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

OLIVER CLARKE

Interviewed by: Morris Weisz
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[Note: This interview was not edited by Mr. Clarke.]

Q: This is Morris Weisz for the Labor Diplomacy Oral History Project. On the morning of May 28, 1995, seated at home is our houseguest whom we are taking advantage in order to get this recording. Mr. Oliver Clark was an associate of mine at the OECD almost 20 years ago now. He has a long background in international labor affairs, during the course of which he had the occasion to meet, work with, educate and be educated by a series of labor officers in Europe and elsewhere. We are going to go over that experience and ask him to comment on, not so much the personalities, although we will be happy to have his comments, plus or minus, with respect to the personalities. But also comment on the operation in the international labor affairs of the US Government. Oliver, as usual, I would like to ask you to begin by a few minutes of social, economic and political basis of your family life, and your early life before you went to do professional work.

CLARKE: Right, I left school at fourteen, which was more advanced than my father who left school at twelve, so I can claim impeccable working class background.

Q: Your father was? What did he work as?

CLARKE: He was a fitter mechanic.

Q: Oh. He was a mechanic? By fitter, of course you mean he was a plumber or something like that.

CLARKE: Oh no, fitter in engineering has a very specific connotation, somebody who assembles in a skilled metal work.

Q: Oh yes, but doesn't do the sort of work that Walter Routh was so proud of doing which is tool and die making.

CLARKE: That's a specialty, but fitter belongs to the same skill set that tool and die maker would have raised too eventually.

Q: Oh, I see.

CLARKE: A fitter is a skilled man, a five year apprentice as my father was, and as I am, because after leaving school, I went into industry and joined the trade union, the [Inaudible] Engineering Union, and apprenticed at Rolls Royce. Then I went into the army for three and a half years where I also did work in engineering. After that I took advantage of the British Bill of GI Rights to take an engineering degree at University College, London. After that, I took a job as a negotiator at the Engineering Employers London Association, which was one of the 47 associations affiliated to the National Engineering Employers Federation. Its member employed 420,000 workers at that time which is not chicken feed. I became secretary of that association in 1956 and held that post for the next eleven years.

Q: Did you retain your trade union membership during that period?

CLARKE: I don't think that is so.

Q: What's common in Great Britain? Because in the United States, in some industries, the person would remain a member of the union if only for the benefits, remaining a member of the brotherhood of plumbers, you know.

CLARKE: Well, when I went into the army, I ceased to pay union contributions and never took it up again. I think it would probably have been impolitic although by no means unacceptable. The fact that I worked for the Labour Party was my business and not my organization's business. I kept my view to myself. They were quite tolerant. I can give examples of that. Again in 1967, I decided I wanted to do some academic work. I had become at a very early stage, interested in the international dimensions of industrial relations. Partly because I was astonished at how inefficiently the British industrial relations seemed to work. So I organized myself, visits to various countries and I took up post-graduate work at London School of Economics and did a lot of work in marvelous seminars and I registered for the pH, which unfortunately I never completed. I worked sixty hours a week which left little time for academic work, but by the end of 1967, this became important to me that I took advantage of the opportunities that I do full time academic work. That too stopped me from doing my own academic work because that was work in participation on industrial democracy organization international projects masterminded by International Labor Studies of Geneva, so that last normally eighteen months in practice. I also worked as a lecturer in Technology College, and operated as a management consultant with a firm called EINBUCON-AICU, which was partly American. AICU stood for Association of Industrial Consultation.

Q: When you use a term or a name, I am going to ask you to spell it for now.

CLARKE: EINBUCA-AICU. I have an interesting observation about that. In the early 1950's BTUC (British Trade Union Congress) took on head of production. This was associated with the interest that TUC was taking in the L'affiliate program and Anglo

American Council on Productivity.

I became an OECD official on Jan 1, 1970. There I was able to operate an entire international field and after my retirement from OECD on the age limit basis, I took up a new project.

Q: Retirement in '87-'88 or so.

CLARKE: I decided on a new career, and I took advantage of the offers to work successively as visiting at University of West Australia, NSW; London University in Belgium; University of British Columbia in Vancouver; Michigan State University of Labor and Industrial Relations.

Q: Where you are going back this year?

CLARKE: Yes I am going back there and American Graduate School of International Management in Glendale Arizona, and Chinese Culture University in Taipei.

Q: Great. This is a good background of what you are going to tell us about. And now, unless you want to go further into that, let's discuss a little bit of what you did at the OECD which gave you an opportunity to observe all activities with the US government.

CLARKE: I joined OECD. My appointment was a result of the adoption of a new program. Incidentally the documents about the program are stored in the European Institute just outside the hills of Florence. To those that documents are contributed, a short survey which is available.

Q: I want to thank you for this. For the people to be interviewed to identify the location of this documentation which is relevant to our work. Why are the documents in Florence and not some place in Great Britain if you have contributed?

CLARKE: Because it was a deal made by OECD, not just for this program but for many other programs. As OECD was crowded by paper, it wanted to get rid of it.

Q: So identify place and location and how one would get this material. Is it available to scholars?

CLARKE: I believe so.

Q: Now this is in Florence?

CLARKE: It's in the European Industry Institute which is associated with the European Union which has been in operation for over 29 years now. Incidentally, Andrew Schonfield was professor there, head of one of the departments. I think a reputable could have access to documents by writing to the Secretary of the European Institute. The

address is Fiesole, Italy. I don't have the zip code.

Q: Thanks. At the OECD, you were appointed by Gustave Rhem. Actually you were only there two years or so.

CLARKE: Its quite amusing, in pursuit of British Department of Employment, I had spent a short time, a few weeks on the continent, checking out industrial democracies in Belgium, Germany, France, Netherlands. And I worked for that time in international labor studies in Geneva. And, kind of last minute thought, when I arrived in Paris on my way back to Institute of London. I said to British Labor Attaché in Paris who was my host, he used to be in Sweden, Walis, I asked what's OECD doing on the subject and he said, well they got a meeting on that subject area today as a matter of fact.

Q: By industrial democracy you mean this whole concept that ranges from co-determination in Germany and all its manifestations in other countries.

CLARKE: And he said I am sure I can take you along and he took me along and I sat in the meeting. I talked to _____ whom I had first met in Stockholm in 1954 when I was in pursuit of my own inquiries and to all the countries in industrial relations. And the American Day Christian was the head of the department concerned and Barkin had already gone. Christian and Rhem talked to me doing the meeting. I felt a bit sore about because I thought I had come to gain information from them and they were talking to me about what I know about industrial democracy.

Q: Now you know why.

CLARKE: Later I found why in a telephone conversation in London. Would I be interested in working in the OECD and so much in accordance with my own interests? I said yes. They explained the problem such as the French event of 1968, the countries that couldn't be convinced that labor was a vital factor of growing importance. And governments need a better understanding of it.

Q: Oliver, I have to interrupt at this point to say that for those people that have been following market plan experience noted in my interview that Christian had been discharged from the Marshall Plan office when I was directing it. It is a terrible example of screwy McCarthyism that it took him some time but finally he did get back in the U.S. government work and then later was appointed to the OECD.

CLARKE: Now you are telling me something that I didn't know.

Q: Yes, that happens.

CLARKE: There was another man, consultant, Weiss. Harry Weiss.

Q: Who had been the deputy assistant secretary for international affairs.

CLARKE: He advised them on the birth genesis of this program. I was engaged in 1969, was an intermittent consultant, and in that capacity as a member of OECD, I commented on a number of meetings under OECD Research Management Project.

Q: You were appointed as a result of a phone call and you came to work early in the 1970's. When you were finally appointed to the staff, it was as a British citizen under formal or informal quota for the jobs they had.

CLARKE: Actually, there was no quota. Several countries were under-represented, like the U.S. Quite a number of Americans weren't interested in that kind of work. Secondly, salary range was below the range of American levels. It wasn't much to attract apart from the idea of living in Paris. So my first task in OECD was to work out how this program might operate.

Q: Labor management program or the research?

CLARKE: Labor management program which had a lineage which was directly descendent from the European Productivity Agencies in the 1940's and 1950's and the new industrial relations program. So, although in a formal sense, OECD did not work in industrial relations, but in practice, it most certainly did. The OECD official who steered it very strongly in that direction was Solomon Barkin in the 1960's. He had left by the time I joined but with his interest in industrial relations he made sure that the project operated in a very useful exploratory way. Indeed if you will look at the publication program in 1960, you cannot help but be impressed by the range and depth and the willingness Barkin shared to engage an up and coming talent, French sociologist, Alain Touraine. We did some work on attitudes to automation. So the organization OECD has to decide how to program, to be supervised, or to be injected by member countries. And the option was to either manpower committee should take direct responsibility of offer to the new committee. The option eventually chosen by the council was setting up industrial relations working party, IWP. The working party and that came about in May 1970. The working party first met in May 1970.

Q: Who was the American who came over?

CLARKE: The lineup or representation was very interesting. The Canadians sent a deputy minister, the U.S. sent an assistant secretary of labor relations. Other countries sent some high level person, one or two cases the top person in the industry, or in some cases somebody very low level. The chairman elected was the American. He proved to be a very able chairman, of course, and this of course was philosophy.

Q: How could we forget him?

CLARKE: He was chairman from the very beginning. The program was well funded, well staffed. I was given two professional aides and a company administrative staff and a good budget with remit to work on strikes.

Q: Identify or describe what remit is?

CLARKE: Remit is in the decision making process. A proposal is made that may emanate originally from within the government or within the working party committee or from the secretary. Then the draft work program examined annually contained that proposal and the government decides whether to go through.

Q: So a remit is a procedure?

CLARKE: A remit is fact that government had approved or not.

Q: So it's a decision?

CLARKE: Yes. In the summer of 1970, the board program received an impetus which wasn't expected in accordance with the ministerial meeting of OECD of that year. Decision was made.

Q: The Ministerial meeting is one where each government is represented by a minister. This would be an economic minister, than the labor minister.

CLARKE: Or a secretary of state. And they decided that the coming problem to deal with was inflation. The secretary general of OECD responded by asking his economic advisor Steven Marris to go around each director of the organization and see what they can contribute. Since by that time tied with what was absolutely clear that labor element was extremely important. The argument about cost caused inflation. Resulting in somewhat generous wage adjustment at the time of full employment. Clearly we had to make contributions to this work. In fact we made several contributions to this work. The major one was an international conference which was set up with the aid of the Steering group. On which American Lloyd Ullman, University of California at Berkeley was a member. It was July 1973 -- conference, you were present in that.

Q: This will be followed up by my own description which I hope to reach sometime about the period and the work done. You said set up for the labor management, operation with some staff members or so. By the time I came, I think you were less concerned with than that than my friend, French, Etevenon, wonderful person. He was fully occupied by the time I came in September 1972, with the labor management Program. You were doing other things you were participating in the program.

CLARKE: The labor division had decided between ourselves, as to who should provide the input to the labor management program, which I've already hinted was largely occupied by industrial relations questions. That in fact was to be changed after the council decision of 1968, which said the program must be broadened out to take account of information more of contents of other directorates. But the division of labor was industrial relations questions. I, all the people who worked with me, provided substantive

input and Etevenon would organize (which he did so well).

One examines the scale of it these days, comparing now and then, it's close today, only a very tiny fraction. All it provides is a small number of expert meetings.

Q: But they still continue to mention that.

CLARKE: But even in those days after counsel position in the early 1970s, the project enjoyed considerable support and worked on wide variety.

Q: Actually it operated under the administrative aspect of OECD. Didn't they have a separate budget for labor management program? Etevenon reported to us/me. But he also had some relation to the department. External relation to the department was sort of management group.

CLARKE: Well that's the diplomatic secretary.

Q: Right.

CLARKE: Etevenon had the right to invite countries to send representatives, and in that capacity he had to liaise with the external relation. In 1974, the whole program was transferred with Etevenon and his secretary to external relations.

Q: Did we agree with that?

CLARKE: You and I didn't agree.

Q: We were very distressed by that. But as a matter of fact, there is an example of where power and personalities, relationships govern. I didn't feel that they constrained us in any way, as we feared might happen. But later on, it became a limiting factor in the effectiveness of what could be done.

CLARKE: If you remember, there was a change of director in 1974 who had a very deep interest in industrial relations. Was replaced by able and agile administrator who didn't feel that labor management project was that important than what was considered the work of his professional staff on that program was an unfortunate distraction from the straightforward problematic work of the directorate.

Q: What it amounts to is that director of education was at where he was the head?

CLARKE: He was head of education but not a directorate. It was attached to science.

Q: So, it was science and education and they combined the education part of it but with our social affairs, so it became the head of the directorate of social affairs, manpower and education

CLARKE: It was called SME and the science part of it went to gather with the technology and industry. The industry committee being suppressed at that time.

Q: What it amounts to is that we were combined to the education part of science and education to the new directorate, which this very ambitious bureaucrat, Sir Arnold Gass.

CLARKE: So, industrial relationships project program reached its peak in 1973. By which time, head of division had been appointed.

Q: 1973, I thought he came in 1974, the new head.

CLARKE: I'm talking about the new head of industrial relations. You were appointed as the head of division in beginning of 1973.

Q: No, it was September 8, 1972, the day after I retired from the State Department.

CLARKE: Myself as a principal administrator, administrator and a junior administrator, with professional strength leading beside Etevenon.

Q: We had separate divisions for which I was involved but had no technical responsibilities and social affairs. Beginning with 1974, we had a new director and functions changed a bit. Well we have gone through this is very valuable in the light of the main purpose of this interview. I would like you to comment on, in so far observe you travel quite a bit during the OECD days and afterward. You might be able to observe the work of the State Department Labor Attachés and the AID function, and the OECD in effect a contribution in fact of that AID program. And you traveled to developing countries. Which was a follow up function of OECD of responsibilities handed over to OECD for the OECC which was supposed to take on doing for the world what had been done for the European countries. So you had the opportunity to travel and without any fine lines, observe the work of the State Department Labor Attachés, AID function and labor function. Even Information Agency which had AID participant but was also independent.

CLARKE: The last goes to an earlier phase of my career. One correct note necessary is that I didn't travel as an OECD official to any developing countries except possibly for the purpose of attending or speaking at a conference.

Q: Right, our division had no responsibilities in the developing world except to comment on that committee, the DAC, development assistance committee. Which I did a little of and which was headed by Ambassador Martin, who was another one of those people who originally came from labor department and then went into greater opportunities.

CLARKE: This earlier phase in my career in which I became interested in was in London in the 1950s. I started industrial relations in August 1950. I had of course already been a

trade union member. I attended branch meetings but I never had any office as a youngster in trade union. But when I became a negotiator, I became impressed by what seemed to be the weakness in the British industrial system that put me on an enquiry to find out how people did things. There were very few books at that time. In fact the most important one was by Walter Gayland's Comparative labor movement in 1952.

Q: Which was less comparative than it was a series of countries summarized by Walter.

CLARKE: Yes, it wasn't much of what we understand today by comparison. But I pursued this interest in two main ways. One was to organize myself during my holiday period, visits to other countries. Secondly miss no opportunity of getting information in London about other countries. Thirdly I should say, I worked upon doctoral studies at the London School of Economics.

Q: That was when you were first exposed to the American work in the general aid and labor attaché work also.

CLARKE: That would be about 1953.

The London operation of the U.S. Embassy was extraordinarily useful to me and thousands of others at that time. The budget appeared to be extensive.

Q: Any distinction in your understanding between the budget of AID and Information Agency and the State Department.

CLARKE: I couldn't have differentiated them at that time.

Q: Because one of the problems was that we had the money. The AID agency and the State Department had their responsibility.

CLARKE: What the embassy provided would have been the aid operation. But also this was aid operation program of the periodic lectures by people such as -- in 1950s and member of Trade unions.

Q: But we never met at that time when I would come over in conjunction of my overall European activities.

CLARKE: Maybe we had a meeting, but of course I didn't know you.

Q: Interesting.

CLARKE: The person who ran this program mainly as I was concerned was Bill Gaudssman and it was put forward in a straightforward way, at least that's how it seemed to me. And it was an exploratory presentation of American System.

Q: Well, he would get lecturers, did he himself discuss American Labor situation in it.

CLARKE: He didn't make any comments. The more I think, Mr. Gaudssman would make one or two comments.

Q: Well, let's continue with Gaudssman. He was active here as a socialist here in the U.S. Did you get any inkling and this becomes important later on the discussion of effective background of what they did. Any inkling of his political beliefs?

CLARKE: No.

Q: Poor fella, he's dead by now. So we are not accusing him of some sort of improper activity.

CLARKE: In Britain, the 1945-1950. The labour government had gone and London Conservative administration of thirteen years. Politics didn't seem to enter it. Obviously under the Gaudssman umbrella, people talked about it widely about U.S. labor movement. It was not socialist. But there was virtually nothing about politics.

Q: Well, what he did, did you know about his association with the Commentary group?

CLARKE: The labor attaché at that time spoke once or twice at the meeting. But I've no recollection of what transpired.

Q: Joseph Gudson and you didn't detect whether U.S. government was quite important. You didn't detect any tension between the Marshall Plan information side of Gaudssman and his political work.

CLARKE: None, whatsoever. To me these two people. The complementarily was not clear to me. The complement was however there. And they were pulling over what happened in America in the factual way.

Q: I want to thank you for understanding of this. We get different versions from different people including myself.

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OK, good morning, we are now continuing the interview the following morning, May the 29th with Oliver who wants to correct a couple of things you said yesterday?

CLARKE: More like adding to them. We were talking when we left off about the confidentiality of the services of the U.S. Embassy in London. And I wanted to add, in the early 1950's, I wasn't very well informed as I was later in my London experience. I got to know them then, attaché I knew, Tom Burn, John Correll, we were on lunching terms. It's interesting to make the comparison from my point of view. I was eager to find out what

was happening with other countries. Americans were the most informative, and they were outwardly friendly. Most other countries did not. The exception was Sweden which ran a very high powered program with very prolific literature availability. It was interesting the Swedish labor attaché with the American labor attaché. They were very frank. I was interested to find that they came in turn from labor or from management and after a spell as an attaché they would go back to their employer's organizational tribunal. I profited from their discussion.

Q: Now you're talking about what period?

CLARKE: I'm talking more about 1960s, late 1950s, through to early 1960s. I talked yesterday about availability of information, about OECD work in labor. I should have added a couple of which from a research point of view probably far more useful to going to Florence to electoral to exercise my proof. The most up to date I'm speaking of 1994 source is a chapter of Blanpain's International Encyclopedia of Laws: Labour Law and Industrial Relations. I was one of the coauthors of that work and diverted to the OECD. My little bit was describing the evolution of the industrial relations, work program. It was not produced by the Wharton school. It was produced by Lester University, now being taken over by one of the publishers.

The third thing that I wanted to mention is my assessment of various labor attachés I have dealt with over time and that applies not only to American attachés but also to Swedes, in recent years, to Germans in London, which incidentally has a valuable monthly bulletin updating German news.

Q: Before we go any further with respect to the Swedes that you said were the most informative in your London days in the 60s, didn't the Germans have a succession of labor attachés too?

CLARKE: They did and I did occasionally speak to them but I really never got to know them so I can't talk about it.

Q: OK.

CLARKE: The thing that seems to be as the most important is rather odd, it wasn't so much as a background or the academic experience of the labor attaché which was important to my perception that they were doing a splendid job. It was the personality of the individual. I have found the American attaché who seemed the least they said was the better, though they were always charming.

And there were others who went out of their way to get me information, to check on things for me and it was clear that it wasn't favoritism to me, but this was their normal approach to enquiries in their countries. I should also add on my experience with labor attaché, was certainly not more recently than my experience with the British Labor Attaché in the OECD. Obviously each of twenty four countries now twenty five with

Mexico have to have somebody in the mission to OECD who dealt with the labor papers and in many cases that was simply acting as a post box and sending it back to the capital. But the larger countries tended to have attachés very much of the labor attaché kind. The U.S. certainly, Japan certainly, then Australia. These countries had particularly useful people with whom I could talk about labor development in their countries.

Q: You were talking about people being helpful, and knowledgeable rather than their personality. Whether they came from the trade union or management or government or academia. I think I understand it from my experience also, but what about the other countries? First, where did they normally come from? You mentioned Sweden is coming alternately from labor and management and returning to labor and management after a brief period of time in the government. I think that may be true about some of the Germans involved not in the diplomatic areas but in the AED caps there who go back also. What about the other countries that you know of?

CLARKE: The UK Labor Attaché said that there is no rule about it, the practice is almost invariably to use civil servants from the Department of Employment.

Q: Who go back?

CLARKE: Who may serve in more than one country, but whose home is within that particular department in the government.

Q: And the choice is made by the department?

CLARKE: The choice is made by the department. I don't know any liaison at all with the foreign office in the international agency.

Q: With respect to the appointment, once they are there of course [inaudible].

CLARKE: I have a number of documents that come from labor attaché and their reports do have a very wide distribution which clearly goes for various people in the mission starting with the ambassador but also the foreign office and the members of other government officials.

Q: Are these reports vetted by the foreign office? Does the labor attaché make an independent submission?

CLARKE: Well, the labor attaché have quite a degree of independence. You and I talked about the labor attaché in Germany in another discussion. In Germany we became so imbued by the virtues of German industrialization that we, that my reports that his reports were treated by scant courtesy in London on the grounds of what we know this guy has to say.

Q: What about the position of trade union and management organization with respect to

the personnel chosen and what they did?

CLARKE: To the best of my beliefs, neither the employment organization, CBI, nor the trade unions were consulted. Maybe it was different in the days when the well known left wing labour leader, Michael Foote was minister because his attitude of making the policy was to say to his civil servant, who wanted to know what minister wanted to put into the draft of law. Go over to BTUC and ask them what we should put in, then close. But that was very special in that period of British industrial relationships, from 1974 to 1979.

Q: What was the name of labor minister under the conservative government who had such good relations with both Churchill and trade union movement? Do you recall his name? My impression was that he did have quite an interest, neither of us can think of his name. I am talking about 50's or 60's. Close associate of Churchill.

CLARKE: Walter Monckton.

Q: Yes, Monckton. W was not the initial of his last name, but first name.

CLARKE: He was a very interesting man. He was a great conciliator. He had trade union's confidence. Earlier he had been involved in the abdication of King Edward VIII.

Q: That's right.

CLARKE: In British war history, Monckton's place of labour is when Churchill returned to office in 1952 or '51, the appointment of Monckton as labour minister, Churchill was sensitive to criticism of his own past with respect to labour. There were cases of rough treatment of coal miners on strike in the first decade of the century. Later, there was the criticism of the general strike in which Churchill took strongly an anti-union attitude, in 1926. Monckton was appointed then to steer a middle course, far removed from the course of probably Thatcher's secretary of employment, Minister of Labour. A course of conciliating giving the union confidence, bringing the unions into everything, where from 1979 on, the doors of the office have been largely closed to the trade union.

Q: I raise this point because of the similarity in the U.S. under Republican regime. There is frequently a very friendly relationship between the Labor Minister, Secretary of Labor and Trade Union and U.S., being the good example came from the trade union, which Monckton was not. Under Republican regime, Nixon appointed a person who was much friendlier than Nixon has been and the difference later on with respect to about the appointments made by Reagan was fatuous even though he came from the union, though not originally, but he mentioned frequently. Yet his ministers, his labor secretary starting with Donovan didn't get along too well. Some of them did, Brock did, pretty well but later on, certainly during Bush also.

CLARKE: Adding to, responding to your questions about different countries, Japan, the way Japan makes information available by labor relations is partly through the Japan

Institute of Labor. The deputy director is a former trainee of mine in OECD, spent a couple of years with me. This is M. Maeda.

Q: I asked for that because somebody going to Japan might want to know that and not the person we knew later, Nakamura who is very important.

CLARKE: Who became the director of ILO of Bangkok, SE Asian Office.

Q: Is he still there?

CLARKE: I believe he is.

Q: That's Nakamura for anyone who goes off to Bangkok.

CLARKE: The succession of labor attachés from Japan for OECD. That wasn't their title but that was the office they were talking about. The tour of duty was three years. Without exception I found them all most friendly, most helpful, anxious to follow and have a part in what we were trying to do in OECD.

Q: And what wonderful hosts to our meeting.

CLARKE: The others I would have good relations with them. I have no criticism of any of them.

Q: There is something about Australia, but they didn't have full time people on Labor, did they.

CLARKE: People dealing with area of work under my directorate and broad directorate of course, people who dealt with foreign policy, industrial relations and manpower.

Q: Take our friend, the Ambassador, Sir Halford Cook. Well he wasn't full time on labor work, was he?

CLARKE: Talking about Sir Cook, Halford Cook had been the top civil servant in the department of labour in Canberra.

Q: In the conservative government.

CLARKE: Under the conservative government, when the Whitlam government came in the early 1970s, Whitlam hated his own people and the Australians who were appreciative of the ever increasing workload of the industrial relations area.

Q: And they had just joined the OECD.

CLARKE: Had the interesting idea of appointing Cook in the mission in Geneva, which

served all international agencies. So Cook's job was coordinating the offices of various Australian missions to international organizations.

Q: But he spent very much time in labor.

CLARKE: But his heart was in labor. He was a member of the fascinating team in the 1940s that made a great name in the Tavistock Institute. He was a psychologist.

Q: Right, but he spent a considerable amount of time in Paris in OECD matters but alone on OECD matters or generally.

CLARKE: I am sure that Cook would have attended various international conferences. The Australian government regarded Cook as their man in Europe. So anything that need to be communicated to the government, Cook would be asked to do this or that.

Q: Known as Cookie. I can't think of any other country I would like to ask you about. But you can think of others, Germans we have covered. There was this indefinite lying between the representatives of Government in the labor field who came from various sources and the representatives like U.S. case, the aid agency which was financed by the government I guess. By one branch of the government and that was ----A ----

CLARKE: I had not much to do with –A--. But of course OECD—

Q: What's the difference between the A—and ---

CLARKE: It's purely concerned with industrial democracy with codetermination of the German kind. It's the agency which provides training for appointed workers directors.

Q: Oh, I see, that's more domestic.

CLARKE: And incidentally part of its funding comes from those individuals. Although German unions are basically responsible for making these nominations insist that part of the remuneration of the directors is paid into the ----

Q: And into the B—

CLARKE: Perhaps I might comment on two interesting cases. In my experience the Swedes didn't follow the same kind of policy of OECD in personal dealing with labor as they did in the major capitals of the industrialized countries. The best to my belief, the people in the Swedish delegation in OECD for labor matters were officials. In Finland, there was usually somebody who took interest in labor which was unusual in that country and that representative also seemed to be very much in tune with the labor experts back in Helsinki. They were well informed.

Q: New Zealand had no such representatives.

CLARKE: New Zealand has only 3 million people. Usually they had somebody who knew something about labor. But they didn't take much interest as the Australians did. One other case I must mention is the Irish case. The Irish embassy, as a point of view of the population is the same as New Zealand, small country. The Irish on the spot in Paris didn't deal very closely with OECD in labor interests. But the people in Dublin were very close. The country of course is varied in their interest and the Dublin people hated by their Permanent Secretary were very interested in OECD. They came over frequently, made great contributions. They made readily available all information; they took part in policy making.

Q: Now are you ready to start commenting on what labor attaché from your observation the U.S. labor attaché did in these very countries and in various countries from your observation, both in your British experience and OECD experience. What did they concern themselves with? What did they emphasize and how much of that emphasis was to your knowledge related to the pressures of the embassy or trade union management or government headquarters?

CLARKE: I must say that my knowledge of this is very superficial, very much an observer.

Q: That's what we want.

CLARKE: I had no knowledge what went on behind the scenes. There were occasions in OECD labor attaches and not just the Americans had difficult job because somebody back in the capital had made some absurd policy declaration that they had to abide. And they were obviously very uncomfortable but of course they did their duty. I had this particularly with Germans. On one occasion, it was interesting the Germans wanted a wording of a proposed International Instrument changed, in what seemed to me in an absurd way. Now the chain of this was that somebody unknown in Bonn had raised it, it had gone up to a certain level and then the OECD coordinator would have been asked to tell the delegation that the German government would not accept this. This is indeed what happened. And by a fluke, I was just off to Bonn for a holiday, and a long weekend and I immediately set in train the possibilities of my having a discussion about this. I had to dress it up. I wasn't dictated to whom I should talk. But I managed to make it clear that I wanted to talk to the person who had set this thing in motion. And I did. It was a mere ranking official and he and I had no problem whatsoever in finding the formal words that implicated the Germans and which certainly implicated me. The Germans in fact alarmed at the significance of that wording and in respect of matter of current importance in Germany. Period DGB had expressed a rather strong view with the German government for resisting.

Q: That's a good way of dealing with the problem like that, but it's a unique way. My recollection and I would like to know of any instances relating to American service, which would parallel this. We had a man representing the labor ministry on some policy

work we were doing in OECD who was later appointed as an expert to develop our policy on multinationals. What was his name? Begins with an M, Alun Morgan.

CLARKE: Alun Morgan,

Q: Morgan came in one day and I can't imagine an American Labor Attaché faced by this problem and creating it this way. He came in one day and took a strong position; I don't remember the issue, that the British government wants this, that or the other thing and some aspect, of labor that he was representing government in a meeting of ours. He came in two days later with a change of government. I think it was when Wilson came in or went out. Something like that. And asked forcefully as he presented one point of view two days before, he presented the opposite point of view. Now one thing is he is very adept at this. We both thought very highly of Alun Morgan and so he could do that very well. But what's the nature of policy development that permits that sort of thing instead which would be closer to the U.S. of sending him to one of the new teams to take another policy.

CLARKE: Well the higher levels of British civil service are as infamous British comedy, "Yes Minister", very close. And Morgan was the man who knew the score, he had by the way when he did that job in OECD already been retired.

Q: Oh yes. That was there. But I am talking about the time when he was a member of the ministry labor staff. He later became Labor Attaché to the U.S. as a matter of fact.

CLARKE: No, no. You're thinking of Kerr.

Q: Oh no. Didn't Morgan take a position as a labor attaché in some place?

CLARKE: I think he had been. But he was too senior at the time you are talking about.

Q: Right, right.

CLARKE: I don't think Morgan would have found any great difficulty period. British civil tries loyally to follow what his political masters say they want.

Q: So does the American Labor Attaché. But to represent a totally new policy, the tendency in the U.S. would be to send in a new person to stress that it's a new policy. That's just an interesting difference.

CLARKE: Yes, but that leads me to the observation that I'm making in all innocence. That one of the weaknesses of American diplomacy in international meetings as observed by other countries, is the tendency for a new administration to send in a new political appointee who quite often behaves that the whole thing is starting on day one and would advance ideas that would have been discussed ten, twenty or thirty years ago, and which would be deemed to be impracticable. So the reaction of other countries is friendly or

charitable but it does follow the lines of 'Americans are at it again' and he would learn. The other countries appreciate the spirit that American representatives raise in these points. But since most of these officials in other countries are long term career civil servants and have been around the international scene for years and years, the changes in personnel from the U.S. side are a little disconcerting.

Q: Though disconcerting, what impact does it have on policy finally developed, any?

CLARKE: When the U.S. speaks other countries listen for obvious reasons. And anything that the U.S. raised would have pretty good and full attention. It certainly would not be brushed aside. But apart from the fact that it might be something new, it would be possible to adopt the American idea. The response of other countries would be to engage in an attentive discussion until a joint point of view could be arrived at.

Q: Now you have been speaking so far of international organizations and representation in the labor side of the U.S. What about in various countries? What posture do you think is best for the American Labor Attaché, or from your experience more practical and more constructive with respect to dealing with the country and specially trade union management groups?

CLARKE: Well, I am an outsider, but my perception is that the office of labor attaché is useful equally to the people in the country concerned, management, labor and government and all through the U.S. I think the labor attaché serves a very important purpose in alerting the economic and political officers of the embassies to realities which would not be gained simply by reading the newspaper or talking to one or two top politicians. Top politicians in my eyes are suspect as to the validity and value of the many things they say on policy issues. The labor attaché can be a source of information, which I find very, very useful, and there is no reason why the American taxpayer should keep somebody in office to inform people like me.

Q: Unless you have important impact on events.

CLARKE: It had a very important than role than I ever had. But I don't want to ignore educational and informative function whether it comes from USIS or whether it comes from the State Department or Labor Department. The inhabitant of the country is not so important. The important thing is that somebody is there to give important information. As I said, to carry back to the colleagues in the embassy and in the State Department the realities of what's happened. We should never forget compared with the 19th century when labor counted for so little with the widening of democracy and the spreading of the franchise and so on. The general revolution of the labor parties and the trade union labor parties today occupy a far more important part in the national life. And that justifies in my eyes, the attention which probably no one in the embassy other than labor attaché or somebody well informed with training in labor could offer.

Q: Well, when you say the importance of labor, do you mean trade union? Or labor in

terms of manpower, trade union and policy? There is a lack of understanding in some circles of what's meant by labor attaché. Is he an attaché about labor matters in the broadest sense, or is he an attaché only about industrial relations?

CLARKE: Oh, he is about employment policy, he is about wage negotiation. For instance I think it's very important the U.S. should have information about German wage negotiation. Let's take another example, which I think illustrates this point nicely. The U.S. certainly has deficiencies in U.S. training arrangements as a country. And the present international trading situation has rather put the spotlight on this deficiency. The U.S. is not alone. The British situation is just as bad or worse and this is the very role in which a labor attaché can, with his or her expert knowledge, track down what's happening in the county where that person is located. Can evaluate the succession of schemes put in to try and improve individual and to inform Washington of what judgment or what use Washington makes of that is another matter. I think the attaché's role is to keep the State Department and the Labor Department informed.

Q: What value is that information outside of labor in its broader sense in policy say industrial policy, investment policy, etc.

CLARKE: Yes, I would imagine that the Commerce Department would also have some interest in this. I don't expect say the attaché in London makes a report about the training and enterprise counsels which is one British development aimed at improving training, would be picked up by the relevant minister who says we must do this now here. It simply that the recipient of the information in a fairly senior policy position should in my judgment, say, what's there in this for us? Are we deficient and how should we fill that deficiency. Does this give us any idea that we can use?

Q: Well, comment on this problem that the U.S. government which others may, that is you are talking to evaluate our government of observing, noticing, becoming expert at from reading and speaking to people, day to day contact. It's the sort of thing we always think about. American Labor Attaché feel this sort of thing, that our friend Sam Burger in the period of Harriman, he had all these so that he was able to help exult American policy when the new Attlee government, we always point to that as a great value which indeed it is. Now that value is because of his background in labor, in Wisconsin and labor. Just general background but it was of no value till Atlee came in and he was able to use his knowledge of the people and contacts of American Policy. Now we have a situation where rightly or wrongly, many of us think wrongly. The US government is governed by the need to cut back and we are carrying what I think is terrible, cutting back on our missions abroad. And this has existed in the last few years, and specially exemplified by the new congress. What we have is a tendency that's developed being exacerbated now by saying, "its wonderful to have a labor attaché, I've got to give him these other duties", some of which are understandable like the human rights field, which is very close to labor field than others. I once was visiting India long after my retirement and found that nobody was ready to go along with me to meet an important person because he had to do something from my point of view, much less his other duties, covering labor and other

things. I think it's devastating to the interest of the U.S. not to have this duty performed of keeping contacts, exchange knowledge which may not have an immediate value for an important for report but will be value in exercising U.S. policy. Not U.S. labor policy. Anyway, you can think of dealing with that problem in the face of these other urgencies.

CLARKE: I would however I would comment on Burger. I don't think it's true he had very little done before that time. Let me remind you that labour entered the British government in 1940 and not in 1945 when Atlee.

Q: Yes I see what you mean.

CLARKE: I happen to know that Burger and other people became very important at that time. And I also remind you that Phil Kaiser in his capacity as a Rhodes Scholar got to know a whole serious of top flight conservative and labour politicians and that must have been of enormous value later on. So make an investment. You can say, I have a labor attaché here and he's costing me so many dollars a week, and what am I getting for it, just a lot of paper? Because the time may come when the critical judgments have to be made and that's the time when this information is vastly valued.

Q: Well, then it's an investment like an investment in physical infrastructure which we are also neglecting now in the U.S. and other countries.

Oliver, with the limited amount of time, I would like to go into another question that I want to get your views on, as your views are largely different from the views internally in the U.S. government. And that's the generally known participation in the U.S. government of covert labor activities. We all know what has appeared in the press, what hasn't appeared in the press. Some conjecture that we give weight to foreign policy in the labor field that carry on overtly by labor attaché and officials of trade union and management activities. But coming out in press in 1966 or so public disclosure of money going through the U.S. government through the CIA or through other sources to trade unions in other countries and labor exercising policies in other countries.

CLARKE: Anything which is covert which represents interference in the affairs of another country is immediately suspect. Certainly nobody would recommend it as a general policy. I think one of the things which the US administration has neglected to appreciate is the impact of the knowledge of these things in the countries concerned. People resent interference from outside. React against it. And it certainly does nothing for the image of the US as a well-meaning democratic power.

End of interview