America by Christopher Columbus. Of course, this also generated controversy with many Latin Americans, because they called October 12, 1492 an "encounter" rather than a "discovery." The Dominican Republic, which was the first landing site, after an islet in the Bahamas, was the unofficial Latin America host for the celebration and the Pope visited in October 1992 for several days, which included a high-level meeting of Latin American Cardinals and Bishops.

As part of the Diplomatic Corps, I participated in all of the ceremonies and meetings, including the welcoming and departure ceremonies at the airport, a huge outdoor mass in the Eastern part of the country, where we helped provide the transportation for the Pope, parts of the Church conclave, several receptions, and finally a private audience, reserved only for the Ambassadors and their wives. I gave the Pope a message from President Bush, which I developed on my own, and had several conversations with him.

The Dominicans went all out for the Papal visit. They rebuilt downtown Santo Domingo, refurbished many of the colonial areas, and finally built a huge monument to Columbus and the Discovery, a monument which everyone said Balaguer would never be able to finish. It was a huge concrete structure, thirty stories high, shaped in the form of a cross, directly across the river from colonial Santo Domingo. On the top was a series of flood-lights of high wattage shining toward the sky. The lights reflected off the clouds at night and lit up the sky over Santo Domingo in the form of a perfect cross. Airplane pilots could see it hundreds of miles away. Several acres of land had been cleared for the structure and the new surrounding park from the existing slums and this proved politically difficult for Balaguer. People joked that the wattage was so high that the lights would go off in the capital when the cross was lit. That didn't happen but the project pointedly made the comparison between the energy needed for the cross, and the brown-outs and black-outs which had taken place for years in Santo Domingo. On the ground floor of the lighthouse, as it was called, at the intersection of the arms of the cross, was a massive, centuries old, marble, ornate tomb which had been made in Spain and which the Dominicans said contained the

remains of Columbus. Of course, Seville, Havana and Barcelona, among other places also claimed to have the great explorer's body.

The Dominicans provided space in the structure for a large trade and cultural exhibit, which kept the Embassy, especially USIS, busy for months obtaining a space and technology exhibit, with very little Washington assistance. It was really a poor performance by Washington, although the exhibit itself was given high marks by the Dominicans. I had the opportunity to open it to the public, which gave the media another chance at the Ambassador and US policy.

It was events like the anniversary of the Discovery, the Papal Visit, and the nice beaches which brought us several guests during our assignment. One Christmas, the whole family, including my sister and her children, came down and we rented a villa in Casa de Campo. Most of the cousins also visited; those trips were far more enjoyable that most of the official visits which we received.

I remember particularly one in which my elderly aunt and uncle from Los Angeles came. They were both world travelers and had visited us before. We took them to the north coast of the Dominican Republic to the site where the first Columbus settlement was built. The Dominicans were excavating the site and making it more accessible. The project was done under the direction of an 85-year old Venezuelan archeologist who gave us a guided tour of the ruins, which were not much more than some stone foundations and trails. The Venezuelan paid particular attention to my aunt Judy, and we kidded her about having an admirer.

We then took them further into the center of the island to visit a site where some American volunteers were providing health assistance to the Dominican population, I think it was a dental group. I was rather well known and the Dominicans were profusely grateful to the US for the help, most of them giving me the personal credit. My aunt Judy gave me one of the greatest compliments of my Foreign Service career, notwithstanding a whole raft of awards and commendations, when she said I really was doing a great job in representing the American people. This wonderful compliment came from a person who for many years often clashed violently with the US foreign policy which I had represented for so long.

I think we may have also taken her to see some Peace Corps volunteers working in the field. During the early '90s there were more than 400 volunteers working in many areas in the Dominican Republic, one of the largest contingents anywhere in the world. Of course, they came under my jurisdiction, and I spent a lot of time on Peace Corps activities, visiting them in the field to learn about the projects, whether they be in agricultural production, small business, the development of small infrastructure projects like electricity and water, or rural schools.

I spent time working with the Dominican Government on their programs, and tried to maintain the usually already high morale of the volunteers. I would

preside over the swearing-in and mustering-out ceremonies, and we opened the guest house at the Residence to volunteers who came into Santo Domingo for a day or two of rest and recuperation. This latter idea created a small spat with the first Peace Corps Director, who was afraid that the "easy" living at the Residence for one day would somehow convince them not to return to their sites. That fear was wrong and it was one argument I won easily. The Peace Corps volunteers were also a great source of information on the economy and social situation in their areas, although I usually did not pick their brains until they were ready to finish their assignment. The Peace Corps did very good things for the Dominican Republic; at the same time, the volunteers learned and matured to a great degree.

There were also of course great family memories in the Dominican Republic. Perhaps one of the most memorable for me, and one of the proudest, happened during our first year. Our daughter Susan graduated from the American High School and I got to be part of all of it, including escorting her to the prom and giving the commencement address at the graduation. It made me feel much more like a father, rather than like an Ambassador. Susan had not had an easy time in the Dominican Republic with her father as Ambassador. One could never be sure whether friends were friends, or were using her to try to get close to the Ambassador, but she did well and I got to be part of the great High School events.

At the end of 1994, I received a call from State informing me that the Department was seeking a replacement given my assignment would be ending sometime during 1995. Most changes were made during the summers and I would have had a full three year assignment had I arrived in mid-1991 instead of six months later because of the confirmation delay. But, I had expected to stay only between two and three years and so the news did not completely surprise me. It was decided that Ambassador Donna Hrinak would replace me during the summer of 1995, sometime after the Presidential elections, assuming she was confirmed in a timely manner.

The change was not as easy as planned. Her confirmation process took some time, and then personal reasons precluded her from coming until late in the summer. Then the election controversy threatened to drag on for many months, just as the Haitian problem seemed to drag on forever. June and July began to be very trying as we really did not know what our plans would be. It was somewhat frustrating, with the Department not being able to fix a date, insisting that I stay on, but not really making any decisions. I was rapidly becoming a lame duck and I had my bags packed to depart right after the elections. Rocha had already left, being named to the US Interests Section in Havana, but we did have a capable Administrative Counselor on board, Chris Orozco, and I saw no need to prolong my assignment. So, we departed in July, after one last meeting with President Balaguer, a very nice diplomatic reception, and far too many *despedidas* (going-away parties which always serve as wonderful representational affairs).

Another complicating factor at this time was our decision about retiring from the

Foreign Service. I was 54 years old with 29 years of service, and I had visions of a nice, easy retirement working at something not too strenuous to augment the significant pension I would receive. I had visions of going to the ball game whenever I wanted, and we both wanted to be close to the children, all who by now had left, and the grandchildren. Fran had followed me around the world for many years and she also deserved retirement.

Of course, it is never an easy decision after such a long, enjoyable career. The Department had called me asking whether I would consider Ambassadorial assignments in Santiago, Chile, San Salvador, or Bogota, Colombia. While all had some advantages, especially Santiago, all also had disadvantages. There was too much need for security and protection in Colombia, I had served in Honduras, which could have complicated matters in El Salvador, and I was concerned that the Chileans would still remember the grape decree. In any case, regardless of the Post I might have been assigned to, we were both leaning toward coming home to San Francisco and settling down permanently in one place, once and for all. When I said no to the above three postings, the Department graciously asked what else I might desire and offered me an immediate policy-making position in the meantime in Latin American Affairs.

The last thing I wanted was to be was in Washington walking the halls of the State Department awaiting another Diplomatic Mission. I knew several ex-Ambassadors who ended up for years in make-work tasks in offices little larger than closets, always expecting that the next change or telegram would bring them their next Ambassadorial Post. So, a bit facetiously, I told the Department I would only stick around if I had a commitment to be sent as Ambassador to Mexico. They responded just as facetiously that that possibility was not in the cards.

One other offer almost changed my mind. One of the major US agencies in Washington offered me a very good, high-level position dealing with Latin America. I actually had an employment appointment scheduled and I canceled it the night before, when we decided definitively to retire and leave Washington. I later heard that the position was mine and the interview was only for form. But, I didn't regret the rejection of the decision.

So the decision was made and we retired and returned to San Francisco and the family. Today, five years later, I am convinced it was the right decision. We have settled down; the kids and grandchildren are close, and there are lots of ball games. As I tell audiences frequently, the Foreign Service was a great career, one that I recommend, and one where I would change nothing had I to do it over again.

This is billed as my oral history, but it is really our oral history, both Fran's and mine. In few other careers is the spouse so important. Fran was a great support everyday of the twenty eight years, always taking care of the family matters, supervising the raising of the children, finding the houses, managing the staff, in

sum, permitting me the time to do the job at the office. The spouse is the unpaid half of the team, and the US Government and taxpayer benefit tremendously. Often the spirit of sacrifice and hardship is greater for the spouse, and he or she is always in the background as far as the public is concerned. Fran was a great representative of what Americans really are, she put on wonderful parties, and she was always a positive factor for Embassy morale, as well as mine. I mentioned her several times in the narrative, but those occasions were only a minute part of what she contributed to the team. Fran should have received some of those awards which came to me; after all, she made them possible.

End of interview