

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

THOMAS P. GALLAGHER

*Interviewed by: Charles Stuart Kennedy
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Q: Today is 26 October 2012, an interview with Thomas Gallagher. All right, let's start at the beginning. When and where were you born?

GALLAGHER: 9/11/1940 on Fifth Avenue, New York City.

Q: All right, let's start on your father's side. Where does the Gallagher side of the family come from?

GALLAGHER: The bogs of Mayo, God help us. Both of my father's parents were immigrants from Ireland. My father was born in Philadelphia. My grandfather was a wetback. He swam ashore.

Q: How did that happen?

GALLAGHER: The Brits had a bounty on his head for something that happened in a pub. He called it revolution. They called it murder. He fled to Liverpool and was found by an Irish cop who said, "They know you are here. Get out of town." He went down to the docks where he knew some longshoremen who stowed him away on a freighter. Two weeks later, the ship docked in Hoboken, New Jersey. He was afraid to get off during daylight hours for fear that the immigration folks would send him back to England to be hanged, so he waited until dark and swam ashore. The next morning, he asked somebody, "Which way is it to Philadelphia?" They pointed and said, "It is over there." Four and a half days later, after stealing apples from the farmers in New Jersey, he arrived in Philly. He stoked coal in a steel mill for the rest of his life and made bathtub gin in the basement during Prohibition. He died shortly after my birth confirming what he believed was a curse on the name I shared with him. The curse was made by an Englishman who was reduced to penury because of a boycott that was arranged by one of my ancestors. As he got on the boat taking him away from Ireland the Englishman reportedly said: "Let there be a curse on the name Tom Gallagher. For every one who is born, one must die." My grandfather insisted that this process has gone on for generations. Strangely he didn't tell my parents about the curse until after they had chosen my name and baptized me. I think he was ready to die.

Q: What had the Gallaghers been in Mayo?

GALLAGHER: Farmers.

Q: And your grandfather met up with an Irish girl?

GALLAGHER: I believe they met in this country. She was from not far away from where he grew up.

Q: Do you know anything about her background?

GALLAGHER: Very little, actually. She was the only grandparent that I can remember, but I don't know much about her. She was a bit of a grumpy old lady and didn't talk much about her background in the old country. She was a Lynch of the family that invented the word, but those hangmen were not closely related to us.

Q: Well then your father. What do you know about him?

GALLAGHER: Not as much as most people do. His work took him away from home a lot, and he died when I was 13. During the war, he was a truck driver for the army. He was diabetic, had two kids, and was a little too old to be drafted. His job took him on long trips to California and Georgia that kept him away. After the war, he became a private chauffeur.

Q: In Philadelphia?

GALLAGHER: No, in New Jersey and New York. His army job took him to Fort Monmouth, NJ and we lived near there. Before the war he had been a chauffeur for various people and a cab driver in New York. He was the Pope's chauffeur briefly in the 30's. Before he ascended to the papal throne, Pius XII spent six weeks in New York. My father was working for a priest at the archdiocese at the time, so he was lent to the Pope. That was his claim to fame.

Q: How about on your mother's side?

GALLAGHER: My mother was an immigrant from a town called Charlestown, which is located right on the border of Counties Mayo and Sligo in the west of Ireland. She came to this country in 1925 as a 19 year old – all alone and scared to death. My parents married in '38. She worked most of her life as a maid and waitress.

Q: Was this mostly in the Philadelphia area?

GALLAGHER: She started out in Philadelphia but she didn't like her relatives in Philly, so she moved to New York as quickly as she could.

Q: This is why you were born in New York City.

GALLAGHER: That is right. My father was also pressured to get away from Philadelphia. I didn't learn this until I was more than 50 years old, but apparently I have

an older half sibling who was born out of wedlock. According to the very little I know about it, the girl's father was a cop who made it clear to my father that he was not safe in Philadelphia. So he moved to New York.

Q: Other than half siblings, did you have any brothers and sisters?

GALLAGHER: Only one, and he died at age two. He was two years younger than me.

Q: So you grew up as an only child.

GALLAGHER: Basically. My parents had what I call a "Catholic divorce." After the war, my father worked for a fascinating family who founded MGM and Random House among other things. They lived in New York City during the winter months, and he stayed there with them. We lived in the garage of one of their estates on the Jersey shore.

Q: What family is that?

GALLAGHER: The family name was Goldsmith. Mrs. Goldsmith was a Selwyn, which is the wyn part of Goldwyn. Her brothers went into partnership with a tailor from Brooklyn named Samuel Goldfish. They wanted to combine their names to name their business.

Q: Oh yes, Goldfish, of course. He became Sam Goldwyn, didn't he?

GALLAGHER: That is exactly true. In combining their names, they didn't want to become the Selfish Corporation, which had obvious disadvantages, so they named it the Goldwin Corporation. Mr. Goldfish took the name and became Samuel Goldwyn. Like everyone else in Hollywood, the Selwyn brothers learned rather quickly to hate his guts, so they ran him out of the company and sold it to an outfit called the Metro Corporation, which in turn sold it to Louis B. Mayer a couple of years later.

Q: Did your father have any stories that came out of this work?

GALLAGHER: All sorts of stories. We lived dull lives, but there were always names to drop and stories to tell about the people we worked for while we had dinner.

Q: I am a movie buff so it is up to you.

GALLAGHER: Mrs. Goldsmith was the daughter of an itinerant rabbi who ended up in Selma, Alabama in 1890. You can imagine what the Jewish community in Selma was. I don't think he was a very successful rabbi. But she did something that no rabbi's daughter in the 5,000 year history of Judaism ever did before. She married an Irishman.

Q: Good God.

GALLAGHER: Good God indeed, what a scandal. Her first husband wrote songs with and for Charlie Chaplain including “Come Away with Me Lucille in my Merry Oldsmobile.” Their daughter sued Oldsmobile for a quarter of a million in ’54 when they were using that song in their ads without her permission. Anyway, Mrs. Goldsmith divorced the Irishman who died dead drunk on 10th Avenue with 47 cents in his pocket. She then married Sam Goldsmith, a member of the German Jewish aristocracy, who had divorced his wife, a Guggenheim, in a great scandal in the early 20th century. He then turned around and to the absolute horror of the German Jewish community, he married a Russian Jew. Furthermore, she was an actress, and further still her first husband was Irish. What a scandal that was!

Q: I am aghast.

GALLAGHER: Mrs. Goldsmith’s brother Edgar, the one who founded the Goldwyn Corporation, led his three younger siblings to Chicago after their parents both died in Selma. At age 20, he decided that he was a failure, so he jumped into the Chicago River in an effort to commit suicide, but it was January or February and the river was frozen solid. He didn’t even break a bone. As he dragged himself onto the river bank, a thief put a gun in his face and said: “Your money or your life.”

“That’s exactly the point,” said Edgar. “I have no money and I’m trying to commit suicide, so please shoot me.” The bandit couldn’t pull the trigger. Instead, the two of them sat on the riverbed to discuss their mutual poverty. Edgar decided that the only thing they had of value was the gun; and he persuaded the thief to hock the gun and split the profits with him. He parlayed that into ownership of the two largest vaudeville theaters in the U.S. – the Twin Theaters, which are registered landmarks in Chicago. He also built the second theater on Times Square in partnership with an Irishman named George M. Cohan. It’s now the American Airlines Theater on 42nd St., and is also a landmark.

Mr. Goldsmith was nicknamed “the Wizard of Wall Street” because he sold out six weeks before the crash in 1929. His main claim to fame came during World War I when Woodrow Wilson was worried about where the German Jewish money would go. In those days, the German Jews were as close to Germany as they were to America. Sam joined with Bernard Baruch and Otto Kahn in throwing a series of lunches and dinners to raise money for American war bonds, thereby leading the community into the American fold. After the war, Marshall Foch gave him a baccarat carafe as a thank you gift. It was given to my mother, and I now have it in my living room.

Mrs. Goldsmith’s daughter by the Irishman married Donald Klopfer who, with his Columbia roommate, Bennett Cerf, bought a small publishing house called the Modern Library and renamed it Random House. Mrs. Goldsmith herself kept up her show business connections by being an angel for Broadway shows. The house was full of celebrities, and we lived vicariously through them.

Q: Was there, on the Jersey Shore, the equivalent of the cottages in Rhode Island and all?

GALLAGHER: Chauffeur's cottages?

Q: I was wondering if there were these huge mansions they call cottages, like the Vanderbilt's and all.

GALLAGHER: Mrs. Vanderbilt lived in Long Branch, New Jersey, where I grew up, until she decided to build the Breakers in Newport, RI. Long Branch had been the preeminent American resort. Seven presidents lived there. Garfield died there. Mary Lincoln threw a ball there during the civil war. When Mrs. Vanderbilt decided to move to Newport, the 400 set slavishly followed her. The Jersey Shore was taken over largely by German Jews who found hundreds of mansions suddenly available. They, in fact, saved Long Branch, which might have gone into serious decline without them.

Q: As a kid when you are around these fabulous places, what were you up to?

GALLAGHER: I started caddying when I was 11 at the Goldsmith's country club. My childhood was lonely because there were no other kids in the neighborhood. I felt very isolated.

Q: That can be quite a problem.

GALLAGHER: And I was a fish out of water. I didn't belong to the aristocracy of the town. The man who bankrolled Woodstock is my age. We lived directly across the street from one another for seven years, but we never met. His chauffeur picked him up and brought him to an elegant beach club every morning while I went to the servants' beach. But it was wonderful to have the beach so close to home.

Q: I would think that, as you say the servants were often couples and all and they would have children. I would think there would be a fairly significant servants' children community.

GALLAGHER: Most of the servants didn't marry. I could get in trouble for saying this but, like the clergy, the servant's life was often a good cover for lesbians and gay men. It was not expected that they would marry. They lived on the third floor of their employer's house and you can't raise kids in somebody else's house. The servants were the first of the immigrants to escape poverty. The immigrants who went to work in the coal mines and steel mills had to buy or rent their own homes and their own food, pay for their clothing and so forth. The servants had their food, clothing, and residence paid for. So they essentially sent half their income back to "the old country" and banked the rest. Many of their nephews and nieces went to Fordham or Villanova thanks to their maiden aunts.

When servants married, they hired out as a “family” and moved out of the big house into a garage apartment. The kids worked too. I started cleaning the big house when I was eight.

Lest I sound like an angry victim, I should say that we all truly loved the Goldsmiths. My father became quite ill in 1948 and couldn’t work for almost a year. Although he had been working for them for less than two years, the Goldsmiths paid his salary and medical expenses and permitted us to live on their property rent free. As he approached his death six years later, they made sure that he had a private room next to the nurses’ station at the local hospital, to which they were major donors. That made it possible for my mother to stay with him overnight and for his 13 year old son to visit whenever I could. Children were not allowed in semi-private rooms. When I went to college, Mrs. Goldsmith gave me a thousand dollars a year for tuition. They were good to us. I remained close to the family until the last granddaughter died two years ago. I now have a number of friends who are members at the golf club where I caddied for Mr. Goldsmith and others. I go there about ten times a year for lunch or dinner. It gives me a kick to eat in the dining room that I was not allowed to enter during the nine years when I was a caddy.

Q: Where did your mother and father and you live?

GALLAGHER: In the garage - in a really crummy two-room apartment in a garage that was built for summer use. We lived there all year long. I was always ashamed of my home when friends came to visit. My father also kept a room in an apartment on 50th St. in Manhattan, half-a-block away from the old Third Ave. elevated trains. He was a gambler: a charter member of what they called, in Guys and Dolls, “the oldest established permanent floating crap game in New York.” I don’t think he ever brought home much money. During the winter, when the Goldsmiths and my father were in New York, my mother worked as a maid - a kind of itinerant house cleaner - for the rich families in the neighborhood. And she worked as a waitress for their dinner parties. She was very frugal. I had everything in spite of the poverty. I got a fielders mitt for Little Leagues, music lessons and dancing lessons.

Q: Did you eat well?

GALLAGHER: Like a king, because the Goldsmiths had fabulous cooks, mostly Hungarians and Austrians. When they were down in the summer, I ate in their kitchen. I grew up dirt poor, but I was eating crepe suzettes, chocolate soufflé, and baked Alaska. During the winter, we reverted to my mother’s Irish cuisine. Yuk.

Q: Given the family background, how important was the church?

GALLAGHER: Enormously important. I was an altar boy for seven or eight years, choir boy, went to Catholic grammar school and high school, and the first two years of college. My mother was totally religious. My father was a bit passive about religion, but he attended Mass, at least when he was around my mother.

Q: Looking back on it, how did you find the church in those days. Quite authoritarian wasn't it?

GALLAGHER: It was quite authoritarian, but you know I never really questioned anything until I went into the Peace Corps and ended up in a completely different culture where I didn't have those daily pressures. Not pressures, so much, but habits (i.e. it's Sunday we go to church now). We don't really think about it very much. I wasn't terribly introspective or philosophical during my college years.

Q: So just to mention, because nobody talks about it, did you have problems with priests?

GALLAGHER: No, the priests for whom I was an altar boy were decent Christians in the finest sense of that word. They were enormously supportive of me. They were sensitive to the fact that my father was dying and when he died they went out of their way to be helpful in every way that they could. The nuns were tough, but really good. I had terrific nuns in grammar school. The nuns in high school were not so hot.

Q: Were you much of a reader when you were young?

GALLAGHER: Very much so, partly because of the Random House connection. They gave me enough books every Christmas to take me through the rest of the year. For about seven or eight years, they published ten history books for kids every year. I was pretty avid reader in grade school, but I became a sloppy reader in high school.

Q: How do you describe the sloppy reading?

GALLAGHER: The nuns kept telling us that we had to read Julius Caesar and other Shakespearian things that I did not understand. I never liked reading plays, and I just got out of the habit. It was a strong habit I had in grammar school. Thank God I got a little education early on.

Q: Are there any aspects of history that you really connected to?

GALLAGHER: Certainly Irish history. The family was very patriotic, and I was raised very strongly Irish and remain so.

Q: Were you an Anglophobe?

GALLAGHER: Not until I turned around 50 and read a couple of history books that I should have read a lot earlier. In my Irish Catholic school system, they taught us that Good Queen Bess brought civilization and Shakespeare and lovely clothes and the renaissance to London without telling us that the "good" lady killed three out of every four residents of Ireland. Sixty years later, Oliver Cromwell followed up by killing another 60 percent of them. I have a great-great grandmother on my mother's side who was working on a chain gang with a twin on each breast, and all three of them dropped

dead in the famine on the side of the road. So later in life, I developed some pretty Anglophobic feelings. I should add that something happened to my mother when she was 10 years old with a group of English soldiers. I don't know the details. She didn't talk much about it, but something horrible happened.

But the queen bowed her head in front of Pádraic Pearse's tomb last year in Dublin; so 800 years of hell are forgiven. I enjoy the English as people. I have always had a lot of English friends.

Q: Your mother was coming up at a time when there were still signs, "No Irish Need Apply." I am 84 now and I recall people saying things like: "I have got the sweetest little Irish dressmaker."

GALLAGHER: Yeah, all condescending.

Q: It was pretty bad, but also the Irish and the Jews have never really gotten along well together.

GALLAGHER: Oh, I disagree. I was at a dinner party in California a number of years back, and four of the guests were Irish and four were Jews. The four Jews agreed that the Irish were the easiest other people to get along with. The four Irish agreed that the Jews were the easiest other people to get along with. In my experience, the relationships between the two peoples are quite positive. I think there is a lot of shared history of oppression. There is also a shared sense of humor that I think both the Irish and the Jews are well endowed with.

Q: Certainly it permeated American society, the Jewish and Irish humor.

GALLAGHER: Absolutely. Jewish more, but Irish second and Blacks third. The rest of those people have no idea how to laugh.

Q: No, but the Germans, which I come from, have footnotes to explain why such and such a thing is considered funny.

GALLAGHER: You are not being entirely fair to them, but the Irish do know how to laugh through adversity.

Q: Did you get any anti-Semitic feelings when you were a kid? I mean, being associated with a Jewish family.

GALLAGHER: The town I lived in was largely Jewish. The Jews were the largest culture around. You know the really short answer is no, or at least very little. The Jersey Shore was largely divided ethnically between Italians, Irish, and Jews. Each community had their own towns. The Italians went to an Italian Catholic church and the Irish went to an Irish Catholic church. That process was breaking down through the schools when I was a kid. My grandmother despised Italians with a passion. My parents taught me that I should

never trust Italians. But each of them had close Italian friends, including the family that lived in the other apartment in our garage. They (my parents) were living through a schizophrenic generation for inter-ethnic relations. In my generation we went to the Catholic schools together and it's really hard to hate the family of your best friend when you are in elementary school. My closest friend since fourth grade is named Capone. I would move to Italy tomorrow morning if I could, if the Euro wasn't so high. The Jews had the same problem the Catholics had in that the German Jews and the Russian Jews would barely speak to one another, and they had the Russian Jewish temples and the German Jewish temples. As with the Catholics, that mutual contempt has largely vanished.

Q: Particularly in the States. It is forgotten now, but the German Jews were the real aristocracy.

GALLAGHER: Absolutely. The richest immigrants we ever got.

Q: All right, now school. You went up through high school in a Catholic school.

GALLAGHER: I did.

Q: How did you find that?

GALLAGHER: I don't think they ever taught us much that was actually useful. I remember in history class having to memorize all of the vice presidents of the United States in chronological order.

Q: A very handy thing to know.

GALLAGHER: Not really. And we had to memorize great swaths of Shakespeare which I forgot the minute the test was over. In fact, in many cases, I didn't pass the test. So while the Catholic schools were thought of as better than the public schools, I don't think they were all they were cracked up to be. I think that I learned more from my fellow students than I ever learned from my teachers in high school. They came from upwardly mobile homes. None of us had crack heads for parents. The weaker students were excluded. Either they didn't pass the entrance exam into Red Bank Catholic High School, or they were expelled for bad grades or bad behavior. My high school class started with 250 but only 138 of us graduated. They were a pretty bright bunch of kids.

Q: A winnowing out process.

GALLAGHER: Yes. None of us ever did anything that was worthy of note as far as the police were concerned. But any behavior that was not on the straight and narrow got punished. The one girl who got pregnant was out the door in a flash. Girls were also expelled for smoking while wearing their school uniforms. One boy who was expelled for bad grades ended up as a judge, and a good judge I am sure. None of it made much sense.

Q: When you say you educated yourselves, does this mean by reading or talking to each other, or what?

GALLAGHER: Talking to each other and socializing.

Q: Did you find,, since we are talking about a foreign affairs oral history program, that the international world was very much with you? Did it come across your radar?

GALLAGHER: My father ran away from home when he was 16 and got a job on a freighter that ended up in Jamaica. That is as far as he ever got, but he had a wanderlust and an interest in the larger world. My mother, being an immigrant, had some interest, at least in Ireland and England. She was not educated and neither was my father. My father went to seventh grade, and my mother went to eighth. But they had some interest in the wider world. They both had several immigrant friends from Italy, Hungary, Norway, and Germany, among other places, and I was always fascinated by their histories. Beyond that, I don't know where my interest in international relations came from other than perhaps some genetic process. But from day one, geography was always my favorite subject. My father stayed in New York much of the winter and we saw him on Sunday when we went to the city, or he would come out to the country to see us. I think he felt guilty about being an absentee father. So he would offer me anything in New York that I wanted. What I always wanted was to drive around the docks and look at the great transatlantic liners. Since my dad also loved ships, he never objected.

Q: Oh, those liners were beautiful.

GALLAGHER: I loved those liners. My first memory of New York was seeing the Queen Mary and the Queen Elizabeth in war paint in 1945 docked at 50th Street. They had just brought the troops home from the War.

Q: Was the Normandy sunk there?

GALLAGHER: That was a bit before my time, but I believe she went down at the French Line's pier on 48th St. – just next to where I saw the Queens. I believe that there is now some evidence that she was sunk by the Mafia to let Franklyn Roosevelt know who really ran the Port of New York. If the story is correct, Roosevelt gave up his efforts to clean up the New York docks rather than face off against the Cosa Nostra while he was busy with Hitler and Tojo.

Q: How about the Soviet Union? This became very much the focus of our generation, but as a kid?

GALLAGHER: I knew it was a big bad place over there. Russia has never turned me on. Africa turned me on as a kid, but Russia didn't. I don't know why. It just seemed like a big old flat place that was cold, and I hate cold. You know I went to grammar school in the 50's when kids were drilled in hiding under their desks from imaginary atom bombs. I don't remember that at all. Maybe once we got under our desks. But we didn't really live

under fear of the bomb. Sure, we were aware of the bomb, but somehow I never expected that to happen.

Q: What sort of games did you play with the kids?

GALLAGHER: I have an eye problem in that I can only use one eye at a time - cross-eyed, basically. In practical terms, what that means is that I can't catch. As a result, I was always the last kid chosen for the baseball team. If you flipped your keys across the table to me now, I would drop them on the floor. At this point in my life, it is a minor problem. I have trouble putting a key in a lock, small things like that. But for a nine year old kid, it was a bloody disaster.

Q: Oh, a big deal.

GALLAGHER: Big deal. So I made up for it in games where there was no catching. I grew up 500 yards from the Atlantic Ocean. I was a really good body surfer and reasonably capable swimmer. I could swim and play those sorts of games. I gravitated towards bowling and golf where at least the damn ball sat still. Nobody threw it at you. I was never a champ at either one, but could at least do it respectably.

Q: Where did you go to high school?

GALLAGHER: Red Bank Catholic in Red Bank, New Jersey.

Q: Did you get involved in any of the extra-curricular activities?

GALLAGHER: No. The nuns tried terribly hard to get me into debate, and I resisted hook and nail. I realize now they saw that I had a pretty good talent for public speaking, but I only caught on to that in my 60's and 70's. I enjoy doing it and I wish I had gotten into doing it then. I also didn't join the glee club, which I wish I had. I am now a very proud member of the New York City Gay Men's Chorus; but I didn't engage in a lot of extra curricular activities at all in high school.

Q: What about living near New York, seeing plays and all?

GALLAGHER: I used any excuse to get to the City. I love the City. My blood starts to pump at a particularly rapid pace when I go through the Lincoln Tunnel. Among Mr. and Mrs. Goldsmith's showbiz friends was Dorothy Fields, the preeminent female lyricist of the Jazz Age ("I Can't Give You Anything but Love, Baby", "I'm in the Mood for Love", "Hey Big Spender", and "The Way You Look Tonight", among others). The year that her husband and favorite brother died she decided to get away from the fast life in New York, so she came out to Jersey to stay with Mrs. Goldsmith who by then was 88 and fell asleep right after dinner. Dorothy had nothing to do but drink a lot of Scotch and sit and chat with the servant's kid. While my mother scrubbed pots in the pantry, I spend many hours listening to Dorothy tell me about her life on Broadway and in Hollywood, from the

Cotton Club to Fred and Ginger. She gave me insanely expensive tickets to West Side Story and other shows. I never could have paid for those tickets on my own.

Q: What particularly grabbed you about the city?

GALLAGHER: Everything. The excitement of it. The crowds, the importance of it, the architecture, the theater. Most of the people in town that I grew up with, the wealthy people, the ones that I looked up to were New Yorkers. New Jersey was a secondary place for them.

Q: As I do these oral histories is I am still dealing with the generations of people whose parents were not, for the most part, college graduates. I think that probably if you got today, college graduation is no longer such a big deal, so it probably doesn't pertain. I think it meant more at a certain point for upward striving and all. As you know, the Foreign Service comes from a very mixed background.

GALLAGHER: Well it didn't used to. When I came in, I remember people saying - and I don't know if there are any statistics to back this up - that 95% of the Foreign Service came from five schools: Yale, Harvard, Princeton, Stanford, and Berkley. I don't know if that is true.

Q: I think it is probably off, but it has roots.

GALLAGHER: It is probably an exaggeration. But I believe I was the first child of a widowed immigrant servant girl to come into the Foreign Service.

Q: While you were in high school, were you pointed toward something, or did you desire something? What were you thinking about?

GALLAGHER: I wanted the Foreign Service from fourth grade. I don't know what happened in fourth grade, but I somehow read about the Foreign Service, and I said that is what I want to do. I transferred colleges after sophomore year, and I was interviewed by the head of the political science department of the school I was transferring into, Monmouth University. He asked what is my career goal was. I replied the Foreign Service and he burst out laughing. "With grades like this, it is out of the question." I want to meet him now. Then along came the Peace Corps in my senior year in college. I said, "Yeah, that's it." I wanted also to be a missionary when I was a passionate Catholic, mainly so that I could go to Africa and look for Tarzan.

Q: You mean a Catholic missionary?

GALLAGHER: Yes.

Q: How does the Catholic Church work? Do you have to be almost a priest to be a missionary?

GALLAGHER: Yes, you did, a priest or a nun. Although nowadays I think they have gotten a lot more liberal about that because they don't have that many priests.

Q: Were you attracted towards the priesthood?

GALLAGHER: I was in grammar school.

Q: What turned you off?

GALLAGHER: Probably puberty. My desire to become a priest vanished in high school, but the nuns and priests were putting pressure on me when I was a kid to go into the priesthood.

Q: I have talked to people who have come up. One man told about how he was sent to Mount Saint something or other in Maryland. Mother Seton came from there and he was told by his mother and his mentor priest that they really have a great deal and all, and when he got up there, it was a Catholic college. He found the school was very heavily into theology, his course. He said: "Wait a minute" because he had discovered girls.

GALLAGHER: I went to a Catholic college for two years.

Q: What school was that?

GALLAGHER: LaSalle in Philadelphia.

Q: What was LaSalle like? When, what years were you there?

GALLAGHER: '58 to '60, freshman and sophomore year. I loved it. I loved being away from home. I had a great group of friends. It was a lot of fun. But educationally, it was really limited. I realized that when I transferred to a non-sectarian school. I started learning about a wider world. At La Salle we studied Catholic political science. which was all about why birth control should be forbidden under all circumstances, and Catholic history, which meant that there was no talk about all those Popes who were starting crusades and behaving badly. I think we studied Catholic math, if there was such a thing. The whole emphasis was theological. You had to take religion courses all through four years. Everybody graduated with a minor in philosophy, but. What they called philosophy was all about St. Thomas. Kant, and Hegel, and all of those non-Catholic philosophers did not exist.

I made a fool of myself getting drunk as a college sophomore and felt that I had shamed myself in front of my fraternity brothers. I actually started fist fights, something that I have never done while sober. I transferred out of La Salle because of that. It was devastating at the time, but as a 19 year old I learned – the hard way – that my Irish blood and alcohol don't mix well and I've been very careful about that drug ever since.

Q: Did you find while you were in this particular atmosphere that you took a contrarian's point of view?

GALLAGHER: No, I didn't. In retrospect, I don't know why because now I am willing to argue with anybody, Catholic or otherwise, provided they don't get their feelings hurt. But the system was so pervasive, so controlling. It was cult-like, and one simply didn't question, and I didn't. Now I look back and ask: "How dumb were you?"

Q: What college did you transfer to?

GALLAGHER: Monmouth. It was Monmouth College then, Monmouth University now.

Q: How did your parents feel about moving away from the mother church?

GALLAGHER: My mother couldn't even begin to deal with it. She couldn't discuss it. For many years, when I was home, I would go to mass rather than tell her that I didn't practice her faith anymore. Finally, somewhere in the 70's, she visited me in California, and I told her she could go to mass at the church right around the corner whenever she liked; but I wasn't going. She was quite devastated. My father wouldn't have cared a whit, I don't think.

Q: When you moved to Monmouth College, what sort of things were you taking? Was this a blossoming? Did you feel you were blossoming out?

GALLAGHER: I certainly blossomed educationally. For the first time, I was studying history somewhat close to the way history actually happened. I was a poli-sci major. I think I got a much finer education at Monmouth than I did at LaSalle. I remain close to Monmouth. I lecture there occasionally and am on the Advisory Board of the Honors College. I am proud to say that I have been named as Distinguished Alumnus of the Year 2014.

Q: You were coming up through the 60's. Catholic schools and the 60's didn't seem to jibe, I mean they usually were a little bit later than the University of California or Columbia. How about Monmouth: Was it hit by "the revolution"?

GALLAGHER: You know Monmouth was working class. The goals were more practical. Get your degree so that you can get some kind of respectable job. So there was very little in the way of revolution. I graduated in '62, which was really before the 60's happened. The 60's didn't really happen until '67, '68, '69 and really a lot in the 70's. I was in the Foreign Service for most of the 60's so I was out of the country.

Q: You are like me. I found myself when the sexual revolution hit. There I was, married with three kids. Boy did I miss out.

GALLAGHER: Well, I felt quite the same.

Q: Did the Peace Corps the idea come to you gradually or was it the Road to Damascus?

GALLAGHER: Road to Damascus. The minute I heard about it in December of my senior year at Monmouth. I said: “Yep that’s what I am going to do.

Q: I was wondering, often a ton of people in your generation were attracted to the Kennedy presidency. How did he hit you?

GALLAGHER: Amen. A red headed Irish Catholic, what do you think? I absolutely idolized him. You know he had the glamour to which one aspired, to say the least, and my Peace Corps experience was a dream. Nobody had the experience my group had. We trained at the Georgetown School of Foreign Service. We were the largest group that ever went out.

The Peace Corps Act was the only piece of legislations that JFK got through Congress, and we were the first Peace Corps group to train in Washington. Every liberal in DC wanted to come and have his picture taken with us. Our speakers in training or at our termination conference when we came home included Earl Warren, Hubert Humphrey, Margaret Mead, Jay Rockefeller, and Justice Douglas. Paul Tsongas was one of my fellow volunteers. Harris Wofford was our group director. He later became a senator from Pennsylvania and held Martin Luther King’s left hand at the bridge in Selma; and he has been credited by Teddy White and all the historians at the time with getting JFK elected to the presidency. We were seen off at a tea party in the green room hosted by JFK and Jackie; and on arrival in Addis Ababa, we were toasted with champagne by his imperial Majesty Haile Selassie, King of Kings, Elect of God, Conquering Lion of the tribe of Judah, and Emperor of Ethiopia. Heady stuff for a 21 year old kid who grew up in a garage in New Jersey.

Q: Were you all designed to go to Ethiopia?

GALLAGHER: We were. Nowadays you can sort of bargain with the Peace Corps as to where you go. But in the early days, one simply was told where to go. I just got a telegram one day that said I was assigned to Ethiopia. In my junior year, I took my only international relations course. Our year long assignment was to do a paper on a country of one’s choosing. I wanted to pick a country that was as far out as one could go, so I chose Ethiopia. In the course of writing that paper, I read every book in the New York Public Library about Ethiopia. There were nine such books at the time. But I read them cover to cover.

On the Peace Corps application one of the things they asked was what country one knew as much about as someone who has lived there for six months. I had never lived anywhere but Philadelphia and New Jersey, but I put down Ireland and Ethiopia. My timing was perfect as the Peace Corps was then trying to find 300 volunteers to go to Ethiopia. I went into the Peace Corps five days after I graduated from Monmouth.

Q: About that time, I was INR specialist in the horn of Africa. I knew nothing about Ethiopia, so I read the same nine books.

GALLAGHER: They weren't very good. They couldn't even figure out what the population was.

Q: Tell me, how does the Peace Corps training work?

GALLAGHER: I thought training was wonderful, although some of my colleagues were unhappy with it. My only beef was the fact that dragged us out of bed at 6:30 every morning and made us run around the football field. I am a night person. I don't do 6:30 in the morning. Apart from that, it was good physical training, which I hadn't had in years. I was totally intimidated by my fellow volunteers. Bill Tilney (who later entered the Foreign Service) held the world's record for the 400 yard dash. Martha Stonequist had played piano concerts in Madrid and Vienna. There was a Yale doctor, a Harvard lawyer, and two Whiffenpoofs from Yale. Someone printed a yearbook with mug shots and bios. Under my mug, the bio said: "He has worked as a caddy, a valet parking attendant, and as a stock boy for Food Circus Incorporated." I was so humiliated. Nonetheless, I am still closer to my Peace Corps friends than any group I have been a part of. In fact, 23 of us just went to Addis Ababa for the 50th anniversary of our arrival there. We were welcomed by the current President of Ethiopia in the same room that Haile Selassie used to welcome us half a century ago.

Q: What language were you taught?

GALLAGHER: We were taught Amharic by a teacher who had an alcohol problem. The class was at 8:00 in the morning and if he was there at all, he was really hung over. I am afraid I didn't learn very much Amharic. I believed at the time I had a weak language aptitude. I flunked French in college. It was the only thing I ever flunked. I was convinced that I could never learn a language. In later years, I was the first officer in the State Department to get off language probation in Arabic without having had any formal training in Arabic. So my language aptitude was pretty good my weak performance was because of the terrible teaching methods that were used in language classes in those days.

Q: What were you going to be doing?

GALLAGHER: All but two of us were teachers. I was told I was going to teach geography at the secondary level and that I would be assigned to an urban area. But when my assignment came through, I ended up assigned to one of the small towns in Eritrea - the second most remote town that any volunteers from my group went to - a place called Agordat in the Sahara in western Eritrea. A totally different experience from everything I had been trained for in Georgetown, where they told us we were going to a cool, high altitude, rainy, Christian country with lots of trees, and there I was in the Sahara with a bunch of Muslims in blistering heat.

Q: That is part of the Ogaden?

GALLAGHER: No, it is the other side of the country. It is the far northwest of what was then Ethiopia. My experience was enlivened by the fact that a month after I got to my Peace Corps town, an explosion went off somewhere across town. It turned out to be the first shot of the Eritrean war for independence - the longest war of the 20th century - which essentially began in Agordat. Agordat was kind of the intellectual capital of the Eritrean revolution, which in its early stages was largely a Muslim operation. The Christian half of Eritrea was not interested in revolution at the beginning; although they later joined the fight.

Q: What was your impression of the situation in Eritrea when you were there?

GALLAGHER: I became very pro-Eritrean, and emotionally supportive of the revolution even though I didn't think they could possibly win. They were fighting the largest army in Africa, heavily armed in those days by the United States. The rebels were nothing but a couple of ragtag guerillas with primitive weaponry. But I supported the reasons for the revolution. The town that I lived in was actively discriminated against. It was Muslim and Arabic was the *lingua franca*. I noticed the prejudice mainly in education. The kids had to pass a fluency exam in Amharic in order to go to high school, but there were no Amharic classes and the nearest high school was over 100 miles away, in Asmara. As a result, only one boy from the town had ever made it to ninth grade. But the Peace Corps changed all that. The arrival of 268 of us actually doubled the number of secondary teachers in Ethiopia and – probably with American pressure – the Emperor decided to spend some of his billions on secondary schools. One of them opened in Keren, which was only 50 miles from Agordat. I'm very proud that forty-six of my kids made it to ninth grade. I am still in touch with eleven of them half a century later.

Support for the revolution grew with each act of brutality by Haile Selassie's government. I had two particularly close friends among the Eritreans; one of whom spent my first year there in jail. He told me the way he was tortured. It was unthinkable. His nickname was Mahmoud es-Soda, Black Mahmoud, because his skin was particularly dark by Eritrean standards. They would use the straps to tie his arms together as tightly as they could so his deep black hands became red, and then beat them with a horse whip. I knew many stories like that that emerged from the torturing that was going on across the street from my house in the local police station.

Q: How about with the other Peace Corps volunteers? Were they seeing the same thing or were they seeing a different experience?

GALLAGHER: Most of them had a different experience. I was right in the heart of the revolution. The revolution didn't even spread to the highlands of Eritrea, where most of the Christians, lived areas until after I left. There were only six other volunteers stationed in towns in western Eritrea. One of them made several efforts to go public with his support for the rebels, but the rest of us honored our agreement with the Peace Corps to stay out of local politics. I learned many years later that the Peace Corps considered pulling us out because of the troubles in the area, but they heard that my roommate and I

had enough sense to keep our mouths shut. While I certainly listened and talked in private to friends. I never said anything in the classroom or anywhere else that indicated that I supported or opposed the revolution. So they left us there. Nowadays I don't think they would do the same in areas where there is that level of political volatility.

Q: What was your impression of the students?

GALLAGHER: Terribly bright kids. I ended up teaching middle school, not secondary school. The kids ranged in age from 13 to 19, which is by our standards much too old for those grades. Many of them had been pulled out of school for a year here and there to work for the family or whatever. Any kid who wasn't bright self-selected himself out and his family put him to work in his father's shop or farm. So by the time they got to sixth grade only the bright ones remained. There were some exceptions. There were a few rich kids who didn't have any brains, and oddly kids from the local Catholic school, which went only to fifth grade, were very poorly educated and had problems when they transferred to our school as sixth graders. But the rest of the kids were bright as whips. It was a pure pleasure to teach them. They understood that education could be a ticket to a better life and were desperate to learn.

Q: What was the substance of your courses?

GALLAGHER: History, Geography, and some English. The history courses were a problem because the test that the boys had to take to get into high school didn't jive with the curriculum. My first year there I followed the curriculum and taught the eighth graders all about ancient Greece and Rome. When they took the test, however, the questions were all about Ethiopian (i.e. Amhara) history. So the next year I taught them Ethiopian history and the test asked questions about Greece and Rome! We had no textbooks, so I wrote my own.

Q: How were the Italians treated?

GALLAGHER: Distantly. There were about 30 men, most of whom had Eritrean wives, who ran farms on the outskirts of Agordat. They had been sent there by Mussolini to "civilize" Africa. A river that took the water from the Ethiopian highlands to the Nile ran through Agordat. It was dry most of the year, but there was underground water. The soil was rich volcanic silt that produced excellent bananas. The Italians ran many of the farms and a few businesses in town. They all belonged to a club where they drank at night. It was deadly boring. I was welcomed there because I was white, but I found the place totally dull and only went two or three times. Our landlord was a young Italian who realized that the white man's days in Africa were numbered. He found life in Italy to be too hectic. He was lost between two worlds and didn't belong in either one. I felt sorry for him.

Q: Was there any effort to recruit you into the revolution?

GALLAGHER: No, not actively. As I said, friends would come and talk to me and tell me what was going on in the hills outside town, nothing classified of course; but I had a general knowledge of what was going on. My friend, Mahmoud who had been so badly tortured knew a lot of about what was happening because he was closely tied to the revolution from the beginning and later became the head of the education department of the Eritrean Liberation Front when the fighting became intense. He told me everything he could about things that were in the public domain, and I was an avid listener. I knew when there were battles going on in the hills around us. We did not have much military activity in town, although one night a man's leg was blown off just outside my bedroom. He was as close as you are to me right now, but there was a wall between us. I can still hear his screaming.

Q: Well you did this for two years.

GALLAGHER: Two years.

Q: Where did you go to get a taste of a big city?

GALLAGHER: Asmara. Once a month, we would take a day off from work and ride the "vomit comet" bus for anywhere from five to seven hours into the big city. The busses were always jammed. The aisle was filled with seated passengers. Live chickens rode under the seats. Goats and sheep were ensconced on the roof. Asmara is generally considered to be Africa's second most beautiful city, after Cape Town. It offered movie theaters and some great Italian food. There were about 40 Peace Corps volunteers stationed there who provided us with social life. I'm still close to many of them more than half a century later.

Q: Did Kagnev Station do much or was that off limits?

GALLAGHER: Well we weren't supposed to go there, but we were known to sneak on and eat a hot dog every once in a while. Maybe I did that three times in the two years, and felt terribly guilty every time.

Q: I am not sure if this is treason or not.

GALLAGHER: I don't think so. There wasn't much interaction. I remember one day I was walking down the main street in Asmara and a very young kid with a Southern accent yelled out, "Hey Peace Corps, I'm from the War Corps." I don't remember any other contacts with Kagnev Station. However, Kagnev did have a rest center in Keren, a town half-way between Agordat and Asmara that we visited frequently. The colorful retired sergeant who ran the place kept a pet kudu in the garden.

Q: Did you ever get a peek at the embassy or the consulate general?

GALLAGHER: The consulate, yes. We were there for several functions. The consul was a man named Sam Gammon.

Q: Yeah. I know Sam.

GALLAGHER: Yes, a very nice man.

Q: I have interviewed him.

GALLAGHER: Have you? Good. Is he still with us?

Q: I am not sure. I haven't seen anything. If he is, he is getting on.

GALLAGHER: He must be, because he was a good 20 years older than me.

Q: He was the head of the American Historical Society at one point.

GALLAGHER: I saw his name at one time, maybe that was it. A very nice person who knew more about me than I realized because the consulate was watching the volunteers in the west, particularly Agordat. That was where the trouble was. Sam told me later that when I got my first security clearance from State, they sent him a request for comments about me. He said he turned it around in one day, saying that I was an outstanding volunteer. He knew that I had spent my time in a politically sensitive area, and that I had avoided the temptation to get involved in any public way.

Q: Very early on there was an embarrassing problem for the Peace Corps because a volunteer had written a post card. It was a very innocuous thing but it got into the papers and was considered terrible. Were you in the Peace Corps then?

GALLAGHER: In Nigeria, it was. I don't think the Ethiopians paid very much attention to it, so we didn't get any negative fallout that I can recall. We just felt sorry for the poor volunteer. Marjorie Michelmores was her name, if I remember correctly.

Q: Were you given instructions as to what to write in the mail?

GALLAGHER: Absolutely. I never wrote anything about the revolution to friends back home unless the letter could be posted from outside Ethiopia.

Q: What did you think about the Peace Corps staff in Ethiopia?

GALLAGHER: I respected them very highly. Harris Wofford was our Peace Corps director in Ethiopia. As I mentioned earlier, Harris was credited with getting JFK elected to the White House. It was he who brought the Black vote into the Democratic party. He was close to the Kennedys but the Kennedys thought he was a bit of a radical. He was appointment secretary in the White House during the transition period. So he made a lot of decisions about who was going to be an Assistant Secretary throughout the government. I think he could have had the pick of jobs. What he picked was taking the first Peace Corps group to Haile Selassie, for whom he had a great deal of respect. So we

were taught pretty much to respect the Emperor as a progressive force who brought education and airplanes to Ethiopia. My friends in Agordat had a different point of view.

Harris was later appointed to the U.S. Senate from Pennsylvania when Senator Heinz was killed in an airplane accident, but he lost election to a full term to Rick Santorum.

Our local Peace Corps staff representative in Eritrea was Bill Canby, a terrific boss who is now a judge on the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals. His wife, Jane, was a kind of big sister to all of us. A really nice woman.

Q: You were living in an empire that was ruled by an old-time monarch. He had a strange record as far as opposing the Italians, and he did have this educational thing.

GALLAGHER: He could have done a lot more for education, but in that sense he was a big improvement over his predecessors.

Q: Given his era and his position.

GALLAGHER: In relative terms, there were some positive things to say about him. But it is also true that the Ethiopian army used to hang people in front of my house. The first one was Christmas day. The man was dead. All of the people who were hung were already dead. It was a custom in the Horn of Africa and in Sudan to warn any rebels by hanging up the bodies of bad guys on gibbets in the center of town. The first one was a man who was sliced in half by automatic weapon fire. It was my first view of the internal organs of the human body. My last I hope. I have never been very medical. On that Christmas morning, I was still in shock when I walked into the shop of my good friend Eftemios Fangaridis, an Eritrea/Cypriot. Eftemios, who knew that December 25 is a big day for Americans, pointed at the mangled body swaying in the wind and said: "So this is our Christmas tree."

One day the Emperor's forces decided to warn the citizens of Agordat against joining the revolution. Three U.S. manufactured F-85 fighter/bombers buzzed the town at a height of less than 90 feet. They were lower than the minaret of the mosque. In a quiet little African market town where few residents had ever seen an airplane they accomplished their goal of terrifying the town. The noise was spectacular. Students were jumping out of windows in fear; but not my 6th grade class. They followed the teacher who hit the floor. When we picked ourselves up and brushed ourselves off the kids were laughing, and I knew that I was the butt of the joke. "OK, what's so funny?" I asked. At first no one would answer; but eventually the brightest boy in the room stood up rather rigidly, closed his eyes and said: "But sir, we have never seen a white man turn whiter before."

Q. Were there close ties between Ethiopia and Israel at that time? There was a connection to the Queen of Sheba, wasn't there?

GALLAGHER: Oh the Queen of Sheba, the Ethiopians Christians play that one up to the hilt, but there is not a stitch of evidence for it. But never mind. They believe that Haile

Selassie was the 225th grandson of Solomon and Sheba. Their visual art is dominated by what are called pictograms, cartoons that show the queen arriving in Jerusalem and bedding down with Solomon. So for religious Ethiopians, that was a strong tie. But there wasn't really that much activity in Ethiopia. The Israelis had a small foreign aid program I think. I never saw them. As far as I know, they did not operate in Eritrea at all. They were very rejecting, in those days, of the Ethiopians Jews. Ethiopia at that time was considered to be the poorest country in the world and the Falasha (Ethiopian Jews) were the poorest people I have ever seen in my life. They were terribly persecuted by the local Christians, not even allowed to live in the cities. They had to live in camps outside of the towns. They had a tremendous rate of tuberculosis that I could diagnose with no medical experience at all. Those hacking coughs on the two year olds were very obvious. At that point, Israel wouldn't allow them into the Promised Land. The chief rabbi of Jerusalem declared they were non-Jews because they wore crosses. In Ethiopia at the time if you accumulated any wealth it went to jewelry. So what little wealth a Falasha had was in the form of jewelry made by Christian artisans. Because of that they were not recognized as proper Jews. It's possible that the chief rabbi's decision was influenced by the fact that the Falasha had skin that was much darker than that of the average European Jew, but who knows. That attitude prevailed until the communist years in Ethiopia many years later when there was the threat of wiping them out. At that point Israel came in and pulled out most of them, but they should have done so much sooner.

Q: How stood relations between Eritrea and Tigray?

GALLAGHER: Tigray Province is directly south of Eritrea. The people are indistinguishable from the Eritrean Christians. They share a language (Tigrinya) and culture. But from the perspective of Agordat, where I was, Tigray might just as well have been in Japan. It was miles away and there was no trade of any significance at all. In later years, the Eritreans and the Tigrinya fought together against the communist dictatorship and overthrew it.

Q: What about French Somaliland? Was that way away?

GALLAGHER: That was further away than Japan. It was in the Aleutians somewhere. We had one Somali kid in our high school, a terribly bright boy.

Q: You know these bright boys you have mentioned. What about girls?

GALLAGHER: No girls. There was a girl's school in town, which went only to 6th grade. We did not teach in it. The schools were completely segregated. Our education officer, who was a very decent Sufi, was very supportive of girls' education; but he didn't get any money for it from the Central government. So in Eritrea's Western Province which was overwhelmingly Muslim there were only two schools that went to the eighth grade in an area the size of Maryland. Smaller population than Maryland, but still you needed more schools than that.

Q: Did you travel around Ethiopia much?

A fair amount, yes. The best trip came on our first Christmas there. We had tried having Thanksgiving with the volunteers stationed in Keren, about 50 miles from Agordat, but it was a miserable failure. We were six or seven 22 year olds far from home sitting at dinner looking at a scrawny Eritrean chicken feeling completely homesick. So for Christmas we decided to go as far away from Western civilization as we could. Mark Himmelstein, one of the volunteers in Keren, had heard about the dancing and celebrating amongst the Kunama tribe who resided 50 miles west of Agordat. It was reputed to be quite a show. The only thing that the rest of us knew about the Kunama was that before a young man could marry he was obligated to kill and remove the testicles from a large animal and give the prize to his fiancée who would wear it around her neck. A large animal was defined as a lion, an elephant or a man. Lions were extinct in the region. Nobody had ever brought down an elephant with just a hatchet. That left men, who, of course, would have had to come from outside the tribe. Red-headed, freckled faced Irish-Americans, for example.

We set off in two Peace Corps jeeps looking for Kunamaland. Of course, we got lost just as the sun went down. As we meandered through the desert there we all sorts of dumb jokes about how one another's testicles would look hanging around some lady's neck. Just in the nick of time we saw lights, which luckily turned out to be the Swedish mission that we were looking for. The Swedes were a lovely couple who had been there for 40 years during which time they had converted seven Kunama. They were quite satisfied with that accomplishment, noting that the other local missionaries effectively bought converts with gifts: the Catholics gave away clothes, the Protestants food, and the Copts would pay five dollars for a baptism. The seven converted Lutherans were true believers whose souls would be saved, or so the Swedes believed.

They took us in most graciously. The next evening they prepared a scrumptious Christmas Eve dinner for us, and told us the story of the Kunama women who were the cause of the dancing and celebrating. It seems that every year in late December, the only time when fields are fallow, a group of young Kunama women, most of them between the ages of 16 and 24 would become possessed by the spirits of Kunama men who had died in the youth of the current elders of the tribe (i.e. 40 or more years earlier). Over the next few weeks the women would relive the major events of the dead man's life – the births of children, battles fought, arguments won – until the time of his death. At the end of his life the women would suffer as he did – running a fever or feeling the pain of cancer. At the moment of death, the young woman would take over her own body again remembering nothing of her possession. During the time of possession the young woman would speak in a Semitic-like language that no one ever used, but members of the tribe could understand because they had heard it every year in the past. The Swedes spoke at least six Semitic tongues, but the language of the possessed was not one of them. They were hoping to record the women so that they could send the tapes to Uppsala University in Sweden for analysis. Interestingly, although the Kunama were pagan, their word for heaven was “Mecca-Medina”, a phrase they had obviously borrowed from their Islamic neighbors.

We spent hours asking the Swedes every questions we could think of to explain this phenomenon. Was it mass hypnosis? Drugs? A disease process? No explanation emerged. In later years, when I worked in mental health, I realized that this strange behavior was probably schizophrenia. Each culture handles that disease in its own way, but there are certain commonalities: speaking in tongues, contact with the divine, sexual identity confusion, fugue states. These women had all those symptoms and they were age appropriate for the onset of schizophrenia.

As it turned out, the women were late that year and the celebrating didn't happen. Nor did we ever find the tribe of elephants that normally came to that area for water in December; but it was still a fascinating trip.

Q: Did you visit other countries while you were in the Peace Corps?

GALLAGHER: Yes, seven of us took out summer vacation in Cyprus, Lebanon, Syria, Jordan, Egypt and Sudan. We took the boat/train down the Nile. Great fun. I took the Foreign Service exam in Khartoum while we were on that trip. I got a score of sixty-nine and two thirds which they rounded off to seventy, a passing grade, but just barely.

Q: That is the mark I got.

GALLAGHER: Is it? I am glad. We must be the two dumbest guys in the Foreign Service.

Q: I was Irished in, as I tell people.

GALLAGHER: So was I, but it was good enough. I never really expected that I would pass the oral but thank God I did.

Q: After two years, you were getting ready to leave. What were you pointed towards?

GALLAGHER: Getting home. Oddly enough, although I earned \$90 a month, I saved up enough to spend three months in Europe, which was good fun. I met my mother in Dublin for her only trip back to the old country, which was probably the best time we had together. Then I came home and just wanted a job

Q: Where did you take the oral?

GALLAGHER: Here in Washington.

Q: When did you take that?

GALLAGHER: Shortly after I came home? I came home in September. I think I took the oral in October. I was under some pressure because in those days you had to come into the service within 2 ½ years of the date you had taken the written. I had taken the written a year earlier, so I was under some time constraint.

Q: Do you recall any of the questions you were asked by the oral examiners?

GALLAGHER: They asked me to go up to a map and point out all the countries in NATO. Then they asked me why Finland, Austria, Ireland and Switzerland weren't in NATO. They asked me to go up to a map and discuss American agriculture. I got everything but soybeans. I didn't even know what a soybean was. But I got the corn and the cotton and put them in the right place. They asked me what the gross national product was, and I remember answering that it was the sum total of all the goods and services in existence in a country in a given moment. One of the three panelists was an econ officer. He kept pressuring me, "Are you sure?" "Yes I am sure," but it was the wrong answer.

Q: Had you formed any more solid opinion of what the Foreign Service did?

GALLAGHER: In the Peace Corps, plus and minus. I liked Sam Gammon, but didn't know him well. There was a junior officer in Asmara for whom jackass is the clearest word that comes to mind. I thought: "Good Lord, is this the Foreign Service I have always been led to believe was such an elite group?" I met someone else who crossed the Atlantic by sea with that fellow who got a bit drunk and was put in the brig by the ship's captain. I have no idea whether he stayed in the Foreign Service or not. So my opinion of the Foreign Service was a bit up and down. We had a termination conference in Asmara at a time when I was convinced the embassy had no idea what was going on in the Eritrean revolution; but Ambassador Corry really impressed me when he spoke to us about the Ethiopian political scene. I thought: "My God, how did these people figure this out" The Peace Corps were the only Americans who were in western Eritrea, and as far as I know none of us talked to the Embassy, but somehow the ambassador had figured out what was going on and was fluent in the Eritrean situation. That impressed me positively.

Q: Ok, you came back and what did you do?

GALLAGHER: My Peace Corps director was kind enough to recommend me to his brother who was hiring for the White House commission on world poverty, which was going to be the cornerstone of the Johnson Years. He gave me a job in the earliest days, when the War on Poverty was a tremendous place to work. I was actually hired by the White House because the Office of Economic Opportunity (OEO), the agency that administered the War had not been finally funded by the Congress. A few days later, Congress gave us a budget, and we became our own agency. At that point nobody had been hired except the top brass and us kids, several of whom were Peace Corps types. My Peace Corps roommate and I started working there together. My future wife was one of the other "kids". She was just out of the Fletcher school. There was no middle management at all, so we were working directly with people who wouldn't have spoken to us in a standard government agency, GS-14s and GS-15s and super grades. The first week I was there, I worked 90 hours. My roommate and I sat down when we had a free moment at one point and said: "My God, what did we do with those 90 hours?" It went by so fast we couldn't even remember. Mostly what we did was run papers from one

office to another, Xeroxing things, secretarial kind of stuff. But I also wrote the first anti-poverty grant for San Francisco and for metropolitan Dayton and for Leslie County Kentucky, which was the poorest country in the country at the time. So I got to do some very substantive stuff during the brief period of seven months that I was there.

Q: The program, I take it, was to end poverty in America.

GALLAGHER: We were going to end poverty in America by 1980 and in the world by 1990. We firmly believed that.

Q: Did you accomplish anything?

GALLAGHER: I didn't think the War on Poverty did accomplish very much, in contrast to the Peace Corps, which also was a brand new agency when I went in. I thought the Peace Corps did then and, for the most part, has continued to do a really fine job. But the War on Poverty was too close to home and therefore was too political. There were too many county commissioners in these small counties in West Virginia and Kentucky and everywhere who had their fingers in the pie and were grabbing the money for their brothers-in-law and what have you. I think a lot of the money got to the wrong people.

Q: A heavy emphasis on places like West Virginia, Kentucky, and Appalachia. It didn't translate very well. Unlike the WPA, it seemed to have left a monument here and there and it built something.

GALLAGHER: Yeah I don't think it was terribly effective at all. There were effective aspects of it. The pre-school head start programs have probably had some very good effects. I worked in community action, the goal of which was to get people activated in the towns to fight poverty. It was just too political. I don't think it left many positive marks at all. But we tried, we were idealistic and we loved it. There was also much too much shoveling out money. We became an agency on a Friday and President Lyndon Johnson ordered us to have programs funded by the following Friday. We worked our tails off and tried to actually get programs going. The first programs that got funded were in very progressive communities that already had something going. New Haven and Ann Arbor, big university towns, New York, DC. But still we worked like crazy that week. It was just a matter of shoveling out money so the president could say we have spent so and so much.

Q: Basically all you had was money, is that it?

GALLAGHER: Yes. We didn't have any experts we were just the bureaucrats who shoveled out the money. Then the local communities and universities would hire whatever specialists who were needed to run the programs in the field.

Q: You know when you think of these programs and one would like to think progress was made.

GALLAGHER: Not a lot. Not enough to justify the amount of money that was spent on it. I was only there for seven months. I was still on a high when I left.

You mentioned you met your wife there. What was her background?

GALLAGHER: She is a hillbilly from southern West Virginia who was quite bright - number two in her class at the University of West Virginia. Then she did a Fulbright in Bordeaux and got a masters in international affairs at the Fletcher school, and like me came to work at OEO. We are virtually the same age. We have been divorced since '72 but I spoke to her the night before last. We are still good friends.

Q: Then where did you go from there?

GALLAGHER: Into the Foreign Service. They brought me in too quickly. I still kind of resent that. There was a fellow at the Board of Examiners (BEX) who told me that I could only enter two classes and if I didn't my time would run out and I would have to start the testing process all over again, and given the fact that I only got a 69 ¾ on my written, I was nervous about taking the written again. He really wanted me in. I didn't realize it until many years later that Hubert Humphrey was putting the screws on the State Department to get Peace Corps volunteers into the Foreign Service. I was the second one to pass the written and the second one to pass the oral. They really wanted me in so they could go back to Hubert and say we got one. The big negative in this for me was that I was only 24 at the time. Although I was eligible to come into the Service as an FSO-7 (FSO-5, in modern terms), one had to be 25 years old to be elevated to that rank. I should have waited until my 25th birthday, but BEX pushed me in too soon.

Q: Later, in the mid 70's, I was on the Board of Examiners giving the oral exam. I had never served in a country where there had been a Peace Corps, and I was very skeptical about how we were going to get a bunch of do-gooders in. What the Hell? I mean I was a consular officer and we spent an awful lot of time enforcing law as far as not giving visas, and people who probably could have used them very nicely. I thought oh boy this is going to have a very negative impact, but in the end I was very impressed by the Peace Corps.

GALLAGHER: Oh good.

Q: The Peace Corps people who came to us taking the oral exam, when we put theoretical problems up, put them in very practical terms. They understood dealing with foreign difficult groups and how you do it much better than just an academic type.

GALLAGHER: The Peace Corps makes you practical.

Q: So what was your first A-100 course like?

GALLAGHER: Shortly after I went in to A-100, I woke up one morning with what turned out to be a desperate case of dysentery, which hadn't plagued me very much in

Eritrea at all. I left with some pride that I was one of the few volunteers who had never been hospitalized. But boy, when I got back here I got unimaginably ill. Twenty five canker sores in my mouth at one time. Bleeding from every orifice in my body. 103 degree fever, terrible muscle pain, yada, yada, yada. It caused me to miss 19 days of my A-100 program. I couldn't get out of bed. They told me later that they considered in effect flunking me and having me take the A-100 again, which I would have considered devastating at that point. But in retrospect, I wish that had happened. So I missed a good chunk of my A-100 class. But I met some good friends there, friends I have kept for 40 or 50 years. I had dinner with one last night. So the bonding process was good. It was a little like Peace Corps training where all these terribly bright people came and talked to us. All you had to do was sit there and take it all in, and they paid you for it, more money that I had ever dreamed, \$5,000 a year, big bucks.

Q: I came in at \$3,500. I didn't know what to do with it all.

Q: Did you have any particular place in mind or did you want to go back to Africa or what?

GALLAGHER: I did want to go back to Africa; but I was assigned to Jeddah. I shared the worst post prize with a woman who was assigned to Belize.

Q: You were in Jeddah from when to when?

GALLAGHER: November '65 to November '67.

Q: What were you doing?

GALLAGHER: The first year I ran the consular section which, in those days, consisted of only me and a Syrian locally employed staffer. The second year I was a political officer. The idea in those days was that you rotated through all four sections, but somehow, it never happened. All I got was cons and pol.

Q: Let's talk a little bit about consular work. My field. What were you up to?

GALLAGHER: It was easy consular work in Jeddah. Mostly, in those days, we issued A (official) visas to Saudi students.

Q: "A" meaning...

GALLAGHER: A meaning official visas. Before I arrived in Jeddah the Department had decided that Saudi students were government officials because they were paid stipends by the Saudi government. It was really more of a political decision than a consular one. The Department knew that these young men (practically no women) would be taking control of the world's largest oil reserves a few years after graduating, and they wanted to make sure that their educations were western, not communist. The way the Saudi system worked, the student would be assigned by the Saudi Embassy in Washington to a

university after he arrived in the U.S.; so none of them had the usual I-20 form that students receive from their schools. The work was boringly routine. The students never came for interviews. We would receive their passports along with a note from the Foreign Ministry, and we issued automatically.

There was also a fair amount of passport work in Jeddah because there was a significant American community in Saudi Arabia; and I had some fascinating protection welfare cases.

Q: I assume you had the American girl who was married to the Saudi student who came back and all of a sudden found herself in a burqa.

GALLAGHER: Working in the kitchen with a nasty mother-in-law. As I was driving down here yesterday, I was thinking at length about a particular case that was exactly that situation. They had just passed a law in Saudi Arabia that a woman could not travel outside the country without her husband or father's or male guardian's permission. This lady's husband wouldn't give her permission to travel. The only place she could go was to the American embassy because she told him she was having passport problems, which was not true. She used to come to me every couple of weeks or so mainly just to chat. Eventually he agreed to let her go visit his sister in Cairo. We developed an elaborate plan. Her parents in Southern California sent money. We worked out a deal with the embassy in Cairo that an embassy officer would be at the airport to meet her. She would arrive in *purda* so that her relatives who had come to meet her wouldn't recognize her. Instead of going right into Egyptian customs, she was to go left into the transit lounge. TWA held up a plane for two hours for her, something an airline would never do nowadays. They whisked her off to LA. We thought, "How wonderful. Job well done". Three months later, she walked back into my office in Jeddah and said: "Mr. Gallagher can you help me get an abortion?" "Madam, that is not in my job description", I replied. For all I knew the poor thing is still there. She went right back to her man.

Q: This is so often the case when you deal with love. I mean you risk your career to get somebody out and pretty soon, they just have to come back.

GALLAGHER: They walk right back in. We had a number of those kinds of cases.

During my time in the consular section my boss was a strange, malevolent man.

Q. What was his name?

Slator Blackiston. He ruined every junior officer who came near him. In later years when I was in personnel and had access to confidential efficiency reports. I checked all of the reports he wrote on young officers. He tried to hurt every one of their careers. The one who fared worst worked for him for two years in Jeddah and was transferred to Milan. Shortly after he arrived there he learned on the same day that his father had died, his three year old son had leukemia, and that he had been "selected out" of the Foreign Service. He was a fine officer.

Slator abruptly transferred out of Jeddah a year earlier than scheduled. The Admin Officer, who hated Slator, later told me that he had seen the cable that Ambassador Eilts sent to Washington demanding that Slator be removed from the Embassy. That made him the first of four, and maybe five, bosses I had who were pushed out of an embassy by their ambassadors. I've asked several FSOs if they ever knew of an officer who was thrown out of an embassy and they all said "no". But somehow I managed to find five of them.

Slator's wife was a character. Her name was April, and when April walked into a room, everyone knew that she had arrived. To understand this story you need to know that in Arabic the word *zip* is a coarse street word referring to a part of the male anatomy. You also need to know that although April grew up in Cleveland OH, she affected a southern accent after her mother moved to Palm Beach; so she didn't always pronounce the r's at the end of words very clearly. She was also one of those Americans who, when foreigners don't understand their English, will speak LOUDER. Further April hated Arabs whom she regarded as unfair to women, so she flouted her diplomatic immunity by driving her car right past the King's palace waving her naked arms at the astonished guards. One day April was making herself a dress and she needed a large zipper for the side of the garment. She took my friend Carol Southerland down to the traditional Arab *souk* (market) to buy her zipper. The merchants gathered around her as she repeatedly, and ever more loudly, demanded that they sell her a "zippa", moving her hands up and down to illustrate what a zipper does. Most of the merchants were wearing traditional Arab *thobs* (gowns); but April noticed that one of them was wearing western-style pants. She roared closer to him, pointed at his crotch, and cried: "A zippa, like that, and I want one this big." The Saudis were destroyed.

Q: What could you do politically as a junior officer? There is not much of a political system there.

GALLAGHER: Precious little. Our ambassador was the wonderful Herman Fr. Eilts, who is, I think, still considered the pre eminent American Arabist. He was a tough boss, but was very gentle in mentoring me. When I became depressed watching my entire A-100 class get promoted without me (because of Slator Blackiston) he took me aside and told me that he was the last member of his A-100 group to get promoted, but the first to become an ambassador. He told me that I was a good officer and that I should stay in the Service, and he recommended me for a job in the Secretariat.

Ambassador Eilts showed his guts during the June War in 1967. Every American embassy and consulate in the Middle East evacuated, and we were scheduled to evacuate as well. In fact ten Boeing 707s actually took off from the Frankfurt Airport to come and get the Americans who still remained in Jeddah and Riyadh. But the Ambassador realized that if we evacuated the British, French, Japanese, Italians, etc. would have followed right behind us. That would have meant the collapse of the entire modern section of the Saudi economy. We ran the airline, the Germans ran the electric company, the Dutch took care of banking, etc. The Ambassador reasoned that the Saudis would never forgive us if we

abandoned them in their time of need. So he sent a flash cable to Washington arguing that we should stay. The Department went along and communication between the U.S. and Saudi Arabia has continued to this day.

At one point before the Department approved our non-evacuation the Ambassador put together a list of nine Embassy staffers who would remain with him after the rest of the community had gone. We would have been the last ten Americans in the entire Middle East. I was so proud that my name was on his list that I didn't have time to get scared.

In retrospect I realize that I had no idea how lucky I was to be mentored by such a genius. He included me in his morning staff meeting of section heads every day because I was the head of the consular section. I was the youngest person in the room by 20 years.

Q: Absolutely.

To get back to your question: there really wasn't a damn thing for me to do in the political section.. I was bored to death. The ambassador invented an assignment for me to write an airgram outlining the function of each of the ministries of the Saudi government. It was a mysterious process because the Saudi government was just a bunch of personal fiefdoms presided over by one prince or another. But there was something of a structure. There was a ministry of commerce and a ministry of education and so forth. Real power resided with the royal family, not with the ministries.

Q: Did you have much contact with Saudis?

GALLAGHER: Precious little. I think that was one of the most difficult parts of this assignment. They are a hard folk to get to know. They don't have a Western-style social life. Their social life consisted of hanging out in tea shops. It is hard as a westerner just to go out and hang around in a tea shop. I could get by with colloquial Arabic reasonably well, but still you can't just go hang out in the tea shop and see who talks to you. There were none of the cocktail parties that you would expect to attend in Germany or Mexico. On the subject of languages, I was able to get off language probation in Arabic even though I never studied the language formally. I picked some of it up in the Peace Corps and in the embassy language classes in Jeddah, but never took Arabic classes at FSI. I believe I was the only officer in the Service to pass the Arabic exam without any formal training.

Q: It was very family oriented. I mean the Saudis were.

GALLAGHER: Very family oriented exactly. Very suspicious of foreigners. That is a basic part of their tradition.

Q: It is still running through Ibn Saud's sons. I understand the youngest of whom is...

GALLAGHER: 69. I just heard that on TV yesterday.

Q: There was a book on it. I can't remember the lady who wrote it.

GALLAGHER: I saw her on C-Span a couple of days ago. That is where I got the 69 number from. Who knows what is going to happen when the old boys finally lose their control over the system. King Abdullah is a pretty strong guy. He always has been. He has held things together quite well, but he is 86 or 88.

Q: Were there any events in Jeddah that particularly struck you?

GALLAGHER: The June War in '67 was the big event. Every US embassy and consulate from Casablanca to Bahrain was burned down or severely damaged. We got a cable from Dhahran saying: "We are inside the safe room and the building is burning down around us." Cables were so backed up that we got the cable 48 hours after it was sent. It was a flash cable that took 48 hours to get through. We didn't know if they were all dead or not. They weren't, thank heavens, but I remember the consul general in Dhahran saying that he was sitting on the phone under his desk while rocks and other projectiles were flying through the windows. Jeddah alone survived. They did not attack us physically.

That was the only time that I felt busy as a political officer, but, in fact, most of what I was doing was consular work. One of my assignments when I was in the consular section was to rewrite the embassy's Emergency/Evacuation plan. The Ambassador didn't have a lot of trust of the officer who succeeded me in consular, so he gave me and the admin officer most of the work related to preparing for our evacuation (or non-evacuation). In the period leading up to the war, I contacted all of the heads of the American companies operating in Jeddah and Riyadh suggesting that they encourage their staffs to take vacations in Europe or back home. Most of the women and children left. When the war finally broke out there were less than 1,000 Americans left in the consular district. Luckily none of them were hurt during the war. If any American had been hurt, Ambassador Eilts would have been ruined for advising against an ordered evacuation.

Q: That was by the way the time - for somebody reading this - that we had our embassy in Jeddah. We later moved it to Riyadh.

GALLAGHER: That is right. In those days the Saudi thought it was too threatening and dangerous for all these semi nude western women walking around with their bare noses sticking out. They just didn't want them in Riyadh. They were too afraid of the Wahabi reaction to women wearing skirts that didn't cover their ankles drinking alcohol. Fortunately for all of us, the embassy was located a couple of miles away from the center of town. It was June on the Red Sea coast, so the temperature was 105 every day. And the humidity was even higher than that. The Saudis are not the world's most energetic people, so even though they were angry at us, they never had the energy to march a couple of miles to burn us down

My wife ran sort of a soup kitchen because our house was right across the street from the embassy and a lot of people couldn't get to homes that were located farther away. People camped on the floor, and Carolyn, who was a great cook, just kept on cooking as much as

she could. The war ended in less than a week and when things calmed down, I remember Carolyn and me sitting down in our quiet house and looking to one another, saying, "Damn, this is boring." Then we looked at one another saying, "Hey people have been killed; countries have been cut in half, and we are complaining because life isn't exciting anymore. What's wrong with us?"

Q: We all know there is nothing like a crisis to get the adrenalin running.

GALLAGHER: I have always been a crisis person.

Q: Yeah, it is fun.

GALLAGHER: Fourteen wars so far.

The other really exciting thing that happened in Jeddah was the trip that Carolyn and I took with another junior officer and his wife retracing Lawrence's steps overland from Jeddah to Damascus and on to Beirut. We had been told that we could drive on the railroad bed and use the Land Rover's four wheel drive technology to get us through the dry riverbeds when we came to the bridges that had been blown up, (not by Lawrence ,the way they showed it in the movie, but by Ibn Saud in 1924). The Saudis had contracted with a big British construction companies to rebuild the Hejaz railway, a project which I think still hasn't been completed. The construction engineers didn't want their road bed destroyed by busloads of Hajj pilgrims coming down from Turkey driving on the road bed, So they put great piles of sand every 50 meters all along the road bed. Unable to use the roadbed we just had to drive out in the desert. The Emir of Tabuk gave us a guide. We got to one point and we said, "How much farther is it to where we are going?" He said, "I don't know; I have never been here before." So he wasn't much of a guide. But we survived and it was a great trip. Our traveling companions were David and Phyllis Blakemore. David had been an A-100 classmate. Phyllis became ill while we were in Beirut, but it didn't seem serious. On the return trip we got to Amman and should have left there on Easter morning, but instead it snowed in the sub tropics on Easter Sunday morning! We thought, "Oh, this will stop, and we'll go on our way to Al Mudowrawa a spot on the Jordan-Saudi border where we planned to spend the night. Fortunately the Land Rover broke down. The embassy in Amman worked on it for seven hours but by then it was still snowing and getting dark and we couldn't leave. It turned out to have been the biggest snow storm in the Middle East in 50 years. We ended up in the Intercontinental Hotel where we were given a lovely suite and we played bridge until midnight. At 3:00 A. M. Phyllis woke up screaming and at 6:00 A. M. they removed her ruptured appendix at the French hospital in Amman. Had we been where we planned to be, we would have been 75 miles from the nearest road, and Phyllis would not have survived.

The Ambassador allowed us to use the Land Rover for free because he wanted us to bring fireworks from Beirut for his Fourth of July party. He wanted it to be a huge bash to emphasize the close relationship between the U.S. and Saudi Arabia. They couldn't be flown down because of the danger of fire, and shipping by sea was slow and unreliable.

But between our trip and the Fourth of July the June War broke out and the Ambassador decided that a more subdued event was in order. It was still a great party, but no fireworks. I met future Saudi King Fahd and Osama bin Laden's father at that event.

Old-man bin Laden was an interesting character. He came to Saudi Arabia as an immigrant from rural Yemen. He applied for a job at the Arabian American Oil Company where they offered him a salary of eight shillings per day to work as a bricklayer. He thought he was worth nine shillings so he refused and went to work for a Saudi contractor who did most of the construction for then-King Saud. At one point Saud decided that he needed a diplomatic reception building on the grounds of his palace in Riyadh, which at the time was the largest walled area in the world and included 46 palaces. The King had a very specific idea of what he wanted which was a narrow building with a grand entrance about 30 feet above its base with a driveway leading up to it. The contractor, bin Laden's boss, explained to the King that the driveway would have to be too steep for cars to use it. But the King insisted that that's what he wanted. While his boss kept insisting that it was impossible, bin Laden piped up with: "I can do that, Your Majesty." The King turned to him and said: "The contract is yours." Thereafter he remained the contractor for the King, and subsequent kings. This was the beginning of the largest construction company in the Middle East.

Bin Laden's private pilot was an American whom I met when he got his passport renewed. He told me that every morning he flew bin Laden out of Jeddah to a quiet place in the desert where he ate breakfast bedouin style under the open sky. If I remember correctly, that pilot later died in an air crash near Jeddah.

Q: Was being gay something that was simmering inside you? I am wondering how you were finding being in an organization which until very recently was not very receptive or hospitable.

GALLAGHER: Neither was any other organization in society at the time. The Pentagon did a study during World War II that "proved" that only one quarter of one percent of American males were homosexuals and therefore they were irrelevant. Needless to say their statistics were way off, but we all believed that we were one quarter of one percent minority.

Q: But did you know it?

GALLAGHER: Did I know I was gay? Yes and no. I knew it but I didn't want to know it. I wanted to lie to myself and say that if I just had a woman around who would take care of my sexual needs I would forget all of this. I certainly dated girls in high school and college and I did respond. I think when you are 16 or 17 you respond to almost anything. I tried to convince myself that I was bisexual or that this was just an aberration.

Q: Where did you go from Jeddah?

GALLAGHER: To Kaduna, Nigeria.

Q: Now explain a bit about Kaduna and what the situation was and when did you do this.

GALLAGHER: When it was time to leave Jeddah I think the Department felt sorry for me. My first evaluation was awful and my second evaluation, which was excellent, was submitted too late for the promotion panels, and the results of the next promotion panels were delayed for almost six months by Congress. So I waited forever for a promotion even though I was in a hardship post with a war going on around me. My last three evaluations from Jeddah (junior officers were evaluated every six months) were glorious. The department rewarded me with an assignment to Paris, but I turned it down and begged for an African assignment. I think I wanted to go back into the Peace Corps.

Sometimes your prayers are answered, and you wish they weren't. I was assigned to Kaduna, which was a tiny three FSO post in northern Nigeria in the old British capital city of northern Nigeria. A small city of maybe 140,000. My ex-wife and I arrived there just after the fall of the Ibos. The Ibos, who had been nicknamed the Jews of Nigeria, were heavily enslaved tribe in the southeastern part of the country. When the British came in, and I assure you this Irishman has no love for British colonialism, but in Nigeria they came in for all the right reasons – to end the slave trade. They were followed by hundreds of Irish and British missionaries.

While the other Nigerian tribes, the ones who had been slavers and had gotten rich off of the slave trade, had strong cultures that resisted the British ways and British education, the Ibos had been driven literally into the forest where they were living in loincloths and hiding from the slavers. They loved the coming of colonialism and converted to Christianity in huge numbers, and with Christianity came education. With education ultimately came money. Their own land which was rather poor and overpopulated and so, like the Jews, they spread out around the rest of the country and became the middle class. They were the electricians, bankers, brokers. Many were qualified for government jobs. They were resented by the other tribes in the country because they were wealthier and had more benefits. In 1967 the Ibos, disgusted with Nigeria's rather stumbling democracy, which was quite corrupt and dominated by northern tribes, revolted and a group of Ibo military officers staged a coup. It was a brutal coup and there were pictures proudly displayed in the newspaper of Ibo officers with their jackboots on the heads of fallen religious and political heroes from the north. The coup stayed in control for six months and suddenly the whole country rose up against them. In Nigeria, justice is rather immediate. If you are in the marketplace and somebody points at you and says "thief man", you will be beaten to death on the spot. The same kind of immediate justice was meted out to the Ibos, who were slaughtered. The estimates of the number of Ibos who were killed range from 30,000 to one million.

My ex-wife and I arrived in Kaduna in early '68. The effects of the slaughter were manifested in the mental health problems that affected all of the officers at post and their families. My predecessor and his wife and four children sat in what became my house and listened as their nanny and her four children and four other household servants were beaten to death in the back yard, screaming for their help. He had advised them to stay

when other Ibos fled Kaduna because the property belonged to the U.S. government and he believed they would be safe. Tell that to a bunch of thugs with baseball bats. No one knows how many people died in Kaduna itself, but it surely numbered in the thousands, maybe tens of thousands. People could be seen hanging in the trees that lined the main streets. They drowned in open sewers. Some people were burned to death almost on the steps of the consulate in the center of the city. Everybody witnessed things that most human beings fortunately never will. When my ex-wife and I got there, we were treated to a week of dinner parties at which we met most of the 150 or so Americans who lived in Kaduna. At the end of that week Carolyn and I turned to one another, and asked ourselves if we had gone nuts on the plane coming over, or are all of these people crazy? The answer was that all of those folk were “crazy.” They were normal people who had lived through a holocaust. My immediate boss ultimately took a gun and blew his head off. The consul’s wife ran off to Frankfurt with a gay Lebanese hairdresser, who was much more interested in me than in her. The consul drank so heavily that when the inspectors came out from Washington, he fell asleep over lunch. The secretary would sit at her desk and type and cry, type and cry, type and cry. At one point, she spoke to nobody for six weeks. The USAID Director would wet his pants at dinner parties. The USIA director’s wife, left her home only once during the year that we overlapped. She was almost in the fetal position. She had double curtains on all the windows and cotton in the telephone in case it rang. Of course, it never rang anyway because the Nigerian phone system didn’t work very well. The whole post was really bonkers and so was the whole American community.

The two other FSOs at post drank so heavily that they could not function. After my first year there I checked the cable and airgram traffic and found that I had written exactly 95% of the non-admin communiqués with Washington.

The sad thing was that in 1968 the Department had no awareness of what its officers overseas sometimes experienced. There was no offer of counseling. No social workers came out from Washington to do post-crisis groups. The attitude was: “You’ve witnessed something interesting. Write an airgram about it and get on with your work.” Fortunately things are better nowadays with regard to mental health services to staff who have taken a walk through hell.

One of my jobs was econ. There wasn’t much econ work to be done. Their economy was in shambles and in a state of war. There were all sorts of import and exports bans, so there really wasn’t any great trade with the United States or anywhere else. Life was difficult because of that. At one point, I was driving a car with tires on which you could literally see the cloth under the rubber. I bought a second-hand Volkswagen Beetle that had no starter so every morning my gardener and steward would push me off to work, and then on the way home from work the three clerks at the compound would give me another push. One couldn’t get parts; you couldn’t get tires, you couldn’t get any sort of goods. So it was a very bizarre period in Nigeria’s history and in my own life. Despite all that we had a luxurious lifestyle. We had a four bedroom house on almost two acres of land. We had three servants. We also ended up with a rather pleasant social life because there was a group of young American couples and also a Dutch Couple and a Chinese

couple and one mixed Nigerian-Chinese couple that we were friendly with, all of them arrived after the war. There was almost no communication between any of us and the people who had experienced the slaughter. We didn't understand why. I figured it out several years later while I went into mental health work and began reading about the psychological effects of holocaust-type experiences. But as I said we had a nice group of eight or ten friends, played golf several times a week, and lived the life of a British Raj, going to the club for dinner. In some respects, it was rather pleasant, but overall it was a depressing and difficult experience.

Q: Again was that area Muslim?

GALLAGHER: It was right on the line between the Muslim north and the animist/Christian south, so it was mixed. If you look at the periodic flare ups that happen now and again in Nigeria, Kaduna and Jos, a city about 150 miles away are featured frequently on modern TV and radio broadcasts about Nigeria. Both of those cities are on the line of religious and tribal troubles. There was no widespread killing in Kaduna while we were there. But just a few hundred miles away the Biafran War was taking another million lives. Biafra had declared its independence and any Ibos who could get out of northern and western Nigeria and fled to the east to the Biafran homeland. The Nigerian military took over the national government after the slaughters in the North. The leader of the coup was General Gowon, who, I believe, was a decent man who wanted to reunite the country. He kept a copy of a biography of Lincoln at his bedside and was conscious of the difficulties of reintegrating the Ibos into Nigerian society. Even though he was leading a war that killed millions, he spoke regularly about Lincoln's ideas of "malice towards none."

I have recently done some reading about it and apparently this was the first time in history that mass starvation made headlines on TV. There was a huge movement in the United States to save Biafra and its children from the starvation that followed Nigeria's successful sea and land blockade of Biafra, the Ibo homeland. Pat Nixon actually stood on the steps of St. Patrick's Cathedral in New York with a box in her hand begging for donations. The Pope got very involved because so many of the victims were Roman Catholics. There were all sorts of dramatic efforts to fly in food. The Nigerian Air force made every effort it could to destroy any airport inside Biafra. But they didn't destroy all of them. There were all sorts of ancient Lockheed Constellation and DC-6's that were owned by some of the African and European charter airlines that were flown by heroic pilots over Nigerian territory into makeshift jungle airports. However, flights were not allowed to land unless they also brought armaments, so these flights kept the Biafran Army going. The war lasted for a full two years. It probably would have ended much sooner had all those armaments not been flown in. Millions of well-intentioned Americans and Europeans contributed money to keep these planes flying keeping the war going even though the Ibo cause was probably hopeless from day one. Both sides would have been much wiser, I think, to negotiate more effectively than they did to end the killing much sooner. When the war finally ended, President Gowon wisely pushed for national reconciliation. All of the other tribes in Nigeria were furious at the Ibos. Had it not been for President Gowon's very brilliant leadership there might have been further

slaughter. But there wasn't, and over time, the Ibos have been re-integrated into Nigerian society. While the country is still stumbling in many ways; the Ibos are stumbling along with the rest of them as best they can.

Q: Did you pick up any of the reflections of this war, which played out in the House or the Senate and then the State Department and European capitals? I know the Peace Corps and the consul general down in Ibo Land got probably overly involved in the situation.

GALLAGHER: Yes, I certainly recall there was talk that whoever was there got overly involved and overly supportive of the Ibos and one can understand why. The indiscriminate killing of Ibos won them many friends. A thousand people were beheaded in just one day in the city of Jos. They were passengers on a train passing through from further north en route to Biafra just as the war was starting.

Q: I take it the press corps either couldn't get in or hadn't been as responsive as it later became to other situations.

GALLAGHER: I think the press got very heavily involved, and a lot of reporters flew in on those relief flights that carried in the armaments. The Biafrans also very wisely hired a public relations firm that had offices in Geneva and Los Angeles. They did an excellent job of presenting the Biafrans as the victim in the western press. There were lots of pictures of little children with hideously extended stomachs due to kwashiorkor which is a vitamin deficiency resulting from starvation. The Nigerians were quick to point out that a lot of those pictures were actually taken in the Congo in 1960; but where ever they were taken, there were certainly a lot of Biafran children who suffered horribly. That message got out to the West. So in the West there was a strong sympathy for Biafra.

You also asked earlier about Washington's reaction. I wasn't in Washington, of course, but our impression in the field was that Biafra had considerable support from Congress. The State Department, on the other hand, felt that Nigerian unity was important. While the U.S. did not get involved in the war, including not supplying arms, the official position was sympathetic to the Nigerian central government. I think there were a number of reasons for that but mainly the Department realized the Nigerians were going to win. The Biafran cause was pretty much militarily hopeless. I don't want to sound too cynical but we might as well be on the side of the winner. The State Department also agreed with the Organization of African Unity which has always had a morbid fear of redrawing the colonial borders in Africa. Had Biafra become free, its boundaries would have been redrawn and that would have conceivably set off bombs and copycat revolutions all over the continent, so while the Department was aware of the horrors endured by the Biafrans, there was a desire to keep Nigeria whole. I should note that this Irishman whose first overseas experience was in Eritrea and who later worked as desk officer for Sudan does not agree with the Organization of African Unity. The colonial borders were made with no thought to local cultures, tribes and social conditions. Tribes have been divided between countries and thrown into states where the rest of the population has been hostile to them for generations. Ultimately those borders will be redrawn, and it will either

happen through a politically negotiated process (which isn't likely) or it will happen through war and revolution (which is very likely).

In this case, however, my own personal sympathies were generally supportive of the Nigerian side. One couldn't help but be horrified by the over two million Biafrans deaths. But the Biafrans were often intransigent refusing offers from President Gowon to come to the table and negotiate. The Biafrans were also claiming all of the old southeast state of Nigeria which included many tribes that were not related to the Ibos, and the Ibos did not have a great record of concern for the rights of those minorities. The Ibo homeland was landlocked, so if it were to have access to the sea (which the Ibos considered essential to their long-term survival) it would have to control non-Ibo tribes.

Q: How about with the Americans there taking sides. I mean, when you got together or was it joint horror or what?

GALLAGHER: Taking sides is almost too strong a phrase. I think there was a general awareness that the Biafrans were not going to win, which they didn't in the end, and a desire to keep Nigeria whole that was felt by most of the Americans that we knew, but most of the Americans that we knew were not very political people. They were missionaries or Peace Corps. That was pretty much it in northern Nigeria at the time. They didn't have passionate feelings one way or the other. I think they just wanted the whole business to be over for everybody. There was one Peace Corps volunteer named Joel who wanted to talk about the pre-war killing that he and others had observed. We all thought it was eccentric, even annoying, for him to mention such things in public. In retrospect I realize that Joel was the only healthy one of all the people we knew who had observed the holocaust. The rest of them bottled up their feelings and quietly went crazy.

Q: How did your former wife deal with all of this?

GALLAGHER: Pretty much the same way that I did. I don't think we had any major political disagreements on it. She got a job as a teacher at a Catholic Missionary School in Kaduna and enjoyed it very much. The biggest fight we had as a married couple was when my immediate boss, the one who committed suicide, decided that it was illegal for my wife to be paid for her work. She was earning I think \$160 a month. Even in 1969, that wasn't a lot of money; but it was hers and she was proud of it. She was making a contribution to our common wealth. I was instructed to tell her she had to stop taking a salary because Nigerian taxes were withdrawn from it, and as a diplomat's spouse she should not be paying taxes to a foreign government. My boss said that doing so compromised the diplomatic immunity of the entire U.S. mission in Nigeria, which I think was a silly exaggeration. Nonetheless, to me, it didn't seem like a big deal. My attitude was, "I was a Peace Corps volunteer, why can't you be a Peace Corps type and do your teaching for the sake of the teaching? You are being supported. We have plenty to eat and a house to live in. \$160 is no big deal." But for Carolyn it was a matter of being rewarded for the work she did. She was a Harvard graduate and figured that she deserved recompense. I was terribly insensitive to that.

Q: Did you have any indication that, other than the domestic Nigerian involvement, there were any other groups that were getting in. You know you have Qadhafi and Mujahadeen and all that. Was that going on?

GALLAGHER: The main international involvement was with the Papacy which pretty much took the Biafran side and openly paid for flights going in. I don't think the Vatican ever intended to send in guns, but as I said, the Biafrans insisted that any plane that landed brought in guns before they would grant permission to land; so the Papacy in effect became passively involved in arming the Biafrans. In its public statements at the time, the Vatican was very supportive of the Biafrans. France and a number of francophone countries in Africa supported, and some of them even recognized, Biafra. Other than that, I don't recall involvement on the part of nefarious players like Qadhafi getting involved. It might be just my weak memory, but I don't recall that being a big issue. I should emphasize that the war was something that to us in the north was something that was handled by the embassy. Despite the fact that I was in a country that was in a horrible state of war for two years, I never heard a shot fired. I never felt in the slightest danger or any sign of blood whatsoever. There was no military action within a couple of hundred miles of where we were. We weren't doing war reporting. The embassy was doing all of that.

Q: What about the British?

GALLAGHER: The UK government strongly supported Nigerian unity. The Brits in Kaduna were very much in the same situation that we were in. They were observing the war at a distance but most of their knowledge of what was going on came from the Times of London. I think it was similar to the situation of many Americans at home during WWII of having to put up with the annoyance of rations and the inability to import things that you had been used to buying in the market place that weren't available because of the war. That was the main difficulty for us; and that was pretty small potatoes compared with what other folk in the country were suffering at the time.

One footnote on my assignment to Kaduna was the outbreak of Lassa fever in Jos. We read about it first in the American press which reported that Lassa – a close cousin of Ebola - had the potential to kill 20 or 25 per cent of humanity. My alcoholic bosses heroically ordered me to go to Jos to find out what was really happening. In Jos the local American missionary doctors and nurses, who were among the victims of the disease, told me that they were worried but they did not agree with the press that there would be a massive die off of humanity. I reported what I learned. Despite my total lack of medical training, I can claim to be the first U.S. government officer to investigate this disease. Lassa fever is just one of many, like AIDS and Ebola that are festering in the tropics among small tribes that have developed immunities – immunities that the rest of humanity might not possess. We will hear more about these maladies as time goes on. I recently saw on TV that epidemiologists who are working on the Ebola outbreak in West Africa have found evidence that Lassa fever is still around. They found evidence of Lassa in blood samples. By the way, I was never given any credit in an evaluation for making that trip to Jos.

I have always enjoyed taking field trips to “wave the flag” in the hinterland of my consular districts. One of my colleagues and I made a trip to the Nigerian town of Minna where we wanted to get a sense of political sentiments in the town. We had been told that there were Irish Catholic priests there who had a really good sense of the town and its people. So we visited these charming men, who indeed gave us a good feel for the place. As we were leaving we asked for directions to the residences of the local American Protestant missionaries. The Irishmen’s faces darkened and they let us know that their relations with our compatriots were less than cordial. They told us that they had little to do with them before the Kennedy assassination; but – moved in part by Pope John’s emphasis on ecumenism with other Christians – at the time of the Irish American President’s death they decided to visit their American neighbors and fellow followers of Christ. “And do you know what they said to us when we expressed our condolences?” said one of the priests. “They said: ‘Well, it’s not such a bad thing. The new one is a Baptist.’” “And that was the end of ecumenism in Minna!!!” declared the Catholics.

It is important, I think to note that I got pretty depressed in Nigeria. The whole situation was depressing. My boss was “selected out” (i.e. fired) of the Foreign Service at the end of my first year in Nigeria. One of his last acts as an FSO was to write my evaluation and he screwed me to the wall. I think it became impossible for him to write a decent evaluation for a 29 year old kid who might have a future in the Service when he himself had none. After he was brought home to end his career, I am told that he committed suicide. I also came to realize, while I was in Nigeria, that my marriage was a sham; that I wasn’t straight no matter how hard I tried to be. I think that quite frankly one of the reasons why I refused the assignment to Paris was that I knew it would be terribly difficult to stay away from the gay temptations that I would have experienced there. In those days, there was no such thing as a gay bar or gay recreation or any gay organizations. Gay men often met on the streets through the medium of eye contact. I knew that in a big European city, there would be plenty of temptation, and I also knew the temptations would be much less in Africa. So in pushing for Africa I was kind of trying to save my marriage and to convince myself that I was straight and that everything was going to work out. As the time in passed in Nigeria, I realized increasingly that it was never going to work out. I had no idea what to do or where to go or how to end the whole thing. Finally, having gotten two weak evaluations, I figured that my own career was in the same dumpster as my boss’.

Q: Was there much in the way of gay activity in Nigeria itself?

GALLAGHER: No. To my knowledge virtually none at all, but, of course, I was so busy protecting my closet that I didn’t seek gay contacts.

Then one day I picked up *Newsweek* magazine and the cover story was about something called gay liberation. I had never even heard the word gay used in that context. The word “gay” meant happy, but it had nothing to do with sex.

Newsweek was reporting on the Christopher Street riots that took place in New York. There was a bar on Sheridan Square in Greenwich Village called Stone Wall, which was one of the few gay bars in New York. It probably survived by paying off the cops, but periodically the cops would raid it anyway. It was a sleazy bar. The patrons for the most part were male prostitutes. They were third world folk, a lot of transvestites, transsexuals that sort of thing. The kind of people your average gay person doesn't have much to do with. Normally when the police raided the bar patrons would meekly file into the paddy wagons to be charged with homosexuality which would ruin their lives forever. The only crimes more serious than homosexuality in American jurisprudence in those days were murder, rape and treason. But on a hot June night in 1969 for once the queens fought back. They literally took off their high heels and bopped the cops over the head with them. The police called in for reinforcements. The fighting went on in Sheridan Square for hours. Eventually the police got control and dragged large numbers of people off to the local precinct to be booked. One doesn't hear much about this any more but I remember reading at the time that one of the people who was arrested was an undocumented alien from Venezuela. Fearing that he would be deported, he jumped out the window of the police precinct. In New York, many of the precincts are surrounded by huge iron fences which have spikes on the top. When he jumped, he impaled himself on one of those spikes. His shrieks of pain brought people from all over the neighborhood. out into the streets and the whole thing turned into three days of rioting. It spread over a big chunk of lower Manhattan and made it on to the front page on *Newsweek*. There I was in Nigeria reading about this for the first time in my life. The only other written document I had seen on the subject of homosexuality were the two or three books that were in the college library that talked about homosexuality as being a psychiatric disorder.

Anyhow, that article quoted a man called Don Kilhefner, who was identified as the Executive Director of the Gay Community Center of Los Angeles. Don and I had been in the Peace Corps together. Of the 260 people in my Peace Corps group Don was one of the ones whom I liked best. I really respected his mind. I had no sexual feeling towards him but I liked him as a person very much. I actually tried in the early days to get posted to the same town that he was in, but I wasn't able to work that out, so after training I hardly saw him. But suddenly there is his name in *Newsweek*. He later told me that he didn't tell the people at *Newsweek* that the Gay Community Services Center of Los Angeles at that point consisted of nothing but a Monday night meeting in the back room of a laundromat on Melrose Blvd. I thought, "If Don can do that, why can't I?" So I became determined to somehow come out of the closet, whatever the hell that meant. I had no idea, and there was nothing I could do about it in Nigeria.

My second year in Kaduna was quite a bit better than the first as the two alcoholics were transferred out and replaced by two very good officers. Ralph Stephan was the principal officer. He wrote great evaluations of me in an effort to make up for the damage that his predecessor had done; so at the end of my time in Nigeria, the State Department once again rewarded me with another assignment to Paris, but I was determined to get back home, get a divorce and start living my own life. I figured that after two bad evaluations my career at State was probably over anyway and I wanted to find some other job.

Q: These two previous supervisors obviously had difficulties. Was there any reaction on the part of the State Department to try to do something for you, do you think?

GALLAGHER: Yes and no. When the DCM reviewed my weak evaluation he said that he had never seen any evidence of the criticisms that they made the consulate. The DCM, whom I barely knew, tried to put in a good word for me, but he had to admit that he didn't know me well. The Paris assignment was an effort on the Department's part to revive my career. When I went back to Washington, my CDO, Jane Whitney, greeted me by saying that she really wanted to meet someone who managed to make such good impressions on some people (Ambassador Eilts and Ralph Stephan) and such bad impressions on others.

I am probably the first person in the history of the State department to turn down Paris twice in a row. Actually when I asked my personnel officer to change my assignment to Washington, she refused. She was a very nice woman but she said, "Hey you are going to Paris. You can't say no to Paris." In the end I walked into her office the day before I was supposed to leave for Paris and said: "I'm not going." I figured that that constituted my resignation. Instead of that, she very kindly found me a job in Washington in the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs – or CU in alphabet soup letters - which is certainly not a hot bureau. But it was a job. I planned to stay there just long enough to find some other career. I went into psychotherapy, began the process of separating from my wife, and began the process of coming out of the closet

Q: What is the date that you moved, not to Paris but to Educational and Cultural Affairs?

GALLAGHER: That would have been March of 1978. I was assigned to the African office of CU. It was not a fast moving office, but it was pleasant. It was run by a man who later became Ambassador to South Africa, Bill Edmondson, a very nice man. The office mainly dealt with administering travel grants to African leaders who took short trips through the U.S., with a goal of inspiring them to go home and lead Africa into the western camp in the Cold War.

I had the most controversial job in the office. I ran the Southern African student program, which was an Averill Harriman idea in 1960 when the Democratic Republic of the Congo became independent and fell immediately into chaos. Patrice Lumumba, the killing of Dag Hammarskjöld, and all of that. Harriman noticed that the Congo at the time had only 11 college graduates. The Russians also noticed. They were bringing thousands of Africans to study in the USSR. They even named a university in Moscow after Patrice Lumumba, and filled it with African students. They would learn communist ways and go back and bring the red banner to Africa. Harriman wanted to counter that, so he invented the Southern African Student's Program (SASP), which was never anywhere near as big as Patrice Lumumba University. When I took it over, SASP had already brought 525 students from Africa to various American universities. They came entirely from the Republic of South Africa, where the apartheid system was alive and well, or from those few countries that were still colonial dominated: Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe), Angola;

Mozambique and Equatorial Guinea. I think we had some students from Malawi and Zambia as well, and Namibia, which was then called South West Africa. The program had fallen into disrepair. It was very difficult to find qualified students in those countries where black people had been seriously oppressed. They were precious few high school graduates who were black.

Embassies were instructed to go out and find high school graduates that could be brought to American universities. They had trouble finding any at all. So they would give grants to people who really weren't qualified. Students then came to the United States and fared poorly academically in American universities. Many had personal problems: they drank too much or got themselves in trouble with the police, what have you. When they finished their academic programs they could not go home because their governments considered them as threats just because they had participated in SASP; so almost every one of them applied for political asylum rendering the program pointless. When I took over SASP intake had been suspended and many in the CU Bureau and the African Affairs Bureau argued that it should be eliminated. But government programs never die, so it was decided to keep the program nominally alive but with no new intake.

The day to day administration of the students' lives and studies was carried out by a contractor, the African American Institute in New York, which in those days was not a very well run institution. So my job was to kind of clean things up financially and to try to get SASP back on its feet again. The African American Institute was pretty much put on notice by the State Department that they needed to help clean up. They hired a fellow who was a former Peace Corps volunteer to run their part of SASP. Between us we did what we could to move students around to get them into programs that they actually could handle. We did a fair amount of dealing with the Immigration and Naturalization Service (now part of ICE in the Department of Homeland Security) on extending visas for students. We were reluctant to call it political asylum because we wanted them to eventually go home and take over their governments when African people eventually overthrew the colonialists as we knew they would. Among the people we educated were Jonas Savimbi, the Angolan rebel, and Robert Mugabe, who didn't bring any honor on the program whatever. In the end, almost all of them ended up staying in the United States. But it was a fun job for me. I enjoyed the place.

One of my students was in school in Philadelphia. In the early '70s Philadelphia was going through some tremendous racial conflict, and the white community was rushing to the suburbs, but they were putting up a fight as they left. The student's was a Zimbabwean named James Patsanza. One night at 11PM he brought a white girl home. She carried the bottle of gin into his apartment, and the next morning at 7:00 A.M., she complained that she had been raped. She did have a broken tooth, but I don't think it was clear that it had been recently broken. James' legal aid lawyer was a young hippie with pigtailed that didn't go over well in the Philadelphia courts at the time. He had 40 other cases the morning that James' bail hearing came up. In Philadelphia magistrates are political appointees who don't have to be lawyers. The hippy boy stood up in court and said, "Your honor I would like to make bail on this case," and your honor responded,

“Bail, Hell, I want to see this son-of-a-bitch hung.” At the end of the legal proceedings, James was sentenced to 20 years. I recall visiting him in prison.

Another of our less successful cases, Pedro Chicuecka, finished pre-dent and entered the University of Rochester’s dental school, where he suffered a severe mental breakdown just after he got married to a lovely woman named Maria from his tribe in Angola who was a graduate of our program and a successful biochemical researcher at the Rockefeller Foundation in Manhattan, Pedro was brought to St. Elizabeth’s Hospital in DC, and Maria came down every weekend to see her husband. He finally was released and joined her in New York, but he stopped taking his medications and deteriorated. He left Manhattan, went to Baltimore and came back to Manhattan where Maria took him back until he started threatening her. She ran out the door and called the police. The police shut down the whole block in mid-town and put snipers on the top of several buildings. Poor Pedro came running out on the fire escape carrying a machete in his hand. He was shot and killed by bullets from the guns of three different officers. Very sad.

So there were several hysterical cases like that to deal with. But it was fun. It was not really a full time job, so I took on several secondary projects the best of which was the Pan Africa U.S. track meet. I was approached by LeRoy Walker, a dynamic coach at North Carolina Central University, a traditional black college who had the idea for a meet that would bring athletes from all over Africa to compete with the team that the U.S. would later send to Colombia for the Pan American Games. It would become the only athletic event in history at which a single team represented an entire continent, and it ended up being the largest track meet in the U.S. in 1972. On the final day we got 42,000 people to show up at the Duke University stadium.

My job was to manage the money the Department put up to transport the African athletes as international visitors and to coordinate with our embassies on the continent. We asked each embassy to reach out to their local sports organizations and recommend athletes. They all came up with accomplished runners and jumpers. The sole exception was the Embassy in Mogadishu which sent athletes with dubious credentials who did poorly at the meet. The Cultural Affairs Bureau was very interested in local participation in any events that it funded, and the North Carolinians really came through for us. Duke University donated its stadium. The Governor threw a huge dinner party for all of the participants at which I met Kip Keino and Bill Toomey. The North Carolina Bureau of Prisons made the event an outing for low threat prisoners, eleven of whom managed to escape during the meet showing that they could run as fast as our athletes. We were supposed to get a front page headline in Sports Illustrated, but Muhammad Ali did something brilliant and he knocked us off the front page. They did give us a great lead article, however.

The high point of the meet centered on a short 30 year old Ethiopian whom someone found running around in the hills outside Addis. They put him in the army and gave him a little bit of training. He had only been outside of Ethiopia once for a track meet in Israel. This was his second international event. He was slated to run the 5000 meter race. He did, and came to the next to the last lap, which he mistakenly thought was the last lap. So

he went into his final kick and was way out ahead of the rest of the crowd and crossed the finish line and raised his arms in the air saying, "I won, I won" as all the other athletes were ran past him. He realized that he had stopped running too early and he ended up coming in last. Everybody felt terribly sorry for him.

The next day the final event of the meet was the 10,000 meters, a distance the Ethiopian had never run competitively in his life. There were to have been four runners, two African and two American. In pity for the Ethiopian, the American team allowed him to run in the 10,000 as a third member of the African team. The American star in that race was a guy called Frank Shorter, who you might remember. He won a couple of gold medals at the Olympics and was just about the biggest American track star of his time. The little Ethiopian shadowed Shorter lap after lap until the last one. This time he got it right and took off like a bat out of hell leaving the much taller Shorter in the dust with 42,000 people screaming for him because everybody was on his side.

Q: How long did you do that?

GALLAGHER: Two years at that job.

Q: Dealing with African students, I think you would have to be rather careful which colleges they went to in that era.

GALLAGHER: Yes. Placement was the African American Institute's job, but as I recall there were very few students below the Mason-Dixon Line. Obviously we did not want to emphasize America's racial problems to the Africans. Students were placed in a variety of institutions including universities and technical schools. It was a source of pride to me that I cleaned the program up enough that my boss decided to put more money into bringing in more students at the end of my tenure there. But we were much more careful in taking in those students. The ones that had been taken in earlier years were just brought in willy-nilly. Anybody who could stand up and show a high school diploma could come and get a grant to America; and I would guess that the embassies were under pressure to come up with large numbers of grantees. After a series of failures the embassies in Africa were much more careful about who they sent; and the numbers were kept much lower.

Q: Where did you go next?

GALLAGHER: My next assignment was personnel.

Q: When did you start personnel?

GALLAGHER: '72. I worked for the wonderful Harry Barnes, who later became ambassador in New Delhi and Santiago where he contributed greatly to bringing down Pinochet. He was a tough man to work for, brilliant and hypomanic. I felt that I was never good enough for him, but I kept plugging anyway.

Q: Yes, he just died rather...

GALLAGHER: He just died two months ago or thereabouts.

Q: Yes. I have interviewed him.

GALLAGHER: Did you? I am sure he was an interesting interviewee to say the least. We used to call ourselves Harry's boys, and I was very proud to be one of them. He selected those who worked for him very carefully, and I was honored to have been among the chosen.

Q: What was your piece of the action?

GALLAGHER: We were the junior officer personnel office and I was responsible for the consular group. Harry tried to make the first five years of an officer's career seamless. So the A-100 program at FSI came under Harry's auspices. We worked very closely with them. We also worked very closely with BEX although they were a separate office. We were trying to get more or less control of the officer's career from passing the exam to passing the threshold into tenure. Harry pushed strongly for officer's rights. He could have been a union organizer. I think we were more strongly into defending the rights of our officers than in any other office in personnel, and we took great pride in that. Harry also was a civil libertarian and strongly supported the woman's movement. I succeeded a very strong woman when I went to PER/JO.

Q: Whom did you succeed?

GALLAGHER: Janice Hall Diggs, who was the wife of a congressman. I believe she was a political appointee, but an interesting and strong woman who fought for women's rights. At one point, security came to Janice and said, "Officer X in Rome has been involved in an affair with an Italian man. You must bring her home immediately." Janice very quickly replied, "The day you bring home every male officer who has had an affair with an Italian, I will bring home the female officer who has had an affair with an Italian." She said the security officer almost blew up in front of her. He was so angry he turned red and seemed to be busting out of his collar. But she stood her ground and the young woman stayed in Rome and later married her Italian boyfriend. I had a couple of interesting opportunities to do something about women's issues, one of which was to make the first tandem assignment in the Foreign Service.

Q: Could you explain, for somebody who might not understand, what a tandem assignment is?

GALLAGHER: A tandem assignment is the assignment of two officers who are married to one another to the same post. In the bad old days when two Foreign Service officers got married, *she* resigned. If she didn't, or so the legend went, they would have assigned him to Bangkok and her to Buenos Aires and say: "OKAY, have a nice marriage". Two of our officers married and wanted to stay in the Service. With Harry's blessing, I

succeeded in assigning them to Brussels. We got away with it initially because the U. S. maintains three embassies in Brussels, one to the kingdom of Belgium, one to NATO, and one to the European Union. I assigned one of the officers to the bilateral mission to the Kingdom of Belgium and the other one to NATO. They were in different cones. One was a political officer, the other a consular officer. We brought the assignment to the Personnel Panel, which had to approve every assignment.

There was enormous opposition because this was a big change. The old argument had been that two married people could not work in the same embassy because it might cause friction among the staff. Horror scenarios were created where an officer might be assigned to work for his/her spouse. But by assigning my officers to two different embassies in the same city, that argument became moot. I was later assigned to Brussels myself and realized there was actually an enormous gulf between the bilateral embassy and the embassy to NATO. I was in the bilateral embassy and I hardly even knew anybody that was assigned to NATO. Anyway, the assignment worked and the camel's nose of tandem assignments slipped into the tent. Negative reactions to tandem assignments actually eased and they are now a common occurrence, although, quite frankly, I have seen a number of cases in recent years where the Department could have done a better job. One of my A-100 classmates was assigned to Sao Paolo while her husband was sent to Madrid. They got divorced.

Two other assignments that I made were important to the women's movement. The first was assigning a female officer to Arabic training at FSI. There was enormous resistance to that also on the panel; but I argued that the Koran does not forbid women from being professional people and that it wasn't necessarily our job to cave in to the social mores of other countries but rather to demonstrate how our culture functions and represent all Americans. We prevailed and that officer later went off to become ambassador to Tunisia. Nowadays, there are women assigned to embassies all over the Islamic world.

The other important assignment which got the most resistance of all was the assignment of a female to the secretariat - the office of the Secretary of State. It is a very high pressure job for junior officers who work there. A very strong belief on the part of the panel was that girls simply couldn't take the pressure. We argued that if they were Foreign Service officers, they were expected to take the pressure. If they couldn't take the pressure, then they didn't belong in the Foreign Service; but if they did belong in the Foreign Service, they should be doing whatever job a Foreign Service officer can be asked to do. We thought this officer was particularly well qualified. Anybody who goes to the secretariat is an officer who is well thought of, because the secretariat is a plum assignment. We picked an officer who was strong and had a really good file.

Q: Do you remember who that was?

GALLAGHER: Yes, Donna Hamilton. That was her married name. I can't remember her maiden name.

Q: I think I ran into her later at a consular affair.

GALLAGHER: If you were a consular officer, you ran across her because she became PDAS in the bureau of consular affairs. That is how good an officer she was.

Q: It sounds like you were breaking an awful lot of crockery up in the sort of the personnel side.

GALLAGHER: And we had a reputation for doing exactly that. We loved being the rebels, all of us did. We also were very supportive of minority officers coming into the service. At the time, there was a special program for minority officers. I don't think it exists anymore. It was a first time that significant numbers of Black people and Latinos came into the Foreign Service, and we were determined to welcome them professionally.

Q: Well as I recall at the time. And I was somewhat delinquent myself in looking back on this. And that is there was not much effort, I mean minority officers, mainly Black, were assigned to regular jobs and all, but their superiors were not told to make an extra effort to mentor them. I think in a way many of us felt the whole idea was not to mentor them. Sink or swim.

GALLAGHER: Watch them fall.

Q: Were you all aware of that?

GALLAGHER: I don't recall what you are talking about, that people were actively trying not to be helpful. I just remember that we tried very hard to be helpful.

Q: I wasn't trying not to be helpful but we weren't given sort of the task saying this is a special program. We want to succeed and let's do something about this rather than saying here is somebody and they are a regular officer and that is it.

GALLAGHER: I don't remember that being an issue. But that would have been more an issue in the field than in the department or at least in personnel. We tried to be very supportive of those officers. Maybe I shouldn't be telling this tale out of school. But one of my fellow CBO's was a terrific guy. I really liked him a lot in spite of this story. He was the first Latino to pass the exam and come into the Foreign Service. But he was not a starving Puerto Rican from the Bronx. His father owned much of downtown San Juan and an estate on Oyster Bay. So he came from quite an elegant background. When we first started working together, he and I went out to lunch one day. We didn't know one another well so it was a getting to know you kid of lunch. He asked me where I was from and I said, "Oh, a small town in New Jersey that you have never heard of." He said, "I went to Princeton. I know New Jersey well. What town was it?" I said, "It was Deal." "Oh you must come from a very wealthy background or else you grew up in the servant's quarters", he said. I honestly replied: "the latter".

It didn't register on him that I had really grown up in the servant's quarters in the second richest town in the world, so he continued to think of me as having grown up in an elite

environment. He began confiding in me what he thought was wrong with the Foreign Service. He said, "You know in recent years they have made a great effort to expand the Foreign Service beyond Yale, Princeton, and Harvard, which is where the Foreign Service had previously come from." He continued, "You know they are even at the point of taking in people like from the University of Nebraska and places like that." Inside I was saying to myself, "My God, have you ever heard of Monmouth College?". Anyway, he joined us in being supportive of minority programs in spite of some of his own prejudices. He was a really terrific guy and I really liked working with him.

Just as my tour in Cultural Affairs ended, the Bureau of Consular Affairs borrowed me for a two month special inspection of passport offices. At the time there were ten passport offices nationally, and I was assigned to inspect the two that were located in California. The reason for the inspection was that CA had recently initiated a system of allowing applicants for passports to apply in major post offices around the country. This infuriated Frances Knight, the Director of the Passport Office.

Knight was a bizarre federal civil servant. Her main claim to fame was that she was Scott McCloud's secretary during the McCarthy years. McCloud was a USIA officer who provided names of people at the Department whom he believed to be leftist to McCarthy. Through McCarthy's power, she got herself promoted from secretary to Director of the Passport Office. She had some fairly strong McCarthyite prejudices, including an abiding hatred of the State Department. When Barbara Watson, a terrific lady, was appointed as Director of the Bureau of Security and Consular Affairs (now CA), Knight refused to set foot in the Department headquarters again. (The Passport Office was then located in a separate building near the Department.) I never met Knight; but I would hazard a guess that her hatred of Watson may have been related to the fact that Watson was the highest ranking black female in the government in 1972.

Knight ruled over passports like it was her personal fiefdom. It was her plan to get Congress to authorize the opening of 100 passport offices across the country which would have given her tremendous patronage power. Interestingly her draft bill was actually put before Congress by none other than the great liberal Hubert Humphrey. I never understood why he was doing the bidding of an extreme right winger. The Department countered that post offices could do the job just as well, and at much less expense; and Congress allowed that idea to go forward on a trial basis at a limited number of postal facilities in large towns. Knight was determined to prove that postal employees just couldn't handle the complexities of checking over passport applications and taking the oaths of applicants.

Once the post office took an application it was sent to the nearest of the ten regional passport offices for processing. My job in the Los Angeles and San Francisco passport offices was to review applications submitted at postal facilities that the staff found to have errors. I decided if the error was minor or substantive. I and the other four inspectors that the Department sent out found that in fact the post offices were doing a pretty good job. Their rate of errors was close to that of direct hire Passport Office workers. The post office idea went ahead and is still being used.

Because my onward assignment was as the consular Career Development Officer (CDO) in the junior officer section of the Personnel Bureau, CA gave me the plum assignment (i.e. California) among the five of us who did this inspection. The other guys had to go to places like Philadelphia and Detroit. I never had more than an hour's work each day, and I was strictly ordered not to participate in any routine duties at the Passport Offices; so I had plenty of time to explore two great cities during my very long lunch hours.

On my first "lunch hour" in LA I made a bee line for the Gay Community Services Center. By this point I had been living in Washington for two years and had begun to develop a gay lifestyle. I had a boyfriend and regularly went to gay bars and parties. The Los Angeles Gay Center had moved out of the laundromat on Melrose Blvd. into two ramshackle Adams-Familysque houses on Wiltshire Blvd. near MacArthur Park on the edge of downtown LA. I remember how frightened I was when I first walked into the Center. I was convinced that the front door was being filmed by the police, and I was probably right about that. There I found my old friend Don Kilhefner who brought me to his commune for dinner and introduced me to the radical fringe of the gay movement. One of his roommates went on to be named as the first openly gay judge in the U.S. I had never met such a bunch of hippies in my life, and I surely looked out of place in my State Department drag. I loved it!

Digressing for a moment, we had an incident later on while I was in personnel where a male officer wrote a letter to a friend of his in Los Angeles. In the early 70s there was something called "men's liberation" that gave straight men the ability to hug one another and to say I love you in a platonic sense to other men without being labeled "queer". One of our junior officers wrote a letter to a male friend in California and signed it: "Love, Bing." The word "love" was not intended to be sexual. The addressee had moved and the letter was returned to the State Department because the writer had used a State Department envelope. When the mail room people opened it and found that it was addressed to a man and signed with love by another man they turned the letter over to Security (now DS). The young officer was summoned into a darkened room with bright lights in his face. They sat him down at a table with two security officers playing good cop, bad cop. There were three form letters of resignation in front of him: one written for senior officers, one for mid career officers and one for junior officers. When inserted into his personnel file, the use of these form letters for a resignation would identify the officer as homosexual, so he or she could never be hired again by the federal government. They actually bragged to him that they caught two a week and fired them. He was told to sign the letter. He stood his ground. He was straight, and didn't want to be run out of the Foreign Service as a homosexual. He talked to his personnel officer who stood with him, and pointed out to DS that the mere use of the word "love" did not prove that he had sex with men. Eventually DS backed down and he was allowed to stay in the Foreign Service.

I make the point to emphasize that if caught homosexuals were immediately fired or forced to resign. There were some other gruesome stories. There was a story that went around about a woman who, a secretary I believe, who was serving in Beirut, where she

was accused by another woman of having made sexual advances. She was brought back to Washington and was 48 hours away from leaving the service for good under obviously disgraceful circumstances when the accuser in Beirut had what was very obviously a psychotic episode. Apparently her accusations were part of her psychotic experience. But the point I am making is that straight people were being drummed out of the service as well as gay people.

Q: Macarthur Park was known as a needle center too.

GALLAGHER: Yeah, the gay center had nothing to do with drugs. I just used that as a reference point. It was probably four or five blocks away. The neighborhood we were in, that the center was in, was not a particularly drugged out neighborhood. I have no doubt in those days that some people at the center used drugs but not in my experience.

Q: It was the era; it was pretty damn pervasive.

GALLAGHER: Oh yeah, in the 70's, drugs were all over the place. I am sure they were at the center but not in my experience. Anyway, Don filled me with the message of gay liberation, and I was quite inspired by it. The experience in Los Angeles radicalized me and got me committed to gay liberation.

On my first Saturday night back in DC from LA, I went to a gay bar. In those days, they were hidden away, far down in the southeast of DC among closed down warehouses. In fact, they were former warehouses that had been transformed into the world's first discos. I went to one of them one night and came out and found a flyer on the windshield of my car that said a group of people were going to try to get together a gay switchboard in Washington, and the first meeting was going to occur on the following Monday night. I thought: "That is interesting," and at the time I was already getting interested in the idea of counseling. I was in therapy myself and the process fascinated me. So I went to that first meeting, which was in a room above a head shop in Adams-Morgan which was not a glamorous neighborhood as it is now.

Q: What is a head shop?

GALLAGHER: A head shop is a place that sold funny comic books and drug paraphernalia. Not drugs but pipes to smoke marijuana and hippy stuff in general. The meeting was up on the third floor with the shop down below. Only a couple of us showed up. Myself and a woman called Nancy - whose last name I cannot remember for the life of me - pretty much took over the operation of the Switchboard and started volunteering ourselves and seeking other volunteers. Eventually, we got money from somewhere, probably out of our own pockets, and got a phone. We went on the phone from six to nine P.M. five or six nights a week. My night to be there regularly was Monday, but Nancy and I took responsibility for keeping the place alive and keeping volunteers there every evening. All of us were untrained. There were millions of people who like me were just being exposed to the idea of gay liberation for the first time and were curious and wanted

to do something but were afraid of coming out. Making the call to an anonymous person on a telephone was a way of entering the gay world for a lot of people.

For many of our callers, it was the first time they had ever spoken to another gay person. They were scared to death, lest the phones were tapped and somebody would find out where they were calling from and that sort of thing. But I think we did some terrific work with some very frightened people who wanted to change their lives. I think in the end that almost of them did come out. It was a lot of fun for me, and it became my entrée into psychology and counseling which I later did professionally. I was also doing counseling as a CDO (career development officer) at the department, and I enjoyed both roles enormously. My co-director Nancy and I never had any titles we just did the job. She had taken over publication of the *Washington Blade*, which previously had been a two page mimeographed sheet of really cheap sleazy gossip that was published by a bunch of drag queens who told stories on one another. It was a dreadful thing, a dreadful piece of bad journalism that Nancy turned into a respectable newspaper.

Q: Was it sort of an “outing”?

GALLAGHER: No, the *Washington Gay Blade* didn't out people. These were people who were so exceedingly effeminate that they couldn't hide in a closet. It was just sort of bitchy stuff about one another. Miss Jane's boyfriend has been running around with some woman or some other guy or whatever. Gossipy, just dreadful, very low. But Nancy took it over and wanted to turn it into a real newspaper which she did. The *Blade* got much more serious and started talking about gay politics and stated announcing community meetings of the organizations that were beginning to crop up for the very first time. Nowadays the *Washington Blade* is a fairly legitimate newspaper. It is passed out in all the gay bars and gay businesses in DC and can often be obtained at sidewalk newspaper dispensers. You buy it for free and they make their profit off of advertising. Nancy created it pretty much from scratch.

I eventually joined the Gay Activist Alliance (GAA), which was a political organization designed to advance the political interests of gay people. I wasn't terribly active in it. I just attended meetings. Sometime after I joined, the GAA decided to sponsor a national conference in Washington on the relationship between gays and the federal government. The conference covered a broad range of issues, but the main point was that being gay was illegal, indeed a felony, in those days. Gay people were routinely arrested if found even so much as holding hands with a member of their own sex. One typical and famous case from that era was the singer, Johnny Ray, who was enormously popular in the 1950s.

Q: Yeah, Tiptoe Through the Tulips and The Little White Cloud that Cried.

GALLAGHER: *Tiptoe Through the Tulips* was Tiny Tim, but Johnny Ray did do *The Little White Cloud That Cried* another song called *Cry* that was kind of whiny. It wasn't great music, but he was popular when I was in eighth grade. He was doing a gig in Detroit staying in a big hotel and went to the bar. In those days, there was no such thing

as a gay bar. He went to the bar in his hotel and started chatting with another man whom he thought was responding affectionately. Ray eventually reached out and touched the other man's hand. It turned out the other man was a police officer who was looking for gay people to arrest. Such officers were used as decoys routinely by police forces all over the country. The officer got out his handcuffs and Johnny Ray was dragged off to jail. Confidential Magazine, which was a super cheap tabloid of the era picked it up and made it front page headlines. That was the end of Johnny's career. There were many instances like that.

So the Gay Activist Alliance was dealing with issues of that sort. One of the panels planned for its conference was on the employment of gays in the Federal government. When I was out in California getting radicalized by my friend, Don, one of the things that I resolved was I didn't want to lie and hide anymore. While I was not interested in publicity, on the other hand, if my homosexuality became an issue in any relationship for the rest of my life, I wanted to be honest about it and not lie. I was working and doing volunteer work in planning this conference. Not doing a lot but being part of it. I don't even remember what I was doing, paperwork of some sort I suppose, stamping envelopes or something. I realized that this was a meeting on the subject of employment in the federal government and that was an issue of mine. They were looking for people to be panelists. I volunteered.

Just a month or so earlier the U.S. Civil Service Commission released a very condescending statement saying that despite its best efforts to keep them out, some homosexuals had actually entered the Civil Service; and a court had ordered the Commission to allow them to continue working. I don't know who brought the law suit. It may have been Frank Kameny, an astronomer who had been fired by the Pentagon after he was arrested for having sex with another man. Frank became DC's most active gay rights campaigner and was forever suing some government agency. The Civil Service Commission did not have jurisdiction over the Foreign Service, the military, the Secret Service, the CIA and some other branches of government service; so nothing changed in the Foreign Service as a result of that court case. FSOs were still subject to dismissal.

Anyway, the time for the panel discussion at the GAA conference came around and I was absolutely scared to death. I am not a public person. Just a couple of months earlier *Newsweek* and *Time* came out with cover stories on Leonard Matlovich, an army sergeant who got caught but fought back rather than accept the dishonorable discharge which was the standard punishment for gays. He lost his fight, but gained national attention for the movement. By this point, the newspapers were developing an almost prurient interest in the gay movement because it was so radical. It attracted readers, particularly all the closeted gay people in the nation. I was terrified of finding my picture on the front page of *Time*. I was concerned for my mother, a conservative Catholic who would have been mortified if she found herself the object of pity at St. Mary's Church in Deal, NJ because her son had humiliated her in the national media. I also didn't want to lose my job. I had no other career prospects, and very little money in the bank. And I loved the Foreign Service. I didn't want to be fired.

There were four of us on the panel at the GAA conference. Two of the people were not federal employees. The fourth was an Air Force sergeant. I can't recall his name. I believe that he and I were the first U.S. government employees to volunteer to come out publicly. Previously the few "out" gay federal employees were people who had run afoul of the police. The Air Force sergeant and I did it on our own terms and with no shame of having been arrested in a public rest room or some other sordid circumstance. I gave a brief statement identifying myself as a gay Foreign Service Officer. After our presentations, a member of the audience asked me what the State Department thought about my being gay. I replied that the Department did not know: "I guess this is a coming out party" I said, and the whole room stood up to give me my first standing ovation. Great fun; but when I went home that evening I was still scared witless.

Q: As I recall, the rationale behind this was that if you were exposed as being gay this could ruin you and you were disposed to give away secrets in order not to be exposed.

GALLAGHER: You could be blackmailed was the argument. To the best of my knowledge the only federal employees who are known to have been blackmailed for being gay were J. Edgar Hoover and his Deputy/lover Clyde Tolson, the very people who were running the anti-gay actions of the federal government. According to Frontline, the excellent investigative journalism show on Public Broadcasting, Hoover was being blackmailed by Meyer Lansky of the Jewish mafia who reportedly had pictures of Hoover and Tolson in drag. Hoover led the anti-gay campaign for the FBI with great enthusiasm while he actively blackmailed Dwight Eisenhower, John Kennedy and Lyndon Johnson among others for their heterosexual pranks. Hoover spent 40 years denying the existence of the mafia. How bizarre! I do agree, however, that people could be blackmailed. I remember when I was in the closet how absolutely terrified I was of being exposed because it meant ruin. Your family wouldn't speak to you anymore. You lost your job. You could be evicted from your home. It was a felony. You couldn't get credit. You could end up in jail.

Q: Oh yeah, and at the same time you had a Catholic priest who was being very much the predator on small choirboys.

GALLAGHER: The priesthood was a convenient place for gay people to hide. So was the sisterhood. You didn't have to get married. It was much easier to be a nun than to go home and get raped by some Irish drunk every night. I think the reason there was so much sexual abuse of teenagers on the part of both straight and gay priests is that most of them would have had a little bit of exposure to sex while they were in high school playing around with friends, which is common enough. That does not mean you are gay, it means that you are a 14-15 year old kid whose hormones have gone wild and you are curious. "You show me yours and I will show you mine" play that kids will engage in. In the case of the heterosexuals, they would have probably dated and probably kissed a little bit and what have you. Then when they are 18, they go into the clergy where they are told to be celibate and take cold showers. For the rest of their lives their only sexual experience they have is the memory of their teenaged romances. When you are 14 years old, you think that a 13 year old girl is really sexy. But by the time you are 23, you have

evolved. Your sexuality has matured and you look at a 13 year old girl as kind of pimply, gangly, dumb and young. But for the priests it basically stopped when they were 15 and that is as far as it went. Therefore, their sexuality got directed towards 15 year olds and never matured. But that has nothing to do with the Foreign Service. I'm being Irish and digressing too much.

Q: We are catching the era. Part of what we do here is I want to capture the era and facets of it as long as we are doing oral histories.

GALLAGHER: Sure. Well it was an exciting time; a time of fantastic gains. It wasn't only gays but it was Black Power and women's lib, the end of colonialism, power to the people.

So anyway, back to the conference. There was a reporter there from the Washington Post from the Style section because gay people at that point were only talked about in the Style section which had previously been called the Women's Section. We were never talked about in the political pages. Ben Bradlee, the *Post's* editor-in-chief was a phenomenal homophobe. The New York Times did not print the words Gore Vidal or homosexual from 1948 until Vidal ran for Congress in 1964, and they finally printed his name. I think they mentioned that he was an open homosexual, so the word homosexual got into the New York Times. But it simply was not used. It was part of that denial I was talking about in the entire society said that gay people didn't exist. But we do.

Anyway, there was a reporter from the Washington Post, and she came up to me after the presentation and asked if I wanted her to use my name. I said, "That is up to you. You make that decision. I am not seeking publicity, but if it happens it happens, I will have to deal with it." She elected not to use my name, but she did print an article in the Washington Post, this is in the summer of 1975 that said that a U. S. Foreign Service officer has publicly come out at a meeting of the Gay Activist Alliance. The program for the event included my name and was publicly available. So I figured that the phone would quickly ring with a call from DS telling me to leave the Foreign Service. But the call never came. I think there are two possible reasons why: 1.) The reason for firing homosexuals was that they could be blackmailed, but I could not be blackmailed after I had come out publicly, therefore there was no point in firing me; or 2.) (and much more likely) the butch fellows in DS didn't read the Style section of the Post.

I have a friend who was in both the Peace Corps and the Foreign Service with me. He at some point in his Foreign Service career had a roommate, I don't know why a Foreign Service officer ended up with a roommate, but he did, somewhere in Central America. His roommate had apparently been close to a gay man who murdered an archbishop in El Salvador, I think. At the time, it was a huge scandal because apparently the archbishop was gay and got murdered by a lover. Leo's roommate had something to do with either the bishop or the lover. I don't know what the connection was. Simply the fact that he had a roommate who knew a gay person convinced security that he was gay. They literally put a letter under his door telling him he was fired. The accused is absolutely the straightest guy I know. He was a regular visitor at all of the houses of ill repute in

Asmara when we were in the Peace Corps. He was married, had kids the whole thing. But he was fired. He fought it and won and had a career in the Foreign Service. I expected to get a similar letter under my door. But it never came and to this day, I don't know why.

Q: As a matter of fact, I came in at the height of the McCarthy period. I remember going with my colleagues and we would go through the department of security area and giggle at the name plates of who was there. Every other name plate had an X standing for Xavier.

GALLAGHER: And either an O or a Mc following it.

Q: Your fellow mackerel snappers.

GALLAGHER: Absolutely.

Q: It was one of the stops I made when showing people around the State Department.

GALLAGHER: Yes, it was very Irish and very Catholic with a few Italians mixed in.

Q: I remember talking to one of my colleagues who said that when they gave you the security interview they sometimes took great umbrage if you said you liked having the lights on when you were having sex with your wife.

GALLAGHER: Did they actually ask that question?

Q: It was a different world we are talking about.

GALLAGHER: I actually got called a Mackerel Snapper once, malevolently once, by a guy who was in my Peace Corps group. He was eventually thrown out which was a good idea. He should have been. He was a real creep. But he actually called me a Mackerel Snapper.

Q: I have heard it. It refers to Catholics eating fish on Fridays. It was nothing particularly one way or the other.

GALLAGHER: Well, he did so with a tone of voice that was decidedly pejorative. That was the only time in my life that anybody every said anything about my being a Catholic or having been Catholic.

Q: Well did you have friends within the service who knew your proclivities or whatever it is?

GALLAGHER: I talked to a couple of friends. I remember coming out to Keith Wauchope, who became ambassador in Gabon, and Richard Thurman, an FSO who is now deceased. Keith burst into tears when I first told him I was gay. I asked, "Why are you crying?" He said, "Because it must be so hard for you." I had another friend, David Blakemore whose then-wife, Phyllis, came with me when I gave the speech at the Gay

Activist Alliance. So I had friends in the department who knew. Of course they didn't go off to DS and say, "Why don't you fire my friend?" They kept my confidence.

GALLAGHER: I had one friend, a colleague when I was in personnel, who refused to speak to me when I returned to the Foreign Service. I assumed that was upset because he had heard that I am gay. I think that the DCM in Madrid when I served there was homophobic. But other than that, it was never much of a social issue with Foreign Service friends. Now, virtually everybody knows, and if they care, they keep it to themselves.

Q: It is an era that none of us look with particular nostalgia, at least certain elements. As you said earlier on, we were talking about the idea of trying to keep women in their place to a certain extent. I mean this is probably the bigger movement that was going on. You talk about women's liberation, but there were so many elements, and the condescension on the part of women and they couldn't hold up under pressure. I mean it was...

GALLAGHER: Yeah, tell that to Condoleezza Rice, Madelyn Albright and Hillary Clinton.

Q: Yeah, we are a different breed of cat now.

GALLAGHER: We are. The changes are astonishing. The fact that I have just been given an award for having come out by DACOR (Diplomatic and Consular Officers Retired) , is a hell of a long way from the way things were in 1975. The seventies was a wonderful time to be alive for a gay person because for the first time in our lives there were gay groups where you could have a gay friend. I never had a gay friend. I wouldn't dare have a gay friend. If people saw me with another man whose wrists were too limp, they might think I was one of them. So I didn't dare have a gay friend until I came out.

Q: Tell me something just on pure prurient interest on my part. Why was there, you might call, it a gay style of lisping?

GALLAGHER: I don't know. It is just the way people speak. Leopold Stokowski, the conductor, was quoted as saying that he never knew a violinist who was gay or a pianist who wasn't. I have tried that statement on friends who play in symphony orchestras and they all go, "Hmmm, oh yeah." "What about George?" They all know somebody who was an exception to the rule, but they generally agree that violinists are straight and pianists aren't. It is fascinating to me that there is some kind of association between one's sexual orientation and the musical instrument that you would choose to play. There are all sorts of associations between one's sexual orientation and the way you speak or the way you hold your wrists and the way you walk. The gay lisp is not an affectation. I was surprised when someone pointed out to me that I had one. I didn't think I had one, but apparently I do. I don't think it is terribly pronounced.

Q: I haven't noticed.

GALLAGHER: It exists, apparently.

Q: As we are talking about this, it seems that lesbians were not quite given a pass but that was all right.

GALLAGHER: They weren't given a pass but it was not as hard in many respects for them as it was for men. For example, it was accepted that women could live together, but if two men lived in the same apartment or the same house together, that raised suspicions. There would be gossip about that. But if two women did, it was not such a big deal.

Q: Part of this was just socioeconomics. Women were not big money makers in those days. This goes way back, so maiden aunts would live together and so forth.

GALLAGHER: Yes. I think there is also a common theme with heterosexual pornography to have the show begin with two women having sex with one another and then along comes a man who has his way both of them. The idea of converting lesbians or conquering lesbians or whatever goes along with the sexual fantasies of some heterosexual men. Therefore, they are not threatened by lesbians. On the contrary, they are kind of turned on by it. But a man is more threatening. If he comes on to me, what if I respond? My god! Does that mean I am queer? I had better push him away before I get threatened myself somehow. If the Kinsey statistics are correct, more than half of the male population admits to having had at least some homosexual fantasies, and there are a lot of people out there who might feel threatened. But I think women in general are less threatened by lesbians than straight men are by gay men. I am not entirely sure why that is, but it is. One political theory is that lesbians are aspiring to be masculine whereas gay men are aspiring to be feminine and that threatens the supremacy of the male. I am not sure if this is correct.

Let me tell you a wonderful follow-up story about my coming out experience that happened just this past week.

When I was the first Foreign Service officer to come out of the closet I was very alone: nobody in the Foreign Service on my side, no movement, no organization, no nothing. Even the ACLU would not guarantee that they would support me before I came out. Instead they advised that they would wait to see how the Department reacted before they would consider defending me in court.

Okay, now fast forward to last Wednesday. It was the 20th anniversary of the founding of GLIFAA, the Gays and Lesbians in Foreign Affairs organization founded in '92 by a small group of very brave folk given that the status of gay people in '92 was slightly better than it was in '75, but only slightly. Their situation was still indefinite and unclear. I wasn't planning to go to attend the anniversary celebration. I had a commitment to speak at the Long Branch Historical Society here in New Jersey at 7:30 that evening. I had already canceled once on the Historical Society and I didn't want to cancel again. The night before the event the current President of GLIFAA, Ken Kero-Mentz, sent me an e-mail

asking if I would attend the Secretary's speech and he said that she might mention me in it. That changed my mind and I decided to make a quick trip to D.C.

I arrived at 1:45 for a 2PM event. The GLIFA people put me together with the past presidents of GLIFA, and we were escorted up to the John Adams Room. I had a chance to meet Secretary Clinton in advance of the formal program. It was a pleasant way to meet her in a quiet, and very beautiful, atmosphere. When I shook hands, I was struck by how small and feminine her hand is. Like someone with that power should have a really big hand. She was tremendously charismatic and charming. So we chatted for a little bit and then it was time to go into the adjoining Ben Franklin Room where 400 or 500 people were waiting.

I was looking very carefully at my watch because I had to make a train back to Jersey at 3:02. The Secretary came into the Adams Room at about 2:10, and we moved into the Ben Franklin Room at about quarter past the hour. Instead of sitting with the GLIFAA presidents in the front row, I sat in the back near the door so I could run out the minute the Secretary stopped speaking. The Ben Franklin room is arguably one of the most elegant rooms in our nation's capitol. The event began with the Washington DC gay men's chorus singing the Star Spangled Banner a cappella in four part harmony. I didn't even try not to cry; thinking, "My God, we have come a long way since 1975."

After the anthem three people introduced the Secretary. She finally started to speak at exactly 2:21 (I was watching my watch very carefully). She went on for about five minutes on the history of GLIFA and she didn't mention my name. Ken had said that the decision whether my name would be brought up or not was up to the speech writer, not up to him. I thought, "Oh well, the speech writer took my name out." Then she went into about five minutes of what she and her husband had done for gay rights over the last 20 years. Probably of all the politicians in the world, she is the greatest advocate for gay rights. Her speech which I expected would last five minutes was now into more than ten minutes, and I was sure I would miss my train. Then she said, "But there is someone that I really want to cite for special recognition. "Is Tom Gallagher in the room?"

I stood up and she spent the next five minutes calling me every wonderful name in the book. And she said none of this could have happened without me and people like me. She spoke of the courage it took for me to come out 40 years ago.. My left brain was saying: "Hurry up, Hilary. I have a train to catch", while my right brain was saying: "Keep going, Hilary. Don't ever stop!" At 2:37PM the room stood up to give her a standing ovation, which I figured, was partly my standing ovation since she had said something about me, and I walked out the door. I thought what a wonderful way to say good bye to State Department at the end of your career. The room full of people giving you a standing ovation after the Secretary has called you a hero.

To make the story even better just six days after the Secretary's speech the Deputy Secretary presented me with the annual Tragen Award which is sponsored by Diplomatic and Consular Officers Retired (DACOR). The award was given in recognition of my having been the first openly gay FSO and for the work I did on women's issues in

Personnel. The event was followed by a luncheon at DACOR's beautiful headquarters near the White House that was attended by friends from my original A-100 class and from my high school class. It's been a hell of a week.

Q: Wonderful! I would like to finish your time in personnel. Any other developments?

GALLAGHER: I don't think there is too much more to say about my time in personnel except to say I had a great time. I was terribly proud of the fact that I transferred 445 officers in my two years in personnel, and I sent every single one of them to his or her first choice. In many cases, they were negotiated first choices. They would come in and talk to me and I would point out that a particular post would be good for their careers and they would happily accept the assignment.

Q: I got involved in career development of consular officers in the period slightly later. Did you come away with any impression about the intake of officers, who they were, whether there were characteristics and things like that?

GALLAGHER: Not that I can think of off the top of my head. I have always had a great respect for Foreign Service officers. They are in general pretty cool people. Obviously, they share a lot of interests with me, which is part of the reason why I think they are cool. But I have always been impressed with FSOs and for the most part - God knows there are horrible exceptions - they are decent folk, people who are not racist. The Foreign Service would be a terrible place to be if you were a racist getting assigned to Africa or Latin America. They tend to be liberal in their thinking. I don't mean they necessarily vote Democratic, although most of them do. But they are tolerant folk who have broad minds and a world view. Obviously, Foreign Service officers share my interest in geography and history, which makes them attractive to me. They also tend to be rather good looking. When I was doing exams for BEX, I played a game in my own mind. I didn't discuss this with anybody at the time but when we opened the door and the person walked into the room, I would immediately say to myself "pass" or "fail". There was only one young woman whom I misjudged. She walked into the room and I said, "Pass", but she basically talked herself out of it. Generally speaking, you could tell by the way they carry themselves, by the way they walk. A certain set of confidence. They are at ease. That counts on the subtle MO of the oral examination.

Q: I was with the board of Examiners at one point. You know, looking for people who are good representatives.

Q: Well where did you go afterwards.

GALLAGHER: After I left personnel, I went on leave without pay, because I decided after I came out publicly that there was no future for a gay man in the State Department. It never occurred to me that one day there would ever be an openly gay ambassador. I didn't want to be a second class citizen in the department, and through my own therapy, I had become interested in psychotherapy. My Peace Corps roommate became an inspiration for me because he got his master's degree in social work and suggested that I

do the same. I didn't want to completely sever my relationship with the State Department because I wasn't sure that I would like social work, but I wanted to give it a try, so I requested a ten month leave without pay so that I could study social work at the University of Southern California (USC) in Los Angeles.

Q: Okay, well let's talk about that.

GALLAGHER: Well that was wonderful in its own way. I mentioned above that I had visited my friend Don at the Gay Community Services Center of Los Angeles when I did a very brief tour in LA. Now that I was there for two academic years I had much more time to spend at the Center. Don quickly named me as Director of the Men's Counseling Program even though I had only just begun my counseling training. It was a peer counseling program; intended to offer brotherly advice rather than formal therapy. Our clients were mostly people who were dealing with coming out in those early days of gay liberation.

The Center was an outpost of radical ideas. Lots of people who hung out there dressed in "gender fuck" as they called their penchant for wearing frilly blouses with beards and lipstick. The "rap groups" – drop in groups for anyone who needed to talk to other gay people – attracted middle-class housewives and husbands from the San Fernando Valley and hookers from Hollywood Boulevard.

One of the Center's goals was to provide an alternative to the gay bars that were opening up all over the country. The bars were fun, but one often met alcoholics and many gay people slipped into alcoholism because their only social outlets were pubs. The Center certainly offered me some great friends. I was more than happy to put in 20 hours per week volunteering there.

The Center's unofficial philosopher-in-residence was a man called Morris Kight, who had been a gay activist back in the 1950s. Every word that he spoke was part of a speech. But he was a grand old man of the movement and very highly respected.

Q: Let me say, by this time, your activities had to be extremely well known. Were you getting anything from the State Department either officially or unofficially about your activities?

GALLAGHER: Not a word.

Q: I would imagine it would be a completely different scene, wasn't it?

GALLAGHER: Unbelievably different - a hippy scene.

Q: Yeah, there are movements and movements within movements. Anything involving California is a whole new kettle of fish.

At that time, the American Psychiatric Association still had homosexuality listed as a major mental disorder. They had stopped using frontal lobotomies, which they used in the 40's on gay people, but they were still using electric convulsive therapy, which is a virtually worthless therapy for almost anything but certainly had no effect on one's sexual orientation. It caused fevers, seizures and other horrible reactions. Some psychiatrists were still trying to convert gay people through psycho-therapy. No psychiatrist at that point in time had come out of the closet. I can't think of one. We had one who eventually came and volunteered with us at the center as a consultant. He was very scared and very much in the closet although he was coming to the center once a week for a consultation with the counselors.

It was because of that gap – the absolute unavailability of openly gay counselors anywhere in the world – that the Center set up its counseling program. Of course, it had to be radical. It had to be hippie. So it wasn't a hierarchical. It wasn't the sick patient going to see the healthy counselor who told him what to do. It was intended as a kind of buddy system, to provide someone to have a cup of coffee with and chat freely. Most of our clients were just coming out of their closets.

Q: Tom, I would think that you would, I mean you are a Foreign Service officer, and we have our own way of doing things and all which is pretty uptight. I am not talking about the sex thing. All of a sudden to be dealing with the Los Angeles gay hippy scene it must have been the equivalent of going to South Africa and dealing with pygmy tribes.

GALLAGHER: My whole life has been either manic or depressive. I don't mean that literally, I am not bipolar. Rather I mean my life has always been extreme. Even in the Foreign Service, Almost everywhere I went a war broke out. I spent very little time in the drawing rooms of Europe, although I got a little bit of that at the end of my career. But yes, it was another world from the State Department. I can't emphasize how totally different it was. There were a lot of people in the Center who were suspicious of me because I looked so conservative. I never wore a dashiki. I was a hippie in my soul but I didn't look like a hippie and I didn't act like a hippie. So there were people who were very genuinely suspicious of me. And there was justification for their suspicions. The Los Angeles police department at the time was doing everything he could to subtly destroy the center. It became very obvious, even a year or so later, that there was a police plant in the center, or so we all believed.

I had just started a master's degree program in social work intending to be some sort of counselor. I loved my experience as a peer counselor and career counselor at the State Department and was looking forward to doing something like that in the future – maybe in the Department. I wasn't sure at that point. When I began volunteering at the Center, I had taken only one undergrad psychology course. That is all the education I had. The experience I had as a CDO in the State Department, however, was quite valuable and it left me with more experience than any of the other counselors.

Q: Again, I am trying to keep this from being judgmental, but it sounds like there is a certain parallelism to alcoholics anonymous, having someone to support you, because AA was a well-developed organization by this time.

GALLAGHER: That is right but AA emphasized groups more than individual counseling. The center did have lots of group things going on; so, yes, in a lot of ways it was similar to AA, and like AA it tried to provide a community for people because gay people were isolated. Prior to my coming out experience, I didn't know a single gay person in the entire world. I had nobody that I could talk to about those aspects in my life. One of the things the center emphasized that was so true is that being gay is much more than a sexual orientation. It is not just a question of what do you do in bed. It is a whole world view, a whole attitude. We are different, our brains are different. There is some evidence now that there are biochemical differences between gay people and straight people; we socialize differently. So the center was emphasizing the idea of gays being something far beyond the merely sexual and it was trying to create a gay community, a place where you could go and have friends whom you didn't go to bed with, but whom you played with, worked with, and went through all the aspects of your life with.

Q: Did you feel the influence of Hollywood? Being the arts and all, it must have had an influence particularly in the Los Angeles area.

GALLAGHER: Absolutely. In later years in LA, I felt that more. The center and its people were regarded by a lot of conservative or middle-of-the-road gay people as the hippy crazies. New York and Hollywood were unique in America because of the strong influence of show business in both cities. The actors and dancers had created communities for themselves similar to what we were trying to build at the Center for non-show biz people. Those who already had a community and tended towards the conservative stayed a bit aloof from the Center so their influence wasn't that strong; but you can't live in Los Angeles without being a little bit Hollywood. As people in Washington talk politics, people in Los Angeles talk movies. So it is just there all the time.

Q: You know the front page of the Washington Post and the front page of the Los Angeles Times, one is politics and the other is movies.

GALLAGHER: That is right. The *LA Times* is not a bad paper, but it is full of show biz news. In Hollywood you constantly meet people who can quote whole passages from obscure Bette Davis movies from the 30s. It's Hollyweird.

Q: Had the bath house business hit its peak or not?

GALLAGHER: It probably hit its peak a little bit later, but it was going strong at that point. It was a sexual wonderland out there at the baths.

Q: Which turned out to be a tragedy.

GALLAGHER: Of unbelievable proportion.

Q: I take it AIDS was not on the table at all.

GALLAGHER: Oh absolutely not. There were sexually transmitted diseases, gonorrhea and syphilis, at that point. Syphilis comes on strong for brief periods, retreats for reasons of its own, and then comes out again. It was kind of in retreat. But gonorrhea and chlamydia were common. The Center did find a couple of doctors who were willing to come out of the closet to provide medical services a couple of days per week. They worked primarily on sexually transmitted diseases which patients had difficulty discussing with their family physicians.

Q: Being this is primarily a Foreign Service oriented program that I am working with you, did you bring to your time in Los Angeles any contact with foreigners?

GALLAGHER: No. I am sure I did. I must have met foreigners in Los Angeles but I didn't have any friends at all who were born outside of the United States. They were every kind of American. You know, Black, Japanese, White, Latino, but they were all American.

Q: Did you find that, again I am using Foreign Service context, we tend to see trends in societies and movements, more than any other people. Did you see a rejection or acceptance within the oriental or Hispanic or Black communities better or worse than with White communities?

GALLAGHER: We were sensitive to the fact that it was a lot harder for members of minority groups to deal with homosexuality than it was for White folk. Statistically, the most homophobic people in the United States are southeastern Black males. In the conservative churches in Alabama, there is often a strong anti-gay feeling. But in those days, it was pretty strong, so in a lot of respects it was much harder for Black and Hispanic folks to come out of the closet. I must say that over the years it seems to me the people who have the most difficulty coming out of the closet are Indian Americans. Not Native Americans but Asian Indian Americans whose culture has all sorts of homosexual mythology, but in its modern practice, it is very suppressed and closeted.

Q: Yes and over the years that has become a sizable and influential group.

GALLAGHER: Yes they have. You know, like everybody else, they are changing, but it is much harder for them.

There is, of course, racism among gay people; but it is much less common than it is among straight people. It's hard to be a member of a minority group yourself and still find a way to discriminate against other groups.

There was sort of a class divide at the Center. The most radical types were always talking about how we should all give up our wealth and become equal, not communist but

communal, and support one another and not think about money and that sort of thing. I remember a couple of conversations with a lesbian friend who, like me, had grown up very poor. Like me, she was not willing to give up the few pennies she had for some higher state of consciousness. I never had two cents to put together so there wasn't much to give up. So there were divides of that sort. There was every imaginable kind of divide in the movement.

There was a lot of internal fighting in the Center. Early in my second year there the Center received the first federal grant ever awarded to a gay institution. It was a million and a half dollars for work with lesbian alcoholics. The Center had never had anything like that amount of money. We literally survived on the dimes and quarters that people put in the hat that was passed around at rap groups. A big row broke out over who should control the money. Some lesbians argued that men should not have any control over the funds. Tensions grew. Radical/conservative divisions grew.

Because I was identified one as the conservatives, the radicals came after me tooth and nail. I went to the Board of Directors to warn them that things were going badly and to say that I couldn't take the heat any longer, so I resigned as head of the men's counseling program. A couple of weeks later I got a phone call saying, "Please come back; everything has changed." Well by then, the revolution, if you will, had gotten literally to the point of violence. There were stones thrown, and a man named Troy Perry, who was the main gay religious leader in the world, (he founded the Metropolitan Community Church expressly for gay people) was spat upon at the center. It really got quite crazy. I had a Peace Corps friend named George Blackmon who I had stayed with briefly when I first went to Los Angeles. George came out to me, divorced his wife (who also decided she was gay) and eventually joined a group called the Lavender and Red Alliance which was operating picket lines in front of the Center. As I crossed the picket line one day George looked at me with hate in his eyes and we never spoke again. It was painful for both of us, and everyone at the Center was experiencing similar pain.

In any case, the radicals basically left and the Board asked me to come back and take over running the counseling program again, just myself without my lesbian counterpart, who joined the radicals and stormed out the door. Essentially, the conservatives won, but it was one of those crazy fights that the 70's were full of. The center was a fragile sort of thing. But it gave me an awful lot of fun and a terrific education.

During the summer between my two academic years, I came back and worked in the Office of Special Consular Services (SCS) at the Department, which may have been the most fun job I have ever had in my life. We were a two man operation inside SCS, myself and a civil servant, whose name was Bob McCarthy, who was a terrific guy, a very upbeat and happy person. He and I virtually did all of the repatriations of American citizens who got in trouble (heart attacks, mental breakdowns, robbery victims, etc.) overseas. I think he did mostly the crazy mentally ill folks and I did all the others. But we backed one another up and both of us did everything.

I came back there again the next year for a couple of months while waiting to get into training at FSI and again worked with Bob and just had an absolute ball. Those were the days of the hippies. Most of the cases were from Kabul and Kathmandu where the most unstable hippie kids would go to buy drugs. We were repatriating a girl who was walking naked in the marketplace in Katmandu and all sorts of really nutty cases.

Q: Let's come back to our focus then. What was the procedure of repatriation? I mean what were some of the issues?

GALLAGHER: The procedure was that the troubled individual would get in touch with the embassy which, in those days, would send the individual's vital statistics to the Department which would contact the person's family or friends in the U.S. to seek money to help out their loved one. Most of this was done by cable. Some of it was done by phone. We were just beginning to use telephones as an implement of diplomacy. There was no such thing as E-mail. Nowadays the embassies contact the family directly because phone connections are so good. Back in the 70s there were many parts of the world where one could only rarely get through to the U.S. by phone. I remember some terrific conversations with family members. When I called one father who, he lived in Tennessee but had a strong Jersey accent; he said, "Yeah you know what that kid is? That kid stinks. That is what that kid is. That kid stinks." This is his own son. So there were all kinds of funny interactions with families with the goal of getting them to come up with the money to repatriate poor little Johnny or Suzie, who was overseas.

Q: What if you couldn't get money from the family?

GALLAGHER: Well ultimately, the Department could come up with money but we were really stingy with it, as you probably know. I think in a lot of cases the individual just stayed where ever he was overseas if his family wouldn't help. They weren't all insane, and they weren't all necessarily physically ill. Some were just broke. I assume that many went on the welfare in France or Japan or Australia or where ever they were, if there was welfare in the host country.

Q: I was a consular officer early on in a wonderful era. When we had somebody who obviously had a mental problem, we could arrange for the local medical people to give the individual a shot and had somebody travel with them and sort of keep them sedated until they totally appeared in the states and then turned them over to either the family or to public health.

GALLAGHER: Right. The U.S. public health service psychiatric hospital on Staten Island is where they would go to if they needed to be immediately hospitalized. They would be brought there directly from Kennedy or Newark Airport. We had one case I will absolutely never forget. It was Friday, the fifth of July, 1974. Of course, almost everybody in Washington took the long weekend to go away. For me, the best place in the world to be on the Fourth of July is Washington. They have the best fireworks, so I didn't mind staying in town. There were only three of us on duty in an office that normally had 20 people. Of course, nobody overseas cared that Washington was taking a

long weekend, so we were extremely busy. At about 9:30 AM I got a call from the Russian desk saying that an American citizen had arrived at Sheremetyevo Airport in Moscow from Helsinki and announced that he had enough gelignite strapped around his waist to blow up everything for a radius of five miles. This, of course, was during the Brezhnev years – the height of the Cold War. If the American had carried out his threat World War III would have begun. My job in this chaotic event was simply to approve payment of the American citizen's passage back to the U.S. which I did very readily. The next six hours were harrowing. Eventually the Soviet police talked the man down only to find that he had no explosives on his waist. It was all a joke. The Soviets agreed to let the American board the next flight back to New York (with armed escorts, of course) where he went directly to the mental hospital on Staten Island. I hope he's still there. Years later the Department asked officers to write stories for recruiting documents that showed why we needed embassies abroad. I wrote up this story and got a call back from the office that was printing the recruiting documents saying that mine was the best submission they received, but unfortunately they couldn't use it because it was all about bombing and world war and they wanted their recruiting pamphlets to be upbeat and positive.

Q: In the Foreign Service, crises are fun. I mean, this is where the adrenalin starts flowing and people pay attention to you.

GALLAGHER: Absolutely, I mentioned above how my ex-wife and I felt bored when the June War ended taking away the excitement that we enjoyed during the crisis. My Foreign Service career took me through 14 wars and I always enjoyed the thrill. When I left the Department and went into social work, I preferred crisis intervention. I think I have a crisis personality. I can be easily bored, but I'm a great guy to have around when the world goes nuts.

Q: How did you find with your new outlook on both the gay thing but also on social counseling? Were you able to transfer this to being a counselor officer?

GALLAGHER: My social work program taught me to listen. It took me 20 years to really learn how to do it, but I think I finally mastered listening. A lot of people think they are good listeners, but they rarely are. This applies not only in counseling situations, but across the board in the Foreign Service. It is a fine art and you have to work at it, be trained in it and practice it to be really good. That may be the most important life skill that I learned in my years as a social worker. Foreign Service officers are smart people. They got ahead during their youth by knowing all the right answers faster than the other students. As a result they talk too much and make too much effort to show how smart they are. Learning to ask key questions and then really pay attention to the response is a fine art. Most FSOs spend too much time talking about themselves rather than listening to their contacts.

I think I also learned to have a certain contempt for stuffy people. Having come from a poor background myself, I spent probably all of my 20's trying to be stuffy, trying to act the way the man wanted me to, the way a gentleman was supposed to act. Social work taught me to have a certain contempt for pompous asses, of which the Foreign Service

has more than its fair share. Overall, FSOs are mostly fun to be around. They are bright and sophisticated in ways that I can understand and enjoy. But when they are stuffy, they are very, very stuffy.

Q: You know you talk about stuffiness, and to what would you ascribe the making of a stuffy person? First you might explain what you mean by stuffy and how it manifests itself in the Foreign Service.

GALLAGHER: Stuffy, to me, means not being able to use the right side of one's brain. The left brain controls the intellect and the ability to follow rules. Stuffy people will tell you that they are reading Plato and going to Wagnerian operas. They wear socially acceptable clothes and set perfect tables. But they have no ability to talk about you and me here and now. They don't experience feelings. I once had an FSO tell me that he knew that his left brain had to control and contain any impulses that emerged from his right brain. What he missed was love, spontaneity, and the ability to relate closely to others. Stuffy people can never be themselves and usually have no sense of who they are. The State Department is full of them. They can be charming at a cocktail party, but they don't know how to get really close to other humans.

Q: When you came back to Washington, you were in Consular affairs from when to when?

GALLAGHER: Just the summers of 1974 and '75, short but sweet assignments. There were some great, hard-working people there, but there were also a few duds. On my first day working there I introduced myself to one of my colleagues and asked what his responsibilities were. "Death", he replied. He handled death cases and obviously the depression of the families he worked with had gotten to him. He was horribly depressed. There was another fellow in CA/SCS named Charlie who had an office directly across from mine. Charlie was a civil servant, probably in his 70s who had apparently burned out many years earlier. His responsibility was taking care of American seamen; but by the 1970s the American merchant marine had declined to next to nothing and few sailors got in trouble abroad. Every day Charlie read the Washington Post and the New York Times cover to cover and never did a stick of work as far as I, or anyone else, could tell. One day a cable came in from Singapore concerning a seaman. It fell to me to carry the cable to Charlie's office for our very first encounter. I passed him the cable and said: "I think this is for you, Charlie." To which he replied: "Boy it never stops coming, does it?" I guess I made him feel busy. He was a perfect example of why our civil service laws need to be revised.

Q: You have finished your education. You have had your summers with special counseling services. Then what did you do?

GALLAGHER: I went into Spanish training and was assigned as Deputy Principal Officer in Guayaquil. It was an assignment I couldn't say no to. When I had been in personnel, I had worked with junior officers. A man named Bob Bischoff took care of

senior consular officers. When he was assigned as Consul General in Guayaquil he asked me to be his deputy. It was an assignment I couldn't refuse.

Q: I replaced Bob in Saigon.

GALLAGHER: Did you.

Q: Okay, you were in Guayaquil from when to when?

GALLAGHER: I was in Guayaquil in '76. I was only there for six or seven months.

Q: What were you doing there?

GALLAGHER: I was Deputy Principal Officer, a title that doesn't exist anymore in the department. My minor claim to fame there was I think I was the youngest DPO ever. I was 34 at the time. I was a brand new 02, and it was an 02 job. I was about five years younger than the other 02s on my promotion list. Since Bob was away on home leave or vacation for about half the time I was there, I think I can lay claim to being the youngest acting chief of a large diplomatic mission in recent history. I was basically in charge of the consular section, which was a busy visa mill. I had maybe six officers working for me. It was kind of fun. Guayaquil is a dreary hell hole. Not a fun place to live and the housing for almost all of the consular staff was in the consulate office building. My bed was directly above my desk. It was a kind of ugly apartment. I eventually moved to one of the less high ranking, smaller apartments upstairs just because the ride on the elevator gave me a sense of not being at the office. But I was at the office. One didn't dare walk around Guayaquil because it was a rough place, one enormous slum; so one was trapped in the office building. I had a couple of really interesting protection and welfare cases. Do you want to hear about them?

Q: Yeah. Quickly, could you talk a bit about the political situation in Ecuador at the time?

GALLAGHER: Confused as always. It was a junta in charge. The senior junta fellow was a naval officer, an admiral. It was basically peaceful and stable the entire time I was there. Nothing changed, just a basic military dictatorship. It was not oppressive. They weren't listening in on people's phone calls and that sort of thing. They just wanted to basically keep a degree of stability and get the oil money. Oil was still a relatively new thing in Ecuador. Ecuador has never had Saudi levels of oil production but they had significant reserves which are capable of making Ecuador a very rich country; but the people have never gotten rich because of rampant corruption and political incompetence. The country has just never gotten its act together.

Q: Yeah, I understand. One president was kicked out because he was an alcoholic.

GALLAGHER: That certainly could be true, and another president was psychotic. The presidents tend not to last terribly long in Ecuador because they steal too much or make

others jealous, and sooner or later the military takes over to control the national theft, and to make sure that the huge cocaine business is not interrupted by nutty Americans telling them to stop the trade. The big political issue for the U.S. during my tenure in Ecuador was the so-called Tuna War. It was a comic opera war, now pretty well forgotten by history. Ecuador declared that its territorial limit extended out the full length of the continental shelf. If I remember correctly, it extended 200 miles out into the Pacific. The waters off Ecuador are rich in tuna and other fish. They waters were fished by boats that came down there from San Diego and San Juan in Puerto Rico flying American flags. The Ecuadorians wanted the tuna all to themselves. It was mostly a verbal battle conducted in the embassies in Quito and Washington, but the actual tuna banks were in my consular district. To some extent, we were involved, but not very much. By the time I got there, the whole thing was starting to quiet down. There were speeches given in the Ecuadorian parliament about how awful Americans were, but that goes with the territory in Latin America. If I remember correctly a couple of shots were fired across bows by the Ecuadorian navy, but none of that occurred on my watch. Eventually the whole thing was quietly settled with the Ecuadorians backing down. Other than that we didn't do much political work in Guayaquil at all. It was definitely a consular post. It was there for visas.

The visa work was often bizarre. On one occasion we had a nun come in who was at least eight months pregnant with a letter from the archbishop saying that she was going on some sort of business to America. But it was perfectly obvious what sort of business she was going on. The Church simply wanted to get her out of town. That visa was refused if I remember correctly. There was a visa line outside the building and there were fellows who would approach people in the visa line just to rent them a doctor uniform, which consisted of a white jacket and stethoscope, so they could come in and try to convince I us they were doctors. We had one lady who came in applying for an immigrant visa. I actually saw her myself. I didn't do a lot of visa interviewing, but I think maybe the junior officer called me in and asked me to get involved in this case. She was 56 years old and she was going with her son, who was 2 years old. I remember asking her whether or not she had gone through menopause and she said, "Oh yes senior consul. When I was 46 years I went through menopause and was in a menopausal state for six years and then when I was 54 amazingly I came out of menopause and got pregnant, and this is my son." Since I am not a medical person, I called the embassy doctor to give his opinion of this medical story. He said, "Tom, I am going to call the New England Journal of Medicine right now because we have experienced a medical miracle. This has never happened before." Anyway we refused the child's visa.

Q: Were the Ecuadorians anti-American?

GALLAGHER: The government was not the least bit anti-American other than the squabble over the tuna fish, and I don't think either side took that terribly seriously. There were not a lot of anti-American feelings among the Ecuadorian people either. On the contrary, there was an almost groveling towards Americans and the desire of everybody in Guayaquil to move to Miami if they possibly could. As someone who was involved with visas, I rather quickly became easily recognizable around town. I remember going to the embassy as often as I could because I liked Quito better than

Guayaquil. We carried our own pouches every week, so I would do the pouch run once a month or so. On one occasion, I arrived at the Quito airport and a total stranger opened the door for me saying, "Welcome Senior Consul." So he knew exactly who I was even hundreds of miles away from Guayaquil.. Of course, you got accosted for visas at every social event.

While I was there, the Consul General was gone most of the time. He took an extended home leave. So I think I was there for six months, but I was in charge being consulate general for three of those six months, which is kind of fun. It was a nice way I thought to end my career in the Foreign Service. When I got there I was really pining for California, and decided I had made a commitment to social work. I looked into the possibility of being a social worker at the Department. I went to the people in the mental health division of the Department's medical office. Quite frankly was terribly unimpressed. The staff consisted of one psychiatrist and one psychologist. I remember the psychiatrist—saying that he had worked for many years at the Federal Aviation Agency. Everybody told him that air traffic controllers were different from the general population. But he insisted they were the same as the general population. Now he was at the State Department and everyone was telling him that Foreign Service officers were different from the general population, but he insisted they were not. I remember sitting there thinking: "You just don't get it do you? Neither air traffic controllers nor Foreign Service officers are typical middle Americans.

Q: When you were talking to MED and looking for a future, did they raise the gay issue and feel that you could be used in this?

GALLAGHER: No. I didn't raise it and they didn't raise it. You know I wasn't bringing it up everywhere. The reason I did the coming out thing was, in some ways more personal than public. I didn't want to hide in any social situation; and I was involved with the Gay Activist Alliance; so I got involved in GAA's event. But I didn't go around speaking elsewhere. I wasn't looking for publicity. In those days, it was really uncomfortable to tell anyone that you were gay. I literally was walking my dog this morning and met a very charming neighbor and her three year old and dog. We just talked for several minutes. I ended up telling her that I was gay in the course of a ten or fifteen minute conversation. I don't do that normally, with total strangers. I didn't generally talk about it to anybody in the Department other than close friends. I was happy to keep the salary coming despite the fact that I thought at any moment the phone call would come. I pretty much decided while Bob Bishton was on his extended home leave that I wanted to get back to California and that there was no future for a gay man at the State Department.... So when the boss returned from his leave I told him that I was going to resign, and I did. I returned to Los Angeles and began working on a Ph. D. in psychology. Unfortunately I got hepatitis shortly after coming back from Ecuador and that killed my Ph.D. program. But my master's degree in social work allowed me to do everything I wanted to do in the mental health field, so I never missed the doctorate I never earned.

Q: Did you have any interesting protection and welfare cases in Guayaquil?

GALLAGHER: There were two. One was already ongoing when I got there. The principals were a woman, her husband and her ex-husband, all three of whom lived in rural southwestern Virginia. They decided to be mules for the mafia. Ecuador was then, and remains, a major cocaine distributor. We had three full time DEA agents on the consulate staff. I think the CIA folks in Ecuador were primarily interested in drugs at that time as well. These three rather dumb folk filled their underwear and their double bottom suitcases with cocaine. They all had cocaine in the heels and soles of their shoes. As they were leaving Ecuador for Miami, she got through the exit formalities and was walking toward the plane; but the heel fell off one of the husbands' shoes and suddenly there was this white powder all over the floor. At first, the Ecuadorians apparently didn't even know what it was but they quickly figured it out and all three of them got arrested.

Off they went to the local *penetentiria*, which was a gift from the United States as part of the Alliance for Progress. We built prisons in South America, which probably was not our most effective aid program ever; but anyway off they went to the penitentiary. At first they walked around bragging that they were mafia, and the mafia would arrange their escape; but, of course the Mafia didn't give a damn about these fools in a jail in Ecuador. It eventually sunk in their liberation wasn't going to happen. That is where I came into the picture. I went out to visit them in the penitentiary. The men were doing kind of okay. They were roommates in their cell. But the woman was the most depressed human being I have ever spoken to – and I later did mental health crisis work for twenty years.

She was brought into a room to see me. She just slumped down in her chair with her head down almost on her knees. Her face was covered with boils. She could barely speak. The women's penitentiary was attached to the much larger men's penitentiary. There probably were only 30 or 40 women housed in a depressingly dark building from which the prisoners were not allowed to leave even to go out in the surrounding yard because the guards feared that the very sight of women would stimulate the 1500 men who were incarcerated on the other side of a fence. The poor women never saw the light of day. There had been an American nun who was working in the prison and became a friend to our prisoner, but the nun had returned to the U.S. two or three months before I arrived in Guayaquil. The American prisoner spoke no Spanish and made little effort to learn it. She was totally isolated.

The penitentiary had been experiencing 150 escapes per month, some of which were effected by payoffs to the guards to open the gates. Others were people just jumping over the fence. The previous warden had a reputation for total corruption, so the government brought in a Dominican priest, a funny very short bald fellow, who was well known for having "nieces" and "nephews" all over the country. (Nieces and nephews were the words used to describe the children of priests.)

He was actually doing a very good job running the *penitentiaria*. He had cut the escapes down to only a few and he had initiated work-training programs for the male prisoners with a goal of reducing recidivism. I went to him and described the pathetic situation of our American lady and suggested conjugal visits for this woman and her husband or husbands. The priest got a worried look on his face and said, "Hmmm, I am going to have

to think about that.” A week later I went back and asked what his judgment was. He said, “All right; but only with the one she is legally married to!” I didn’t bother to get into a theological argument with him because from the church’s point of view, she was legally married only to her first husband; but from the State Of Virginia’s perspective she was married only to her second husband. In any case, she was allowed to visit her second husband on weekends when her first husband would go to another cell. It was probably the best mental health treatment plan that I ever developed. She quickly recovered from her depression.

The two men were master carpenters. While they may not have been very bright in the ways of the world, they did have a great talent for woodwork. The priest asked them to use their skills to train other prisoners in carpentry. So they set up a little factory on the prison grounds manufacturing small prefabricated Cape Cod houses. Ecuador, like all of Latin America, had terrible middle class and lower middle class housing problem. Here were these perfect little Cape Cods that these guys were producing. My boyfriend at the time was an architect. He came to Ecuador to visit me and I brought him out to the prison to show him this little factory. He said the quality of the stuff they were making was very high.

The priest gave one of the houses to his boss, the Minister of the Interior. The minister took the house and sold it for \$5,000. He said, “That is wonderful. Give me another house.” So the factory these guys had developed became a production center for the minister of the interior, who was getting \$5,000 a pop for selling these little houses. Remember this is the same Minister who appointed the priest to end corruption at the prison. The American prisoners quickly trained their Ecuadorian colleagues to keep the production line going; so the minister himself got in touch with the two men with a proposal that if they would move to Ecuador’s other large penitentiary in Quito and train the prisoners there to make similar homes he would allow them to go home to America with their wife in six months. It was an offer they couldn’t refuse.

The last I heard from them was a phone call from a Chinese restaurant in Quito. The minister had put them up in a private home there where they were technically under house arrest, but that didn’t stop them from going to a restaurant. They called to thank me for all I had done for them and to say goodbye. I hope they never left rural Virginia again.

Q: Wow that is great.

GALLAGHER: The other case was my final protection and welfare case (always my favorite part of consular work.) This instance involved a bunny from the Playboy Club in Montego Bay, a 29 year old who looked like a very good looking hooker. Her handsome boyfriend looked like a California surfer boy. They made arrangements in New Orleans to come down to Guayaquil to be mules (smugglers) of cocaine for \$2500. The police in New Orleans were onto them. They got in touch with DEA who got in touch with the DEA people in Guayaquil who made an arrangement in effect to have these people arrested in Guayaquil. If they had been arrested in New Orleans before they came down, they would have had to prove conspiracy, which is terribly hard to do in a court of law.

There would have been no cocaine as evidence. But once they got to Guayaquil and picked up their product, the cocaine would be the evidence for a conviction.

The Ecuadorian police were perfectly happy to participate in this sting because they were always telling the DEA people: “Oh yes. we want to work with the Americans to stop the drug trade,” but they were all totally corrupt and didn’t want to stop anything. Now there was a situation where they could arrest these two stupid American kids and get some points with the Americans for doing it. The Americans obligingly picked up the cocaine and were in their hotel planning to leave the following morning when the police forced their way in and arrested them. The arrest process in Ecuador called for the accused to be put in the general lockup in Guayaquil until his/her trial was completed. I have been in the general lockup in Guayaquil, and it is one of the most horrible places I have ever seen in my life. It is a large room, perhaps the size of the Ben Franklin Room, into which they just put all the people who had been arrested on the streets of Guayaquil in the last couple of weeks. These were tough people. The first time I was there, I think there were two females and maybe 250 men, all in one big room. The females were tough ladies to say the very least. One of them was completely psychotic. I imagined this beautiful Playboy Bunny going into that atmosphere. The lockup was on the grounds of the police academy. I imagined all the professors and students at the police academy having their way with her, and then turning her over to the prisoners. So I went to the police station and I said to the police captain: “You know this young lady is close to Hugh Hefner,” which was gross exaggeration. “If she is maltreated in the prison, this will be printed in Playboy Magazine” which I am sure he read. “That would be a terrible embarrassment to the Republic of Ecuador. Can’t you put her somewhere else?” He agreed to allow her to stay in the police station even though it had no jail cells. It wasn’t exactly comfortable. They were sleeping on wooden couches, but at least they were safe. Unfortunately the police office closed on weekends, so after a few days of safety they would have to move to the horrible city jail. So on Friday night they were moved. Oddly there seems to have been some honor among the thieves at the lockup. They allowed the Americans to hang blankets to give themselves some privacy and, at least for the week that I was there, she was not molested.

Thinking of the other woman who had been so isolated in the women’s prison, I called upon my social work education and decided to try to set up a support system for her. I had two close American women friends whom I asked to come with me to the prison to meet the prisoner and periodically go and visit her. They agreed, but the night before one of them freaked out, saying, “Tom, I have never been in a prison in my life. I don’t want to go.” Her husband, whose name was Peter, volunteered to go in her place. Peter was the leading American businessman in Guayaquil at the time. He was born to great wealth in Hollywood. The house that he grew up in was between Pickfair, where Mary Pickford lived, and the Fred Astaire’s home. His best friends growing up were Buddy Rogers Junior, Mary Pickford’s son, and Fred Astaire, Jr. He made a million bucks by the time he was 30 but was bored with LA. Somebody said, “Why don’t you go do fish in South America?” With little more preparation than that, he got on a plane to Guayaquil and opened a business exporting fish and shrimp. He was making buckets of money.

Peter was charming, but somewhat sociopathic with limited impulse control. It was a bad judgment on my part to let Peter go, but off we went to the prisoners' little cubbyhole in the jail. I presented them with a list of attorneys, but Peter took over the meeting saying: "Don't pay any attention to that. I will get you an attorney. Furthermore I will get you valium to make it easier for you to deal with being in the prison." I had a fit with Peter on the way out. It was totally inappropriate for him to have done that. Talking about drugs to people who had been arrested for drugs is absolutely loony. I was furious with him and I told him so directly. I said, "You are obviously not going to get involved in this case any further." He was very apologetic.

The next day Peter called up one of my junior officers, Brian McNamara to ask Brian to send him copies of all the papers we had on the prisoners so that he could show them to the lawyer he had found. He asked Brian not to tell me about his call. Brian, of course, did the right thing and came immediately to me. I was furious and called Peter to give him hell and tell him to get out of this affair. Although I left Ecuador just a day or two later, friends there told me that Peter did indeed back off. His wife left him a couple of weeks later and, like me, moved to Los Angeles. There were rumors going around Guayaquil that we had run off together which both of us thought was very funny. We stayed friends in LA, but we were not lovers. The other woman that I brought to see the prisoner did continue to visit her. The drug smugglers were eventually sentenced to several years each in the Guayaquil penitentiary.

One fun aspect of the Foreign Service is the interesting people one meets. I was sitting in my office in Guayaquil when two older gentlemen walked in and asked to talk with me. The younger one at 68 had just retired from the *Denver Post* where he had been a reporter. The older gent was 93. He was the former Dean of the Colorado School of Mines, one of the world's best schools of geology and metallurgy. They wanted my assistance in getting their Geiger counters to the Galapagos Islands.

The old gentleman (I've totally forgotten his name) was a "sooner" – a member of one of the white families that went into Oklahoma sooner than whites were allowed on what had been Indian territory. They were members of a conservative Protestant sect that didn't believe in reading. The sect has long since gone out of existence. At age 19 he decided that he wanted to learn to read, so he left his family for good and walked to the University of Oklahoma which had just opened. The zoology professor recognized his genius and took him into his family. Seven years later he earned his Ph.D. in geology.

As the Dean of the Colorado School of Mines he was highly respected in his field; but he took some ridicule for his idea that changes on the surface of the earth didn't always happen slowly over millennia, sometimes they happened instantaneously as when meteorites strike the earth's surface. He believed that the Caspian Sea was probably created by a huge meteor. Until the 1970s scientists believed that meteorites almost always burned up in the earth's atmosphere before doing damage to the planet. He was going to the Galapagos to seek out samples of small meteorites that would be preserved in lava flows and bring the samples back to Colorado for further analysis.

I ended up spending the entire afternoon with my new friends. The old gent told me that when he was 22 three different doctors told him that he had a bad heart and would only live for six months. From under his cowboy hat the 93 year-old nodded and smiled saying: “All three of those doctors are dead now”.

Six months later I was sitting in a dentist’s office in Los Angeles and picked up a copy of *Smithsonian Magazine* that included an article that showed that scientists had proven that Hudson’s Bay in northern Canada was formed by a huge meteorite explosion. That article and others went on to argue that life itself may have come to this planet riding on some ancient comet. Here was this 19 year old illiterate in Oklahoma who was carrying the secret of the origins of life in his mind.

A mind is a terrible thing to waste. You meet some really interesting people in the Foreign Service.

Q: Where did the Ecuadorians in Guayaquil go in the States?

GALLAGHER: Miami and secondarily the New York area. I think Washington and LA were third and fourth. To many folks in Latin America the word “Miami” is a synonym for heaven.

Q: Okay, well then what have you been doing since?

GALLAGHER: Upon resigning from the Foreign Service I moved to the gay ghetto in West Hollywood CA and I began studies for a Ph.D. in psychology at U.S. International University in San Diego. I studied for two years, but got a case of hepatitis which knocked me out for seven months. Since I couldn’t work and had spent all of my savings I had to give up the Ph.D. As soon as I recovered I got a job as emergency room social worker at UCLA Hospital. I loved it. I’m an excitement junkie, and an ER has plenty of excitement. As part of that job I was asked to teach interviewing skills at the UCLA School of Medicine.

I really wanted to live in the ultimate gay ghetto, San Francisco; so after a year at UCLA I got a lousy job at Travelers Aid in San Francisco. It was useful in offering me an income in northern California, but it was a dead end. As soon as I could I got a job as Director of the Psychiatric Crisis Unit in Napa, CA, a job that I really loved. Napa is a progressive community that supported mental health services, and I worked for a great boss, Jim Featherstone, who also worked for a great boss. After four years in Napa my unit was inspected by the State of California Department of Mental Health which declared us to be “the best community crisis service in California.”

I hated commuting to Napa, so when a job came up in the City of San Francisco’s Department of Health doing the same kind of work I was doing in Napa I jumped at the chance. Everyone warned me that the administrators of San Francisco’s mental health programs were as crazy as their patients, but I went ahead and accepted the job offer anyway. The clinic I ran in San Francisco, the Mission Crisis Service, was the whipping

boy of a nutty system. There had been eight directors of the unit in the preceding two years. But I got lucky and worked for a really good boss, Gloria Gonzales, for the first several years that I was there. Gloria and I were able to reconstruct the unit. We got rid of the staff who had been assigned to my unit because they had failed in another part of the system. We moved the clinic out of a filthy basement into a respectable office space and merged with an outpatient clinic so that we were able to offer a range of services: crisis intervention, long-term psychotherapy, medications, community outreach, home visiting and AIDS crisis services. We won an award from the American Foundation for AIDS Research. We became the most popular field placement for students from seven universities. Services to patients tripled which I was there even though I reduced our staff budget by more than a quarter of a million. For eight years I loved it, but when Gloria left things got difficult. Her replacements, three of them in less than two years, were fools. Our administrative support collapsed, and I burnt out. I asked for a transfer to another clinic and spent my last two years in San Francisco running a day treatment program for mentally ill senior citizens. It was fun, but the same incompetent administration was still in charge.

Q: I was wondering if this had anything to do with the Haight-Ashbury and all that sort of thing.

GALLAGHER: The Haight was actually not in my district. There were a couple of crisis services in town and that specific neighborhood was covered by another one. My area of responsibility was the southern half of the City. Our target groups were the gay and Latino communities in San Francisco. San Francisco has the highest recorded rate of mental illness of any city in the world. The City is victimized by what in social work is referred to as greyhound therapy. If Boise, Idaho, has a crazy person that they have trouble dealing with - a recidivist costs the state of Idaho a lot of money - eventually someone would get around to saying, "You know, I think somebody like you would really do well in San Francisco." And they would give him a one way bus ticket to San Francisco. Unstable people were also attracted by the druggie image of the Haight and the suicidal implications that go with the Golden Gate Bridge.

Q: That is consular practice. As a good consular officer, I can understand.

GALLAGHER: The same thing was done by consular officers in the Foreign Service. Give a jerk a bus ticket to the next consular district, although I don't think that Foreign Service Officers did that sort of thing very often. In addition to Greyhound therapy, police officers in northern California would do what they called county line therapy. Mentally ill people are a real problem for the cops. A typical situation would be that merchants in some small California town complained about crazy Jenny who is smoking three cigars and wearing two funny hats. The police would bring her to the local mental health clinic, but they could not lock her up for smoking and bad fashion practices. She would be offered, but refuse, therapy. This would repeat itself a number of times until the police, sick of Jenny, would bring her to the county line and point her to San Francisco with a warning that if they ever found her in their county again they would beat the hell out of her. Jenny got the message and instantly became San Francisco's problem. San

Francisco also has a large number 9x12 four bit rooms in cheap hotels that were originally built for sailors who spent days in port. Sailors no longer use them because nowadays their ships turn around in less than a day. In the 1970s new drugs to treat schizophrenia came on the market. Liberals argued that the new drugs enabled the mentally ill to return to their communities. Conservatives viewed the drugs as a means to save money over expensive hospitalization. This odd political confluence resulted in hundreds of thousands of patients being released. Once they got free, many of them discovered that there is a much more pleasant way of treating schizophrenia than using anti-psychotic drugs. That treatment is alcohol which dulls the voices that the schizophrenic hears. As a result, many of them became “dually diagnosed” with both mental health issues and alcohol addiction. They were really tough to treat. Initially the federal government had plans to open 2500 mental health centers nationally to treat them in their home communities; but only 250 such centers ever opened. This is the basic cause of the homeless problem which confronts all American cities, but San Francisco even more than the rest.

In the early 90s, as I turned 50, I started thinking about retirement and learned that my job with the City of San Francisco would give me a retirement income of \$33,000 per year. I was horrified. At the same time Bill Clinton was making it possible for gay people to work at State. My astrologer advised me to “go international”; so I reapplied for the Foreign Service.

Q: Today is December 14, 2012. Tom you were coming back into the Foreign Service, when was that?

GALLAGHER: 1994, I came back.

Q: How did this come about?

GALLAGHER: I applied through the Board of Examiners for the Foreign Service. I had to take the oral exam again. Returning FSOs could only be assigned to openings at grade levels and in cones where there was a need. The only cones that were available were admin and consular. I had to take an FSO-3 job, even though I was an FSO-2 when I resigned, because there were no openings at higher levels. But my income was still was more than I was making as a social worker, and the retirement potential was much better.

I think I mentioned that when I was in personnel I had made the first assignment of a female to the secretariat, Donna Hamilton. It turned out that when I came back into the service, she was the principal DAS in consular affairs.

GALLAGHER: The reason I assigned her to the secretariat back in 1973 was because she had such a strong personnel record. Somehow my name came up when my new CDO (Career Development Officer) was sitting next to her and she turned around to him and said, “You take care of him,” because she remembered that I had taken care of her. So I got Madrid as my first post. I was no longer determined to spend my life in Africa as I had been as a junior officer. I was perfectly happy to take Europe.

Q: All right, well let's talk about Madrid. You were in Madrid from when to when?

GALLAGHER: I came back into the Foreign Service, which in October, 1994. I did the A-100 course again, took some Spanish, and then went to Madrid. So I must have gotten there around April of '95 I think. It could have been May or June, I am not sure.

Q: That is all right. When did you leave?

GALLAGHER: Two years later. Before I went to Madrid I got a phone call from the late Linda Wauchope, a consular officer who was the wife of my good friend, Keith Wauchope, asking: "Do you know what you are getting into in Madrid?" I said, "No, tell me." She told me that my future supervisor in Madrid had been working on the death case of a young gay American man who had died of AIDS. This is in the mid 90's when there was no cure for AIDS. The supervisor - Joe was his first name, I've forgotten his last name - engaged in a series of E-mail exchanges with Jack Markie in the Office of Special Consular Service at the Department concerning the death and whatever arrangements were made for the body, that sort of thing. He concluded his final E-mail by saying, "Isn't it a good thing that another flamer bites the dust."

Q: Ugh!

GALLAGHER: Apparently, he was not aware that Jack Markie is the biggest flamer in the State Department building. Jack went directly to Mary Ryan, then Assistant Secretary for Consular Affairs, with a copy of the E-mail. She ordered that a letter of reprimand be put in Joe's personnel file. His career was already dead in the water anyway. At that point, he was suing the ambassador in Madrid. His daughter had fallen off the monkey bars at the American school and seriously injured her jaw. Joe sued the school, of which the ambassador was the president or honorary president of the board.

Anyway, I went out to Madrid expecting to work for a fellow named Harry Jones. Harry, like Donna Hamilton, had been one of my officers when I was in personnel in 1973 and I had assigned him as the first consular officer to get university training - something that I had to fight very hard for back in those days. Harry and I had a pleasant relationship and I thought, "Oh that is great, I will be working for Harry. He will be on my side." Well, it turned out that in the course of an Embassy reorganization Harry had moved to take over the joint Pol/Econ section, and Joe had been elevated to Chief of the Consular Section.

When I arrived in Madrid it didn't take Joe long to figure out that a 54 year old single man who had just spent years in San Francisco running an AIDS agency just might be gay. I was totally new to computers at that point and had no idea that one is supposed to turn off one's computer when leaving work at the end of the day. Joe found my computer open with my log on and sent an e-mail to Mary Ryan complaining about the assignment of his successor because she was a woman and Madrid was no place for a female officer. Ryan warned the female officer, Eloise Shouse, that she would have a "snake" (i.e. me) working for her in Spain. Eloise knew that I wasn't a sexist and discussed the situation

with me when she arrived in Madrid and we figured out what had happened. Thank God, Joe transferred out just a month or so after my arrival so he didn't have a chance to do much damage. I later met with Mary Ryan and assured her that I had not sent the offending e-mail.

Q: Who was the ambassador?

GALLAGHER: John Gardner. He was a terrific guy, a political appointee, and a professor of international law at Columbia University. He had served in the Carter administration as ambassador to Rome. Unlike many political appointee ambassadors at whom Foreign Service officers look down their noses; this was a man that everyone respected. He really knew what an ambassador should do.

Q: What consular work, like in Madrid at that time?

GALLAGHER: The visa cases in Spain tended to be quite easy. Spain had just been added to the visa waiver program which cut down the visa workload dramatically. The visas we dealt with were, for the most part, completely routine. I don't recall a single terrorist or any similar kind of case. I had those in Belgium later but not that I can recall in Madrid. The people who did apply for visas were Spaniards who were students and workers H and L visas coming to work temporarily in the United States. It was mostly a paperwork process, but I found it enjoyable and liked the job.

I didn't get involved much in American citizen services at all, because there were always at least two officers in that section, so if one was gone the other took care of it. Eloise did have one very death case which is worthy of mention, however. Sadly a 25 year old American dropped dead on a basketball court in Valencia. We had no consular agent in Valencia, so she had to handle the case from Madrid which is a couple of hundred miles from Valencia. The young man's parents lived in Little Rock where they were friendly with U.S. Senator Bumpers who nominated his fellow Arkansan, Bill Clinton, for the Presidency at the Democratic convention in 1992. The family called Bumpers who called the White House which called Eloise every 15 minutes for the rest of the day – which was a Friday and it was already after noon. The family wanted the Embassy to persuade the socialized Spanish physicians to remove their son's testicles and fly them to Little Rock where, presumably, they would try to extract semen and find a woman who might become pregnant and provide them with the grandchild that their son could not give them. In a socialized medicine system they triage patients giving priority to the most serious strokes, heart attacks, etc. Removing semen from a cadaver comes after the ingrown toenails in such a system. I'm sure that the doctors in Valencia thought that the entire United States had lost its mind when they got the request, and I don't believe that they ever complied. That evening I went to a dinner party at the home of the Mexican consul, a very nice, but very serious, man with an exceptionally deep voice. I told the assembled guests what we had been doing all afternoon at the American Embassy. One of the women at the table, who probably had trouble understanding my abysmal Spanish, asked me why the family wanted the testicles. The Mexican Consul answered on my

behalf in his deep serious voice saying: “Sometimes they use them for soup.” I think we had some sort of cultural misunderstanding.

Eloise managed to alienate everyone in the section. The chief FSN in the Social Security office resigned because of her. The senior passport FSN barely spoke to her boss. When the inspectors came they devastated Eloise, partly because I told them that she once hit me while I was working the visa line because I was late on one of the junior officer’s evaluations. Shortly thereafter she curtailed her tour. I think that, like my boss in Saudi Arabia many years earlier, the DCM asked her to leave early. He couldn’t stand her. Nobody much liked him either, so the Embassy was not a happy place.

Q: How did you find social life in Spain at that time and relations with Americans?

GALLAGHER: Overall I think the Spanish are an absolutely wonderful people, and as a nation I think they were pro American. I don’t remember any significant anti-American feeling at all. Vietnam was over and Iraq hadn’t started yet. Clinton was popular.

My own social situation was a bit bizarre. About two or three weeks, after I got there I was standing talking to Harry Jones’ wife in the embassy lobby. The ambassador’s wife passed through.

Q: Danielle.

GALLAGHER: Danielle, exactly. I have heard recently that she died shortly after leaving Spain.

Q: Yes.

GALLAGHER: I think that was awfully sad. Danielle, whom I had met briefly at some big reception, passed through the lobby and she turned to me and said, “I can’t tell you how many people have told me what a nice person you are.” I thought, “Well that is nice to hear, coming from a source like that.” The result was that I started getting invitations to just about everything. Well, not everything. They entertained a lot. But I got invitations to Thanksgiving dinner, Christmas dinner, and many other parties with the rich and famous – they moved at the top of Spanish society. The DCM and his wife were not invited to Christmas dinner, and I think that was a source of some discomfort on his part. One of the regular guests at the dinner parties was the Prince of Vidin who was fourth in line for the throne of Bulgaria, if there was still a throne of Bulgaria, which there isn’t. It was that kind of high society that I certainly wasn’t used to as a social worker in California. I enjoyed it immensely.

Mrs. Gardner - whom I never called Danielle, she was always Mrs. Gardner to me, even though we were very good friends - introduced me to the Lebanese ambassador’s wife, who had a visa issue, which was my turf, that I helped her with it. She started inviting me to her parties too. Her name was Tanya, and she and her husband, Robbie, lived in the apartment that Mrs. Franco moved into her horrible husband died. The apartment was

stunning; Roman columns in the dining room and that sort of thing. I am not sure this is related to our conversation but Tanya, told me a great story about how she survived the wars in Lebanon.

Before the wars, the social structure of Lebanon was that rich Christians and middle class Sunnis dominated poor Shiites. Tanya and Robbie were rich Christians – so rich that Tanya didn't even know all of their Shiite gardeners. One day one of the gardeners came up to Robbie and said that his wife was giving birth to their seventh child. The fetus was breeched and the neighborhood midwife were unable to handle that. They needed a hospital which he couldn't afford, so he asked Robbie for help. Robbie reached in his pocket and gave the man a fistful of money and said, "Go with Allah." The mother and child both survived. Several years later when the Lebanese wars began the Shiites took over Beirut and ordered all Christians out of the city. Tanya and Robbie were living in a camp in the hills and they needed gasoline. All by herself, Tanya hopped into her hatchback with a bunch of plastic Glad bags and drove into town to a Muslim gas station owner whom she hoped would help her. She filled up the Glad bags with gasoline, threw them in the back of the hatchback, turned on the engine of the car - which was braver than I would have been - and started driving back to the hills. En route she was stopped by a Shiite road block where they were checking identity cards. In Lebanon, like in many places, you can tell a person's religion from their family name. Those with Christian names were put up against a wall and shot. Tanya watched as men, women and children were murdered while she waited her turn. When her car came to the head of the line, her ID was checked by a man with a ski mask pulled down over his face. Her full name was Tanya Arab. The Arabs are one of the few families in Lebanon where some people are Christian and some are Muslim. The masked man asked which branch of the family she came from. She replied: "I am Mrs. Robert Arab". By some freak chance the man in the ski mask was the father of the baby who had been saved by Robert Arab. He identified himself to her and whispered softly that he was going to tell his men that he was sending her on to the next warlord down the road who was meaner than he was, but what he wanted her to do was drive two blocks, turn right, and go like hell. She waved good-bye and lived to tell the story. When I met her she told me that when the killing ended in Beirut she tried to find her former gardener to try to repay him. To emphasize the lengths she had gone to to find him this elegant, wealthy Beirutite told me that she had even spoken to "Yasser Arafat and the communists" with no luck. She was convinced that the gardener had died during the wars, a distinct possibility given the fact that he was a warrior; and she was further convinced that he was killed by his own men that day because he had let her go: a serious case of survivor's guilt. I noted that she really didn't have much of a direct relationship with the masked man; rather her family had helped his family. I urged her to find his family, and the breeched child, and perhaps send the child to college or otherwise help the masked man's heirs. She liked the idea, but I don't know if she ever found them. Anyway, that is probably irrelevant to our discussion.

Q: Oh no, it captures flavors.

Q: Had AIDS hit Spain and Europe at that time?

GALLAGHER: Yes, and I really should talk about that. At one of Tanya's dinner parties, I met an American citizen who was born to an Italian family in Cuba back during the Batista regime, where her family had gotten very rich, and were on one of the first planes out when Fidel took over Cuba. She was educated in Marymount College in New York and seemed a very charming woman. She was the mistress of the Duke of Toledo who was a first cousin of the king and was fourth in line for the Spanish throne. He actually lived in Hong Kong a good chunk of the year, where he was manager of the Banco Santander, a huge Spanish bank. He was head of their Asian operations, but he came back to Madrid a lot. She was very openly his mistress. He had an arranged-marriage-wife that he didn't pay much attention to. He openly went around town with his mistress. But when he was out of town, she had no man to escort her. She came on very strongly to me because she was smart enough to know that I was gay – and I had the title of American Consul – which made me a perfect escort for her to bring to parties.

She was a volunteer at the Spanish AIDS Foundation. One day she got in touch with me and said the AIDS foundation was having trouble contacting the American pharmaceutical companies that had just developed the first AIDS “cocktail”, three medications taken together that were the first treatment for AIDS. The Spanish government was in the process of trying to decide whether the national health service would pay for them or not. The AIDS foundation had been trying to get in touch with these companies, but their letters went unanswered. Hoping that I might have contacts with the pharma people, she asked me to have lunch with the head of the AIDS foundation a thoroughly charming woman named Frances Aldrich de Llopis. Frances was a cousin of Nelson Aldrich Rockefeller and granddaughter of Senator Aldrich of Rhode Island who helped King Leopold to rape the Congo back in the 19th century, but that's another story: a very ill gotten fortune but a considerable fortune to say the least. At our lunch I agreed to contact the Embassy's Commercial Section to get their advice on how to reach the pharma companies. The chief FSN in the commercial section turned out to be a terrific guy who arranged luncheons with Eli Lilly, Merck, and Johnson and Johnson. Each one of them apologized profusely for not responding to the letters which never reached the top leadership of the corporations. Now that the Spanish government was about to make a decision on whether or not to spend a lot of money on their drugs, they were quite interested in showing how they wanted to make a contribution to Spain.

The Spanish AIDS Foundation was the obvious channel, so each of the three drug companies agreed to pick up the budget for a particular function of the Foundation. One picked up the social services budget. Another one picked up the medical services budget, and I think the third one picked up the admin budget. So basically, they took up the whole budget of the Spanish Aids Foundation and agreed to continue paying it on an annual basis as long as the epidemic exists. I think that amounts to upwards of six million dollars over the period 1997 to 2014. It was something I am proud to have been associated with. All I did was act as a catalyst, but we had three great lunches at three of the best restaurants in Madrid, and we got some real good work done. In his 2004 World AIDS Day speech, Colin Powell mentioned that one of his officers had raised \$3,000,000

for the Spanish AIDS Foundation. He didn't mention my name, but I knew who he was talking about.

There was an odd moment in the luncheon that I had with Frances Aldrich de Llopis and the woman who introduced us (whose name I have long forgotten). At one point Frances, went off to the ladies room, and I was left chatting with the woman who was going to be my bosom buddy. At some point in the middle of the conversation, I said that my father was a chauffeur. I saw a look of shock come over her face and the curtain went down on our relationship right then and there. The mistress of the Duke of Toledo was not going to hang around with any chauffeur's son. She went out of her way to almost insult me at subsequent meetings that we had, which I think was nothing but her own rather pathetic snobbery. It was the only time in my adulthood that I remember being put down because of my humble origins.

Q: Yeah, it is sort of unusual that, normally one would view that sort of thing in the American context.

GALLAGHER: Exactly. I thought I was talking to an American, but I wasn't. I was talking to a pre-Castro Cuban with an old world mentality. She was a royal social climber. In every conversation I had with her, she dropped names all over the place. At one point she mentioned Pope Pius XII and I almost said, "Yeah, my father was his chauffeur", which is the truth, but I didn't.

Q: One runs across this, but one realizes that Americans really are different than a lot of other people.

GALLAGHER: They certainly are, and thank God for it. There is a lot of that kind of snobbery in Spain. Even cities compete with one another. Madrid and it's people get put down by people from Seville or Barcelona for being *nouveau*. Barcelona has been there since the Celts built it and Madrid only came along in the 12th century. Anyway, enough to say about Spain, a lovely country.

Q: So then what?

GALLAGHER: So then I came back to Washington to be Country Officer (aka desk officer) for Eritrea and part time Country Officer for Sudan. There was a full-time Sudan Country Officer, but I worked with him half-time.

Q: So you were doing this from when to when?

GALLAGHER: From '97 to '99.

Q: Okay, well let's take the Sudan first.

GALLAGHER: It was an exciting desk. In recent years the Sudan desk has had up to 34 officers, but when I was there it was just Steve Schwartz and me. Since one or the other

of us was away a good deal of the time, and there was a gap between Steve's departure and the arrival of his replacement, Matt Harrington, I was often doing both countries alone. Our office director was the famous April Glaspie, who was the one who was accused of telling Saddam Hussein that it would be fine if he invaded Iraq. Do you remember that story?

Q: Oh absolutely.

GALLAGHER: I don't want to go off on a big tangent about that, but I am sure that April never went off on her own to say anything to Saddam about invading other countries without being carefully instructed from Washington. She was a consummate professional and would never do anything that ridiculous. I loved working for her.

Q: To me it sounded like the munchkins around Jim Baker coming up with a story to make him un-guilty or at least he had nothing to do with it.

GALLAGHER: I think you are right on there, but I have no more evidence than you do, so we can only speculate, but I am quite sure April was guilty of nothing but doing her job very well. She and I bonded very nicely because she had been mentored by Herman Eilts who mentored me in Jeddah. She was with him in Cairo for a lot of the lead up to the Camp David Accords. We were both great admirers of Ambassador Eilts.

At that point, Sudan had taken over from Biafra the dubious honor of having the highest death toll of any war since 1945. It had passed two million. I later was Congo desk officer when that country took over Sudan's dubious mantle with a death toll that has now exceeded five million.

I have a three generational connection to Sudan because my mother's father was a foot soldier for Lord Kitchener when he conquered Sudan for the British Empire in 1898.

Q: Oh yeah, the battle of Omdurman.

GALLAGHER: My grandfather was in the Connaught Rangers. I think they were actually left behind to guard Aswan when Kitchener went south to wage one of history's silliest wars. My uncle was a pilot for Imperial (now British) Airways in the late 1930s flying the London to Cape Town route from his base in Piraeus, Greece. He landed his flying boats in the Nile at Wadi Halfa, Khartoum and Juba on his way south.

My Peace Corps experience had been within about 100 miles of the Sudan border with Eritrea. The tribe that I had most contact with in Eritrea, the Beni-Amur, were first cousins to the Hadendoa a tribe on the Sudan side of the border. Was it Kipling who wrote here's to you Fuzzy Wuzzy?

Q: Kipling, the Fuzzy Wuzzy, and your home in the Sudan.

GALLAGHER: You're a poor benighted heathen but a hell of a fightin' man.

The Beni-Amur and the Hadendoa were the only tribes I knew of in all of Africa who wore Afros long before anybody in this country copied their style. That is where they got the name Fuzzy Wuzzy from, because of all their hair.

Anyhow, the Sudan desk was enormously exciting. The Sudan kept popping up on the daily press briefing. One always had to have something ready by 10:00 A. M. I am not a morning person, but I had to become one because there was always some darn thing that had to be cleared by 14 people before 10 to get it to Jamie Rubin who was in the press secretary at the Department then. There was enormous interest in the Sudan in this country, largely on the part of evangelical churches in the U.S. whose interest in the Sudan had been spurred by the large number of evangelical missionaries operating in South Sudan, where they had a good deal of success. The Sough Sudan was very heavily Christian, both Protestant and Catholic. As a matter of fact, I had dinner with a friend of mine last night whose sister is at a Catholic mission in Maridi in Southern Sudan right now.

The churches in this country got very worked up about Muslim persecution of Christians in Southern Sudan, and rightfully so. The Khartoum government was then, and remains, beyond disgraceful. They are just a bunch of thugs. When I was on the desk, the main power in the country was an Islamic extremist named Ahmed Turabi. He was the Speaker of the Parliament, but he seemed to be running things while the President, Omar al-Bashir was thought to be passive. Turabi gave haven to Osama Bin Laden in the Sudan earlier in the 1990s. While I was on the desk we persuaded the Sudanese government to throw Osama and his men out of Sudan; but I was not involved in that operation. I was told in a general sense that there was a real bad guy in the south and we were going to get him out. But it was so hush-hush that only Steve, who had the political portfolio, dealt with it, and he was instructed not to tell me or anyone else in the Office of East African Affairs what he was doing. I assume that he was working closely with the CIA, but I never knew the details. I know we got Osama out of Sudan, but of course he just moved to Afghanistan, and we all know the rest of that story.

Turabi represented the idiot fringe of Islam. He pushed Sharia in the fiercest way throughout the country. Because of that he developed a good deal of opposition to himself. As he became ever-more extreme, President Bashir asserted his authority and sent Turabi off to jail. The prevailing wisdom in Washington at the time was that Bashir was more moderate than Turabi and would be a little bit easier for the U.S. to deal with, but that was a bit of a pipe dream. Bashir, who has since been indicted by the International Court of Criminal Justice, is utterly evil.

I made a familiarization trip to Sudan when I went to work in AF/E and I was terribly impressed at the extent to which Khartoum had deteriorated in the 30 plus years since I had visited the city as a Peace Corps volunteer. In 1963 Khartoum was the capitol of a country that was aspiring to become middle-class. The country has great agricultural and mineral wealth. In 1956 when it became independent of Britain – the first African nation to do so – its living standard was about the same as South Korea's; but by 1998

Khartoum had become impoverished. There were pathetic refugees everywhere. The streets were potholed. I was particularly impressed by the zoo and the museum. I had visited the zoo in '63 and found it pleasant; but by '98 most of the animals were gone – either escaped, sold or butchered. I found the museum empty save for one old man who was a guard and took his job very seriously. He was saddened by how many objets d'art had been stolen. No one came to visit, he said.

In the midst of all this misery there would be a three story 25 bedroom house going up. I would ask, “Whose house is that?” “Oh that is the minister of interior’s or minister of finance’s,” would be the reply. These people were robbing the country blind and were very blatant about it. They were showy about their money, which was stolen from the Sudanese people. I have never seen such disparity between the rich and the poor.

On that same familiarization trip I went to Nairobi where most of the south Sudanese rebels were living. Among others, I met for about two hours with Salva Kiir who is now President of South Sudan. I also took the most fantastic trip of my life into South Sudan. The night before we left I had a horrible reaction to the anti-malarial drug Lariam which kept me up in a very agitated state for most of the night. I got only three hours sleep before I had to wake up for my flight, and on top of that I had a horrible case of dysentery, so I was in pretty bad shape. We flew on a light aircraft (with no toilets) to Lokichogio in north-western Kenya where we changed aircraft to an even smaller UN plane that flew food into the south which had chronic food delivery issues. We flew low over the jungle in the hopes of avoiding the Sudanese Air Force which might have shot us down as, from their point of view, we were flying illegally over territory they claimed. We arrived over a sizable town called Maridi where our pilot buzzed the “airport” (actually a cleared field of grass) to let the local people know that we were from the UN, not the Sudanese Air Force. They removed the oil barrels that were blocking the landing strip to prevent the Air Force from landing. The town had been bombed a week earlier, but, with little damage done. I met under some mango trees with some commanders of the local Sudan Peoples’ Liberation Army (SPLA), the main rebel group. The local mayor insisted on serving us lunch and we just made it out on time to make our connection back to Nairobi.

The overwhelming political issue in Sudan in the 90s was the continuing civil war between the Muslim north and the Christian/Animist south. Northerners had been capturing southerners as slaves and selling them north to Egypt and east to Arabia for millennia, so there was a lot of justifiable hatred of the north in the south. The people of the south were Nilotic Negroes: the tallest people in the world and very dark-skinned. The northerners were racially mixed and considered themselves to be Arabs. The British colonialists had lumped them all into one colony without regard for ethnicity or culture; and in 1956 they left saying: “Why don’t you all play nice and have a democracy.” Fighting began almost the minute the Brits pulled up stakes, and – with an eight year hiatus in the 60s and 70s – had continued through the 1990s. More than two million people had died by the time I arrived on the desk and millions more have died since then.

Fortunately for the south, the north had a really sloppy army. They still managed to kill way too many people, but it was a very disorganized process. If they were really efficient about it, they would have wiped out another million or more human beings. For example, the air force consisted of old Soviet-era Antonov prop-jet passenger planes. They would bomb villages in the south by throwing bombs out the back door of the Antonov, so the bombs landed for the most part in the jungle doing no damage at all but nonetheless scaring the hell out of people and occasionally killing people. Most of the death was caused by starvation caused by people being pushed off their land.

Q: How were we getting information?

GALLAGHER: The status of our Embassy in Khartoum was a bit goofy. We had moved the Embassy to Nairobi several years earlier after some of the demonstrations staged by the government threatened to get out of hand. But shortly before I went onto the Sudan desk we had partially reopened the chancery in Khartoum and the Ambassador and DCM were spending less time in Nairobi and more in Khartoum. When I visited Khartoum, both the ambassador and the DCM were there, but that was a bit of a rarity. The Ambassador was Tim Carney, who had previously been ambassador in Port Au Prince and somewhere else. A kind of great white hunter type, he liked to travel to South Africa and hunt rhinoceros. Interesting guy. The DCM was Don Teitelbaum, who later became ambassador to Ghana. So we did have a functioning embassy during the entire period that I worked on Sudan.

We got information from the CIA. I don't know how they got their information. That was not mine to know - no need to know. We also got a lot of information from other countries. The French gave us a lot. There was huge interest in the Sudan on the part of several European countries, and, of course, Egypt. The other Middle Eastern countries didn't seem to be very concerned about Sudan. I used to get visited all the time by the political officer of the Egyptian Embassy who was probably in my office once a week. But the Italians, the Brits, the Irish were also hugely interested in Sudan. The Irish were involved because the well-known Irish NGO GOAL had a big operation in Sudan. They were in my office all the time. A young political officer from the Israeli Embassy also visited me regularly and there were less frequent visits from the Swiss, Germans, Dutch and Russians.

I also was in regular contact with a number of American religious groups most of which had missionaries in Sudan, particularly in South Sudan. I was especially impressed by a Presbyterian who had been in southern Sudan for over twenty years and by '98 had returned to the U.S. where he was working at a church in Arlington, VA. He had done some excellent peace work in the south. There are two main tribes in South Sudan, the Nuer and the Dinka. They have been fighting one another for millennia. The typical scenario was that a bunch of Nuer warriors would raid a Dinka town and run off with all the women and the cattle and kill all the men. The women were brought to Nuer land as captured wives and impregnated by the Nuer men. Some years later the Dinka would come to the Nuer village and take all their cattle and all their women so the two tribes are virtually identical genetically because all of the women being swiped from one end of the

south Sudan to the other. Almost every Dinka had a Nuer mother and vice versa. Still, they have this long history of warfare. At one point when they were on the verge of more internal fighting, my Presbyterian friend invited a large number of chiefs for a talk-a-thon. The southern Sudanese have an interesting justice system. When there is a crime in a village the men would sit down and discuss the matter until they had a consensus on who was guilty and what kind of recompense was in order. The Presbyterian (I wish I could remember his name) drew a map of South Sudan in an open field and invited each chief to sit on the area that represented his turf. Each chief then spent as long as he wanted complaining about offenses by the other chiefs or tribes. The process of listening to every chief took more than a month. When all their complaining about one another was done, they realized that they were wasting effort damaging one another when they had a bigger enemy in the form of the Sudanese government. They signed a reconciliation pact which brought an end to their infighting for quite some time. I had great fantasies of my Presbyterian friend getting a Nobel Peace Prize along with his 25 or 30 chiefs, and having them all show up in Stockholm in their African regalia. It would have been a great photo op for the King of Sweden. I did propose it to some Congressman's office (Nobel nominations may be submitted by national legislators), but it never happened.

Soon after arriving on the Sudan desk I had my own opportunity to win a Nobel. I had a small group of Nuer students from the University of Maryland who used to visit me once every couple of months. Most of our meetings were just pleasant chats, and I probably should have thought about a more efficient use of my time, but they amounted to a nice break from the crush of work, so I let them visit whenever they wanted. One day they arrived in a very angry mood because a Dinka officer in the southeast of Sudan had led a raid on a Nuer village, killed a lot of people and – as in the bad old days – ran off with the women and cattle. It turned out that my young students were the unofficial representatives of Riek Machar, the Nuer leader. Riek became Vice President of South Sudan after it won its independence. The President is Salva Kiir, a Dinka, whom I mentioned above. Riek, the students told me, was ready to go to war with the Dinka. This would have been a disaster for American policies in Sudan which were generally favorable to the southerners and supportive of their independence from the north. There is a Nuer religious belief that the tribe will be saved by a messiah-like leader who will come from the east and will have certain scars on his forehead. Riek had the scars and was believed by many to be the Nuer messiah.

I said to these students that this looked like a terrible mistake of the sort that happens frequently in guerilla wars. I suspected that the guilty commander was acting on his own without approval from his leaders in Nairobi. I asked them to ask Riek to call me so we could discuss it before he took any action. He called that same day and I begged him to give me just 48 hours to get in touch with the SPLA leadership. He was furious and ready to go to war, but he agreed. As fast as I could I called Don Teitelbaum the Khartoum DCM who was in Nairobi at the time. Nairobi was also the headquarters of the Sudanese People's Liberation Army.

Don went right away to speak with John Garang the former leader of the SPLA who was still alive and to Salva Kiir who was then Garang's deputy and is now president of South

Sudan. They insisted this was a renegade captain and they would deal with him appropriately. They asked Don to assure Riek that it was not the SPLA's intent to fight the Nuer. On the contrary they needed the Nuer as part of their revolution. I conveyed this back to Riek and he backed off. Stopping wars is what diplomats are supposed to do, and I felt that this little intervention made my career in the Foreign Service worthwhile. Stopping slaughters is a lot of fun. Sadly after South Sudan's independence Riek got mad about something else and the Nuer and Dinka are now engaged in a full scale war made worse by the fact that both sides are heavily armed after years of revolution. Tens of thousands are already dead and I'm not optimistic about the future. But at least Don and I delayed this war by 16 years. The current chaos in South Sudan illustrates the point that it is very difficult for revolutionary leaders to make the transition to governors. They are men of war who often want to keep fighting. We were so lucky to have George Washington.

Q: Yes, you keep coming back on things like that. Okay this is what we are doing, but why us?

GALLAGHER: Why the U. S. you mean?

Q: Yeah.

GALLAGHER: I think the simplest answer to that is because of the influence of those evangelical churches in small town USA. We got communications regularly from South Dakota, Ohio, New Mexico, and churches all over the place, that were indignant about the treatment of Christians by Muslims. Anti-Muslim feeling was cooking up in the United States pre 9/11 and this played right into it. There was a degree of exaggeration. People were going around speaking to these various church groups and saying that people were being crucified. When you use a word like "crucified" to a Christian group it gets people all worked up. What was happening was something that I mentioned when I talked about my Peace Corps experience in that part of the world. A local leader would capture and kill a bad guy and then hang his corpse on a gibbet in the center of town to let people know that the leadership was firm and strong. The body being hung up might have belonged to a revolutionary, a heretic or a common thief. So it is not crucifixion in the way that Jesus was crucified by the Romans. It does amount to a dead body swinging in the air and it is a pretty horrific sight.

A second reason for the U.S. interest in Sudan was that Susan Rice, who took over as Assistant Secretary for African Affairs shortly after I went to the Sudan desk, had a strong interest in Sudan. She was quite close to a group of Americans who were not necessarily religious but were concerned about the human rights abuses in Sudan. Susan made sure that Sudan stayed in the spotlight.

There were also several American NGOs like Doctors Without Borders who had programs in Sudan and lobbyists in Washington who influenced the anti-Sudan-governments feelings in the U.S.

These influences inspired some American and European journalists to visit Sudan, and their reports were always full of horrific stories of persecution based on religion and race. So the general American public had access to negative information about Sudan.

Beyond the exaggeration about crucifixion there were also plenty of reasons for decent people of any religion to care about the mess in Sudan. The slave trade was booming. I never thought I would spend hours of my life working against slavery, but I did. I'm not sure that we had much success in stopping the trade as the only way to really stop it was for local government on the ground to start arresting the slavers, but that never happened while I was on the desk. The best hope for eliminating slavery would have been for the south Sudanese to win their independence and then arrest the slavers who have plagued the south Sudanese people for millennia. Since I was off the desk when South Sudan did win its independence, I don't know if the new government stood up to the slavers.

In almost every other respect Sudan is the end of the earth. The only economic interest was gum Arabic. I became an expert on gum Arabic, a substance about which I knew nothing at all before I got involved in Sudan. It is the sap of the acacia tree. The acacia grows quite well in Eritrea, Sudan and Chad. Gum Arabic is used in an emulsion. An emulsion as I came to understand it, (my knowledge of biochemistry is more than limited) is an agent which when added into a soft drink causes the other elements of that soft drink to mix well together. So Coca-Cola is the biggest customer of gum Arabic in the world. There were two American firms who basically had a monopoly on gum Arabic. One was in Jersey City, and I have forgotten where the other one was. But the guy from Jersey City was down in my office a couple of times having a fit because the sanctions on Sudan were putting him out of business, or so he claimed. The only other developed source of gum Arabic was Chad where the French dominated the trade; and they tried to avoid selling to the American market.

Q: How about oil? What sort of role did that play at that time?

GALLAGHER: At the time that I was on the desk the oil had been discovered and some work had been done to develop the newly discovered oil fields, but there was very little production. I don't recall ever dealing with the U.S. oil companies with regard to Sudan. Perhaps my colleague, Steve, dealt with them because he held the economic portfolio.

Q: The Chinese had an oil interest didn't they?

GALLAGHER: I wouldn't bet money on this, but I don't think that they had any oil concession during my time on the desk. They do now I believe. The potential for oil development made the political situation worse. The oil is on the border of Sudan and the land that eventually became the Republic of South Sudan. When peace talks finally began, there were great arguments over where the borders should be defined because of the presence of oil.

One fun aspect of being on the Sudan desk was that I got to represent the United States at a conference in the Hague that was called to get the donor nations to pony up money for

food for the World Food Program to provide sustenance to 1.5 million starving Sudanese. The organizer of the conference, the Netherlands Deputy Foreign Minister, Mr. Pronk (not sure of that spelling) hoped that Susan Rice would show up, but she and everyone else in the AF Bureau were busy, so he had to settle for the desk officer. He was not happy and did everything he could to insult me. But I didn't take it personally. We did actually get commitments to get the food moving, and I had great fun sitting next to the Deputy Foreign Minister of the UK with a sign in front of me that said: "The United States of America." That's something that few FSO-2s get to do. It's perverse that I talk about a conference about starving human beings as "fun", but I have to admit that it was. What I thought was really bizarre was that Minister Pronk hosted the 15 delegates to a great meal at the Hotel des Indes, the finest hotel in the Hague where we sat surrounded by great art eating a fabulous meal while talking about people starving in Sudan.

One of the most appalling stories to come out of Sudan in the 1990s was that of The Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) which has got a little bit of attention in the last couple of years. The LRA was established by a woman named Alice Lakwena with a goal of establishing a Christian government based on the Ten Commandments in Uganda. Alice's original LRA soldiers fought with sticks and rocks and Alice had a special potion that would make her soldiers' bodies impenetrable by bullets. Not surprisingly Alice didn't last long as a military leader. She was replaced by Joseph Kony, a Ugandan, who moved his base to the deep jungles of southern Sudan whence they began a program of scampering across the border into northern Uganda to attack small farms and villages from which they would kidnap children ages five to fifteen –reports indicate that somewhere between 5000 and 30,000 children were abducted - whom they brought to Sudan to use as pack animals and sex slaves until the kids were old enough (age 10 or so) to carry weapons whereupon they became soldiers in the LRA. To insure their loyalty, each child was sent back to his/her home village with an LRA escort and ordered to kill a member of his/her own family. This horrible act would make it clear to the child that the family would no longer take him or her back, so the LRA became the child's only family. If a child objected to his/her treatment by the LRA the other children would be instructed by their masters to beat that child to death. On one occasion I heard of a situation where children were ordered to bite another child to death.

There is a long history of misunderstanding and conflict between the settled agricultural southern Bantu people in Uganda and their northern co-nationals the Acholi people who are Nilotic hunters. Many LRA members are Acholi as are almost all of their victims. Southerners blame northerners for the horrible dictatorships of Idi Amin and Milton Obote who were both northerners, but not Acholi. For the "protection" of the Acholi, the current Ugandan President Yoweri Museveni put them into several huge concentration (my word) camps. He locked up more than a million people in camps which aid workers described to me as "Worse than Darfur". They described one camp as a ten mile long dirty diaper because the only latrines were outside the borders of the camp, and whenever the women would go to use the latrines the Ugandan soldiers would rape them, so they stopped using the latrines rendering the camp a huge open sewer. Death rates from dysentery and AIDS in the camps were sky high.

One day when I was on the Sudan desk, I got a phone call from a woman at the Carter Center in Atlanta. She said President Jimmy wanted to do something about Sudan, but he didn't know where to begin. I had just come out of a meeting about the LRA and I was incensed about these stories I had heard, and so off the top of my head I said, "Well if he wants to do something about Sudan let him start with the Lord's Resistance Army." I got into telling her what I had just been telling you except it was fresher in my memory then. Sure enough, she went back to Jimmy and he went out to Kampala where he called a summit meeting between himself and President Museveni of Uganda and President Bashir of Sudan. For whatever reason, Bashir was trying to butter up to the United States that day and he actually agreed to allow the Ugandan army to cross into Sudan in hot pursuit of the LRA.

Now imagine the U.S. giving the Mexicans permission to operate in Nevada. When is that going to happen?..... or any country allowing the army of its neighbor, particularly a potentially hostile neighbor, to have free reign in its territory? . Sudan was ruled by a conservative Muslim and Uganda by a conservative Christian. The potential for the Ugandan army to align itself with the rebels of the Sudan Peoples Liberation Army was sky high. Yet Bashir actually agreed to this. I thought: "Yeah, we have beaten the Lord's Resistance Army." Terrific! Subsequently another FSO who had worked closely with the Carter Center said that one of President Carter's weaknesses was that he would go off and have a big meeting that got a lot of headlines and publicity but the follow through wasn't there. I think that is exactly what happened in this case. He went off and had a terrific meeting and everybody agreed they were going to fight the Lord's Resistance Army and Jimmy flew back to Atlanta and that was the end of that.

Several years later, when I was back in the Office of East African Affairs working on the Uganda desk, the Lord's Resistance Army was still around. I wondered why. I came to the conclusion based on some pretty strong evidence that President Museveni needed the Lord's Resistance Army to justify his locking the Acholi up in their concentration camp. There were stories that I got as Uganda desk officer in 2005 of people asking the Ugandan army officers: "Why don't you go across into Sudan and do something about the LRA?"; and the Ugandans just laughed at the prospect of them taking any action whatsoever. They were clearly giving the LRA a free hand, and the Ugandans never took advantage of President Carter's work.

I kept talking to my wonderful boss Phil Carter, who later became Ambassador to Cote d'Ivoire and an Assistant Secretary in the Africa Bureau, about the LRA. Phil was as horrified as I was and he bugged Ambassador Ranneberger the PDAS in AF at the time to get something done about the LRA. In the last months before Sudan broke into two countries, Ranneberger went out to Khartoum to join in negotiations between the Sudanese government and the SPLA. Phil persuaded him to talk to the SPLA leader, the late John Garang about the LRA. I wrote the talking papers that Ranneberger used to tell Garang that if the south Sudanese expected to be respected as a nation they would have to rid their country of a force as dangerous and crazy as the LRA. Garang got the message, and the SPLA immediately began to harass the LRA. Eventually they drove them out of Sudan and Uganda, although for a couple of years Kony and Company were a terrible

scourge upon the long-suffering people of the Democratic Republic of the Congo. When last heard from Kony and the LRA had moved to the tragic Central African Republic, which already had 24 other revolutionary forces wandering around. The latest press reports that I have heard about the LRA indicate that its forces have been reduced from several thousand to 300, and as of early 2015 Kony had not been heard from for three months. The hope is that he is dead. I certainly hope so.

The *New Yorker* magazine did one of the few reports that appeared early on in the U.S. press about the LRA. The writer spent some time at a recovery home that a group of Italian nuns were running for kids who had somehow escaped the LRA. As she was interviewing two early teen-aged girls one of them interrupted their conversation to say that the author's body would be hard to chop up because she was thin. The fat ones were easier to slice because fat is easy to cut through.

The big blast of publicity about the LRA, however, came from a charming group of five undergrads from the University of Southern California film school who have created two movies – *Invisible Children* and *Kony 2012* - both of which went viral on the internet. *Invisible Children* got 80 million hits. You may recall a year or two ago there was a fad with people were wearing buttons reading “Who is Joseph Kony” which was a way of showing that they had seen, and supported, the films. *Invisible Children* described how northern Ugandan children whose families owned small farms would walk for hours after working on their family's land to shelters that were set up in the major towns of the north to protect them from the LRA. Because of these kids from USC, the Lord's Resistance Army – which was almost unheard of in the U.S. - became very well known. Eventually, in response to the publicity, President Obama, with unanimous agreement from the Congress, sent 100 special forces to Uganda, who are now teamed with the Ugandan and Congolese army in trying to track down the LRA. If Joseph is still alive he is definitely on the run and isn't doing the damage he used to do. I'm quite proud that I was the original officer at State to take the LRA seriously. By the way, the only opposition to President Obama's move against the LRA was Russ Limbaugh who argued that the LRA were a Christian force that deserved U.S. support in its struggle against the radical Muslim government of Sudan.

The five kids from USC visited me at State one day. I took them all to lunch in the executive dining room and did everything I could to encourage them to keep up their excellent work.

Q: You were getting something done.

GALLAGHER: Yeah, those were probably the two most productive years of my Foreign Service career and I haven't even begun to talk about Eritrea yet.

Q: Who was the head of African affairs then?

GALLAGHER: Susan Rice.

Q: How did you find her? I mean she is obviously been in the news every day for so long, but how did you find her?

GALLAGHER: A very nice person, very bright and 32 years old, which, from the perspective of having recently passed my 72nd birthday, made her a young whipper-snapper. I remember thinking that in another 20 years Susan might make a really great Assistant Secretary, but she is too young, much too inexperienced and naïve. She had a passionate belief that in the late 1990s new leaders had emerged who would create what she called a “New Africa” where everyone would live happily ever after. The leaders she favored were Museveni in Uganda, Isaias Afwerki in Eritrea, Meles Zenawi in Ethiopia, Paul Kagame in Uganda and Jerry Rawlings in Ghana. Over the intervening years Museveni, Afwerki and Kagame have proven themselves to be monsters, and Zenawi didn’t have a lot of respect for civil rights. I honestly think that Susan’s misreading of these men, whom she considered to be her personal friends, was based on her own hopes for a prosperous Africa. But she sure was a bad reader of human nature; and her belief that her chosen African leaders were her buddies was tragically naïve. She clearly had not been trained as a Foreign Service Officer.

Q: Yeah.

GALLAGHER: On to Eritrea: I think I mentioned above that I heard the first shot of the Eritrean War for Independence – at 29 years it was the longest war of the 20th century – when I was teaching a seventh grade history class in Agordat, my Peace Corps town. I never thought the Eritreans would win; but they proved me wrong. They fought with amazing skill and determination to defeat the largest army in Africa. By some measures Eritrea was bombed during those 29 years more than any political subdivision on the face of the earth. Many Eritreans lived in caves and came out to work their land only at night when the bombers and strafers couldn’t see them. Despite their poverty and stress, the Eritreans managed to build both school and health systems that were the envy of much of the world. One of their hospitals was actually a five mile long cave in which they performed battlefield surgery. Eritrea is lined with what they call “Soviet presents”: i.e. Russian tanks that the barefoot Eritrean soldiers heroically immobilized by jumping onto them and shoving grenades into the faces of the tank drivers.

Isaias Afwerki commanded the Eritrean forces for the last several years of the revolution and became President of Eritrea when the fighting stopped. I first met Isaias during my social work days in San Francisco. The University of California, San Francisco, invited a number of Eritrean doctors to come and teach the Californians how to deal with gunshot wounds in emergency rooms. I was invited to a reception the University held to welcome the Eritrean delegation which was led by President Isaias. I saw him standing there in a corner all by himself. I walked up and chatted with him for quite a while. My main memory of that chat was that he seemed very shy and somehow strange. His mind didn’t seem to be where his body was. My mental health evaluation on him was that he was paranoid. Several years later when I was on the Eritrean desk I spent some time drinking beer with Isaias in the kitchen of the residence of the Eritrean Ambassador to the U.S. He was more animated during our second chat, but still somehow strange.

The fighting stopped in 1991 after Ethiopian rebels, with Eritrean help, overthrew the monstrous communist government in Addis Ababa that had succeeded Haile Selassie. Prime Minister Meles of the new Ethiopian government rewarded his wartime allies in Eritrea with a promise that he would grant them independence if they voted for it. The election was held in '93 with 95% of the Eritrean people supporting independence. This was, I think, the largest plurality in any free election anywhere ever. For the first seven years of its freedom Eritrea was "the Singapore of Africa". Isaias, unlike so many African leaders, does not steal the national wealth. He lives in a modest home and wears rubber sneakers – a symbol of respect for the Eritrean rebels who defeated their well-armed opponents wearing shorts and rubber sneakers. He has honestly put tax money into school, hospital and road construction. Reforestation was very effective. Hills were terraced. Dams were constructed. The Eritrean diaspora bought Eritrean bonds and invested in their motherland. The economy boomed. Even during the struggle Eritrean educators, led by my close friend and fellow teacher in Agordat, Mohamoud Mohammed Saleh, managed to raise literacy levels and even ran schools for Ethiopian POWs. When peace came, schools were built everywhere. In Agordat when I first went there we had 12 students in eighth grade, our highest level. Now there are 1100 kids in the newly built high school. Relations with the U.S. were excellent during this period. Isaias and some of his deputies had received training in Maoist China during the revolution and for a while he seemed to take Mao's little red book seriously; but in the years immediately following independence he acted like a believing capitalist encouraging foreign and domestic investment.

On my orientation trip to Eritrea after I was appointed to the desk I was able to go by myself back to Agordat, my Peace Corps town. The people I spoke to there gave me a different impression from all the happy talk I was hearing in Asmara and Washington. I learned that the Muslim lowlanders were becoming very suspicious of Isaias' government, and wrote a cable back to Washington telling what I learned. The cable was very well received, and proved to be prophetic. When he was trying to take over the revolution, Isaias had wiped out the original rebel group, the Eritrean Liberation Front (ELF) a largely Muslim group, killing most of its leaders. The Eritrean revolution was originally an almost exclusively Muslim movement, while the Christian half of the Eritrean population stuck with the Christian leader, Haile Selassie. But the Emperor made a lot of mistakes in handling the Eritrean people and eventually all of them turned away from him and even farther away from the crazy communists who succeeded him. Isaias led the Christian Eritrean rebel group called the Eritrean Peoples Liberation Front (EPLF) and he viewed the ELF as a threat. Not long after he took over the EPLF he went after the ELF and killed many of its leaders. I asked several Eritrean Muslim friends why they accepted Isaias' leadership, and the reply was always that they thought he was the only man who could hold the country together, but they didn't really trust him. They disliked him, but thought he was the man of the moment and they wanted Eritrea to make it as a nation state. The ELF to the best of my knowledge was never strongly influenced by the Muslim extremists that are such a threat today.

In its early days as a nation the Eritreans got along famously with their former compatriots. The Ethiopian Prime Minister, after all, had set Eritrea free as soon as he took control in Addis Ababa. There were rumors, probably false, that he and Isaias were cousins; but, family or not, they talked on the phone several times daily. Everything was hunky-dory, and everyone in Washington, particularly Susan Rice, was holding Eritrea and Ethiopia up as an examples for the rest of Africa.

Then one day when I was backing up the Ethiopia desk officer who was on leave I walked into work and somebody said: "Do you know that your countries are at war" I was shocked. My first reaction was to ask myself: "Where the hell is the intel community. Nobody warned me of this!" But the intel people had no way of seeing this coming. I honestly think that Isaias got drunk – something he does every night – and decided that a war would be fun. Some of my Eritrean friends argue that during the 29 struggle for Eritrean freedom Isaias never won a pitted battle, so he needed this war to prove to himself that he is a war leader and hero. They may well be right, but I still suspect that alcohol was influential in his thinking.

Isaias' excuse for this violence was that Ethiopia was occupying the tiny village of Badme which he claimed for Eritrea. The people of Badme were members of the Kunama tribe almost all of whom lived in Eritrea. Badme sits on along the only straight line on the Eritrea/Ethiopia border which was defined in a 1902 treaty signed by the Italians and Ethiopian Emperor Menelik. The northern point of that line is defined in the treaty as the point where two small rivers meet. Likewise the southern point is also defined by the confluence of two rivers. The waters of those rivers tumble at great speed down from the 9000 foot high Ethiopian plateau during the monsoon rainy season. Over a century the rivers moved. There is now a serious question for geographers, lawyers and diplomats to settle as to where the boundary should be demarcated today. But instead of waiting for the slow process that should have taken place in the Hague, Isaias rushed off to war. The two sides had been having low level negotiations about Badme which should have continued; but Isaias wanted his war.

At the time the fighting started Susan Rice was in Stuttgart meeting with our military command there. Johnny Carson was the Acting Assistant Secretary. I had the dubious pleasure of bringing the word about this new war in Africa to Johnny whose reaction was absolutely perfect. Right away, he said, this is not our fight. We don't want to get involved in this. We need to spend three days saying loudly to both sides, we love you both. You are our allies, our friends. We view you as the new Africans. We want to build our policy on wonderful new guys like you who are not going to behave like Mugabe and Idi Amin. We are terribly upset by this and we want you to go immediately to the Hague and try to work this thing out legalistically and not militaristically. This approach made absolutely perfect sense to me.

What happened instead was that Susan, consulting nobody, hopped on a plane in Stuttgart and flew to Addis Ababa to begin a process of direct negotiations with both sides. She flew back and forth from capital to capital negotiating with these two men as if they were her buddies. Foreign Service Officers are not trained to think that way. You don't think

that the president of some other country is your buddy. He is the president and you deal with him officially. You might tell him jokes or invite him to dinner. Your wives might be friendly, but the idea that you are buddies is not there. You are working to advance the interests of the United States; but I think she got lost in the friendship she thought she had with these two men, and was sure that the friendship and their common African heritage would somehow resolve everything.

Well it didn't, to nobody's surprise. I think she was out there for at least three weeks at tremendous expense in a rented plane flying back and forth, but not bothering to consult with the Department very much. I don't ever remember being asked to prepare talking points for her or to do any of the things a desk officer might do in circumstances like this. When she finally gave up she called a press conference at the Addis Ababa Hilton and announced that President Isaias of Eritrea was intransigent and since she wasn't getting anywhere in her negotiations it was time to pack up and go home. That foolish announcement ended the goodwill between the U.S. and Eritrea. The Eritreans have not said a nice word about the United States since that date. In fact, their hatred of us is passionate. I was sent to the Eritrean embassy twice earlier this year trying to get visas for my Peace Corps group to go back to Eritrea. We had our 50th reunion in Addis Ababa and those of us who had been stationed in Eritrea wanted to cross the border as kind of a peace mission. All I got from the Eritrean embassy were long lectures about how terrible the Ethiopians and the Americans are and how innocent poor Eritrea is. I recently heard that we wanted to appoint a new ambassador to Asmara, but the Eritreans wouldn't even accept our diplomatic note asking for their *agreement*.

I have an old Peace Corps buddy, who is also a retired FSO, named Leo Cecchini who wanted to do something about this foolish war. Leo was working with David Gurr who was also in my Peace Corps group. They began by visiting the two embassies in Washington to urge peace, but, not surprisingly, nothing came of it. Leo and David came to my office one day while Susan was in Addis to kick the gong around about what he and/or the USG might do. Susan's negotiations had succeeded in reducing the argument to the very simple question of which side should police Badme (the village that was at the core of the problem) while both sides sought mediation in the Hague or at the UN. I noted to Leo and David that Badme was a tiny place with a population of only 50 or 70 people who had been policing themselves for centuries. They didn't really need uniformed officers. As we went along with our discussion one of us said: "Why don't we just send a couple of Peace Corps volunteers to monitor the town for a couple of months until this blows over?" In the course of working in AF/E I had met most of the leaders of both countries. As soon as I said that I had been in the Peace Corps I would be greeted with a huge smile and a comment like: "Oh I had Peace Corps teachers and I loved them. My favorite was Miss Johnson. Do you know her?" The Peace Corps was the one institution that both sides trusted.

So Leo and I contacted the Peace Corps. "Absolutely not" was their reply. The Peace Corps had no intention of sending volunteers into a war zone. Never mind that I had been in the same war zone during almost all of my time in the Peace Corps. The organization has grown more conservative with age. "How about returned Peace Corps volunteers

(RPCVs)?" we asked. That got a more positive response and an audience with the Peace Corps Director who thought it was a great idea. We began to circulate the idea unofficially and I got a number of e-mails from RPCVs, some from as far away as Fiji, saying they would like to participate in our effort if it ever got off the ground.

By then Susan was back from her fruitless peace mission, and I went to her as fast as I could with our idea of sending RPCVs to Badme. She dismissed it out of hand just saying: "That won't work". But I didn't give up.

I'll have to go off on a tangent to explain my relationship with Ghebre Selassie Mehreteab before I finish this story. I first met Ghebre when he was 12 years old in Agordat. He lived in Asmara where he was a schoolmate and best friend of the future President Isaias. Ghebre was always fascinated with America and Americans, and he managed to ingratiate himself to a married Peace Corps couple, Terry and Lois Shoemaker, who lived near him in Asmara. They all but adopted him. He ate with them every evening. Terry, who had some construction skills, came out to Agordat almost every weekend in 1963 to help us build the school we built there. He, Lois and Ghebre would sleep on our porch.

Eventually Ghebre made it to Bryn Mawr College in Pennsylvania where he met and married Secretary of State Cyrus Vance's daughter. Upon graduating he got a job with the Ford Foundation in a housing program where he learned the ins and outs of the real estate industry. He then went off on his own and made quite a fortune. I believe he is the richest Eritrean. In the 90s he was living in the house on Capitol Hill that had once been made famous by its previous resident, Senator Gary Hart. He and I renewed our friendship when I came back to the Department. Luckily for me he spoke to his old school chum, Isaias, several times a day which gave me an indirect line to the President while I was on the desk, an opportunity that few desk officers have. Ghebre and Isaias developed a code word for me: "Agordat" so that anyone listening to their conversations wouldn't know that they were talking about a State Department officer.

I discussed our idea of using RPCVs in Badme and Ghebre agreed that it was a great idea. He called Isaias who agreed. So now we had a peace plan that the protagonist thought was workable. The next problem was how to get through to the Ethiopians. I obviously could not use State Department channels for an idea that the Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs had said was unworkable. The only way that Leo and I could get through to Meles was through Anthony Lake, the former National Security Director, who would be leaving shortly for Addis Ababa to try to pick up the pieces of the mess Susan had left behind. The only person we knew

When Susan came back from Addis Ababa, I proposed this to Susan and she dismissed it out of hand. "No, this won't work. This is not a good idea. Forget it." So now, I was working against the specific instructions of my Secretary. I was supposed to forget about it, but I didn't forget about it. We needed to get to Meles to get his agreement, but we had no line of contact with him, and I surely could not use the Embassy in Addis for that after the Assistant Secretary had told me to back off. We decided to contact our former Peace

Corps Director Harris Wofford, who for a while, was a senator from Pennsylvania. He was also close to Bill Clinton. So close that he was Clinton's sexual confidante. Clinton used to tell him about his sexual escapades. Harris used to talk to me about his sexual interests so I always felt I had an indirect line to Monica Lewinski. Anyway, Harris had a great deal of influence in Washington, and he knew everyone of importance in the Democratic Party. So we went to Harris in the hope of getting through to Tony Lake the former National Security Advisor at the White House. The Eritreans, and the Ethiopians by that point had agreed to a cease fire and Lake was now going to go out to try to follow up Susan Rice's ineffective efforts in stopping the war.

We asked Harris to call Tony Lake, but for some reason, he balked. I never understood why. He came up with several lame excuses: i.e. "Tony Lake is in Haiti today". So call Haiti, dammit!!!, I thought. All three of us kept calling Harris hoping to persuade him to call. Eventually he stopped accepting our calls. I tried to speak to him seven times without a response. Lake went off to Addis Ababa with no knowledge of our plan or the fact that Isaias had agreed to it. Some time later, Harris and Ghebre Selassie, who are good friends and prominent Democrats, found themselves in the back seat of a limo with President Clinton. They raised our idea with him and he thought it was brilliant. "Go ahead and do it." he said. But by then it was too late. Fighting had broken out again after the brief cease-fire and Isaias was no longer in mood to compromise. Because one phone call didn't get made, 100,000 people eventually died in the war that followed. In fact a state of war still exists between Eritrea and Ethiopia 15 years later although there is no fighting at present. The war has been indecisive and I have no idea who controls Badme today. I've avoided Harris ever since. I am very aware that I was breaking all the State Department's rules by entering into negotiations without the permission of my Assistant Secretary, but I thought the goal was worth it.

Q: Was there anything else going on in Eritrea that you were dealing with?

GALLAGHER: The other big event occurred shortly after I started work on the desk. Isaias got all upset because a couple of Sudanese troops crossed into Eritrea. It's unlikely that the incursion was planned by the Sudanese government. The border is poorly demarcated and it's easy to get lost. Isaias' response to this minor event was to move 56 tanks his base at Sawa on the Sudan border and he started making threats of invasion. A war between Eritrea and Sudan was not in anybody's interest. Some Arabs would have perceived it as an attack by the U.S. which getting along very well with the Eritreans and very poorly with the Sudanese. Eritrea and Sudan both needed to spend their limited resources on national development, not warfare. AF/E's Office Director at the time was April Glaspie. She called in the Eritrean Ambassador. As I mentioned above, I have tremendous respect for April, but this was not her best day. The Eritrean Ambassador was a dud who had been an ally of Isaias during the Eritrean revolution. He had no diplomatic skills at all. I was the note taker when he met April. She let him know in no uncertain terms that the U.S. was deeply opposed to an invasion of Sudan. The Ambassador got huffy and the conversation ended with him virtually storming out of the room; leaving me thinking that the lovely relationship between Eritrea and the U.S. had just been flushed down the tubes. Fortunately I got a call the next day from the Eritrean Ambassador to the

United Nations, Haile Menkerios. Unlike the Ambassador in Washington, Haile was a skilled diplomat. We scheduled another meeting and both Ambassadors showed up. April was in a better place, and it was a pleasure to watch she and Haile work things through while the Ambassador to the U.S. sat there with his mouth shut. I'm sure that Haile personally agreed that Eritrea did not need a war with Sudan and it may have been him who persuaded Isaias to back off. War averted.

Haile later had a falling out with Isaias, as most people do sooner or later, and decided not to go home where he might face jail time without trial. Kofi Annan, who recognized his diplomatic skills, offered him a permanent job at the U.N. I hope he's still there.

I came to believe that Isaias' near invasion of Sudan, and perhaps his invasion of Ethiopia, were part of a dream he had of conquering all of Africa, or at least a good chunk of it. When his friend, Paul Kagame, was thinking of moving troops into the Congo, Isaias is reported to have advised him to "go for the Atlantic", in other words to conquer the whole country. The Eritreans in the 90s were justifiably proud of the fact that in the course of their 29 year fight for freedom they had defeated Haile Selassie, who had been heavily armed by the United States, and the communist regime which was strongly backed and armed by the Soviet Union. I think Isaias believed that he and his armies were invincible and had truth and justice on their side. Therefore conquering Africa made sense.

In the period that I was on the desk and just before, Isaias threatened to invade Yemen in a dispute over some islands in the Red Sea and he began his dabbling in Somalia where he may still be involved on the wrong side. He later also interfered in the politics of Djibouti; so he went after all of his neighbors.

Q: What else was going on?

GALLAGHER: The number two man in Eritrea was, and is, General Sebhat who led the Eritrean forces in the field during the struggle. He must be a brilliant tactician because it was he, not Isaias, who won most of the battles. He is now Vice President. He was Minister of Defense when I was on the desk. Somehow he has managed to maintain a good relationship with Isaias – perhaps because Isaias knows that Sebhat is too powerful to have as an enemy. He came to the U.S. and, of course, it fell to the desk officer to escort him on his visits to various US government offices. Our big stop was the Pentagon where they arranged for Sebhat to have lunch with about 12 generals and admirals. I was by far the lowest ranking person at the table. It was the most boring diplomatic lunch I had ever been to in my life. Nobody had anything to say to anybody else. There were long pauses everywhere. General Sebhat is rather shy and very soft spoken, wearing a uniform that didn't quite fit and looking for every bit like a hillbilly from Africa as far as these high falutin' generals and Admirals were concerned. I livened up the event, however, when I said to General Sebhat "I want to hear how you sank that Soviet Destroyer in Massawa harbor." The generals perked up, and I'm sure the admirals got erections. They just had 40 years of the cold war in which the U.S. taxpayers supplied them with all manner of submarines and inter-continental ballistic missiles and air craft

carriers and tanks and whatnot, but not one of them had ever sunk a Soviet destroyer. How could it be that this little fellow with a uniform that doesn't fit sank a Soviet warship?

Sebhat smiled and modestly said, "Well it wasn't a destroyer, it was a corvette." Okay, ten feet shorter than a destroyer but it was still a major Soviet military vessel. Then he added, "Well, I had seven Fiberglas motorboats." With all their aircraft carriers and submarines and ballistic missiles, the generals and admirals had done nothing; but with seven Fiberglas motorboats the little fellow sent a Soviet corvette to the bottom. It was a wonderful moment.

Q: After the Eritrea desk what?

GALLAGHER: After serving as Eritrea, Ethiopia and Sudan desk officer, I went to Brussels.

Q: You were in Brussels from when to when?

GALLAGHER: From '99 to '02. It was an interesting assignment process. CA keeps fairly close control of consular jobs both domestically and overseas; so I had to consult with the senior personnel officer in CA/EX. Neither of us recognized the other, but as we chatted we figured out that I had been her CDO when she first came into the Service. You may recall that I got my assignment to Madrid because as a CDO I had been helpful to a woman who was then a PDAS on CA. I asked this personnel officer where I had sent her and she replied: "Paris". I smiled and said that I would love to accept an assignment to Brussels. It was done. I was assigned to be chief of the visa section and deputy head of the consular section.

It turned out to be a very weird experience largely because I found myself another boss who had been run out of an embassy by his ambassador. In this case, the boss, Joseph (Joe) Pomper, told me himself that he had been asked to leave Tel Aviv by none other than Ambassador Tom Pickering, perhaps the best known and most able FSO of the last 40 years or so. Joe told me that Pickering threw him out because Joe was gay.

Q. I can't imagine that being a problem with Tom (Pickering).

Indeed. Pickering has worked happily with a number of gay officers and I suspect that Joe was dumped either because he had trouble getting along with his coworkers and/or because he had issues in issuing visas to Arabs.

During my first year in Brussels Joe and I got along reasonably well and accomplished a couple of laudable objectives. For example, we became one of the first posts in the world to use a contractor call center for visa appointments and information; although that process was made much more difficult by Joe's bickering with the contractor. The contractor's representative, who was the wife of an A-100 class mate told me that she recommended that the contractor give up the effort to serve Embassy Brussels because

Joe was so hard to work with. The process of setting up the phone answering system was further complicated by the fact that the Embassy's telephone operators feared that they would lose their jobs when the new system was up and running. Heretofore it was they who gave out visa information to the public and consular inquiries made up a good portion of their work. I had the job of serving as liaison with the telephone office. The American in charge was most cooperative, but asked for my assistance in dealing with his staff who were led by a particularly loud woman named Ann. We got the system up and running in spite of her. Despite the fact that she was a genuine pain in the neck to the consular section, Joe later hired her to replace one of the workers who quit in his section. I have WAE'd in Brussels twice in recent years, and Ann is still there. Still the weakest link in the section. It's amazing how one man's legacy of incompetence can live on more than a decade after his departure from post.

Despite the fact that Joe and I got along reasonably well for a year, I was disturbed at watching his seemingly endless fights with his FSNs. He supervised a total of five FSNs that year three of whom resigned rather than continue working for him. Although I had not been involved in their issues, each of them came to me in a rage to let me know why they were quitting. They took more than half-a-century's worth of experience with them. At one point the FSNs who worked for Joe in the American Citizens Services section came to my four FSNs to say that they wanted to go to the DCM to complain about Joe's management and they hoped that the visa section FSNs would join them. They described Joe as the worst boss they had ever had. My FSNs responded that they understood how difficult things had become in ACS, but they were not directly affected, and, in any case, Tom was the best boss that they had ever had and they didn't want to upset the apple cart by complaining to the DCM lest I would side with Joe or perceive them to be difficult employees. The ACS FSNs decided not to go alone to the DCM. They quit instead. It was all very sad. I remember one of them crying bitterly in my office saying that her mother had worked at the U.S. Embassy and all her life she wanted to do the same, but she just couldn't stand it. The other two didn't cry. They raged.

Eventually my turn to face Joe's temper tantrums came. I had a series of serious gum infections and had made an appointment with the periodontist recommended by the Embassy's health unit. It took three weeks just to make the appointment and there was a six week wait time for my appointment. Giving plenty of lead time I asked Joe for a couple of hours of sick leave. When he did not respond I simply assumed that the sick leave request had been granted. But three days before my appointment with the periodontist Joe came to me in an open area of the visa section and said that he wanted to visit American prisoners that morning and asked that I make another appointment. I said: "Can we talk about that?", and motioned towards my office as the appropriate place for that conversation. He said: "We can talk about it here" (i.e. in front of the FSNs). So I told him that my gums had been bleeding for months, that I had several abscesses, that it had been difficult to make the appointment, and that I really hoped I could keep it. He stormed away, and later asked me to come to his office where he went into a childish rage about me embarrassing him in front of the FSNs. I really don't think I said or did anything to embarrass him. My tone was polite. He could easily have changed the time of his visit to the prison. I think he embarrassed himself by behaving so petulantly in public.

After that meeting Joe did not speak a word to me for four months. It was obvious to all of the FSNs that we did not get along. After four months I went to the DCM after we had a fiasco over Belgian passports and fraud reporting (see below). She instructed him to speak to me, but needless to say the conversations were short and not very sweet. I tried making overtures, but they were rebuffed. For example, he took a short vacation in Spain and I wrote him a long note suggesting some out-of-the-way places that he might enjoy. But he remained bitter to the end.

Q: Well what was the problem do you think, with the consul general?

GALLAGHER: His upbringing and a big case of insecurity. He referred to his father as “Doctor Pomper.” I think that I also intimidated him since I was twenty years older than he and much more experienced in the Foreign Service and in people management.

Joe was very sensitive about issuing visas to Muslims and Arabs. My guess is that he may have had his problems with Pickering because he had been too rough on Arab visa applicants in Israel and was trying to make up for his past mistakes. On one occasion, I had an Iranian who was residing in Antwerp. He came to me and he wanted to go to Arizona for postdoctoral work. He had a letter from a retired U.S. ambassador who was on the faculty of the school he was going to in Arizona. The Ambassador assured us that he would return to Belgium after his studies in the U.S. During the interview I asked him about this family. He had a wife and two kids whom, he said, would not be accompanying him. His wife was also a student in Belgium and she had a job she did not want to leave, he said. So I issued him a visa figuring that he had a good reference and strong ties to Belgium. . The next day he shows up in my office with his wife and two kids applying for visas for them. I refused them on the grounds that he had told me only the day before that they were staying, and I considered canceling his visa. When Joe reviewed my refusals he called the family in to meet with him, and issued visas for all four of them without ever discussing the case with me. I later looked up their records with DHS and found that they applied for political asylum two days after they arrived in Arizona. Joe was obsessed with making sure that all of our Moslem applicants got visas.

Another serious problem concerned the Belgian passport issuing system. CA had had trouble with the Belgian passport office for years before Joe and I arrived in Brussels. Passports were issued by the local government unit, the commune, of which there were more than 200 across that small country. Their security procedures were abysmal. They issued passports, perhaps after collecting a small “extra” fee, to people who had dubious claims on Belgian citizenship. The most notorious example of Belgian passport ineptness occurred shortly after the U.S. invaded Afghanistan when the leader of the Northern Alliance, a key Afghan ally of the United States, was assassinated by two Middle Eastern killers who carried Belgian passports (for which they were not eligible) to get into Afghanistan. There were cases of corruption in Belgian embassies and consulates abroad. CA had warned the Belgians in no uncertain terms that if they didn’t federalize their passport system and insure quality they would be taken off the visa waiver system that allowed Belgians – like other western Europeans - to enter the U.S. without visas. The

Belgians agreed to take the passport function away from the communes and make it a responsibility of the federal government, and they promised to do a better job of issuance. Joe was terrified that Belgium would be taken off the visa waiver if they failed. Surely removal from the waiver list would indeed have caused an uproar, and one can only speculate if CA would have followed up with its threat. Our job was to let CA, particularly the fraud office, know what the situation was on the ground and let CA make the decision as to what kind of response the U.S. should have.

In that spirit, I wrote in one of my quarterly fraud reports that the now-federal passport office had gotten very busy so to help with its workload it had sent several thousand blank passport books to a commune in Antwerp and asked the commune to resume issuing passports. I also wrote in that report that the Belgian Ambassador to Bulgaria and a Belgian consul in Casablanca were both fired for passport fraud, and that a number of blank passports had been stolen from the Belgian Embassy in Luxembourg. Joe did not clear on my fraud report for four months despite three or four e-mail reminders from me. Eventually I was having a conversation with an officer at the fraud office in CA and he noted that we were late with our quarterly fraud report. I told him that it was in my boss' in box. The fraud officer raised this point with Mary Ryan, the Assistant Secretary of State for Consular Affairs, who had been deeply involved with the earlier negotiations with the Belgians. Ms. Ryan had a fit and called our DCM. The fraud report got sent. It was during this period that I talked to the DCM about the sorry state of affairs in the consular section. Although she was responsible for an Embassy whose largest section was consular, she admitted that she had never had consular experience and had no idea what to make of the situation; so she did nothing. What really amazed me was that she had no idea how bad things were in her largest section. Joe did not speak to me for four months, but he never mentioned to his boss that there were issues between us.

Shortly after the 9/11 attacks I had a young Moroccan apply for a visa to return to a flight school in Opa-locka, FL to continue his studies in mosquito spraying. Normally a returning student is a routine issuance, but when I saw Opa-locka I got nervous and refused his visa. He was indignant. Ten days later he returned to reapply, but this time he was carrying a Belgian passport, which I suspect he obtained illegally. This time I told him that we needed to keep his passport and he could come back to pick it up a day or two later. I brought the passport immediately to our Assistant Regional Security Officer (who, interestingly, shared my name, Tom Gallagher). Upon investigating, Tom found that the applicant's father was a conservative imam at a local mosque and was of some concern to the Belgian police. Tom took the passport data and my notes and entered that information into DS' computer records, and I reentered the applicant's name in CA's system as a refusal with strong notes. Two days later the applicant returned to get his document. Tom instructed the Embassy guards to refuse him entry and Tom returned his passport to him outside the Embassy gates. This time the applicant was accompanied by a whole group of supporters, presumably from his father's mosque, who yelled: "Infidel, infidel" at Tom. The applicant did get a Canadian visa and made three attempts to cross the U.S. border from Canada using his Belgian passport but was turned away because computer records showed my refusals and perhaps Tom's notes. Rumors were circulating at that time that the CIA had reported that al-Qaeda had a second plot to use a mosquito

spraying aircraft to cover some American city with poison. I'm not sure if that was true, but I do like the thought that by simply refusing a visa I saved some large American city and its residents from destruction. I never even got a thank-you from anyone at the Embassy or in CA for that, nor was it mentioned in the bad evaluations that Joe wrote on me.

One final story about Belgian passports and then I'll leave the subject: a Belgian citizen applied for some sort of work visa to return to his home in Los Angeles where he and his American wife ran an interior decorating firm. One of the FSNs brought his passport to me and showed me that it had obviously been altered. The date of his birth had been written in ink rather than printed like all the other numbers and letters in the document. I had established a relationship with the Director of the Belgian passport office who, in his effort to prove to the United States that Belgium was doing a great job issuing passports, had told me that I could drop by whenever I liked. So I went to his office and he agreed to have his "experts" look at the suspect document. A couple of hours later he called back to say that the passport was definitely fraudulent. When the man returned to pick up his visa we had him arrested outside the Embassy compound. He spent several days in jail during which time his wife called us several times per day saying that she desperately needed him in Los Angeles because they had a contract to decorate the home of the Chinese actor Jackie Chan who was due to fly in from Hong Kong any day. The poor man languished in a Belgian jail until the Belgian passport office spoke to the office that issued the passport. That office admitted that it had altered the passport after a printing error that they didn't want to repair properly. The man went home to LA. I don't know if he decorated Jackie Chan's house or not.

During each of my three years in Brussels we were visited by teams of computer experts employed by CA who went to every consular section on earth for periods of two or three weeks to install the latest electronic updates. They worked just behind the visa line and heard everything that went on. The heads of all three of those teams came to me, and to Joe, at the end of their stays with the observation that I ran the most polite visa section in the world. I valued those complements. My predecessor in Brussels had a very bad reputation for rudeness to the staff and to applicants. When I arrived and met the DCM he told me that he got three phone calls every week from visa applicants complaining about being badly treated by consular staff. The DCM asked me to put a stop to the problem. When he reviewed my evaluation a year later he mentioned his instruction to me and concluded that he was glad to say that he never got a single phone call after my arrival.

Despite all the screw ups, Belgium is a pleasant place to live and I had a great group of FSNs to work with. I'm still in touch with them 13 years after leaving and I've been back twice as a WAE (When Actually Needed) retired consular officer to work in the section for a month each time. On one of those occasions Joe's successor as head of the section told me that when he announced that I would be coming back for a month the FSNs cheered.

Q: Who was ambassador when you were there?

GALLAGHER: We had two. In 1999 and 2000 the Ambassador was a Cuban American appointee of the Clinton administration. I can't remember his name. He wasn't very memorable. He left running the Embassy to the professionals and made no enemies that I can recall. After he left he called me for visa assistance with Belgian craftsmen whom he wanted to bring to Palm Beach to work on decorating his house there. I recall that he needed 43 men! It must have been quite a house.

When the second Bush administration took over we were supposed to get the woman who headed the Floridian electoral system as our ambassador; but she got into so much trouble after the "hanging chads" fiasco that she couldn't get a political appointment without raising hackles in Congress; so we got George W.'s second best friend, a real jerk. He lived next door to the other Bushes, the beer people, in St. Louis where he garaged his 100 Bentleys. He brought one of them to Brussels and insisted on driving it himself much to the chagrin of the security people who wanted him to ride in one of their highly protected limos. He also wanted his wife, from whom he was inseparable, to have a desk next to his in the Ambassador's office. This time DS put its foot down because she did not have an appropriate security clearance to be in an office space where highly classified documents were kept and used. It fell to the DCM to tell him this. He got so angry that he asked the DCM to leave post. It was very unfair.

Q: Did you get involved in the political business or the economic business at all?

GALLAGHER: No, I basically stuck to the consular section. I didn't do any work anywhere else in the embassy.

Q: Did the consular section get involved with this very deep division between the Walloon and the Flemish?

GALLAGHER: No, not in a big way. Certainly, I was very aware of it. When I went back to Brussels on one of my WAE tours there I had lunch with my French teacher, a really lovely woman. She said, "You know when you came here in 1999," the issue between Walloons and Flemings was: "Oh it is annoying to have to do everything in two languages." The Flemish people always complained that the French never bothered to learn Flemish, even though they all learned to speak French fluently, but overall, people got along. But 12 years later, my French teacher said the attitude is: "I hate those people," so it has really deteriorated badly over a fairly short time. Many people you talk to now in Belgium say: "Yes, the country is going to break up one of these days."; but the problem is nobody knows what to do with Brussels. Historically it has been a mainly French speaking city that is completely surrounded by Flemish communes. It would be very inconvenient to include it into the Walloon section of the country since it is not physically connected to the Walloon areas. To put it in the Flemish part of the country would bring huge objections from the French speaking population. The reality is Brussels is becoming a foreigner's city. Of the 980,000 people living there when I was there in 2002, 150,000 were Moroccans, and there were also tens of thousands of Congolese and large communities of Tunisians, Algerians, Malian, Syrian, all sorts of Middle Eastern and African people, Rwandans and Burundians. Then of course, there was the huge

European Union population, all the bureaucrats from the EU. My house was located about a block and a half from the EU headquarters. Walking down the street in my neighborhood one heard every European language spoken as you walked along. The number of Belgians in Brussels has declined dramatically. Probably only half the population of the city is Belgian I would think at this point. One proposal has been to just make Brussels the European capital city and create something like the District of Columbia or the Federal District in Mexico and have it somehow ruled by the EU, but the EU isn't willing to take that on. So it is just a festering problem. As you know, Belgium recently went for a year and a half with no government largely because language issues kept them from arranging a coalition government. Even when they agree, there is Flemish Socialist Party and French speaking socialist party and a Flemish conservative party and a French speaking conservative party. But they are so divided linguistically that they can't agree on policies. It is a very troubled country.

Q: How did you work as far as local employees, Foreign Service nationals, between the Walloons and the Flemish?

GALLAGHER: They got along just fine, and indeed on a day-to-day one-on-one basis most Belgians get along. My senior FSN, a wonderful woman called Raymonde with whom I still correspond, once said, "My children speak Flemish to me and French to their father and we get along fine." Her husband was actually an Italian who had been born in Belgium and spoke French as his first language. Our number two FSN was French and was then and remains one of Raymonde's closest friends. They set the tone for the visa section, and as far as I know there was never any nationalist friction in the ACS section either.

Q: How did you find social living, aside from the fact they had a very high beer capacity?

GALLAGHER: Oh extremely pleasant. I had a great apartment that was an easy walk to work. There were 24 of the best restaurants in Europe within four blocks of my home. I put on a lot of weight while I was in Brussels. It's a great base for going out exploring. Belgium has well known tourist towns like Bruges and Ghent, but little places like Ypres, Tervuren and Bastogne are absolutely fascinating. It was a great place to launch little day trips, and weekends in Paris, London and Amsterdam were easy and cheap as the dollar was very strong against the euro then. I played a lot of bridge in Belgium and made nice friends among the locals. The only problem for me was the boss.

Q: So what were you looking for to doing after you left there? You left there when?

GALLAGHER: 2002. I was looking to come back to Washington because I was going to turn 65 in 2005. I wanted to spend my final three years in Washington in order to get the cost of living allowance that would make my pension higher. Joe went to great lengths to bad mouth me in CA, but my former A-100 coordinator was looking for someone to work in the Office of International Health in the Bureau of Oceans, Environment and Science. I got a job there as Regional Advisor for Europe. When I left San Francisco having run and AIDS program for eight years during the worst years of the epidemic there I promised

myself that I had done my bit and would never work in an AIDS program again. But here I was.....

The main issue we worked on in International Health in those days was AIDS. Before 9/11 Colin Powell repeatedly stated that AIDS was the biggest threat to American foreign policy. He was very supportive of our efforts.

Over the years since the AIDS epidemic was identified, epidemiologists learned that no country in the world mounted an effective anti-AIDS program unless and until the head of state or head of government spoke out loudly and clearly in support of AIDS education and treatment. In the U.S., for example, anti-AIDS efforts were left to a small number of, mostly gay, activists in the big cities. Things went slowly until the death of Rock Hudson who was a friend of Ronald Reagan. Hudson's death moved Regan to take an interest in AIDS and, more importantly, to start speaking publicly about the importance of efforts to combat the disease. After Reagan began to speak up, anti-AIDS programs sprung up all over the US, not just in the big cities. But internationally few countries outside the developed world were doing much of anything. Eastern Europe, my bailiwick, was doing almost nothing, and in South Africa the idiot President Mbeki kept announcing that AIDS was not contagious, but rather was one of the results of extreme poverty.

Our first job in International Health was to wake up the Foreign Service to the danger and to get our embassies to urge host governments to act. Towards that end, I worked with the embassies in Kiev and Moscow to organize two conferences for U.S. officials in eastern Europe. In Kiev the conference attendees were the U.S. ambassadors from all of eastern Europe and the former USSR. In Moscow it was more of a country team meeting for all of the posts in Russia. I also attended a chiefs of mission meeting in Geneva to spread the word amongst our diplomats there, but my speech – the only one on AIDS – was reduced to five minutes because my boss, the Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary in OES rambled on for 25 extra minutes (as was his wont) taking up almost all of my time. On that same trip to Europe I went to Vienna to meet with OECD staff to raise their awareness of AIDS, and I visited the U.S. Mission to NATO in Brussels which agreed to ask NATO to name AIDS as a threat to the alliance. This would have required all of the NATO aspirant nations (i.e. Ukraine, Moldova, etc.) to provide AIDS education to their troops as part of their preparations to qualify for NATO membership. The soldiers in the aspirant countries' armies were probably the most vulnerable people to AIDS anywhere: young men with a bit of money in their pockets, away from home, and looking for sex in the area of the world where AIDS was spreading at the fastest pace. I firmly believe that our program – which was directed at huge audiences worldwide – was the single most effective anti-AIDS program anywhere. That is not to disparage the many local AIDS programs that were and are doing heroic work. But no program had the scale of ours with its ability to affect whole armies and nations.

One of the best examples of the success we were beginning to have came when our Ambassador in Tallinn wrote an op-ed piece in a major Estonian newspaper that pointed out that Estonia at that time had the highest rate of AIDS growth in the world. Three hours after the newspaper went on the stands the Ambassador got a call from the

Estonian Prime Minister who said something like: “Good Lord, I had no idea that we had such a problem.” With that the Ambassador counseled him to start speaking out publicly, which he did, and that was followed by increased funding from USAID, the EU and other agencies to fight the epidemic there. Estonia now has a good anti-AIDS program and is no longer the country with the highest rate of AIDS growth.

None of the countries of the former Soviet Union had good anti-AIDS plans and eastern Europe was reporting more AIDS cases than some parts of Africa. Russia itself was a hard nut to crack. Up until 2003 Mr. Putin mentioned AIDS only once almost as an afterthought in a speech about Russia’s declining population. Needle sharing by heroin users was the big problem there. The addicts were obtaining raw poppy seeds and processing them themselves using human blood – frequently infected with the AIDS virus – to soften the seeds. The final concoction – including someone’s blood – would then be injected into the addicts arm, leg or neck. I don’t think there could possibly be a more efficient way to transmit the disease.

Tuberculosis was also a disease of concern to the Office of International Health. It was rearing its ugly head again as a secondary effect of AIDS. People with compromised immune systems were more vulnerable to TB. Our primary focus, however, was AIDS because if we could control that disease the TB problem would also come under control, or at least would be moderated.

Just when things were rolling along very nicely, our Office Director, Ted Nist (a great guy), called us in to announce that the White House had just announced the opening of PEPFAR, the President’s Emergency Program for AIDS Relief, which would spend ten billion dollars over ten years to combat AIDS in Africa and Haiti. Since the White House had never bothered to consult with our office or with the Department of Health and Human Services or with the Center for Disease Control this came as a complete surprise to all of us. National Public Radio reported that the White House decision to start PEPFAR was the price that George W. Bush paid to Colin Powell in order to get Powell to deliver his disastrous speech assuring the UN that we knew that Saddam Hussein had weapons of mass destruction. The speech was delivered within 48 hours of the White House’s PEPFAR announcement. I’m sure Powell has regretted that speech ever since.

No serious planning at all went into PEPFAR; but a few parameters for the program were quickly announced. PEPFAR would provide the newly developed cocktail of AIDS control medications to two million Africans and Haitians using American manufactured drugs. No cheaper generic drugs manufactured in India or Brazil could be purchased on the open market. An immediate effect of this policy was that the market of AIDS patients for the three American drug companies that made the cocktail went from one million American AIDS patients to three million patients worldwide – a cozy three hundred per cent increase in the drug companies’ markets.

Another of PEPFAR’s rules was that one third of the ten billion would be spent on abstinence education despite the fact that numerous studies had shown that abstinence

education is a fairly inefficient and ineffective way of preventing AIDS. This requirement had the effect of making an AIDS program more acceptable to the religious right.

To administer the new program the White House appointed the President of Eli Lilly, one of the producers of the AIDS cocktail, as head of PEPFAR. He immediately went off on a series of trips to Africa on which he preached the abstinence message. A few months later, however, the Washington Post got hold of the address book of the madam of the highest priced whore house in DC. There was much speculation as to which senator's or congressman's names would be found in her book; but in the end the only name of any consequence that was listed was that of Mr. PEPFAR himself. He quickly resigned from his abstinence education job, but not before he had a chance to take all AIDS functions away from OES. He completely killed our program of educating governments and leaders. There was nothing to be gained for Eli Lilly in a program that would in the long run limit its market.

The entire PEPFAR process was seedy at its outset. With 45 million diagnosed AIDS patients in the world, helping two million of them while simultaneously killing the most effective anti-AIDS program was absurd. Distributing pills in 17 or so African countries runs the risk of rendering the drugs ineffective if patients do not take their drugs regularly in prescribed doses. Since the end of the Bush administration PEPFAR has been reorganized and now no longer puts such a strong emphasis on abstinence. From what I have seen on my WAE tours in Africa, PEPFAR is now doing a good job, but it had a shady beginning.

Q: Yeah, all of this was highly controversial.

GALLAGHER: One final story - of no historical importance – from my OES days: We had an Assistant Secretary of State for Oceans, Environment and Science who got his job because he was Dick Cheney's fly fishing partner. He was a nice fellow, but his writ was to make sure that the State Department did nothing to interfere with the industries that were destroying the environment.

One day the Assistant Secretary made a trip to the Republic of the Congo (Brazzaville) to attend a conference on environmental issues in the Congo River Basin. What he really wanted to do was to visit a game reserve he had heard of where there were gorillas who had been orphaned, raised by humans and returned to the wild. I heard this story from the junior office from Embassy Brazzaville who was instructed to serve as his escort officer for this important safari. They were accompanied by a woman who was the Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary in OES. They got into a small outboard motor boat with two African boatmen and went putt-putting down a river until they came upon Bongo, a 500 pound silverback whom the African men recognized. Having been raised by humans, Bongo was thrilled to see the visitors and ran up and down the river bank saying "hi" in gorilla-speak. The boatmen tied to boat to a tree that was overhanging the river so that the visitors could get a better look at Bongo. Bongo, like other gorillas, was an excellent tree-climber and he quickly climbed the tree to which the boat was tied leaving the passengers feeling highly vulnerable as they sat beneath him. The African men untied the line,

restarted the outboard motor and began to slip away. Not wanting to let them leave him, Bongo dove into the boat. The junior officer said that the only thing he knew to do upon finding himself in a motorboat with a silverback was to act as passive as he could, lowering his head and shoulders and staying very quiet. The female PDAS, the junior officer believed, somehow missed seeing Bongo jump into the boat. When she turned and found herself facing King Kong, she began to scream with an ardor that would have put Faye Wray to shame. By now the African men had disappeared. It's not clear if they fell out of the boat or just figured that they would prefer to be in the river with the crocodiles rather than in the boat with Bongo. With its motor running the boat now began circling downriver out of control. The junior officer who was closest to the rudder was not about the move lest he upset Bongo. Eventually the boat beached and Bongo, frustrated with all the screaming, grabbed hold of two bright yellow life preservers and marched back to the jungle where he hopefully lived happily ever after.

Q: Did you find when you came back from Brussels that the gay scene had changed much in Washington?

GALLAGHER: That is an interesting question. I don't recall ever focusing on it. It certainly had changed since 1973 when I came out. By the late 90s and early 2000s it was OK to be gay in the State Department and the issues for the gay movement were very different. In the early days we were fighting for the right to exist, to hold jobs, to get protection from the rocks people threw at us. Now the issues are things like recognition of gay marriage and, within the Department, getting visas for the partners of FSOs. I find that much less exciting than the 70s. Maybe that's just because I was young in the 70s and so was our movement. Nonetheless I am a very proud member of GLIFAA (Gays and Lesbians in Foreign Affairs Agencies) and march with them in the gay parade in DC most years

Q: Where did you go from OES?

GALLAGHER: Once PEPFAR started we had little to do in the Office of International Health. I had only a year left before mandatory retirement. My former boss in AF, Don Yamamoto kept calling me to ask me to come back to the Bureau of which he was then PDAS and OES let me go a month early. Don assigned me to the Office of Central African Affairs where I was Country Officer for the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC). Having previously been country officer for Sudan, which at the time had the largest death toll of any war since 1945; I now took over as Country Officer for the DRC which had by that point surpassed Sudan with a death toll of nearly five million in that unhappy country's endless warfare. Remembering that I spent two years in Nigeria during the Biafran conflict, I was now intimately involved in the three biggest wars since the end of the World Wars.

Q: Let me make sure I have the right Congo. Which one is this?

GALLAGHER: Kinshasa, the big one the former Belgian Congo. Not Brazzaville which had been a French colony.

Q: What had brought about this war? We need a little background.

GALLAGHER: The DRC has about 1000 tribes, more than anywhere in Africa. The reason there are so many is geographic. The jungle is so dense that it is very difficult to travel, so small families would become isolated and over time expand, develop their own language and culture and become a tribe or nation. No single tribe dominates or controls the entire country. A few of the larger tribes might be viable as nations, the Kingdom of Kuba, for example. But most of the other 999 or so tribes are too small to make it as independent countries. These small tribes survived, and some even prospered, until colonialism changed everything.

The Belgians took over the Congo largely because their second King, Leopold II, wanted an empire like all the other European kings. So he took over what nobody else claimed, which was a large stretch of jungle in central Africa. With the help of Americans, he used Henry Morton Stanley as his governor of what was then called the Congo Free State which was, in fact, a privately owned fiefdom of the King. The Belgian parliament had no control over the Congo in the early stages of the colonial period. Stanley and Leopold himself used their influence on the American Congress to get American recognition of what he called the Congo Free State. One of his biggest helpers in Washington was Senator Aldrich, grandfather of Nelson Rockefeller, (whose great-grand daughter, Frances Aldrich de Llopis worked with me when we raised money for the Spanish AIDS Foundation). Senator Aldrich was rewarded with some rubber plantations which were beginning to be developed in the Congo. The reason rubber was so important was that the bicycle had just been invented in Europe creating a huge need for tires. Leopold gave rubber concession mineral concessions to people who paid him a lot of money. He then offered no supervision over them at all. Many of them turned to pretty spectacular brutality well described by Joseph Conrad in *Heart of Darkness*. The net result was ten million dead out of a population estimated at 20 million when the Belgians arrived on the scene. So they basically killed more than half the native population, making my good Belgian friends the biggest mass murderers in history on a proportional basis. There were only 5 million or so Belgians in the late 19th century. If you do the math on that it comes to two dead for every Belgian citizen, a much higher ratio than the Germans attained in the 1940s. The really amazing thing is that the Belgian population of the Congo at the turn of the 20th century was barely 1000 which means that each Belgian resident of the place was responsible for, on average, 10,000 deaths. The “Free State” authorities put out an edict requiring that the few bullets they had available should only be used to kill humans. Therefore each time a bullet was used, a human hand had to be presented to the authorities. Since the local white folks wanted to hunt animals for food and fun, they had to kill a human every time they used a bullet to shoot an animal. The hands piled up.

Q: I think there was a book, King Leopold's Ghost.

GALLAGHER: It is a wonderful book which is still influential in Belgium. Leopold's control over the Congo was brought down by a combination of Joseph Conrad brilliantly writing (in his third language) of *the Heart of Darkness*. Conrad and Roger Casement, an

Anglo-Irish officer in the British Foreign Service, wrote a number of books and articles about conditions in the Congo. They worked with the anti-slavery movements in Europe and the U.S. to shame the Belgians into changing the Congo into a real colony with parliamentary control rather than the fiefdom that it had been. Casement is one of my favorite people in history.

Q: He was later hanged by the British.

GALLAGHER: You know your Irish history well. The Brits did eventually hang him; but well before that he was assigned as a junior officer as British consul in Leopoldville. He did something that none of the other diplomats in Leopoldville ever did: he went up river and look at the rest of the country. What he saw was the appalling results of brutality that was being meted out to the Congolese people by their Belgian overlords. His polemical pieces and *The Heart of Darkness* were translated into French and circulated widely in Belgium itself. There were also two black Americans, one a missionary and the other, I have forgotten what his profession was, but they too wrote pieces that were very well received in this country beginning opposition to Leopold in the U.S. The net result was that eventually the Belgian parliament, embarrassed by these revelations, took control of the Congo away from Leopold and put it in the hands of the legislature itself, the parliament. That didn't end the killing immediately, but it did begin the process of cutting back on it.

Poor Roger went back to Dublin in or around 1916 where he saw conditions that rivaled those he had seen in the Congo and in Peru where he also wrote an anti-slavery polemic. He used his diplomatic contacts in Berlin to arrange the shipment of arms in a German submarine to the Kerry coast during World War I. Unfortunately for Roger, British intelligence was on to him and he was arrested and hung, but not before the Brits published his diaries which included graphic descriptions of the phalluses of the many men with whom he had had sex. To this day many Irish historians believe that the diaries are hoaxes, but Roger's biographers believe they were real. Roger's body was returned home to Dublin in 1995 where he was given a proper Irish wake and funeral.

Even after the parliamentary reforms, however, the Belgians continued to believe that the Congolese did not have the capacity for anything more than a fourth grade education. That is what they gave them and there was widespread literacy, but only to the fourth grade level. The Congolese people were able to do simple math and to read, but not be any threat to the colonial masters. The Belgians came to think of themselves as the nicest colonialists in Africa.

With the advent of the 20th century rubber became less valuable as plantations were developed in Malaysia and Indonesia; but the Congo is fabulously rich in diamonds, gold, cobalt, copper, uranium and coltan, a mineral needed for cell phones. The Belgians made a fortune out of these resources.

In 1960 when the rest of Africa was gaining its independence, the Congolese, under the leadership of Patrice Lumumba, went to the Belgians and said: "We want our

independence too.” The Belgians were absolutely shocked. They thought the Congolese were treated so well that they would be perfectly happy to remain a colony forever. Because of their limited education policies, there were only 11 college graduates in the Congo on the day it became independent. The Belgians put up no fight at all, nothing like the scenes in Algeria or Rhodesia or Kenya. The minute the Congolese demanded independence, they pretty much gave it to them. The U.S. became interested in the Congo at the time. It was, of course, the middle of the Cold War, and the Congo had uranium. The Soviets also got interested in the Congo and even named a university in Moscow after Patrice Lumumba. They brought students from all over Africa to study at Patrice Lumumba University in Moscow, where I think the student body was largely African. I think I mentioned at one point in our conversation that I ran the Southern African student program which was the American response to Patrice Lumumba University. This later became the justification for the establishment of the Southern African Students Program which I ran in the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs many years later (see above).

Congolese independence was followed by chaos. The province of Katanga tried to secede. Civil war ensued. UN troops were sent in. Lumumba was assassinated – many say by the CIA – and UN Secretary General Dag Hammarskjöld died in a plane crash which many believe was an intentional act on someone’s part to get rid of him.

Q: I know some Irish troops got eaten in one of their forays into the jungle.

GALLAGHER: Is that so

The chaos ended when a soldier named Mobutu Sese Seko took over the government and ruled for the next 40 or so years as a horrible dictator. He wasted the country’s resources on buying himself 13 palaces in Belgium and others elsewhere in Europe where he threw fabulous parties. The U.S. and western countries accepted Mobutu’s rule if only because it was an improvement over the anarchy that preceded him. Eventually, after 40 years or so, he died with his boots on. I think it was diabetes that killed him. There was no obvious successor. Democracy was tried but the election was flawed, and the country began falling apart into regional fiefdoms controlled by local warlords some of whom were pretty nasty and all of whom were utterly corrupt. The DRC is a wildly corrupt country. Around the turn of the 21st century troops moved in from all of the DRC’s neighbors. Tanzania, Uganda, Rwanda, and Angola sent the biggest contingents. They claimed that they were invading to establish stability but what they really were after was the mineral wealth. What in varying degrees they did was to establish control over small areas near important mines so they could steal the place blind. At one point the International Monetary Fund issued its annual statement on the Rwandan economy ruing the fact that Rwandan diamond exports had declined over the previous year. In fact, Rwanda has no diamonds. Their “exports” were in fact re-exports of what they stole from the DRC. On a trip to Kigali I was amazed by the construction of McMansions all over the city – seven and ten bedroom houses showing off Rwanda’s new wealth most of which is stolen from the DRC.

The DRC stew was complicated by the slaughter in Rwanda when Hutu extremists who had lost control of Rwanda fled to the DRC under hot pursuit by the Tutsi-led Rwandan army. The parts of the country that had no gold or minerals were left to their own devices which often meant a return to tribal warfare. Some of the stories of that warfare were almost comical. One political faction, the Mai Mai believe that a warrior should wear a sink around his neck when he goes into battle. Yes, I said “sink around his neck.” Two tribes the Hema and the Lendu are passionate enemies who have fallen into chronic warfare. One of them, the Hema, I think, believed that a warrior would be protected in battle if he wore a blonde wig and a ball gown. The Congolese are rather large people. So imagine seeing an angry and heavily armed black man coming at you wearing a Marilyn Monroe wig and a cute little strapless number that he just picked up at Lord and Taylor’s. OK, I lied about Lord and Taylor; but the rest is true. One has to keep hold of a sense of humor when you are dealing with mass slaughter, but it isn’t easy.

The incidence of rape in the Congo is phenomenal, and the incidence of gang rape is even worse. I don’t remember the statistics off the top of my head, but I believe that one third of the women in Kivu province have been raped at least once, many of them multiple times, many of them gang raped. I have never heard of any time in history when rape was so prevalent over such a long period of time. Maybe I shouldn’t be surprised. It may be more common than we know, but one third is a massive statistic.

The Congo desk was unbelievably lively. Every day, the department spokesman was making a statement about the Congo, so I would come into work and very quickly have to draft up something to be used by the department spokesman and get cleared by 20 people by 10:30 in the morning. I am not a morning person. I hate mornings so I never got in to work as early as some folks at the department do. I am not a 6:30 A.M. worker. I was always running up against the deadline of 10:00 or 11:30. I would have been even if I had come into work earlier because the clearance process still had to go on.

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We had a terrific ambassador in the DRC who was appointed while I was on the desk, Roger Meese, a very fine Foreign Service officer. I was involved in his swearing in and all that kind of stuff that the desk officer does the footwork for. I went to the DRC when Don Yamamoto organized peace talks in Kigali to try to bring some semblance of peace to the place. Don spent years pushing the peace rock up the Congolese hill, but peace never reigned for more than a few weeks at a time.

What Don was doing was making a pitch get the Congolese militias that were controlled by the Rwandans to join the Congolese army, and become a part of Congolese society. We have done a good deal to try to train and support the Congolese army and make it an effective fighting force; but it has never been effective.

On one occasion Don and I went to a very expensive Washington hotel to meet with Jean-Pierre Bemba, a vice president of the DRC who was a warlord from the northwest. I had a sense of being in a room with pure evil: a fat, mean looking man who was robbing his country blind. He developed a great money-making scheme at the expense of the government wherein he accepted rice from the government that was intended for the

people. He then used an airline that he owned to fly the rice to the northeast at government expense where he sold it back to the government which then paid his airline to fly it back to Kinshasa. I think Bemba was finally arrested, and I hope he's still in prison.

On a recent trip to Kinshasa as a WAE I was really struck by the enormity of the poverty in the place. For a country that is one of the richest of the world in terms of natural endowments the levels of poverty are absolutely extraordinary. When I was riding in from the airport I asked the junior officer who met me why so many people were standing by the side of the road watching traffic go by. "What else do they have to do?" she asked rhetorically. But the neighborhood surrounding my hotel (the only good hotel in town) was quite posh. The Papal Nuncio lived in a huge mansion there as did many government leaders. The population is now up to 80 million. Having gone down to ten million a century ago it has expanded like crazy. There are virtually no birth control programs because the Christian churches don't want that sort of thing.

Q: Was there any government going on at the time?

GALLAGHER: When I was desk officer President Kabila was in the presidential palace in Kinshasa, but his writ didn't extend very far outside the city. The rest of the country was pretty much in a state of anarchy. There was concern while I was there about uranium. At one point before my time on the desk Dick Cheney got involved. He was trying to show that Congolese uranium was being shipped to Iraq as part of the weapons of mass destruction program that he wanted to believe was going on. Apparently, it was very heavily investigated at the time and no connection to Iraq was found. I did a little digging into the uranium question. I wasn't interested in the Iraqi connection. I just wanted to know where the uranium was going. Who was the end user of the product? One source told me that truckloads of the metal left a particular mine every day and at the gate some turned left and some turned right. I asked all of my contacts at the CIA and the State Department's Bureau of Intelligence and Research, but nobody seemed to know where the trucks went. Everyone seemed to hope that the uranium ended up in South Africa, but no one knew for sure.

Anyhow, I did the Congo for only six months. Once again, I found myself working for a jerk who ran a wretchedly unhappy office with public humiliations and officers in tears on a regular basis. Oddly enough he liked me, and on two occasions when he was a way from the office for extended periods he left me in charge of AF/C. But one night when I was slaving away on some Congolese issue or another he came into my office at nearly 9PM and yelled fiercely at me because I had sent him something on a computer that was not properly formatted. The next day I went to Don and said that I had only six months to go before retirement, that I was sick of working for weak people (Don didn't disagree about my boss' weakness) and that I was quite ready to retire immediately if he couldn't find another place for me. He moved me into the Office of East African Affairs where I spent my last six months working for the wonderful Phil Carter who later became Ambassador in Guinea and the Ivory Coast as well as serving as a Deputy Assistant Secretary in AF.

AF/E was a child's playground compared to AF/C. I was Country Officer for Tanzania and Uganda. Tanzania is doing fairly well economically and our relations with Dar-es-Salaam are good, so not a lot happened there. They had some Christian/Moslem tension, particularly on Zanzibar; but overall I didn't spend a lot of time on Tanzania.

Uganda was another story. I talked earlier about my experiences with the Lord's Resistance Army so I won't go into that again.

President Museveni was one of the five African leaders who so enamored Susan Rice. I didn't share her respect for him. He signs all of his letters with the phrase Sincerely Yours In Jesus Christ, but Jesus doesn't need friends like him. In addition to his horrible treatment of the Acholi people and his rape of the Congo's wealth, he also became passionately anti-gay at one point advocating execution for homosexuals; but that fiasco came after my time on the desk. Nonetheless, during my tenure in AF/E he was the biggest recipient of American foreign aid on the African continent. Like Kagame in Rwanda, he always offered to help the U.S. – for example with troops for the African Union forces in Somalia – so we never called him on his abuses of power.

Museveni's influence in Washington was also helped along by his boast that Uganda, unlike other African countries, had developed a strong anti-AIDS program with amazing results. Uganda has indeed done better than many countries, but nowhere near as well as Museveni claimed. He produced a "study" that showed that AIDS was actually on the decline in Uganda. But while I was on the desk *the Lancet*, a highly respected British medical journal printed an article showing that Uganda's "statistics" were based on data from one small village, not the entire country.

Am I going to get in trouble for saying critical things about a "friend" of the U.S.?

Q: On something like this, if this is the way he treats his people it deserves to be said.

GALLAGHER: Well I am happy to say it.

Q: We are not an official publication of the State Department.

GALLAGHER: Okay, well I will say what I have to say, and you can edit it. We will hang together. Going back to the Susan Rice Saga, the Op-ed piece in the Washington post that I believe ruined her bid to become Secretary of State reflected very accurate information that this Eritrean national had. Much of it was public knowledge. What he criticized her for was her adoption of Isaias in Eritrea, Prime Minister Meles in Ethiopia, President Museveni in Uganda, and President Kagame in Rwanda. Those are the big four that I kept hearing about from her when I was in the AF bureau. The Eritrean also mentioned President Rawlings of Ghana as one of Susan's favorites. She believed that these five represented the new Africa, which she wanted very much to come into existence. She believed they were genuine democrats. All of them one way or another were revolutionaries. She saw them as George Washingtons. Rawlings is the only one

who left office allowing someone else be elected to succeed him. I think he is a genuine African hero. But the other four are in varying degrees, thugs. That includes Museveni who became a huge favorite of the United States for a variety of reasons, one of which is supposedly a very effective campaign against AIDS.

Museveni is close to the so-called “C-Street group” of fundamentalist members of the United States Congress who share a house on C-Street near the capitol. A number of them and their favorite pastors have gone to Uganda to encourage Ugandan politicians, including President Museveni himself, to seriously consider passing a bill to make homosexuality a crime punishable by execution. There was a strong backlash against the legislation and the Ugandans have backed off. I believe that after I left the Department Secretary Clinton, who has taken a very strong stance in support of gay rights, made a fairly strong statement warning the Ugandans that they would risk their foreign aid program from the United States if they continued to pursue this goal. We were giving them 36 million dollars a year, I think, much of which went into AIDS programs. We also have provided them with military training and in more recent years.

The Tanzanians had elections that were less than perfect while I was on the desk. It is probable that ballot boxes in Zanzibar were stuffed. Tanzania, if not careful, runs the danger of turning into another African country that splits along Christian/Animist lines on one side and Muslim on the other. That is essentially the issue in Zanzibar. The Zanzibaris are overwhelmingly Muslim, and they have consistently felt cheated in elections. There were some rumors that there might be an uprising which, to date, has not taken place. I hope that is because the Tanzanian president has been wise enough to negotiate with his Muslim minority and to give them a voice and a place in the parliament. But I am away from it and don't actually know what is going on. That was the main issue I dealt with in Tanzania. The Tanzanian economy is doing very nicely. They have done a lot of things right: curried foreign investment, used their foreign aid well, and, by African standards, they are a relatively more honest country. As a result, their economy has grown by about 4.5% growth per year for a long time. What else to say? I don't think much.

I turned 65 six months after I started working in AF/E. When I left the department I said I am so glad to be out of this place. I am never coming back. My first year of retirement, I didn't WAE at all. Then in my second year, they had a passport crisis. That was when we suddenly insisted that everybody traveling to Mexico or Canada needed a passport. Something like 800,000 Americans applied for passports almost overnight, so I thought it might be fun to work in the passport office in New York and make a little extra money, and give myself an excuse to spend more time in the City. So I applied for WAE. They bungled my application. I think I had to fill it out three separate times. They finally got it right and upgraded my security clearance, but by the time they did that the passport crisis was over. However, I was now on the mailing list for WAE positions that were opening up. Conakry was on the first list that I received, and Phil Carter, who had been my boss in AFE, and who I really respect very highly, was ambassador there. I decided that it might be fun to work for Phil again so I volunteered for Conakry. Not surprisingly nobody else wanted to go to that miserable city, so off I went to Guinea where I spent a very pleasant

two months. Phil treated me very well. So did the DCM. The junior officer in the consular section was a terrific fellow and spent a lot of time with me, so I wasn't lonely out there. The whole embassy was good. I taught a class in bridge which made several friends for me. The consular section was in the process of rewriting the emergency evacuation plan which required the junior officer and me to split three or four trips into the hinterland to meet with the missionaries and business people who were our local e&e contacts. Conakry launched my WAE career which has been much more successful than my pre-retirement career. I have since been to Kinshasa, Yaoundé, Cotonou, Paris, Brussels (twice), Madrid, Dubai, Port-au-Prince, Monterrey, Guatemala City, Dublin, Istanbul, Riyadh, N'djamena, Nassau and Recife, and I'm scheduled to leave for Guangzhou shortly. Almost all of those were a month each. It's been interesting to view so many posts as a sort of outsider. Even miserable places like N'djamena and Port-au-Prince can be fun if the boss and the coworkers are good people. Dubai was the worst of the lot. The CG was a nice fellow, but the junior officers were unpleasantly odd and the FSNs were duds. The weather was horrible and dust storms covered the city every day that I was there. Guatemala City was probably the best experience. I was given a sponsor, a rare thing for a WAE, who turned out to be exceptionally gracious. She and her husband brought me to meet a priest-friend of theirs who is running a hostel for about 30 of the most pathetic people in the country. All of them had developmental and/or psychiatric disorders. The priest himself lives in a converted pig sty and provides his charges with three square meals and a clean, safe place to sleep. It was the practice of Christianity at its best. I swore years ago that I would never give another penny to the Catholic Church to build more palaces; but I gave this priest every cent I had in my pocket and then arranged with the Community Liaison Officers at the Embassy to do food and clothing drives for him.

I have gotten lots of really very warm evaluations as a WAE. The last three officers who have run the WAE program in CA have all told me that I am one of their golden boys and I tend to get the posts I ask for as long as I do a few hardship posts along the way.

My career has been a roller coaster ride. When I'm working for one of the jerks who was thrown out of an embassy or right out of the Foreign Service I'm miserable and so is everyone around me. But when I'm working for one of the Foreign Service's stars – Hermann Eilts, Harry Barnes, John Brims, April Glaspie, Phil Carter or Don Yamamoto – I fly with them and so did my career. Thanks to the loser I worked for in Jeddah I was the last member of my A-100 class to get promoted; but I made FSO-2 in just 14 months after my tour in personnel - catching up with my classmates. On my return to the Foreign Service I was passed up for promotion for years. On my final evaluation I finally wrote a really strong officer's statement pointing out that I was the first openly gay person in the Foreign Service, that I had made significant assignments of female officers when the glass ceiling kept them down, that I had stopped a war in Sudan and gotten rid of the Lord's Resistance Army, that I had been given charge of the U.S. response to the two biggest wars since 1945 and that I had refused a visa to a probable terrorist who planned to do great harm to an American city. Just as the promotion panels had made up for the early insults in my career with my quick promotion to FSO-2, the panels came through again by promoting me 22 days after I retired. It was perfectly obvious from my

evaluation that I was about to face mandatory retirement, but they used one of the few slots available for promotion to let me know that I had done a good job.

GALLAGHER: You are a very good listener. Thank you for putting up with all of this.

Q: This is very good, and again you certainly can expand on your thing. I look forward to this. It will be great. This was fun. I have enjoyed this.

GALLAGHER: So have I.

Q: Bye.

This is Secretary Clinton's speech:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4PqBEq3SlfU&t=16m16s>

End of interview