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LESLEY DORMAN

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INTERVIEW

Q: This is Penne Laingen on March 27, 1987. I am interviewing Lesley Dorman. Lesley, would you please tell me the posts you have served in, in their chronological order?

DORMAN: London, England; Cairo, Egypt; Tehran, Iran; Washington, DC, I count as a post; Lusaka, Northern Rhodesia, which became Lusaka, Zambia; Khartoum, Sudan; The National War College, which I also look at as a post, because I worked very hard; Washington, DC; Bangkok, Thailand; and again Washington, DC.

Q: Which do you consider your most successful or happiest post?

DORMAN: Well, I enjoyed all the posts, but I think that the ones I really enjoyed the best were Egypt and Bangkok. I also enjoyed Lusaka very much. They were all very different and my enjoyments were all very different. I worked a little bit in an eye clinic. I worked for the YWCA. But I had a lot of fun, too. I played tennis twice a day with the Egyptian ladies in the morning and I played mixed doubles in the afternoon with Egyptians and Americans, with other nationals, and I played in the international tournament in Cairo in mixed doubles and in ladies doubles.

Q: Did you win?

DORMAN: Not a thing (laughs), but we got up there in the mixed doubles. I played with a Dutch woman, and we didn't do badly. We didn't get as far as Lew Hoad (Australian tennis player), who was playing in the tournament.

Q: Were there a lot of Egyptian women who played tennis?

DORMAN: Quite a lot. A very interesting thing for people today is that I played in one set with Egyptian women and a Viennese woman, a Jewess, who had come out of Vienna in the early part of World War II, and everybody got on so well. The Commodore of the Yacht Club in Cairo in those days was David Addis who was Jewish. A lot of people in the Khan al-Khalili...the mousski (bazaar) were, so when one really thinks about this, Semites get on well together when politics don't interfere.

Q: You said to me that you had undergone the Zambian Independence. What was that like?

DORMAN: We went into Lusaka in 1963 and Independence was in 1964 a year later. Independence was all prepared for. The Princess Royal (Princess Mary, daughter of King George V, the Countess of Harewood) came out from England and, poor darling, I hope it wasn't the Independence, because I believe she died a month later. She was very gracious. It was a very dramatic time, because not only were there lots of balls and spectacular events in the stadium, but I think seeing the British flag hauled down and the Zambian flag -- orange and black and green -- put into place was very, very dramatic. At a special

hour, when it was dusk. And because the copper belt is part of Zambia, a big car covered in copper came with the President of Zambia riding in it.

Then, I had the good fortune to have two interesting talks with Golda Meir, who was representing Israel. She was a very serious woman indeed. Her sense of humor came infrequently, but she was fascinating. What I liked about her was that whatever question one asked (and one hoped it would not be frivolous, because she valued her time), it was answered with understanding. I thought she was a very fine human being.

Q: I think so, too.

DORMAN: I had a good experience there, because I rode with the British General, Sir George Lee, and his wife, Pam, good friends of ours, in their car, because Phil was doing something else at the time, to one of the celebrations. The British officers were all dressed in their uniforms with their swords, and there wasn't any more room in the car. I was slim in those days. We were all in long gloves, very chic and soigné. The aide-de-camp had to stand on the running board of the car! A little vignette. It was the warmest time of the year.

Q: As a person who grew up in England, did you have any feelings about the independence? Colonialism? We were in Malta when the British left. Lord Mountbatten came out. Nobody can do it the way the British can. Did you have any feelings in your heart?

DORMAN: I don't think I had any political feelings in my heart, if that's what you mean. I thought that Northern Rhodesia was very stable. Kenneth Kaunda was a very good man. His father was a Presbyterian minister. His mother became a personal friend of mine. They are dead, passed on. I felt this was a time they were ready for it and there was good leadership there. There had been concern, but it was very stable in many ways, yes. Well, at the moment, economically, there are concerns. There are good reasons for that. But Kenneth Kaunda was president. I wasn't too concerned about it, but I think it is always sad, when you are a young girl of whatever nationality and you see a flag like the Union Jack flying bravely in the breeze, and it's been there for many years, and you see it fall down at twilight ... does have some sort of feeling for it, everybody, whether brought up in the United Kingdom or not. Many Americans felt nostalgic, I know. Any flag coming down, one feels this is the end of an era, a passing. The attitude should be "we are going forward, hopefully well."

Q: There were no bloodbaths? As in the subcontinent?

DORMAN: Well, there were some concerns in Zambia itself with Alice Linchina. There were some uprisings, one of which she headed. So there were concerns in the local areas where some of my staff lived, so that I did, when Phil was away or when we had a dinner party and had to take people home, I had to take the staff that didn't live on the premises, in the Singer Gazelle, a car, not to be confused with the sewing machine (laughs). This is

a part of Foreign Service life, I would suggest, where one has to have courage and fortitude. I used to drop the cook off first, because he lived in the most dangerous township. I dropped him off in his township, then I would drop off the other fellow and keep the car engine running all the time, because it was dangerous and there were fires and all sorts of danger. But, on the whole, I would suggest that I used to go into the bush to get jewelry for a shop that I started there to sell local crafts. It is still going very well. I had rather fun there in Zambia.

I did a rather foolish thing. I had a (high) altitude problem. I was very tired, with two children. I went to a hotel when I first arrived and immediately went to a meeting at the YWCA. I dozed off a little bit at this meeting and woke up to find that I was fund raising chairman for the YWCA! We put on a big ball, which Kenneth Kaunda attended, and all these crafts. I went into the bush and had jewelry designed -- elephant hair, bracelets, etc. -- and, through all our fund raising efforts, a YWCA hostel was built. The craft shop is still going strong.

Q: Where else did you work for the YWCA?

DORMAN: I was on the Board of the YWCA in Lusaka. I want to say something about this which I think is very important. When I first went to Lusaka, before independence, it was practically a Board of all non-African women. By the time I left three years later, there were only three of us who were not Africans on the Board.

Q: So, you made a concerted effort to bring this about?

DORMAN: Yes, we did, but I think the African women -- the Zambian women themselves -- some of who came from South Africa, were very well educated women. In fact, there are one or two in Washington, DC, that I keep in touch with. They were very enthusiastic and they worked very hard.

Q: Who bought those crafts that you sold?

DORMAN: That was many of the Europeans and Americans who came to Zambia from Southern Rhodesia. Those people who came up from South Africa were immediately apprized of the fact that there were marvelous crafts at the YWCA. I had really tried to wean off my work so the African women were able to deal with this themselves. And that is why it's still successful.

Q: That's very important.

DORMAN: It's the most important thing!

Q: We tried to do that in Afghanistan, but it didn't work. We realized we would leave a vacuum when we left, but, you know, the thing that closed down our Gift Shop was not that the U.S. Government objected, nor that the Afghan Government objected, but that the

American women wanted to be paid for their work.

DORMAN: Well, I think that's sad when you're trying to start something. If you come out with a job, I'm all for it, but there's a time and place for that. The thing about this shop was that it acquired so many different crafts. Inoge Wina, whose husband was minister of finance at the beginning of the Zambian independence, and who had received some education in the U.S. at the University of California, I believe, and I went around on a craft-buying trip. We got crafts down in Livingston and all over the place. We made arrangements for the trucks to come in periodically with the crafts, with the baskets, with the trays, with the masks, and with all the various things they make there.

Q: Did they also have a cottage industry though? Or were you more or less starting it?

DORMAN: This is exactly what I was doing, and whatever one does in this life, I believe it should be considered teamwork. One may be the power behind the throne, so to speak, but basically, you can't do it on your own. Nothing is ever done alone. Yes, most of the stuff came from actually Barotse province. That is where most of the crafts are made. I have a gorgeous giraffe in my home which I got down in Livingston. It was made from one piece of Mukwe wood by a Barotse. And we had giraffes, too, other giraffes, at the craft shop, lots of wood carving, beautiful, beautiful work, lovely work.

There was something, though, that I was sorry about. I can understand it, but regretted it. Just before I left, I was asked by the minister of information -- because the craft shop had become so successful and because they were building this new airport, which I've never seen, lots of copper, I believe -- that there should be a craft shop at the airport. Unfortunately, the women were not eager to do it by themselves unless someone like myself, I assume, would be there in case something went wrong. And I can understand that, but it was a pity.

Q: These women were timid, I suppose. They're not used to being administrators?

DORMAN: Some of these women were. They were very administrative conscious, because they were originally from South Africa. Rachel Kalulu, Daphne Kinoso, Pauline Nalumango - most of their husbands were ministers.

Q: Then why were they afraid?

DORMAN: I don't know. I think it's a responsibility to undertake something new.

Q: Was it a cultural thing?

DORMAN: That may be true, a little bit ingrained.

Q: We found they leaned heavily on American and British women in Pakistan and Afghanistan. The women there were a little timid to take responsibility, and I couldn't

figure it out, except in their culture, they were a little held down.

DORMAN: I think that's true to a point. I agree with you up to a point, but I have to give you some rebuttal, because I was very impressed with people, some like Martha Chileshe, for example, who was the wife of the mayor of Lusaka. She was in the National Council of Women they were trying to formulate, although they asked for input. I was asked for input. We were all very careful not to ever be in the forefront. Sometimes our advice was taken. Perhaps sometimes it wasn't. We never really knew, because it never really started. The National Council was never approved, but Martha went as a sort of Zambian representative to one of these sessions in Nairobi and she was right about the need for those things. And ultimately, they did have one of those things in Zambia, as far as I can recall, in that particular country.

Q: Obviously, if it's still working, you did it well. You left it in the hands of these women, but do you think that American women are working with these crafts today?

DORMAN: No, I think it's done mostly by African women now.

Q: That's good.

DORMAN: Well, we planned it that way, we really did. From the outset, nothing was ever done there in a matriarchal way.

Q: That's patronizing...

DORMAN: It's awful. I hate it, and I can't work that way.

Q: We were true diplomatic wives (laughs).

DORMAN: I don't know about that (laughs). There again, this was a Consulate General when we went in, and Phil was one of them. It became an Embassy while we were there, and we were able to stay there for awhile when the Ambassador came -- Robert Good and his wife, Nancy -- wonderful human being. He had been on President Kennedy's Task Force for African Affairs. Of course, President Kennedy was assassinated while we were there, so we went to every church service under the sun. It was a very sad time.

Q: How did the blacks react? They were very emotional in Pakistan.

DORMAN: Oh, yes, terribly emotional. And I always recall that we went to every denomination. I remember at this Jewish synagogue, there was a host of butterflies which came in, and one got under the collar of one of our men. They were all wearing the yarmulkes (Jewish caps). The men were separated from the women. This man didn't know what to do because of this butterfly. There was all this heaving and it was terribly funny, yet we daren't laugh, you know, because it was a serious time. We had a very nice cathedral in Lusaka. Anglican, which is my church, Church of England, Episcopalian. I

was really very impressed.

And then we had gas rationing; petrol here, gas to you and me. And we were riding bicycles. I remember going down to the dentist and having some awful thing done on a tooth and having to bicycle home again. I had just enough gas in the car to get one of the children either to or from school. The streets were very quiet there then. The Africans were just beginning to drive more, but the streets were fairly quiet in the morning. I had my bicycle, and my son, Tim, had his. I would condition reflex him. He was a little fellow to go on the roads, turn right, and eventually I got him so he could go on his bike to school every morning. I went enough behind him in the beginning, and he didn't even know that I was there.

Q: Was it safe?

DORMAN: Absolutely safe. And then I picked him up. One has to take a chance in this life. You cannot molly-coddle children, particularly Foreign Service children.

I remember one night somebody tried to rob us. Unusual, but it did happen. We were at a friend's house and we got a phone call from our son, who was actually at school at Peterhouse in Marandellas, Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe). Peterhouse was run on British School lines, had a British headmaster, and most of the staff were British. He was home for vacation and had gone across the street to some neighbors. He called us from there and said he thought the house was being burglarized. It was quite traumatic, you know, but children have to be adaptable in the Foreign Service.

Q: And they do, and yours have turned our magnificently, Lesley, tell me a little bit about Haile Selassie. When did you meet him and what were the circumstances?

DORMAN: Well, he came to Zambia on an official tour, and I simply met him really through dinner and the usual business we get involved in.

Q: When did you go to Zambia again?

DORMAN: We went into Zambia, then Northern Rhodesia, in 1963, to the capital, Lusaka, and we had branch posts too that we had people at ... up in Kitwe and so forth. It became Zambia in 1964, as I mentioned earlier.

Q: That's right. What year did Selassie come?

DORMAN: I can't remember exactly what year he came. But the thing I remember most about him was that he was very tiny. He was in military uniform, and he had a tiny little dog that just kept leaping around him all the time. Terribly spirited, this little dog. And he obviously loved this little dog very much. He seemed very friendly.

Q: Moving on, you've really had quite a varied experience, I think.

DORMAN: You asked me a question, which I didn't finish answering. And that was, where else was I affiliated with the YWCA? And I didn't complete that. We might as well tie that together. My next experience with the YWCA, if my memory serves me correctly, was in Bangkok, because we didn't have a YWCA in Khartoum. There, I was invited to be on the Board, and I realized that the fund raising, which I've seen ways -- I really dislike fund raising intensely -- it's rather like an animal, you know -- if a person doesn't like an animal (laughs), it always seems to go to that person. I decided that of all the positions there, I was not interested in the very hierarchy parts of the Board. I wanted to do a great deal in Bangkok. Fascinating place. I really felt that this was 1969 and we had come out of the National War College, which I'd like to mention later, and I was very interested in the Y, because it was a very good Y. The fund raising committee had got down to two Thai women, who were delightful, but were becoming rather desperate because no one seemed to want to attach themselves to this endless task. I was like a "lamb to the slaughter" and went in there all guns blazing, metaphorically speaking. I got somebody to represent each country in SE Asia on this fund raising committee, so that Asia was fully represented, including the Thais, and we really did go forward. And as a matter of fact, I received. I don't like to discuss what I've received, but it's rather nice to tell people you got something when you've done something, so I'm going to tell you. I got a special pin from the Prime Minister, Thanom Kittikachorn for my work for this. I was rather pleased about this. That was rather nice. It wasn't the sort of thing you put around your neck on a ribbon, which was sort of disappointing, but it was nice (laughs). And his wife gave me a little glass vial with her name on it, which was rather charming.

Q: Did you meet Queen Sirikit?

DORMAN: Yes, I did. I met her several times. And I've even met her here in the U.S., because one of my best friends is a cousin of both the King and Queen...Thanjing Nang. She is a Thanjing, which is a Princess. She is, yes, I believe, the leading Thai here when she is in this country. She is called Her Serene Highness, because Julie Abrams, General Abrams' wife, he was in Vietnam, you recall, and I were asked to read the Thai Kings at the Capitol Center in Maryland, not the big one, but the smaller one, at a Thai celebration. And this friend of mine wanted me to read her great grandfather who was King Chulalongkorn. He was after King Mongkut. She's a very good friend of mine. So that when the Queen was here, I was invited to something by her and met the Queen. Phil also had an audience with the King several times when he was in Bangkok. They're very nice. The present ambassador to the United Nations is M.L. Bhirabhong Kasemsri, and his wife, who is a M.R. Momrajchawong or daughter of a Princess. Their titles go in rather a strange way. They start out as a Khunjing, or daughter of a Prince, and then they go down. In other words, her children do not inherit the M.R. Momrajchawong from her. Then they get other names, but it's not for perpetuity is what I'm saying.

Q: Of all your posts, would you say Thailand had the most interesting culture to you?

DORMAN: It had the most aura of glamor. Although I must say that my time in Cairo,

visiting the Valley of the Kings in upper Egypt, was a very fascinating experience. Going into the tombs of Cairo was absolutely fascinating.

But Bangkok had something apart from a tremendous amount of traffic today, which is regrettable, in my opinion. It has marvelous klongs (canals) and, unfortunately, they're filling many of those in, in order to go forward with progress. There are other problems. Because of the klongs themselves and the water, the old houses are on stilts, and the present, newer houses aren't, and it causes erosion too with the modern houses. So, there are many reasons why they are filling those klongs in, but it's regrettable.

Our house was a lovely, old house of teak, beautiful, right on a klong, with a lovely garden. The house itself ... I was able to go to Jim Thompson's House of Silk and choose fabrics, not in silk, but in cotton, to furnish the house. And I got very lovely old Thai prints. Charles, who managed the place after Jim Thompson disappeared ... we've all heard that story, I'm sure.

Q: No, I haven't (laughs).

DORMAN: (laughs) It's not relevant to this, I don't think ... I used to go and get these lovely fabrics, really old, the designs, and make them up, and they were lovely.

Q: Did you work with crafts in Thailand?

DORMAN: No, I didn't work with crafts in Thailand at all. I was on the Board of the YWCA. I was the second vice president of the International Women's Club. How the Board went was: president and then first vice president, who was a Thai, and then the second vice president, who was usually another national.

Q: And they were Thai Christians?

DORMAN: They were Buddhists. The one thing about the YWCA that a lot of people don't realize -- and I didn't until I worked with the Y -- is that you don't have to be Christian. There are a lot of Indians in Zambia, for example, and elsewhere, all sorts of different people -- Hindus, Brahmins, Sikhs -- who belong to the Y.

Q: I know, because I had a great uncle who was in China, went there to teach under the auspices of the YMCA in 1910, but I did think that the Chinese, who worked there, had to be Christians.

DORMAN: No, that is not what I have found. And, in fact, the Thais that I knew in Bangkok were Buddhists, and that's a very interesting religion. I took a course in Buddhism and found it just fascinating. I can understand why people, who don't come from Asia adopt Buddhism.

Q: It's a very happy, ethereal religion.

DORMAN: Yes, very. It's marvelous. My hairdresser here, who did my hair in Bangkok, is a wonderful human being. And in his salon here in Virginia, he has his Buddhas and they have the fruit for the Buddhas which he changes. He has these beautiful apples. Everything is chosen with precision and care. They're a very gentle people. In the world in which we live today, where there is so much strife, that feeling of gentility is marvelous.

Q: Absolutely. Tell me about Cairo before you tell me about the evacuation from there. And what years were you there?

DORMAN: I went into Cairo in November 1953. It was just after King Farouk had gone, and Naguib was in power. He was the transition really, General Naguib. I have a book which was written by him which is very interesting. And then, of course, Gamal Abdel Nasser took over from Naguib.

Q: You were there when Nasser was in power?

DORMAN: Yes, I was there until 1956 when the Middle East War broke out, when there was a big evacuation. Going back, however, I loved Cairo. There was something about it. The streets were smelly, I mean, quite odiferous. But the people are ... I like the Egyptians tremendously. We still have good Egyptian friends. There's something about that place.

Q: I suppose you really feel like you're in the Foreign Service there.

DORMAN: Egypt, really, when you asked me how I felt about it, it was really a challenge to me, because it was my first overseas assignment in the Foreign Service. I got married in London. We were there for nearly four years. Phil had been in Moscow first. We weren't married then. It was really my first experience.

Q: You were really dunked into it.

DORMAN: Yes, and, you know, I'll tell you something, as far as the Foreign Service is concerned, it was really a most terrifying experience, which I don't associate with Cairo in the sense of putting it onto Cairo. But I remember going into this room with all these officers and their wives at some reception, being kindly done for us, which was kind because we were very low on the totem pole, and there was an "esprit de corps", but it was just terrifying to me. I had been used to .... my mother was a wonderful human being, who used to race cars ... a wonderful person...

Q: Race cars?

DORMAN: Yes, as a hobby. And she was a fantastic woman. She was a suffragette, yes, for the woman's vote, and had a graciousness about her. She was charming when she was charming, but if you weren't pleasant, mother could really fix you with an eye. I was used

to greeting and meeting people and not being gauche, I hope, but this was terrifying in Cairo. I always feel that when a young, new couple comes to post and even if it's not the first time out, they're pretty new, the best way to start off with them is to have a very small group or small dinner and let them just merge into the environment like a chameleon, slowly, very slowly, you know, because it can be terrifying.

Q: Did you have a lot of entertaining to do?

DORMAN: Yes, we did. We entertained a great deal. And we had one evening which I'm sure has happened to all of us, when we were ourselves going out to dinner. The doorbell rang, and I had a nanny for Mark, who was tiny then, and it was two guests -- Egyptians, a husband and a wife -- who were really supposed to be coming that day the following week. I realized that anyone can make these mistakes, and I simply had them in for a drink. I was obviously dressed to go somewhere. I'm glad I was ready, because Phil was still in the shower. And eventually, he appeared, and then I quietly and gently said: "I really feel..." And they realized that no one else had come, so they knew. I tried not to say you've come on the wrong night to make it less embarrassing. But, you see, it's all common sense really. And if you've had some form of caring in your own home and good education, one learns this.

I went to boarding school at ten and a half. The first boarding school I went to had a little house -- the school had three houses ... Little House, Middle House, and Senior House -- where younger people were cared for rather specially, but it was still away from a marvelous home that I adored, a big home in the country with lots of horses and dogs and lots of fun and games, you know. And private schooling ... it was very traumatic, but it was a great lesson. I really agree with it in many ways. I think I was too young. Ten and a half is a little too young. I would put it more to the age when children go to prep school in the States. It was a good experience. It stood me in wonderful stead for my life in the Foreign Service, because I went to school with foreign nationals, girls from India, from East Africa...

Q: Then, in the Foreign Service, you never suffered homesickness. You had done that in boarding school, early on.

DORMAN: Yes, I had. Well, of course, one always suffers homesickness, and even coming to the United States as an American, having lived so much in Europe, in England, one is always homesick for something. One is homesick for cultural mores, which are definitely different. Even Canadians to the U.S. find it difficult, as I know from my present work. And I think this is something a lot of people don't realize. They think that because you speak the same language, we're all alike. That is not true.

But going back to Cairo. I liked Cairo. I liked going into the bazaar. I knew it backwards and forwards, inside and out. I didn't always like to see tourists come and bargain these people down below .... Bargaining in the Middle East is an accepted practice, in many parts of the world, but there's a limit as to how far one should do this. I liked going to Al

Azar. I liked meeting people like Sheik el Bakoury, who was a minister and who brought us marvelous mangoes. And those we were allowed to accept with impunity. I really enjoyed all these wonderfully interesting people. We made marvelous friends and some of our best Egyptian friends actually are now living in Washington, in Bethesda, not too far from you.

Q: But, was this a time when Americans were liked?

DORMAN: Well, you know, it wasn't a problem really. I don't think I felt any anti-American feeling the whole time I was there. In a way, when I say that, I didn't notice it either. Now, I might not have felt it partly because of my British background, my ability to speak French, which the Egyptians, educated Egyptians, many of whom did. The fact that to me it wasn't difficult to stand up when people came in the room and to kiss another woman on both cheeks ... it isn't easy for every American to do that. But when one has been raised in Europe, visiting France or other parts of Europe, it becomes an easier thing. It's not as different. I had an advantage there, I think. But I never felt any animosity.

We had problems. We saw the Russians coming in because they were going to deal with the Aswan area, you know. Even during our evacuation, for example, we didn't really leave until the war was nearly over. Nasser didn't give us permission to be evacuated. In the end, we were allowed to go out. We were ready to be posted anyway. We were packed when the order came for us to leave. And so, we didn't see our stuff leave. That was done after we departed. But we were on the way, and that evacuation was very traumatic because we got into the desert and there was a desert rest house. Normally this was a place where people would go for vacations. We never went. We usually went to the Red Sea. And there were lots of scorpions. We used to take our sleeping bags and sleep overnight, sort of holiday, great fun, very adventuresome, with a whole group of other people. But people went to the rest house and that was fun too. Anyway, we went to the desert rest house. They didn't expect busload after busload of evacuees. Some of us were in our own cars. We were in ours. It was a little English Austin convertible.

Q: What were you going to do with it?

DORMAN: Well, it was going to be left in Alexandria to be shipped to our next post, which was Iran. Going home first, but the car wasn't going home. The car was going on to the next post. We were in the desert house overnight, and I remember I shared a bedroom with a woman called Josie Brinkly, who now lives in London. She was American. Her husband was an American educated in Great Britain. His father was a judge in Alexandria, Egypt, man called Jasper Brinton, not Brinkly. Brinton was marvelous and his wife, Mary, was a wonderful human being. This evacuation was very traumatic. We were in this desert rest house and the children had something to eat and drink, but there was nothing for the adults, hardly anything. And the next morning, we set off.

Nasser had sent outriders with arms to guard us across the desert, and when we got to the outskirts of Alexandria, the Sixth Fleet had sent in the Fort Snelling and the Chilton to take us out. And the Marines were not able to go beyond the port area. They were manning all buildings. As we approached the port area, the crowds -- this is where our anti-Americanism comes in, that you were asking me about -- the people were on both sides of the car. Nasser's outriders had gone. And there we were with this car. And, of course, Mark could speak some Arabic. He was four or nearly five, because we were there a long time. I said to him, "Don't speak anything, not a word. You look down, don't look out, don't talk to anybody, don't answer whatever anybody says to you, do not respond."

Q: And pray...

DORMAN: Yes. As the gates of Alexandria harbor opened, I was so thrilled because we just got through. And then, they made us go through Customs. And I remember somebody had a little dog, and the American Marines said: "You can't take that," this little dachshund. "You must put it down." He had it in his raincoat. And the owner put it down and said, "Shoot it. I'm not going to let it go in the streets here; just shoot it." And the Marines couldn't, and it went down in the landing barge with its owner, to go on board the destroyer, and went out. And as we sailed out ... we had until sunset to get out of Alexandria. The British and French, who were fighting, of course, this war with each other as allies, of course, had given us until sunset. There was a big Russian ship behind us in the harbor. It was all very dramatic. We were all dressed, full battle stations, all in life jackets, as we sailed out of Alexandria harbor. And then, we all went to Cyprus and got on the family boat, the General Patch, and then we went to Naples.

Q: And how long were you in Naples?

DORMAN: We were only in Naples a few days, and then we went and safe havened in Rome. And we went straight on, because we were going on home leave anyway, on reassignment. But we had a good friend who was with us who was pregnant, and she was just about to give birth. And she did, in Naples. I lost the most marvelous umbrella, from Swaine, Adeney and Briggs, which is a wonderful shop in Piccadilly, the only decent thing I had taken out with me, because we only had a suitcase with us. I had Mark with me. Of course, little boys always want to go somewhere, and I had put it down in the Red Cross Station in Naples. Disappeared. So, there we were. Lost my umbrella.

Q: You were also evacuated from Beirut?

DORMAN: Yes.

Q: In what year was that?

DORMAN: Well, we went in the Sudan out of Zambia, to Khartoum in 1967, and in the Spring of 1968, Phil had to go to Tunis to attend a conference there, and there was a lot of

meningitis in Khartoum. Tim was young and Mark was in school at St. Stephens in Rome at the time. So, I had Lebanese friends, and I decided to go and visit. We didn't want to impose, so we had a special diplomatic rate at the beautiful Phoenicia Hotel. I had a room where I could use the balcony quite conveniently as a happy laundry without it being seen, and it was really very enjoyable. Our Lebanese friends would send their cars and chauffeurs to pick us up. Took us around, and we had a very good time while we were there. Phil came back from the conference. There had been lots of rumors about war then. Young Winston Churchill was in the hotel then, and I teased him, because the paper he was representing had rather glaring photographs on the front about a possible disturbance. He's now a representative of Parliament. I said, "Why do you want ... Do you really think there's going to be a war?" He said: "Oh, we do this, because it excites and sells the paper," or some rubbish of that sort. So, anyway, Phil felt because he had to get back immediately, he felt we should stay on in Beirut and have a bit more of a holiday. He had hoped to stay, but he couldn't. I had been invited by Frances Rizk, whose husband, Edward, who at one time had been ambassador to the United Nations for Lebanon - they were Copts. She's American, living in New York and Cannes now. She had invited me to a luncheon in honor of General Odd Bull, United Nations Representative, given for his wife actually. Dwight Porter was ambassador there. Adrian Middleton was DCM, who had been with us in Cairo. Phil had paid a courtesy call during the brief time that he was in Beirut, which was just overnight, and as Phil left the airport, he handed me an envelope which had a power of attorney in it, because Adrian had said: "We don't know what is going to happen. There may be an evacuation." Adrian had gone out with us in Cairo, and he was very wise.

I got a call about 7:30 in the morning from Frances Rizk to say that the luncheon was canceled. I thought it was because her children were unwell, but she said, "No, get packed immediately. You're coming to the hills with us, to our house in the mountains." She said, "War has been declared." So, I said, "Well, I registered at the consulate, which I'm supposed to do when I go to different countries, just in case, because I am an American 'dependent'." I hate that word, but it has to be said because it's true, unfortunately. Well, it also has its good points. And I said I'd have to wait until I heard from the Embassy. Adrian did call me, so I couldn't go with Frances. The following day, we were evacuated to Greece where I stayed quite sometime.

Q: And where were the children?

DORMAN: Mark joined me, because he had a vacation from his school in Rome. And Tim was with me, because he'd gone to Beirut with me to get away from meningitis and the school holidays had already begun in Khartoum. Don't forget, that's the hottest capital in the world. It was 120 degrees in Khartoum. No humidity or I would have been dead.

Q: Tell me about the Sudan.

DORMAN: The Sudan is a really very interesting place, I think. It was my least liked

post, least favorite post, simply because of the barreness of it, but I loved the people.

Q: And what years were you there?

DORMAN: We were there a very brief time. We went in 1967, and in 1968 Phil was recalled. And during that time, we had become an Interest Section of the Royal Netherlands Embassy because of the war. So, Phil was called back to Washington to go to the National War College. We left there in July of the following year. We were in the Sudan a very brief time, but I did a lot there. I mean, I really got an awful lot into it, which I found most worthwhile and rewarding. I got to know the el Mahdi family very well.

Now, Saddiq el Mahdi, who is the present Prime Minister of the Sudan, is an old friend. I know Saddiq. In fact, his sister, Amina, was a very close friend of mine. He was Prime Minister when we were there. He's Oxford educated. He and I occasionally would have our own talks. I liked his brother, Yechia, very much. One of his brothers, in fact, both of his brothers, are dead. Ahmed died just a short time ago, I was told. But, anyway, their mother was the wife of the posthumous son of the original Mahdi, who fought General Gordon in Khartoum. The years between, yes ... and in the drawing room of their home in Omdurman (You have Khartoum North, Khartoum South, Omdurman, "bas", that's all, that is it. That's it..."helas", finish)... in the room was a picture of the Mahdi. The movie, "Khartoum", had just come out, which of course wasn't permitted to be shown in Khartoum itself. But a lot of the Mahdi family had been in England, and Amina had seen it in London. The picture of the Mahdi looked just like Laurence Olivier looked in the film. And I couldn't ... I was mesmerized. In fact, Sayeda Sakina, who didn't speak any English, did say she'd give me a copy of it (laughs), but I never got it. I never liked to ask. But she was from further South, and her accent was different. There were different idioms and colloquialisms. My Arabic never was the greatest, but I did make a supreme effort. And I thought I was doing rather well until I met Sayeda Sakina. I found that she was absolutely impossible (laughs) to understand. It was an interesting experience.

I was a member of the International Woman's Club there, which had two sections. One was a social section and one was for so-called "good works", but I called it "getting down to the nitty-gritty." We worked with abandoned babies. They had a red light district in Khartoum, and a lot of the women had come from Ethiopia. Some were Italian in origin. Lots of different backgrounds. They used to keep the girl babies.

Q: Why would they come there?

DORMAN: Who knows? Why do they go anywhere? To get money. Well, it was probably quite profitable. The Profession. So, the girl babies were kept apparently, and the boy babies were thrown out. Some of them went into the Nile. And we used to save these children. We were given a special wing in the hospital. That's another story. We took care, and then the staph broke out, which was very dangerous, of course. I was very worried, having a young child there myself, and others, too, who were involved with this.

I used to go back home and get into the bathroom, and the "suffragi" (man servant) used to bring a great big bucket of water with Dettol, a British product they had in Khartoum, a British disinfectant, marvelous stuff, because it's so safe, as well as being effective.

Q: It's like Pinesol. I used it in Karachi the same way.

DORMAN: It was great. And I used to wear my hair very short. It had a fresh smell. It's not an offensive smell ... well, I can do without it.

Q: A clean smell?

DORMAN: A clean smell. And dunk everything, you know, in it, hair and all. My hair was really suffering. I was always having to go to a little friend down the road who had a beauty parlor in her house.

We did work with these children and we lobbied with the Sudanese Government, some of us, and I was one of the people, (this was before the war broke out) to get a home called the Migoma Home for these abandoned babies. And after we became an Interest Section of the Royal Netherlands Embassy, I then withdrew, because it was undiplomatic for me to have anything to do with the local government. But I got from President Azari a special invitation when the Home was opened to be present, and I was flattered by that. I thought, how awfully nice that he bothered to acknowledge what I had done.

And while I was there, there was a State visit by President Kenneth Kaunda of Zambia and his wife, Betty Kaunda. She came to see me. By this time, she had acquired a Lady-in-Waiting, which was really quite impressive. They came and had lunch, and she was on a special diet. We had to whiz around and get some special food, but it was marvelous to see her. I was very thrilled that she had looked me up. So that was fun.

Q: So, the women of the Sudan ... are they under the veil?

DORMAN: No, they wore a "tobe"...were swathed in the same thing as a "chador". It covers, but the difference is very marked. Most of the women wear it. The older women wear white "chadors", but the younger women wear all sorts of diaphanous ones. As far as I can recall, the style for women were fairly short dresses when we were there, and so they would have these quite short dresses and these diaphanous "tobes", which you could see right through. (laughs). You know we laughed with them, not about them. The Sudanese women and we laughed together, because they used to say "We're wearing our tobes", and I would say, "Yes, I know." We were very careful, of course, but they were very nice.

Some of the men, the elder statesmen in the Sudan... (and this is where I must applaud the British. The British left an excellent civil service, I believe, also in India. And they left a first-class one in the Sudan. It's too bad that these things had not been retained) ... the eldest Sudanese, all, had a great respect for the British and they had emulated the best.

They had beautiful libraries, one wife, then by Muslim law they were allowed more, a respect for their womenfolk. It was most marked.

Q: That's why I was asking you. I was under the impression that Sudanese women were considered... within the home at least... the absolute reigning queen bees, and that if their husbands earned money, because the woman had the highest goal in life or mission... having children and running the home... the husband had to bring his money home and give it to her. But she, if she earned any money, could keep it for herself. Does that ring a bell?

DORMAN: Not really. I think the women are very respected. I'll give you examples. I do think they carry quite an influence, but only to a degree.

Q: They don't have influence politically or publicly, but...

DORMAN: Well, I'm talking about...

Q: I mean, in the total concept of their culture, they are considered higher than the men actually?

DORMAN: Well, I never thought that when I lived in Khartoum. That is not the way the Muslim religion works. Let me explain how some of this works. Our landlord was a marvelous man, Sayad Muhammed Salah el Shengiti, deceased unfortunately. We had this very lovely home, which belonged to him. The Americans rented it from him. He came to pay his respects, if you will, or to greet us, and he said to me, "Do you like animals?" And I said "yes", and he said, "I'm going to give you a gift, if I may." He said, "It's not a gift that you can take with you very easily, but it's for the time that you're here." I said, "Well, thank you very much, Sayed Salah." He came with a crested crane which is called Abu Gouga. They are marvelous birds. And this crested crane stayed in our garden, and we loved him. He used to screech a lot, but he was great fun and became quite beloved.

Well, anyway, Phil was giving a stag dinner for someone from Washington. We'd get these very bad "haboobs", as they call them in the Sudan (In Egypt, they are called "hameems". There were worse things there in the form of monsoons, floods... dreadful). This dinner party was a stag dinner party which, to show you the particular thinking of this particular man and what he had learned and how we respected him... the guest of honor had overflown. When it was learned by Sayed Mohammed, who was the other guest of honor that night, that the American wasn't coming, because he'd had to overfly, he said, "Why isn't Lesley here? I want Lesley at the table."

I was having supper on a tray with a very good friend of mine, Gloria el Fadil, who was married to the brother of Sarah, who was the second wife of the Prime Minister, Saddiq el Mahdi. And Gloria was British. Gloria and I were having dinner on a tray. (She is now Lady Michael Birkett, whose husband is Chairman of the National Theater in London.

Gloria had a son by Tahir-Saddiq). Phil said, "Lesley has a friend." Sayed said, "Please, both come in." And, of course, he knew Gloria. We both came in and we had to sit on Sayed's right and left and join the conversation. And there were other Sudanese men there, and I'm sure some of them were not terribly pleased about this, but he was very progressive.

And then there was a poet, who had also been at Oxford, a Sudanese poet, and he used to come round and talk. If Phil was away on a trip, he'd come and talk about various things. I do think they liked women, not just from a sex point of view, but that wouldn't enter into this at all. But I do think they had a real regard and respect for women, because Sayeda Sakina really managed her menage in Omdurman, and those boys, all of them, whether they were the Prime Minister or the flunky, they had to toe the line with her. So from that point of view, I think you are quite correct in your earlier statement.

But I want to tell you something interesting for history in the Sudan about Muslim thinking, which is very interesting. Saddiq had two wives, which is interesting in the first place, because he'd attended Oxford University. One brother, Yechia, had one wife. He was killed in Geneva, and then his wife married again. Ahmed had more than one wife, so that it seemed to be customary in the household. Saddiq's first wife was Hafia and his second, Sarah. I just loved Hafia and also Sarah, but in a different way. She (Sarah) had been educated in the United States at Sarah Lawrence, I think. When Saddiq went out to dinner where the Americans or foreign nationals might be, he would take Sarah with him, because he felt, although Hafia spoke beautiful English, Sarah was more up to date...

Q: More cosmopolitan?

DORMAN: More cosmopolitan and could hold her own better in a mixed group. But I used to go visit Hafia, who had her own house. Sarah used to live in the big house with Saddiq and Sayeda Sakina, but Hafia had her own house. And Hafia would say... (there would be a pair of Saddiq's shoes ... and I got to know her well enough that I could ask her certain questions and she was willing to answer) ... she said, "You have to understand, Lesley, we have our alternate nights. And even though Saddiq may be taking Sarah out to dinner someplace, if it's my night, he has to leave her and come back to me. And if he gives me a bracelet, he has to give Sarah a bracelet."

Q: Did you feel either one was a favorite? We found this in Pakistan. We had a friend whose first wife lived upcountry in Baluchistan, and his favorite, was the most cosmopolitan and lived in Karachi. Yet, six months of the year, he would go upcountry to be with Farida and six months with Soroya, who was definitely the favorite. Did you feel that?

DORMAN: No, in the Sudan, what they feel in their own hearts is something that we would never know, but their dictum is to be absolutely impartial and to treat each one alike as Hafia gave the example ... if she gets a bracelet, so does Sarah. I think that possibly, because one doesn't really know if he enjoyed going out more with Sarah than

Hafia, but I doubt it, that he merely felt that Sarah was more Americanized and, therefore, when he was with people from the United States at a dinner (he wasn't sitting with her after all), it was easier to take her to these dinners. And Hafia, I'm sure, went with him to other places. No, I think there was really fairly strict impartiality. But, of course, we do know about the great building of the Taj Mahal at Agra. That was definitely a favorite, wasn't it? So, that is an example where it does exist indeed. But I think in this case, I would say "no."

Q: Now, do you want to move on to Iran? That's another Muslim country that you have lived in. What were the years you were there?

DORMAN: We went from Cairo to Tehran, after having a little bit of leave between in the United States, in between visiting England. We went into Tehran in 1957, April 1957, and I was about three months pregnant when I went in. It was quite tricky going around those "kuchis" ... "kuchis" being side streets, little side roads.

Q: "Coochis" were nomads in Afghanistan.

DORMAN: "Kuchis" in Iran are little streets, and they weren't paved when I was there. The main roads were paved, but not the "kuchis". So, we rumbled around in these cars the real estate people took you in ... jitney type vehicles ... to house-hunt. And I was very fortunate. I did eventually find a house which was owned by a very nice brother and sister. She was a dentist who had been trained in the United States.

Q: Up in Shimran?

DORMAN: Yes. We were right across from Davoudia. We were near the American Officer's Club and the riding stables. We moved into this very modern house. There was a mullah next door to us. We had a big wall around us, and there was no other house anywhere near. When we left there were houses all over the place and the "kuchi" was just about to be paved.

Q: My husband went to Iran in 1953 to 1955. He had a lovely place in Shimran, and when we came back on our way to Afghanistan in 1968, he took all day searching for it and came back and said: "I think they built the Hilton right on top of it."

DORMAN: Well, I'm very interested to hear that comment, because our house, which was very modern, was painted white, and then we all had to have these wrought iron grills, beautifully done, because there really was an awful lot of theft. It was turquoise, and the grills were silver. Sounds very ornate, but it wasn't. It was in very good taste. And I had great big pots... lovely flowers in turquoise pots. I'm talking about the old Iran turquoise color, beautiful colors that they had. We had 125 fruit trees and a swimming pool. Our well ran dry, but it didn't matter because we got our water from the Embassy, but we still had to boil it. Of course, we had the gin bottles and whiskey bottles in the bathroom for the brushing of teeth.

But I was fortunate in that, shortly after arriving there, after the baby came in October, in getting a very nice woman, Osra, excellent, who had worked with Americans and who did speak and understand English very well. She did take care of the baby, because I taught at the British Embassy International School. I was on the Board of Governors, and I taught all subjects. I had a complete class of international children. It was like going into the Ark. I think we had almost two of every nationality. Sometimes, we only had one, but it was tremendously international. It was a very good, British, private system called PNEU, and I don't know what the acronym stands for anymore. I've forgotten, but it was a very good system. All the exam papers had to be sent to the UK for verification, so there was no cheating on the part of the staff there.

Q: You were hired by the British?

DORMAN: Yes. They asked me if I would teach there. They were very short of what they called -- I wasn't a teacher -- I had qualifications, but not for teaching. It's not difficult to teach the equivalent of fourth grade really. I went to help them with French ostensibly when the French teacher's daughter was out with an appendectomy, but I ended up teaching a full class. I had two Americans in the class. I regret to say, they were not the best students. I spent quite a bit of free time after school with them to boost them up, but it was a good way to occupy one's time.

Q: Judging from our experience with Iran today, where do you place Iran in your history of postings?

DORMAN: I'll tell you, very frankly, having gone from Egypt to Tehran, I really feel that the Iranians were very different from the Egyptian people. I can really say this with impunity that I, although we had superficial friends there, most of the people I did not consider, really, did not think they had very much rapport with foreign nationals, even the educated people. I felt there was a lack of sincerity among them. I have to say that, because I know very few people who have really kept up with Iranian friends. One meets Iranians out of the country, and they are absolutely delightful. They are nice people. I had a lot of friends when I was there, but it seemed to me to be superficial.

When Mark went back many years later to work briefly for Bell Copter, he tried to find our house for one thing and never found it, which was most interesting. Of course, he was quite young when we left there. The other thing was that he just felt that the people that we'd known, had been very friendly with us, did not make a concerted effort to be friendly to him. Which I found to be very surprising, because if their children had come to us, I would have bent over backwards to have done everything I could. Very superficial. I felt a lot of the women, for example, my landlord's sister was a delightful woman and I was very fond of her. And sometimes it's difficult to keep up with people. People move, mail gets lost. I loved this woman who worked for us. She sent the children karakul fur hats, and we in turn kept in touch with the people she was working for. She moved to Meshed, and we sent things to her.

Q: Would you call this superficiality an inhibited quality with foreigners, with Westerners, a sort of holding back a part of yourself, because of this mistrust of the West?

DORMAN: No, I was talking more of a real superficiality, particularly among the women. Many of our women like to be well dressed. And I love to see people well turned out, looking chic and so on, but these women...

One woman I knew, her mother had been a princess of the old dynasty. Her father was a Frenchman. She didn't speak a word of French. Her English was extremely poor. She made no real effort to learn. She seemed to be far more interested in her hairdo, her manicure, her pedicure, and her wardrobe. I have to say this. It was superficial. Her husband, on the contrary, was very different. He was a much more well-rounded human being. He seemed fairly interested in a sensible way.

Q: You are speaking mostly of the upper crust, but economically today wouldn't you say these revolutionaries today are far from superficial?

DORMAN: No, I don't think they are superficial. The lower echelon are far more dedicated. And whether we agree with their dedication is neither one thing or another. They are truly (and I don't mean the die-hard revolutionaries), but on the whole, the lower echelon are nicer. That was my impression. Personal feeling. I preferred my staff to the people with whom I dined.

Q: I think Bruce would agree with you. I think it's interesting that this revolution was partly trying to overthrow that superficial class that looked to the West for clothing, language, whatever they considered to be important.

DORMAN: It's also, of course, what has happened in every country. At some point or another when there has been a revolution, it's where the hierarchy have indeed not addressed itself to the real needs and concerns. I feel there are many people in this country to this day who need a lot of help, that are overlooked, so we've all got this on our plate. But I do think that in some places like Iran, before the Ayatollah, it was really very bad. It was very serious. There was a haughtiness about it.

Q: Arrogance.

DORMAN: A very great arrogance, which I thought was most unfortunate. And I felt the problems there could have been averted if the light had been seen to the full more quickly. I do feel that the Queen, the Shah's last wife, did indeed try to address some of these concerns, but unfortunately, it was too late to register.

Q: What did you do?

DORMAN: I would like to say one thing, if I may, that is one of the lessons that should be clearly learned in the Foreign Service, both by families and employees alike, that you should really "get on with all and get off with none." You really want to know, basically, if you can, as many people in the country right across the board. To give an example of that, when we were in Cairo, we had a reputation of knowing more Egyptians than anyone else. We knew them from all stratas, and that takes a little bit of work, if I may say so with humility. You want to know the Free Officer Corps of Gamul Abdel Nasser and you want to know the step below and you also want to know the Copts as well as the Muslims and you want to do it with great sincerity. One of the things that I have found to be very regrettable is that I have seen, unfortunately, people go into a country and not play the game awfully well. They're not sincere. The host country people do recognize this. They're not stupid. It was particularly true in Africa. If you don't go with a genuine and positive feeling, even though the place or country may not even want you, if you go in with a positive feeling of "I'm going to enjoy this experience," it may not be the finest thing you've done or the best place you've been, but you can still get a lot out of it and give a lot to it.

Q: That was interesting, because it leads right into my next question. I want to speak more about the general feelings you have about the Foreign Service and the spouse's role within the Foreign Service. The way you speak, you definitely feel it's a partnership, a diplomatic partnership, is that correct?

DORMAN: Oh, yes. I think that it's a partnership, but I do draw the line with too much being discussed with a wife. If the wife is not security cleared as far as the work experience is concerned, it is very difficult for the wife and very often unwise, because inadvertently one may say things that one would not say if one stopped to think about it longer. Nobody wants to be responsible for passing on information which is ill-conceived. Personally, we had an agreement in our menage, our household ... that I just didn't know things. But there were so many other things where the partnership was able to take place well. It wasn't just in entertaining. It was getting together with the host country people and talking about all sorts of things which wasn't anything to do with the work that my husband was involved with.

I feel that if it isn't a partnership, it's extraordinarily demeaning to a spouse, whether it's a male or female spouse. (Of course, we have some male spouses now in the Foreign Service, and they have some at the World Bank. Met one the other day from Brazil, quite young, who was a male spouse). I think it's imperative that there be this good working spirit, because if it's a country where this doesn't exist, it opens new vistas, possibilities, where it could be practical. One doesn't force this on anyone or even suggest it, but if a host country people see you and your husband having this good partnership, people see you and think they may want to emulate it. At least, they respect you for it, even if they don't agree with it. I think they still respect, and it's much easier for the husband and wife both to be able to work together peaceably. Brings for happiness and it's wiser all around, I think.

Q: Do you think the Foreign Service or the State Department should recognize, not necessarily with pay, but recognize it as a partnership?

DORMAN: Yes, I do. One of the things that Secretary of State Vance tried to do (and I have great respect for Secretary Vance) and Ben Reed, who was Under Secretary for Management during the Carter Administration. For example, after the Family Liaison Office was opened, the Secretary held a reception on the Eighth Floor for those of us that were concerned with this and had worked hard to achieve this end and did indeed present us with framed certificates of appreciation from the State Department. Although I don't have this certificate in any place or prominent location, in fact, it's out of sight, it isn't out of mind. I'm very proud of it and I think it's something, because one goes overseas and because one really makes an effort, I think. Most Foreign Service spouses do make an effort. I have seen drones. You are always going to get drones in any society, but most of the people have been hard-working bees, and I really feel that it's a little demoralizing to work that hard and not be able to build up any sort of resume. Even now, it isn't possible really in many countries to get employment. First of all, there isn't reciprocity with many countries and, even if there is reciprocity like we have in the UK, jobs simply aren't there. These people have their own unemployment. You're lucky if you get a little job in a photographer shop on the Fulham Road. So, I mean, it's easy to say what should be done, but the realities are so different.

Q: When was the last year that you were overseas?

DORMAN: I came back from Bangkok, which was our last overseas assignment, in 1971, but I have kept constantly apprized of what is going on. I still have so many friends still in the field in different parts of the world. And, of course, having been President of the Association of American Foreign Service Women for five years and even since then working in my own business, which deals with foreign countries, I keep constantly in touch with what is happening.

Q: I was wondering if you feel that we gained more or lost more by the 1972 Policy Directive on Spouses? I don't want to get into the formulation of FLO yet, but I want to talk in a general way about how you see the spouse role today. Were we right to -- I guess we had no choice -- were we right to do away with that role?

DORMAN: Well, I have two minds about the 1972 Directive. Basically, I'm more against it than for it, and I'll tell you why. I am for the freedom for the spouse -- very much so -- but I think that would have come through a gradual process. It wasn't just being disturbed by the 1972 Directive. There were so many concerns that brought about that Directive, and had not the Directive been put in place, I think these concerns would have been there and they ultimately would have had to be addressed. What that Directive did, it not only made non-persons of the women, it took us off the official roles, which would have given us the opportunity to have said to the Department, "Look, here we are being rated"... and although some of the comments on most of us were very humorous, rather flattering in some cases to the point of being untrue in some cases, those reports were not taken

seriously by the officers. Unless somebody was an inebriant, drunk all the time, there were very few adverse reports on anyone. Therefore...

Q: You mean the efficiency reports?

DORMAN: Yes, I do.

Q: I didn't even know I was in my husband's efficiency report.

DORMAN: Well, I did, because of one very amusing one, where somebody reported that I was -- paid me a compliment -- which I didn't think was true about being a very good hostess, what an attractive personality I was, and how much he liked my green mascara. And in those days, at night, I had gone in for green eye shadow and green mascara, because I had green-grey eyes, and this man had noticed this, and that was the first time I had been shown this report.

Q: Was he saying, in a backhanded way, that it was too much?

DORMAN: No, quite the contrary. It was very flattering and it was couched in a way that it could not have been unflattering. It was in Tehran, and I thought, "Oh, Lord!" It's that sort of thing. I resented that comment to be truthful with you.

Q: You would not comment on a man in that fashion.

DORMAN: No. And I also felt it was somewhat... he made comments like this, and some of us did occasionally compare... you know... "what did you get?", that sort of thing. I do recall asking somebody when I read this. I resented it because I thought it was unprofessional. I felt if we were being reported on, it did not dignify the process. If you're going to do this reporting, do it professionally, do it academically. If you're in this report, then report on the spouse as you would the husband; I mean, the wife and husband are together. In those days, it was mostly the men who were the employees, but I feel very strongly about this.

Q: It's interesting, Lesley, because there's always this argument brought up that you can't pay spouses if one has soggy hors d'oeuvres. My feeling is like yours, that when we speak of the spouse, it's a broader thing than that. It is not the soggy hors d'oeuvres, it has to do with a people-to-people kind of street diplomacy. When you spoke of knowing your servants in Iran, I felt the same thing about it -- the relationship -- not the relations (laughs) that I had with my corner butcher...

DORMAN: (laughs) Watch it.

Q: (laughs) ... were as important as I had with any woman in the women's club or Maltese diplomatic wives group.

DORMAN: I feel that bringing up the Foreign Service Associates briefly, trying to get this through, were we still being reported on...

Q: (For clarification), the Foreign Service Associates idea is mainly to do with spouse employment abroad.

DORMAN: I understand that, but what I'm simply saying is that any form of trying to do anything, if we were still being reported on, we could then show the Department that we were part of the team, an official part of the team. See, you have more clout when you are an official part of the team. The only way to get more done is to have clout. I felt that with the 1972 Directive that simply took it away.

Q: Not only clout, but you also have to have a sense of purpose...

DORMAN: Well, yes, of course, you have to.

Q: What else keeps us going abroad but feeling that we're a part of it?

DORMAN: I didn't mean clout in the sense of knowing people. I meant having some prestige in that respect.

Q: Entree.

DORMAN: Exactly right. You see, <u>that</u> went. I have to be frank with you. I personally feel, and have felt all along, which is one of the reasons I think the 1972 Directive was never rewritten, I feel too much was made of it. In many posts, for example, Virginia Egan, who I think is a most marvelous Foreign Service spouse, has been an ambassador's wife in her thirties. She was connected with me in the Forum Group, one of the editors of the Forum Report of 1977. She is just a marvelous, well-rounded human being. And Virginia has found that wherever she has been posted that things have gone along extremely well. She's not had these concerns and she's been in some hardship places. It depends a lot on who the hierarchy are, how they behave, how they react to the people they work with or have at post, and the people who are sent to post. We bring in a lot of people today. I think our intake, our choice of personnel, all these things contribute to concerns the Foreign Service may have.

I've met couples recently. They are bringing in much older people who have been well established in their own fields, as lawyers and in all sorts of fields, and they come in and they are very sophisticated, almost too much so in some cases, because they have already formed themselves into such a groove that to adapt to this new experience is difficult for them. But I've noticed little things. Manners, which are somewhat lacking, which just does not go down in many parts of the world. When in Rome do as the Romans do. You have simply got to behave yourself. And I think...

Q: This is a good point. I feel we have come through the counter culture years in this

country, which was somewhat of a watering down and a leveling of our society. The word "elite" is a bad word coming out of those years. There's a lot of good, too... more democratic behavior, for example. On the other hand, the Foreign Service remains a very rigid, protocol-conscious system. And so, when we spouses, when we go abroad, having thrown out all these rigidities and anachronisms for ourselves, we have to fit into this rigid system.

DORMAN: One should always be oneself. I have always found it to be a fact, when you are watching someone on television and you see someone being very pretentious, and then you see someone very fresh in their approach and good fun with some humor...

Q: But, don't you think when you say "be yourself" that sometimes a level of being ourselves has slumped a bit. I'm not always too proud of what we export abroad as being American.

DORMAN: I was trying to say that earlier on.

Q: Can you speak more to that?

DORMAN: I can speak to that, very much so. In Cairo, very regrettably, I was at the Gezira Sport Club, where I played tennis, but not with Egyptian friends. At that point, the Club was really becoming quite a place for Egyptians as well. They had belonged, but now had become more interested in the Club. I was sitting with this very charming Egyptian woman, and some Americans nearby were criticizing Egypt within hearing. That was one instance. Then I was sitting, one day, at the same Club with an American, whose husband was Egyptian, and she's still a very good friend of mine, and she was saying to me, "I don't belong to the American Woman's Club. I simply won't join it. I won't join anything connected to America at all here, because I sit and listen to the women make derogatory remarks about Egypt, and I am married to an Egyptian, and I simply won't tolerate it. It's disgusting." She said, "It's Egypt. Why should people sit and talk that way? If they want to talk that way in the confines of their own home, that's one thing, provided the servants can't hear (because they all spoke English in those days)." You know, it's very bad. One sees these sorts of things. In the Mousski (bazaar), I saw some of our American tourists dressed in mink at the height of the summer, bargaining down in a shocking fashion. One feels degraded. I remember hiding behind a pillar or something. I hoped I wouldn't be recognized by anybody. It's embarrassing.

Q: I suppose it's a price we pay for a free society.

DORMAN: Yes.

Q: However, we went recently to see a movie called "Hoosiers", and I said to my husband, "Now this, to me, is real Americana and the kind of film that we should send abroad, to show what we are like."

DORMAN: I think our propaganda has not been good.

Q: We are not all like "Dallas" or "Dynasty".

DORMAN: No, not really, not at all, and I think it's poor propaganda. It's awfully hard on the Foreign Service, because these concepts are already there from what the people see in the movies and such, and it's a false concept. And we have to live it down if it's not a good one.

Q: So, all of this points to the fact that you really give the spouse a big role overseas.

DORMAN: Yes, I do.

Q: In this aspect of people-to-people diplomacy? It's very important, isn't it?

DORMAN: I think it's a great help if people have children overseas where friendships can be made. The husbands may make their contacts in the framework of their work and, at the same time, the spouse can make excellent contacts, genuine ones, excellent ones... when not working... just getting together with other women and children. Children make excellent contacts with each other, and I think this is to be fostered. I would not like to see the Foreign Service become a single Service. I think it would be absolutely disastrous. It would be ruinous.

Q: What do you think about the tandem system (where both husband and wife are Foreign Service officers)?

DORMAN: I don't really see any harm in it. I think it's a difficult system to operate on the part of personnel people in the foreign affairs agencies. Having husband wife at the same post, even if one is in State and the other is in USIA or AID or whatever, this is not an easy matter to accomplish, and indeed we all know cases where people have been in connecting countries. We remember Ellsworth Bunker in Vietnam and Carol Laise in Nepal. That is not a very satisfactory situation for a husband and wife team. But I do feel, however, that bearing in mind that not every spouse is going to be qualified to become a Foreign Service officer, they may not even wish to or even be a member of the Staff Corps (What's wrong with that?). But I do think, because that is not necessarily going to follow, there is no harm in it. And if it does afford employment for the spouse, I'm all for it, because we live in a society today where we have got to cut our cloth to suit the situation, and there's no doubt that the [cost of] education of children today is astronomical. It's appalling.

The figures are absolutely out of sight. Because most people who go into the Foreign Service want a high standard for their children. And bearing in mind, too, that children are moved from post to post, it's very often essential to send them away to school. Then, that may be partially paid for by the Government or wholly paid for by the Government, but when they come back from being overseas and you're based in the United States, then

you have to foot these bills yourself. You certainly have to foot the bills at the higher education level. This has to be thought about in order to pay these bills, because the salaries are not commensurate with the business world. It is essential, really, that the spouse has an opportunity to build up a decent resume and work as much as possible. It's not the best thing for women of small children to go out and work. I don't think it's commendable. I think if one can possibly swing it, at least when the children are two, five or six, the mother really should be there.

First of all, there isn't the help overseas that there used to be. People don't want to do that type of work anyway in the world really, and it's essential that the children do get a good beginning with their own mother. I feel that if that can be managed, it's a good thing. But employment's essential today, there's no question about it.

Q: Do you feel that the kind of work that spouses did abroad under the umbrella of "charity", everything from working with the blind and doing what I call Peace Corps type of work, to fund raising for the National Trust of a country, do you think that was worthwhile and something that we should be doing?

DORMAN: Yes, I do. One has to be very careful, however, that the country is receptive to your doing it. Usually, when one gets there and is thinking of starting something, you want to be very careful that this is not going to be looked upon... frowned upon, I would suggest. Yes, I do, because it doesn't matter if you do something in a paid capacity, whatever you're doing, and particularly helping the underprivileged in a country is really important, like the babies in the Sudan. They just would have died. They will get a good future now, hopefully. They were going to be educated under the Government's auspices and have a chance. I think that most of the work, for example, when I worked on a milk run in Lusaka, Zambia, where we went into the bush, and I thought that was very worthwhile to give milk to these babies who were undernourished and needed milk.

Q: I know so many women today, however, who think it is a bad thing to do. It's being exploited, they feel, that it's American money that people want, or they feel unappreciated, or they feel it's beneath them. They are professional women now, and they're not going to do this women's clubby charity bit. I feel that it's dropped off considerably in the Foreign Service. Do you feel that that has happened?

DORMAN: I don't know. It depends on the post and really depends on the people. I have never been a woman's club person. The fact that I worked so long with the Association of American Foreign Service Women was really the cause. I felt that was something that was worthwhile, because it had a lot of professionalism to it, which we can talk about later, but I am not a club woman. If you notice, I have not belonged to a woman's club anywhere I have lived. The International Woman's Club, I belonged to because I was meeting people of different nationalities and because the things we did were very professional. I don't see any harm with having a cup of coffee with someone. We can go overboard in decrying that sort of thing.

And I also think that people are wrong in decrying, in generally decrying, volunteer work and charity work. But I do think that some work is not "charity." It is working in museums where one is being educated. I knew people who worked in various parts of the world who came back and opened the most marvelous craft shops and are making a fortune. It's benefitted them in the long run and has helped their professionalism. I think one has to weigh the pros and cons. I never felt I was being exploited going out in the bush in Zambia. I do want to say that I would like to see more money put toward the disadvantaged in our own country. I personally am getting rather tired knowing that my tax money is going indiscriminately all over the place. I do use the word "indiscriminate", because to some degree I deem that to be correct. I do feel that charity begins at home. And I can understand certain resentment of our women going abroad when they know that at home they have seen some things going on in our country, in the inner city of Washington, for example, as I have seen. So, I think one has to use common sense and take each thing at its own value.

Q: I wanted to ask you about women and working. Did you have any thoughts about spouse employment?

DORMAN: Well, I think spouse employment is very necessary as I said earlier. I think if there isn't employment in many posts, which there isn't, that it's very important that people do something.

We were talking about charity work (I don't like the word "charity" actually), but work that helps the people, particularly children, if one can do something there. You can do museum work, and when you get home, you can learn an awful lot about the art and artifacts and come back and sell them. There are all sorts of things that can be done and one gains an awful lot.

The most important thing in my mind is to get to know the people of a country, really and truly. If you go into a paid job, you only get to know a limited number of people. If you're freer, you can do all sorts of different things. International Clubs are awfully good overseas, because you get to know a wide vista of people. You get to know people that have been at posts where you've been before, people who are coming from a foreign post that you may be going to. It's also a tremendous scope of friendships and understanding the different cultural mores of a group of people. I think it's very important. A lot of the work that you do can be geared to eventual jobs, but if one can get employment and you already have a career, then if you go to a post... you're a lawyer, for example... I think it's very demoralizing to be unable to carry on your career. And it does not do your career much good to go into a standing situation.

Q: Well, I think it (spouse employment) is definitely going to have an impact on the future of the Foreign Service.

DORMAN: It's inevitable, because of what I said before, because of the astronomical cost of living. Even if you don't have children, you still have tremendous cost of living,

and in this country, we have now got to the point where it's very difficult to fulfill those expectations. One needs lots of money.

Q: I wanted to also ask you about your years at the National War College. What years were you there?

DORMAN: 1968 to 1969. I really enjoyed it. I had rather hoped that I wouldn't have to do anything, except what I really wanted to do, but Dotty Lightner (Alan Lightner was the Diplomat in Residence at the National War College) got hold of me and asked me if I would co-chair a program that they had then, mainly for the spouses, which was called "World Events." My co-chair was an awfully nice woman. We got a very good committee organized, and we used to get together in the Club at Fort McNair and got some very good programs. David Ness on Egypt. People from CIA to talk on various things. And they were such good programs that the men wanted to come to listen to them. We in turn were not allowed, as they are now, to listen to the men's programs. There were one or two evening programs that we could do to, but they were very few and far between. I bowled. I belonged to international cooking. I met a lot of marvelous people and, having worked with the military overseas, the attachés, it was great fun being with them that year. I thought it was wonderful fun.

Q: It was a wonder year for everyone concerned. Did you stay home for that and then go overseas again?

DORMAN: We were home just for the one year and, as a matter of fact, we have been living in a house in Virginia and rented an apartment for that year down in the Southwest. Then we went to Bangkok, and when we came back from Thailand, we decided that we really liked that area very much. It was extremely useful. It was close in. We loved the river and had a marvelous view up and down. So, that's where we've been living ever since.

Q: Right outside the gates of Fort McNair.

DORMAN: Yes, exactly right.

Q: Those beautiful boats go by. It was a lovely place.

DORMAN: Of course, you were living there, too. It was a lovely place.

Q: Well, is there anything else you can tell me before we get into AAFSW? When you came back from Thailand, you went immediately into work with AAFSW? As Corresponding Secretary?

DORMAN: As a matter of fact, I didn't do that immediately. I wasn't a member of the Association. As I've said, I'm not a great club woman, but my name was given by somebody to the Nominating Committee. They wanted someone on the Nominating

Committee, and I wasn't even a member and I pointed that out. They said, "Well, you can join." And I said, "I have reservations about being on a Nominating Committee when I've just come back from overseas and I don't know anyone who's here yet. I haven't found my way around yet." Anyway, they prevailed and persisted, so having had a few names passed by me, I said I would. And then I joined, of course, in order to do this.

Then the following year, I became Corresponding Secretary. In those days, I was almost a Girl Friday to the President, who was Pidge Leonhart. (Bill Leonhart was then the Diplomat in Residence at the National War College, as it was then called.) I did that for one year and I did a lot of different things... helped the Program Chairman. We seemed to muck in more without too much reservation, which I think was very nice. There was a great rapprochement between us all.

Q: Now, up until then, wasn't AAFSW primarily a social organization? Did some charitable work in the inner city, but it was not into its advocacy role at that point?

DORMAN: No, it wasn't at that time. I became Membership Chairman for two years after that, worked with Charlotte Rechnagel for one year and then with Mary Buell, who was my immediate predecessor. And then, after Membership Chairman, I have to say, very reluctantly (I was asked three times), I became President. But I did say at that time, although I had no choice about the Board, I did say to the person that called me that I did hope they would think very seriously about the type of Board they were putting together, because I was positive I would only do it if I was allowed to make some sensible changes or try to get those changes effected.

Q: What did you have in mind? This was before the Directive?

DORMAN: I had in mind... no, it was after the Directive. I became President in May of 1976, and the Directive came out in 1972.

Q: But, did you have the Directive in mind?

DORMAN: Not the Directive as such, no, but the discontent from ambassadors' wives on down. I had too many friends who were discombobulated, who felt they were non-persons. They were neither flesh, fish or fowl within the framework of the embassies. There were so many grumblings. There was discontent with the medical division, discontent with education, which was the overseas schools, but in fact, all forms of education, and of course discontent with employment or the lack of it or the lack of opportunities for it and the lack of concern of the foreign affairs agencies to address themselves to these things.

Q: You saw that. You saw there were things when you came in as President, before you were President, and thought they needed working on?

DORMAN: Absolutely, thought change was imperative. Absolutely. And as soon as I

became President... well, I knew before I became President when I was Membership Chairman, that Ambassador Carol Laise, who was then the Director General, had invited certain people, some of whom had done very little with anything -- I don't know how these people were chosen -- were invited to some luncheon, including our President of AAFSW. Everything was very nebulous. She had realized that there should be some change.

Now Hope Meyers had started, sometime before, the Research Committee on Spouses. And during Charlotte Rechnagel's time as President of AAFSW, Hope presented to the Board a document which had been put out in conjunction with the Woman's Action Organization (WAO), but the group that she was associated with had not really been given a name at that time. All the slots of the people that were going to address different concerns were already filled, so AAFSW had absolutely no opportunity for any input or putting any persons into these slots.

Charlotte Rechnagel and the Board were a little non-plussed by this, so she appointed a Committee which consisted of Margaret Dickman, Peter McClure, Nancy Matthews, Hope herself, and me, yours truly. And we convened at the home of Nancy Matthews to discuss this. We were very objective, I felt, and went into it from all standpoints. We felt that the time was not just quite ripe for this. We weren't awfully happy with the "fait accompli" presentation. Nothing against the people who conceived it, not at all, nothing personal, nothing to do with the Directive. This was a document which Hope presented to our Board. We were not included, any of us. Hope agreed, seemed to agree, with our findings that it had perhaps been too premature.

Hope was First Vice President of AAFSW when my predecessor, Mary Buell, was President, and she, I think, may have been offered the Presidency, but she declined. She'd been offered some job with a Canadian group and went off to do that. But I attended several meetings at Hope's house, with a group of lots of other people, and we were constantly talking about discussions. I was frankly disappointed that the group had not gone further forward in trying to resolve the various concerns. And that was the one reason that I accepted the Presidency of AAFSW, because I knew it was going to be quite a hard row to hoe. Having accepted the Presidency and having come aboard, I was very fortunate in having a Second Vice President (It was quite a large Board)... an individual by the name of Jean Vance. (I'm not bringing husbands into this because I don't think husbands have anything to do with it. It's a woman's organization, although we've tried to get men into it).

Q: Jean Vance is from Minnesota. No wonder she's so good. (laughs)

DORMAN: She's a great human being. I love her. The only good thing I can say for myself is that Jean is still working with me. You know, I can always feel that it says something nice for me, which I say with a great deal of humility, but I feel rather pleased about this.

Anyway, I asked Jean... I talked to Jean at some length... and to the Board... and I said we really had to do something, the Association. This was a very serious matter. I had tried to get to Ambassador Laise without success. I had met with some...

Q: ...which is surprising, because she was one of the first women to...

DORMAN: And she's on my Board of Directors for my business now. But it wasn't her fault. The Director General of the Foreign Service is really involved with a tremendous number of concerns. She had already realized that there was something... things... that needed to be done. She just needed some help in getting it done and formulating it. She needed other people to deal with it and then put it to her, which is what we did, of course. I had lots of conversations with Sue Whitman, who was working at that time for the Director General's Office, and we felt we were not getting anywhere, so we decided to have a big meeting, which we did at the Guy Mason Center, at the big hall there.

We had a panel. We had already got together our group of people who worked on these various groups. We had a panel all ready and Marie Tobler was the moderator of the panel. She did not do any further work on the Forum specifically, but we had a lot of people coming and going and we did other things afterwards in the organization, which I would like to mention, which I think were very important. We had this meeting for everybody. They didn't have to be members of AAFSW. We had posters around advertising it. We did have somebody there with membership forms if anyone wanted to join AAFSW, but people were not expected to belong or join. We wanted to get this matter resolved. So, everybody spoke her piece at this meeting. It was a very open meeting, everybody was able to say what she thought. People really stood up and discussed everything. Divorce was one problem. I mean, divorce seemed to be on the ascendancy, for some reason. I don't know why. Really very bad.

So, with all these concerns, we decided the only way to go was to get together, to consolidate what we had already started, which was a Forum group. We did this really... the reason it was called the Forum... because I personally was very concerned about what we might have to do. You don't want to bring an Association down, because you do something with the very best of intentions, but it ricochets. So, the Forum was under the umbrella of the Association, but a separate entity to safeguard the Association.

We sent out a questionnaire to 9,000 people overseas. Of course, some went to bachelors who would write back and say, "No, sweetie, not interested." (laughs) People really answered these questions quite well, and from the responses to the questions, we developed the composition of the Forum, which was this: We had a Family Life Study, which was children, climate, languages and all the rest of it. We had the Modern Foreign Service Wife. And interestingly enough, Stephanie Kinney, who was the Chairman of that, had worked with Hope Meyers on the Research Committee on Spouses and called me one day and was having a conversation with me about one thing or another and was saying various things about the Foreign Service. And I said: "Look, why don't you join AAFSW? And from there you can speak your piece and try to effect change." I said,

"Grumbling on the sidelines (she wasn't really grumbling, but, you know, making these comments is useless), so I said, "Now, come on, you come aboard and join." Some of these people on the Research Committee were not members. What happened was, they all eventually joined AAFSW and merged into the Forum. That's what happened to most of them. Hope didn't. She was a member of AAFSW, but she did not become a part of the Forum, but she was available to talk to and things like that.

Q*: It really was the beginning of setting AAFSW on the advocacy track, it seems to me, or a more professional way of going about things, and I think, Lesley, you were really instrumental in bringing that about.*

DORMAN: Well, I did my best. As well as that Modern Foreign Service Wife Committee that Stephanie chaired (and I'll give you the names of the people who worked with us), there was Orientation and Training, which, of course, is a very important one; Reentry, which has always caused severe stress. I mean, I think reentry is one of the things that is frightfully difficult for everybody. I don't know about you, but I've stood and looked at beds and been unable to make them, which I'm ashamed to confess (laughs). It's one of the most appalling examples of stress.

Q: I thought it was always fun to have twelve servants overseas, being in a complete household of men... with a husband, three sons, and maybe seven male servants... and then come home and be all servants rolled into one. And you're trying to get your kids to make their beds. It's not easy, is it?

DORMAN: It's not easy. I think that servants actually are a blessing, but sometimes often a difficulty, because they often have to be trained almost from scratch. I know that in Tehran, for example, I pulled aboard the husband of the woman I had. He had a cobbler shop and lost it, and she trained him, and he came to work with us. Phil gave him a white dinner jacket. I found him tying Mark's shoelaces, you know, that sort of thing. I think one of the reasons I liked Bangkok so much was because I had the most marvelous staff there. I had a cook and two maids. They didn't speak much English, but the cook did. And I had a perfectly wonderful chauffeur, who spoke perfect English, and a gardener who didn't speak any, but the thing was they were all good. There are other places where that quantity is not easy to work with, but this was a pleasure.

Q: I think you're quite right about reentry being a difficulty, because it is a sort of "Upstairs, Downstairs" life.

DORMAN: (laughs) More downstairs, than upstairs, I would suggest.

Then we had Women in Transition, Retirement and Divorce, which we'll go into, of course, and the Spouses Talent Skills Bank, which was put together by Cynthia Chard and taken over by the Department of State from Cynthia. And we also ultimately had eight recommendations in the final report, eight full recommendations. Our concerns, having written this report, I'll mention some of these concerns. We felt that by writing it, it

would put on record what was happening, and not only that, by presenting it to the top echelon in State, USIA, and AID, it was almost politely forcing the hand.

Now, the first person we went to see was the Director General and that was Ambassador Carol Laise. She was extremely nice. May I say that we exercised caution at every turn. We did everything most professionally. We always had a member of the particular labor union... in the case of the Director General, it was the American Foreign Service Association (AFSA). They are the labor union for State. In fact, there was a labor union for AID and USIA.

Q: AAFSW is not a labor union.

DORMAN: Absolutely not.

Q: It's a lobbying group.

DORMAN: Well, we got it into lobbying in order to do that, and indeed we did pay our dues to do that, but...

Q: But there is a difference.

DORMAN: Exactly so. And the AFGE is the USIA union. They took over from AFSA in the United States. But we were responsible for seeing that when we met different people that the labor organization was there. We covered our tracks from stem to stern.

Q: That's very interesting, for when you think of it, the 1972 Directive, in effect, legally excised spouses from the State Department in a way as a policy, and a lot of women were fighting for this independence from the Foreign Service. So, here we come along with some of our feelings about spouses in the Foreign Service and are presenting them to the Director General, but we really don't have a union behind us or anything. I feel this was the juncture at which AAFSW had to establish its "bona fides", you might say...

DORMAN: Well, the great thing about AAFSW, in my opinion, therein lies its strength, because it is a non-profit, autonomous organization. It is nothing to do with the Foreign Service. Its members are, but it is not. And I think that is the secret and that is why we have a lot of clout. You know, if we're denied the Eighth Floor for any reason, the diplomatic reception rooms, immediately somebody from the Hill comes down quickly to the Secretary of State and says: "Why is the Association being treated this way?" We have a very sound reputation now on the Hill, which, of course, came about partly from this work that I'm going to recount to you.

Q: Let's get on with the Forum Report then.

DORMAN: The meeting with the Director General is where we are at now. We (I believe... the Forum Group), I always took the Group with me. May I mention this here

and now: the Group did change along the road. Jean Vance remained in place; I remained in place. But it did change, because obviously people were posted, and so, I will mention shortly who the Group were initially, who were the Steering Committee, the initial people.

While we were with Ambassador Laise, having presented a copy of the Forum Report to the Secretary of State, then Henry Kissinger, to various people, such as Larry Eagleburger, who was in the Department at the time, and to the Director of USIA just coming aboard, John Rinehart, and to the Director of AID, Governor Gilligan. So, they had copies of our Forum Report.

Now, when you have an association like the Association of American Foreign Service Women, one has to watch its budget, because most of our money does go to good works in the inner city, which we'll discuss presently, and therefore, I asked Ambassador Laise whether she would be willing for the Department to send copies of the Forum Report to posts or get them reproduced at post, if they could do that, and with a mandatory telegram requesting that meetings be held at post to discuss the Forum Report, which hopefully everyone had been given an opportunity to read.

And the reason I requested this was because we had got our findings, and that's why we had been able to write the report. But I felt it was very necessary, as indeed did the Forum Group, to substantiate these findings, because we wanted to get as much backing as possible, to go ahead and get the office opened, which we will be discussing and which we felt to be all important.

So, Ambassador Laise agreed to this, and the Forum Report did go out. It went out with a cable, of course, signed by the Secretary of State. In the interim, after the report went out, we made arrangements to see the then Deputy Under Secretary of State for Management, which was what it was called then, who was Richard Moose. Now, he wasn't aboard very long and he was replaced by Benjamin Reed, who did most of the work with us and who very shortly after getting into the role, into the office, became the Under Secretary for Management, which it is now called.

After seeing Ben, we went to see Secretary of State Vance, (the Democrats then being in office). I talked to Gay Vance, Mrs. Vance, and apprized her of what we were doing, because she had agreed to be our Honorary President, and which I felt it was customary for the wife of the Secretary of State as a role for her to play. Gay Vance is a woman who sits on many interesting boards, but doesn't just sit on the board. She's a very interesting, active woman, and I felt that she really was concerned herself, had genuine concerns. We had a lengthy meeting with Secretary Vance. Mrs. Vance was present at our invitation. The Director General was present and the main members of the Forum Committee. The Secretary agreed that what we were thinking about was a very wise plan.

We had explained to him the tremendous concerns which existed and that, if you allow these rumbles to continue, they merely escalate and result in much more serious affairs.

What had prompted me, had really given me food for grave concern, was that the Canadian ambassadors' wives had indeed mutinied. Now, it's easier for them to do it than for our wives, because they are a much smaller service. This is not something that one wants to discuss all over the place, because after all the Canadians are our sisters, but it was very disquieting to me and it was factual. I felt that after having that big meeting, these concerns were very real. We were hearing them from everywhere. And they were so varied that it was necessary. The emphasis was all on most things that occurred within the framework of being a Foreign Service spouse!

Q: It was always interesting to me, Lesley, when you mentioned the Canadian women, how their concerns paralleled ours in many respects.

DORMAN: Absolutely. Absolutely. And I think that this was basically ... although they (the Canadians) find it quite difficult coming to Washington, because of all sorts of insurance concerns and medical concerns, living insurance, which make it rather difficult for them. But we always assume incidentally, Penne, that because we speak the same language that things are not difficult. This is something that is a very good example, the Canadians, that they do find it quite difficult getting integrated here. That's something to bear in mind. It must be much harder for other people.

Q: That's surprising.

DORMAN: It <u>is</u> surprising, but English people find it difficult too. It's expectations. One expects things, because the language is the same, to be easy. What, to us, may be easy to other people getting used to, is not. But the Canadians, I would have thought, would not have had the same trouble, because they are so close and have so many of the same things.

The responses coming from sending these reports abroad were very positive. Everyone in the foreign affairs agencies was extremely supportive in what we were trying to do. It was agreed that there should be an office. We had really wanted it to be called Community Liaison Office, mainly because of concerns that we felt might arise from the Staff Corps side of things. Family Liaison Office is what the Department wanted. I had joined WAO (Women's Action Organization) and also September Seventeen, which was the Staff Corps Group, because the Staff Corps felt that wives were getting jobs overseas under certain aegis, at certain posts, which normally the Staff Corps could get (e.g. Excursion Tours).

Q: It threatened them.

DORMAN: Exactly right. They did view the wives as a threat. Once the Family Liaison Office was established, we were able to deal with this very effectively and to give conclusive proof that we had not encroached on the Staff Corps preserves in any way.

Q: How did you find such proof?

DORMAN: Well, Susan McClintock... it's a little early to talk about it, because we haven't got onto the Skills Bank yet... but Susan McClintock was in charge of the Skills Talent Bank, which the Department agreed to computerize, which was part of the FLO once it was established. I requested a meeting with the September Seventeen group leadership and their members or whoever wished to attend. I had Susan with me and she was able to give conclusive proof that there had been no jobs taken which would have been Excursion Tours taken by wives, which should have been for Staff Corps members. And that was really very important.

Q: After this report was disseminated, then what was the next step?

DORMAN: We went through various procedures to do that, to establish FLO. Jean Vance and I had a number of meetings with Joan Clark, who as you recall subsequently went as Ambassador to Malta and preceded you there, I think.

Q: She succeeded Bruce.

DORMAN: Well, anyway, Joan Clark and her sidekick... a Phyllis Bucsko, a very bright woman, who were with Management, we had a lot of negotiations with both of them. And we also went to see Ben Reed. We went to see the Director of AID, Governor Gilligan, and had a long session with him, because we had a grievance, and our grievance was that when we had sent out the questionnaires, (I had been able to get the names and addresses of the people we should send them to in AID, State, and USIA with all sorts of promises dealing with these things), and an awful lot of the AID people's addresses were out of date. And Governor Gilligan agreed it was quite monstrous to the proportion that it existed. He was very cooperative on all our ideas, on the various concerns that we had on education, medical, and divorce, the children and the employment and the rest of it.

Then, we went to see John Rinehart, who had just come aboard as Director at USIA, and, of course, we had AFGE there for that, because AFGE was the labor union for them, and they were all very responsive, really, very responsive indeed. They all had their own team with them, one or two people and so forth.

And then I briefed the Secretary of State, again with his full team, and that was (laughs) quite a terrifying experience. Apparently, there was quite a lot of briefing on that day, and I learned afterwards that there was a competition as to who did the best, and I'm saying this without any real modesty, but apparently I won (laughs). I was quite terrified. I always remember the Secretary saying to me... I had a brief with me, and he said, "Are you going to read that or do you want to extemporize or pull out the pieces you want." "No," I said, "I'm going to read it. It's fairly short, Mr. Secretary, and then I will speak to the various points." And it worked. It went very well.

If you don't read from your brief under those circumstances, you can be tempted to leave things out which are frightfully important. And I owed it to all the work we'd done to do

my best. And we really got 100 percent support; I can really say that. It was absolutely fantastic.

And from there, after meeting with all these people, we then chose the office space. We chose it. I want to say here that any organization that is in any way dealing in a negotiating style should never relinquish that negotiating ability and opportunity until the ribbon is cut, until the office is opened, because once you let the reins go, it's a serious business.

And then, Jean Vance and I sat on a panel to choose the Director of FLO. We sat with one of the top people in Personnel, and there was an Assistant Secretary who was in charge of our panel, and we simply worked from dawn to dusk. Jean and I were there at 8:30 AM and we never moved from the room until 1:30 PM. How we did it, I don't know. And then we went on until closing time. It was a really very exhausting process. We got hundreds of resumes and got it down to ten people. We interviewed ten. It was right across the board. It was people from the outside. Somebody had been a child movie star in some film. They were really from everywhere. And then we got down to five.

And at five, Jean wasn't on the final panel, which I was sorry about, but I did discover that USIA and AID weren't going to be on the panel and I did point this out to Ben, and he agreed. I said, "There may be funding, you know. They are part of the foreign affairs community." So, anyway, they came aboard. They got somebody quite high up in USIA and AID. There was Harry Barnes, who'd taken over from Carol Laise as Director General, Joan Clark, Ben Reed and myself. And we didn't have any prepared questions. They just came out as we thought fit. We probably proposed different questions to different people, but that's fair too. It was all covering the concerns. And Janet Lloyd was chosen as the first Director of FLO.

And there was another panel and resumes and things, and Mette Beecroft was chosen by the initial panel for Deputy Director. And Susan McClintock was chosen for the Skills Talent Bank. Joan Scott, who had been Nathaniel Davis' secretary, came in from Bern, and I told Janet Lloyd about her, because Liz Davis thought she would be awfully good for the office. Bernice Munsey came in as the Education Counselor, which completed the staff at that time. She had been the Director of the Foreign Service Education Counseling Center, which AAFSW ran with AFSA, and we decided for various reasons to bring that to a close. I tried to persuade the AAFSW Board to start a counseling center for AAFSW, and the Board wouldn't go along with it. Bernice had even found offices for it near the White House with a shuttle going from every agency to the office, and we hoped also to have an employment agency later on. We would have made nothing but profit, but the Board was timid. And I do mention that because it annoyed me, no end.

Q: The Board was what?

DORMAN: Timid.

Q: Timid.

DORMAN: They were worried about the finances, and the only amount we could have lost (and we went through this with a fine-toothed comb with expert advice) would have been $6,000. And believe you me, we would have made a tremendous amount of money.

It would have helped us to have perhaps eventually done away with the Bookfair, which has always been a millstone around our necks, but a necessary one. I was sorry, because it was a decent idea. And Bernice had already got clientele from foreign embassies, from the World Bank, INS, and we would have had a ball with it. Anyway, bearing in mind that it was necessary to put somebody in there (in FLO), I talked to Ann Mathias, Senator Mathias' wife, who's always been interested in education...

Q: You know why, don't you? Because she had a learning disability growing up. Did you know that?

DORMAN: No, I didn't know that. She may have mentioned it to me.

Q: Therefore, she's always been interested in education.

DORMAN: She's just a darling. I introduced her to Janet Lloyd, and Janet took it over from there. The Secretary was called to the Hill and funding was brought about to have this counseling put into FLO. It had to go somewhere, and I was so pleased. Now, of course, the FLO is expanded. Well, anyway, we're going a bit ahead.

Q: It took one year to get it.

DORMAN: Yes, and Secretary Vance gave a marvelous party upstairs for all of us and gave us all certificates of appreciation which were framed (I always mention that they were framed, because frames are so expensive. Otherwise, mine would remain furled for life! Well, I won't say what I would have done with it probably. (laughs)) It was a very nice party. Philip Habib came, made an effort. Everybody was there. I made a speech. The Secretary made a speech, or vice versa, I would suggest, and it was all really... And the head of AFSA also made a speech. We really felt that we had achieved something.

Q: You did!

DORMAN: We also asked that M/FLO be under the highest echelon of Management, because we knew it would have a problem within the Department getting started. We also knew that... they gave us, through Ben Reed, I think, that sign which assistant secretaries usually have above their doors, above their offices. We had originally asked that the grades be a four and five, and they ended up a three and a five. And I, with a great deal of daring, went to Ben and asked him if the Deputy couldn't be raised to a four, because I felt that the Deputy had to know as much as the Director, particularly in the opening of an office like this. But he'd gone as far as he could and he just felt he couldn't go any

further.

I think it would be good to record the various concerns of the Forum Report. Of course, it was extensive. I'm just giving you the sort of headings: Education and Adjustment of Children. There have been a lot of problems with the various schools overseas, DOA, and various problems. Medical. (The Forum Group had six hours with Med, not altogether, separate hours, with the Medical Staff then. There was Dr. Watson, who was head of the Medical Division, Dr. Dustin, who was the Deputy and is now the Director, and Jerry Rose, who was Administrative Assistant, and Dr. Hanes, who was the Psychiatrist).

We just absolutely got together. They couldn't have been more cooperative. And I think one of the reasons that there have been problems with MED since, it seems to be on a continuing basis as far as I can see, is because people change, and I think that some people come in and disrupt and so on.

Well, to go on with this: Living Conditions. (Housing obviously comes under that). Career Continuity. (There's your Career Employment). Communication with the Foreign Affairs Agencies. (Often abysmal). Reentry. (Again, a very important entity). Transition from Foreign Service Life, (which, of course, includes to the private sector or retirement. That is very traumatic. I think that retirement business is very traumatic. The men have always been away from home. Now they are always in the home. I've seen more and more cases of the wives going out and doing something. It doesn't matter whether they are cleaning out a stable someplace, they are doing something in order to get out, because the husbands are home. I think it's a very difficult situation. It's something that I know is very difficult, and I've known a lot of people who have had problems with it). Tax Free Retirement Account in Spouse's Name. (That's the Tax Reform of 1976, which of course, came out at the time we were involved writing this). Education and Family Counseling. The Divorced Spouse. Teenagers.

I want to put on record what was in the program when the M/FLO was opened: "The FLO (That's M for Management and FLO for Family Liaison Office) is a two-way channel of communication for the foreign affairs community, a central clearing house, a resource center and a referral service. It provides information related to Foreign Service living to employees and family members in Washington and abroad. It communicates the individual and collective concerns of families to the foreign affairs agencies." And, of course, we know now that there are little CLOs (Community Liaison Offices), which are little FLOs in many posts around the world.

Q: How many are there today? Over 100 isn't it?

DORMAN: I don't know. I think there are quite a lot. I think there are very few posts without them, where they can be had. The problem with them, I think, is that often the person who does training, if the budget isn't too good at any particular time... the FLO Director or whomsoever goes out... goes out to train them... I think some of these people may be missed. And if they don't report to Washington, which they don't have to, (they

get medicals in the field now and all sorts of things), then it means that they're not meeting with other CLOs. I think that is gradually being addressed. This is a great concern to me, because I think that I've heard too many stories. There are many marvelous stories of what is going on in the field with CLOs, but we do have to address...unfortunately, we don't want to be negative... but you do have to address the problems, because that's what you want to put right.

Q: And now, FLO itself has how many officers?

DORMAN: I don't know for sure now, but I think they have a Director, Deputy Director, I think about eight people in there now. It really has grown tremendously. Perhaps nine persons with secretaries.

Q: That can have disadvantages. It becomes too much a bureaucracy.

DORMAN: Yes, I think it can have many disadvantages. I feel that the FLO grew rather too quickly perhaps in some ways. I don't know, but I just feel that way. Choosing the personnel for it, too, may not always have been just right. I mean, they've been done with good intent, but the positions in there can be "sticky". I mean, they're dealing with people very often much older than themselves, more experienced in some cases in the ways of life. And when a person has to go in as a tried and true Foreign Service spouse and talk to somebody about things which are very intimate and of great concern to them, and very meaningful to them, if this information is not treated very, very carefully, if the recipient of the information is too bureaucratic in her attitude, I think it can be simply appalling.

Q: Can be very inhibiting...

DORMAN: I have heard all sorts of stories coming out of FLO, and I think, on the whole, it has done far more good than to the contrary. Certainly, there could have been improvement. Sometimes, there have been real problems in the office, and I think one of the really bad things is that the people who complain may come to me and say something, and you say: "Look, this has nothing to do with me now. You must go to the Director. If you want to complain, complain to the Director or the Deputy Director, pronto." They don't always bother to do this. Now, a part of that problem is they may make a telephone call, the Director is in a meeting -- they attend a lot of meetings -- and then they don't bother to get back. Perhaps they are in a hotel or paying - who knows? Getting into the Department now particularly is very difficult with all the security business, so, you know, there are a lot of things that are against it.

The whole idea originally was that the doors were all open, the little banquettes were filled with children. The idea was when we chose the offices that they'd be close to the C Street entrance and easy for the children to get in with their parents. And that space was for children, you see? Now, we see doors closed. We have sometimes seen a much more closed shop.

Now, I understand it is an extremely difficult thing when you're dealing with the Bureaucracy. First of all, the office had to establish itself. Janet Lloyd and Mette Beecroft did a wonderful job here. They had to get on, establish themselves, gain the respect of the Department, refute any concerns that may have existed against their being, stride out to new spheres and deal with everything, and they really achieved all these. Yet, the doors were always open, the smiles were always there and there was a tremendous welcome sign. I really feel, without any criticism intended, that was the whole idea of those of us who brought this office into being. I don't see that atmosphere there anymore.

When the Canadian High Commissioner came down to talk to some of us -- I was privileged to talk with him -- that was one of their concerns, that the office like that would automatically, because of the nature of the beast, become too bureaucratic in its attitudes and the people in it become too bureaucratic and set in their ways. And that is why they have never really opened an exactly-like office. Their office is not that. They have something, but it is not comparable. I do think it's always a danger, if you will. It's always denied by the people who work in the office, and I think sometimes they don't even see it. The President of AAFSW is always supposed to be an advisor.

There is a plaque in the main office from the State Department, which was given to the AAFSW, stating their whole contribution to this affair. And it hangs there, but nobody ever sees it anymore, because the doors are closed.

I think they do have another office on the other side where the secretary is friendly, and they have been for a long time, very welcoming, very nice, but I think there should have been a photographic history in that big office, perhaps. Not of all the reigning directors, but of the fact that... And what has happened is, you will see a Director leaving, you will see them receiving a check for $300 or $500, you will see them getting meritorious honor awards or superior honor awards, compared to whom you will never hear them say, "This office was founded by AAFSW volunteers. It is to them that we owe our thanks." Not the names of the team, but the Association. That you do not see, and that annoys the daylights out of me.

Q: Of course.

DORMAN: Many of these directors would not have gotten their jobs in that office if they hadn't been a part of AAFSW. Many of them worked with AAFSW and some of them did not, but some of them did. And it seems to me that... that is something that is...

Q: We are getting farther and farther away from the years of the founding of it, and it has become a part of the Bureaucracy. That's where their funds come from. They now must establish a budget every year; they must go to the Administration people and the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) to say, "We need a Skills Bank or we need someone to do this." They don't come to AAFSW, and that's the problem.

DORMAN: Well, that is the problem.

Q: AAFSW was the Mother Lode, but they don't say that.

DORMAN: No, and I think it's a very bad thing they don't. I do think, however, that they should be reminded by AAFSW, and it shouldn't be a question of them telling AAFSW what to do. AAFSW is still the Mother there, and the OBC -- I cut the ribbon with Martin Ackerman to open that, I was very privileged -- and I think they are doing very good things, but we always felt there was a very slight strain between these two offices. I think that perhaps is being broken down, which is an excellent thing. I'm glad that there's more freedom now, I hope there is. But they are two separate entities and they are dealing ostensibly with family concerns.

Q: The OBC, we should say, is the Overseas Briefing Center which trains families to go overseas, and FLO... how would you characterize it? It is the link between the State Department and the families.

DORMAN: Yes, I would say not only the State Department... let's please... I remember not too long ago, Mike Deedo, when he was in training at AID, had to give $5,000 of his training money, very much indeed, to FLO. It's the agencies, USIA and AID that are concerned with this.

I just want to read the names of the original members of the Steering Committee of the Forum: There was my humble self; Jean Vance, Chairman of the Forum; members of the Steering Committee were Mavis Barrett, Jesse Bartlett, who is now deceased regrettably, Cynthia Chard, Virginia Egan, Janet Hawley, Mary Holmes, Janice Kennedy, Stephanie Smith Kinney, Alice Lowenthal. And there were many people who worked with it as well, but that was the original committee cited as such in the Forum Report.

Q: Now, we'd better move on here. We've got the Forum Report written. We had the FLO established. What would you say was the next thing out of that Forum Report? The divorced spouses? Did that become a big issue?

DORMAN: Well, yes. A lot of concerns were addressed by the Secretary and some of them are still being addressed. Yes, divorced spouses and employment were the major things. The medical part, we felt, we had addressed as well as we could.

Q: What was that? Complaints about care abroad?

DORMAN: Yes, and care at home, too, with examinations. And I think there are still problems there unfortunately. But, who knows? One should not be judge and jury. But we did feel that after those six hours, we had really gotten through and dealt with the mental health side of things. We tried to make some things a little more equitable. However, I did feel that when the Iran hostages were taken, and the wives were here, that they were not dealt with by the Medical Division as astutely as they should have been or as wisely as they should have been.

There again, it's a matter of the staff changing in the Medical Division, and it's very important for sound handovers there and for some form of supervision. Really, FLO should be supervising this, in my opinion. They should be seeing that the families are properly cared for, and the families should be able to report to them if, indeed, they find there is a lack of proper treatment.

Q: I think they are generally.

DORMAN: I think they are, too, and certainly watching education. Judith Livingston is working on that in the FLO and has done a marvelous job. She's a very bright woman; she's been a professor at George Washington University, has a Ph.D... "Dr. Livingston, I presume." (laughs) She's a wonderful person, and I think she has done well. I think the overseas school division also has perked up quite considerably of late. We really worked on the schooling, because that is so important. And it is really very necessary that it's dealt with with acumen and skill.

After this, immediately, because I'm a great believer in keeping things on the upsurge -- and I mention this before I go on to the divorce side of things -- we did have an Economic and Legal Seminar, put together by Jesse Bartlett, who was a lawyer and graduate of Oxford University in England... although she's an American. Very bright woman. She is now deceased which is regrettable, a very great loss. We did this over at the Foreign Service Institute (FSI). Jesse got together some of the best lawyers from Maryland, Virginia, and the District. We had this all-day Seminar, and it was brilliantly run and awfully well done.

From it, we did indeed write the Report of the Economic and Legal Seminar, which I believe is still around to be had, I hope. I think it is so important to keep going on with things. We also did a very big Seminar for the International Year of the Child called "A Child of Many Nations". Susan Donnelly and Linda Bell chaired this. We pulled in Jane Freeman, wife of Orville Freeman, as the moderator. She was head of the Girl Scouts at that time. And Gay Vance I invited to come, and I introduced Gay and Jane. And USIA taped it, and it was reportedly supposed to have been sent to posts around the world. Personally, I never saw it or heard of anyone who saw it, but I haven't made a great effort in finding out.

We made a very minimal charge for this and we pulled in military wives, embassy wives from foreign embassies here in Washington, and, of course, our own Foreign Service people. That was good, because it also helped the State Department, because something that had been planned didn't work out, and I think it covered all corners by our doing it in the Department. We went into workshops and dealt with all the different things which affect young people, so that was good.

The next thing, as far as divorce is concerned, was Survivor Annuities and Pro Rata Share. The divorce really seemed to be on the upswing in the Foreign Service. It may

have been on the upswing everywhere. I think, it's got out of hand.

Q: Do we really know? We don't know if the Foreign Service has more divorce than the rest of the population, do we?

DORMAN: No, we don't know that. The problem is, we don't know from the Foreign Service point of view. We tried to get statistics, and the Department really won't relinquish those, because once a person has been divorced, as far as the foreign affairs agencies are concerned (and that's all of them), the spouse is no longer... never has anything to do with anything. Talk about non-persons! They've become a myth! It doesn't matter whether they've been aboard for thirty or forty years, they still become absolutely a non-entity. That is one of the dreadful things about it all.
We decided that something just had to be done to try to secure for those wives who had not received equitable divorce settlements. Some wives had had very equitable divorce proceedings for many years. The husbands have been tremendously honorable. The judge has been decent. It has been done in a state where people, where the judiciary, have treated the manner with seriousness and, indeed, with the right sense of keeping the wife's side well in mind. A part of the problem came about, of course, because of No Fault Divorce which in turn came about because of the great desire to go forward with great freedom for women, which we want. But, you know, it "ricochet romances" in this way. (laughs)

I had testified before Claude Pepper's Committee on Aging with John Burton in the Chair. That was one of the first times I had testified, and it was really the most terrifying experience of my life, because Dr. Joyce Brothers was there and, of course, she is really very well known, quite notorious, charming woman. They had the TV and the lights. And after her was Eleanor Smeal, who was the President of the National Organization of Woman (NOW), then has come back. However, the lights did not stay on for poor Eleanor. As soon as Dr. Brothers had given her talk, the lights went off and the television cameras removed themselves, and... may the good Lord be praised, as far as I was concerned...

Q: Do you think it was political?

DORMAN: I don't know, but the thing is that after Ellie Smeal, I testified, and there were a lot of...

Q: And the lights came back on? (laughs)

DORMAN: No, no. (laughs) Very dim indeed, very dim. Almost darkness by that time. And it was, of course, on these women who had been left in these unfortunate circumstances.

Q: How many were there, would you say?

DORMAN: How many women?

Q: Women, in this group?

DORMAN: Well, that's another story. I would have thought probably about 80, but the State Department always put the figure at 150, but you always got to put more. We have discovered more since, because a lot of those people in the main were people who had fairly reasonable good divorce settlements.

Q: So, we're not talking about a large, large group.

DORMAN: No, we weren't, but it was enough to... oh, it was more than 80, because I'm basically talking about the group that was left afterwards, I'm sorry. It was, I suppose, about 150. It wasn't an enormous group, but the point was that the ones who were suffering were suffering badly, and it was a sense of injustice.

Q: The reason I raised the numbers was because the military wives, after we got the pension part, the military wives wanted the same. And there, of course, you're talking about thousands.

DORMAN: Well, interesting that you would mention that and very appropriate too, if I may say so. When they knew we were doing it, the military wives came to me, to us, and offered to give all their support. And my response was, "Be in the room, but keep quiet, because if we can get it, then we can help you get it, but we're a smaller group and, therefore, it would be much better not...

Q: ...to overload the circuits.

DORMAN: Absolutely not. And then subsequently to that, I got in touch with Bill Colby and went ahead, and we helped the CIA wives go forward and have worked with them in various ways in connection with this. But going back, there were very good people: Olympia Snow, Pat Schroeder, Barbara Mikulski, and... I'm trying to think of the name of the lady who ran for Vice President...(laughs)

Q: Geraldine Ferraro?

DORMAN: Geraldine Ferraro! I went to speak with her personally, very charming. And a whole group of women... this whole Committee was stacked with numbers of people, and the questions were very piercing and very...

Q: Well, let's face it, you were on the wave, too, of women's liberation, and in the Congress it was an opportune moment.

DORMAN: Well, it <u>was</u> opportune, and I covered quite a wide spectrum in my brief. It wasn't just on Survivor Annuities and Pro Rata Sharing. It was employment opportunities

and a general going forward for the spouse.

And then, after that, Patricia Ryan testified with me, and Marcia Curran, both of them. Marcia Curran, of course, later on, became a Director of FLO. Marcia testified. This was before the Post Office and Civil Service Committee of the House with Pat Schroeder in the Chair and Dante Fascell, who is now Chairman of the Foreign Affairs Committee in the House.

Q: And who, I think, has always been a real supporter of the Foreign Service.

DORMAN: Yes, he has, and in a very genuine way. He was a very decent man indeed. Ginny Schlunt, who was a lawyer and his Administrative Assistant, and I did a lot of work together. She's no longer with him; she's on her own now. But he's excellent. He's the sort of man whom, I think, we need in the Congress. He had really only met me a couple of times and one was when I testified. Subsequent to that, it was a meeting at State. He came right across the room to talk to me. Now, I mean, I wasn't of any importance, and even if I had been, which I wasn't, I thought that was a very decent thing for him to do. I really feel that's the sort of man he is. When he had a heart attack, I wrote him a letter. I was no longer President of AAFSW. He wrote me a charming letter back, you know, "thank you", he's a very decent man. I like him. He's very good. I think it's good that he's in the position he's in at the moment.

Anyway, Patricia testified on divorce, Marcia on employment, and I on the overall. Also Bibs Thurston testified in her own right. She has a tremendous sense of the legalities of all this and was commended by Fascell, because of her extreme knowledge on the legal aspect of this. She'd been divorced for many years and she's made an absolute study of it. It's amazing the knowledge that she has.

We had real problems in the House, overall, because a lot of men had been divorced. Then we testified before the Senate Subcommittee of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, Clairborne Pell in the Chair, and Javits wandering in and out, and other people present. He asked... the Chairman asked me... Senator Pell... why we were called the Association of American Foreign Service Women, and wasn't that...

Q: Wasn't that chauvinistic?

DORMAN: Exactly right, against the men. And I pointed out to him, as I did on Panorama, that the League of Women Voters has, for years, always retained its name and yet it has had not only male volunteers, but male employees, and that I thought we were known by this name and that men were very open to...

Q: Welcome.

DORMAN: Very welcome, and indeed I had really tried to get men to join, but I didn't go on about that. In the end, he asked me quite a number of questions. We had been to see

him ahead of time and talked to him, and he simply said, "I'm going with you right across the board, Mrs. Dorman." So, I was very pleased, because we really needed this. Unfortunately, OMB, of course, played a big part in all this.

Q: Absolutely.

DORMAN: A date was fixed, not necessarily with OMB, but a date was fixed as February 15, 1981, and anyone who was divorced prior to that date was not included. Now, what happened was, this is not a mandatory decision, but it did give the women a right to go before the judge with no prejudice. And unless something very bad could be proven against them, they really got a good chance of getting their rights and in a proper climate.

What we have to remember, which in a way has a sense of unfairness to it, each state has its different rules, as we know. California is probably divided right across, and that is the case in several other states. But if sometimes one does get a judge who is not very sympathetic for whatever reasons, it is hard and sometimes the women aren't very fair in the judiciary, which is interesting. But on the whole, most of the divorces have gone fairly well. But we had this group of women... the 80... that was the number of women to which I was referring earlier, yes, that was left out. It's a bit more now, but the number was nebulous. Now we think we've got it at last. Yes, we do. It's in the Appropriations Bill now.

Q: What year was...

DORMAN: 1976. It's been eleven years. I have worked all along with this group and so have other people. Very hard. I think Pam Moffat has now been working very hard to get this resolved. She's the President of AAFSW now. Tory Whitman in the State Department should be mentioned. Excellent, in this regard. And Bill Bacchus, who has been maligned unfairly by the women, I think. He's a wonderful human being and done everything he possibly could, and people have to understand that there's only so far that you can go with this thing.

Q: What do you have for them now?

DORMAN: Well, the Pro Rata and Survivor Annuity, and what is happening is that it is not coming from the husband at all. It will be given to the spouse according to the rank of the husband at the time of the divorce. And if they are getting anything from the husband, that will be deducted from what she will get, but basically, it is a great step forward. They don't get Medicare. We had hoped to get that, as some of these Pro Ratas can be quite low. Some people only get a little something, over a thousand a month pro rata, so that is not enough, but it is certainly better than what they are not getting now, you see?

Some of them are living off their children. We have people in absolute penury. It is really very serious. There have been all sorts of cases, and you have to be sure that what you're

hearing is accurate, because when people go through a lot of stress and strain, there is a great tendency sometimes -- well not a great tendency always --- but a tendency for stories to get a little flaky, so one has to be careful. But these cases will be properly adjudicated. The money is not coming from the spouse. It is coming from somewhere else. It's coming from a fairer source. They're not going to take from anyone else. So I do think that this matter, hopefully today, should be resolved in the House. It goes to the full vote today, and then it goes to the Senate, and I really do pray fervently that this goes through. These women have waited so long, some of them have said, "We are going to be dead and buried before anything happens." Working with them every so often, once a month, and trying to keep their spirits up, I ended up by saying a year or so ago that they really had to do more to help themselves. They do seem to have been doing that. And it does seem to be more effective. AAFSW helped immeasurably.

Q: Well, we stuck with them. Who else has worked with them?

DORMAN: Patty Ryan worked awfully hard with them when she was here as Forum Chairman and, as a matter of fact, a lot of our other things have gone practically by the board in order to help this group, because there's only a limited time in anyone's life. We have all got our own families to be concerned with and many people with employment, as well.

Q: So, what else would you say...

DORMAN: I testified also before the White House Committee on Families, which was, I think, a good thing, because all of these things are important. There was a lot of news about this in The Washington Post. Judy Mann wrote articles about it. It was in The Star. And in The New York Times and The Chicago Herald Tribune. It was all over the place, and that's the sort of thing that makes the public understand. It also gives the public an insight into the fact that we in the Foreign Service exist, because, I think, it was the Iran crisis that really got us known as the Foreign Service. I think around the country a lot of people in the U.S. don't even know of the existence of the Foreign Service. You know, unsung heroes and heroines. We've all been exposed to terrorism of some sort. I mean, evacuations, riots galore, and I had been told once that my husband had been killed, when he hadn't. All sorts of terrifying things. And that was said in front of my two children.

Q: We need to build a constituency of friends and people who understand. You mentioned that you were on Panorama with Janet Lloyd?

DORMAN: Yes, Janet Lloyd and I did a lot of radio programs at different times... CBS, PBS. Did one for PBS in the FLO office, and we really got very used to working together. We sort of complemented each other very well. If she was on and I wasn't talking, she would bring me in, and vice versa.

Q: What was your purpose?

DORMAN: Well, we were invited to be on Panorama, because people had heard about the Forum Report, because that was what I was supposed to speak on and the bringing about of the M/FLO. Before the program in the morning (Panorama is at noon, as you recall), I had had esp, if you will, that I might be asked a question on the intake of the Foreign Service, whether this had been changed at all by the taking of the hostages in Tehran, Iran, and I had called Clint Lauderdale, who was then in that office in the State Department to ask him for numbers. He was very pleased that I had done this, and I got the number of the intake for that year. I got the numbers of the people who had passed the written exam and those who'd passed the oral and the final acceptance, and his permission to, indeed, divulge these facts.

He also asked me if I would put in a word for advocacy while I was able to talk, which I did, and I was asked this question, and it was very interesting. I was also asked the question again why we were called the Association of American Foreign Service Women. I think he said "wives", the interviewer, and I said "This will get me hung, drawn and quartered... this is women", and I said "We do have single people as members. We have Staff Corps people as members and officers who are members of the Foreign Service themselves, and therefore, that is what it is called."

We talked about the hostage situation, and we talked about various things very briefly. Ambassador Popper had joined us, because he had written an article which had been published in The New York Times, and he came aboard at the last minute. He had been on TV, obviously, many times before and was fairly vocal, articulate, and in the end a man came with a big sign saying: "Lesley Dorman, do your stuff now!" I had a copy of the Forum Report with me, and as soon as I could, with dignity, I interjected and then said my piece. Then, I was able to get Janet Lloyd in by saying that "my good colleague, who is Janet Lloyd, is Director of the Office," and I managed to work it in that way.

I had been asked the question on the intake before that, prior to that, but it was a very satisfactory interview. It was a half hour instead of the usual ten minutes. We were rather privileged, we thought, and people that heard it were very pleased with it, both in the Department and out.

Q: Who was the interviewer? Was it Maury Povich?

DORMAN: No, it wasn't. He was away. I cannot remember who it was. I have to say, with due respect, that I wouldn't mention the name, because I wasn't impressed with the person. I didn't think he had done his homework awfully well, and he was a bit antagonistic. I thought, indeed, one had to challenge him politely if he said the wrong thing, and I felt that instead of taking that with humor, he... Most of those people are rather good on that show. It's a very good show, I think, but he didn't worry us at all. The producer was a woman who was marvelous and she went on to work for Ted Turner's outfit.

Q: That broadcast helped to put AAFSW and its work on the map?

DORMAN: Yes. And, you know, the broadcasts were very useful, because I remember driving one day and hearing... what they did... they did some with Janet and myself together, talking together... then they took out and used these broadcasts for weeks. They took out segments, and I could hear my voice coming out as I was driving, nearly causing an accident. I remember my dentist saying to me once, in the middle of filling a tooth or something diabolical, "You know, really, I would have been quite happy to have married somebody in the Foreign Service. You really make it sound great!" And I thought that's good, because we do have these negatives as well, but it's so important for us to be loyal to what we work with. If you can't be loyal, get out. I really feel we have a great sense of pride in the Service, whatever our concerns about it may be, and that's very important.

Q: Your legacy in the organization has been tremendous, Lesley. I know that there are several other things... many other things you did, but the two that I want to ask you about... first is, you were Program Chairman and what kind of programs did you put on?

DORMAN: Oh, yes, after I was President. It wasn't exactly blackmail, but I got Patty Ryan to agree to be President, because five years was just more than...

Q: You didn't have withdrawal symptoms?

DORMAN: No, none at all, fortunately, but I did have a chary feeling about being on the Board after being President, in fairness to the next President. But Patty and I were very good friends, and I was very careful in my conduct on the Board. So we didn't have any problems. I said the one thing I would do, since she asked me, would be Program.

It was a job I enjoyed more than anything else. It has got so many possibilities. Lots of frustrations, very nerve wracking. You never know if anyone is going to come on time. Art Buchwald used to rush in at the last moment, but he always used to say: "Lesley Dorman calls, I come". (laughs) I felt rather flattered by that, but anyway, he didn't mean it, I'm sure, but he was great fun. We had people like Barbara Tuchman and we had Marvin Kalb, who was very popular, because not being a member of the foreign affairs agencies, being an outside newsman, he could really tell it as he saw it and not as he felt he ought to report it. He was very, very good. Walter Stoessel, of course, who was Acting Secretary of State twenty one times, not only came and talked to us, but he also moderated a panel on the Soviet Union for me with William Handley, who's very well known. And Dimitri Simes, who is indeed a Russian, who came out from the Soviet Union not too many moons ago. We were going to have Ann Garrels from ABC, but she fell by the wayside, but we got a replacement for her. We had Bruce Laingen, of course, Penne, your dear husband, who talked to us.

Q: Who was excellent (laughs).

DORMAN: He was first class, yes, he was great. And we had lots of panels on the Soviet Union, on Poland, and arts and sciences, tours to the Hill and to Winterthur and so much

more. I always have a committee when I do something, try to get expertise on it, people who have access to the art world in Washington and that sort of thing, so it's really more fun. I still go out after most of the speakers as the Program Chairman, but delegate them to others, so people feel a sense of responsibility and enjoyment themselves. It is a lot of teamwork.

Q: Today, now, with so many wives working, how do you think the programs are going in AAFSW?

DORMAN: Well, I think one of the concerns that I have stated quite openly and honestly both to the present Program Chairman, who is a darling, Susan Mallick, and also some other people, that I feel there should be a separation between some of the programs. In other words, some programs should take place elsewhere other than the Eighth Floor. I think people like to come to the Eighth Floor where most of our programs take place, because those diplomatic rooms are marvelous and should be seen, and people like to bring guests to see them and so forth. But I really do feel very strongly that a lot of our members are not interested in the real advocacy programs that we have, because we have members of varying ages and we have a lot of our Bookfair supporters and, therefore, that would be my main criticism. Programs are difficult, because we don't pay our speakers. It's all pro bono, and it's not easy.

Q: But, if you get those speakers of that quality that you got in, what 1978...

DORMAN: 1981-82, after I was President. These were all during my time as Program Chairman.

Q: It wasn't that much longer ago, and yet, I don't feel that the same quality or standard is being given to us. The reason is that the audience is so many retired and that younger women work?

DORMAN: No, I don't really think it is a problem, because we have so many younger members now, and a lot of the programs are for them. As I say, there should be separate lunches which we can do sometimes.

Q: Or dinner or night programs?

DORMAN: Well, we did try night programs, but we didn't get anybody to sign up for it at all, and I don't know why. I agree with you, but people don't like to drive after dark, a lot of them, not even the younger people enjoy it particularly, or they get home and they're tired, or they may work. We tried noon meetings, luncheon meetings for the working people, but they haven't been successful. We did when I was President a program on mental health which Mrs. Carter came to, for example. Dr. Steven Hirsh, who is a psychiatrist, and many other very good people were on the panel. I had been working with the Forum Group with Dr. Peter Bourne. I wouldn't go to the White House, but then he had a meeting which he wanted me to attend to meet Dr. Herbert Pardee, Director of

the National Institute for Mental Health. This was held at the White House, and other members of the Forum team were present.

Q: Did you feel, speaking of Mrs. Carter, that what the First Lady or the Secretary of State's wife contributes or puts in has a great deal to do with how AAFSW is perceived?

DORMAN: No, actually, I don't. In fairness, we were very lucky with Gay Vance and Adele Rogers, very supportive. She was a darling woman. I think all of them have been supportive, many of them, except one or two who perhaps weren't interested. I think Mrs. Shultz is very supportive...Obie Shultz. It's just the fact that I really don't think it makes that much difference. I think that in Gay's case, she was marvelous, because she got together and I was privileged to be on this particular panel, when we met and got together with Congressional and Senatorial wives.

Q: Can we go on and talk about how privileged you felt to be a part of that?

DORMAN: Yes, I'm very happy to talk about this briefly. There were two sets of meetings that Gay had organized. One was the meeting that we used to have, a pre-planning session with the Congressional wives, and we would have these meetings at the State Department usually. Sometimes, we had lunch in the Secretary's Office. We would brown bag our lunch, all of us would bring our own, and we'd have this lovely china and we'd be sitting there with these brown bags. But there were people like Lorraine Percy and Casey Ribicoff and a whole group of people. We used to plan meetings. Sometimes we'd go to the Hill and they would be the hostesses, and sometimes they would come to the State Department. There would be a special program on a certain part of the world. Then, various members of AAFSW and other Foreign Service wives, who may not be members, would be invited to attend. And they were very informative and it gave this rapprochement with the Hill, which was very necessary.

And then, the other meetings that we had fairly frequently were very, very useful, where representation from the OBC, the M/FLO, AAFSW (that was represented by myself or someone else if I couldn't be there), and ambassadors' wives, who were in on leave, perhaps the Director of the FSI to talk about what he was doing, somebody else to talk about advocacy, various things. Gay Vance would be in the Chair.

And this was followed forward, after Gay left, by Jane Muskie and then Pat Haig. I think after Pat Haig left this rather fell by the wayside. And I know that, to the best of my knowledge, this is not being done under the present Administration, which I feel is a very great pity, because it brings about the opportunity for the wife of the Secretary of State and other people in the hierarchy (Jean Newsom used to attend when David had the top slot of the Foreign Service). It's really important, because all sorts of grievances -- not necessarily grievances -- but all sorts of ideas can be aired and talked over and debated and arbitrated, and it's really very good.

As far as the Forum's work, we initiated meetings with the Congressional wives,

whichever Congressional year was in. We would meet with that section of the Congress and other people, of course, that had been there for years also attended these meetings. We would meet informally. There was just a very small group of us. They would invite us to the Hill and all sorts of things. And I remember there was this big group that Gay was involved with... Jim Wright, who is now Speaker of the House, had us up, took care of us up there. And this really is important.

The Forum Group of AAFSW made it clear to the Congressional wives in no uncertain terms that we were meeting because we had mutual concerns, not because we wanted our concerns to be relayed to their husbands through "pillow talk", if I may use that phrase. We were very genuine in this, because...

Q: There was a sense of belonging...

DORMAN: Absolutely.

Q: You belong to the Foreign Service, and they belong to the Congress, but you're together in your purposes...

DORMAN: Well, we both move all the time, and we both have schooling concerns, we have medical concerns, leaving their doctors in their home states and coming here, you know, and it was really very fruitful. That seemed to disappear, and I'm very sorry about that. I think continuity, you know, every now and again, an organization has to look at itself and it has to say, "Do we need to keep this going? Do we need to keep that?" And then, according to the dictates of what is deemed important, then the good things should go forward and the things that were perhaps very good, but are no longer needed, may need to be cast aside. I think you need to look at yourself every now and again.

Q: You need to be flexible, but you also need to stop reinventing the wheel every few years.

DORMAN: I feel that too. I couldn't agree more. That's part of the problem. I do think AAFSW did everything it possibly could. I used to brief... the President of AAFSW usually briefs ambassadors' wives, DCMs' wives, going overseas. If they're not members, they quickly join (laughs), and you know the thing works well.

Q: The second thing I wanted to ask you about, beyond your work as Program Chairman, was the inner city projects that AAFSW has done through the years? What was your contribution in that?

DORMAN: Oh, yes, the inner city projects. I worked very hard, still am, as a matter of fact. AAFSW... I think Polly Jones started this, and this was also carried on by Dotty Kidder and other people.

Q: What year? Can you give me an idea... in the forties, fifties?

DORMAN: Well, AAFSW was convened in its present form in 1960.

Q: Oh, that's right.

DORMAN: And the Bookfair started in 1961, that was the first year. The inner city projects, I would say, in the middle to late sixties were started. And it was a very good idea. We have done a lot of work. Adele Rogers still comes to work... well, she lives in Washington, in Bethesda... at the Simmons School, even when she's with Bill in New York. It's not called the Simmons School now...

I'm trying to think... it's got a new name. But, in any event, it's a school in the inner city. She's just a marvelous person. So, that is something that we did. We've done a lot of different things. We've done displays of all sorts of artifacts at the State Department from all around the world and had these groups in, but that was beginning not to work too well, so that was dismissed.

Q: I think it was security, wasn't it?

DORMAN: Well, it was partly security and it was partly the fact that the groups seemed to be younger and younger and not very appreciative, unable to understand, they were really too young, and I felt... well, we felt... that the program was a lot of work, but it really didn't achieve very much. We'd been in classes and talked about various countries we'd been to. Classes in Virginia and Maryland and the District.

We've worked with Area B Mental Health, which has now been consolidated; I think it's now Area A, but we did an awful lot of work there, not just giving money to it, which is done liberally, but working too. And when the new wing was built, we helped with different things, gave toys, went and talked to the children, went and talked with the people that were there and so forth.

And then the Eastern Branch Boys and Girls Clubs of Greater Washington, the Women's Auxiliary, which was started by AAFSW members, Ruth Bond and June Byrne, who incidentally was the person who started AAFSW in 1960. She's now June Spencer. She was widowed and remarried. The Women's Auxiliary (I sit on the Board now), we do a lot of good, a tremendous number of things, and AAFSW gives us a great deal of monetary support and they give us moral support. The community representative attends many of the Board meetings, and we, in turn, the Women's Auxiliary, give a luncheon for AAFSW once a year, which is coming up next week. The Auxiliary arranges for scholarships for young people.

So, you know, we really concern ourselves. We've given money and help to Martha's Table, to Children's Hospital, to the House of Ruth, a tremendous amount of support there, and to many organizations in the inner city where we feel it's important. We've done one-time stands. We've given lots of books to various people that have asked us for

them, from the Book Room and so on, when we feel there has been a really genuine need.

I think this is a marvelous participation, and we are the only entity of the Foreign Service that has really addressed itself to the inner city of Washington. We worked terribly hard to get the money and it all goes to good works. Very commendable.

Q: We mustn't forget the Bookfair. It gives money for scholarships.

DORMAN: That's a tremendous amount of work, and I must say it got to such a point during my Administration we decided to pay the Book Room Coordinator, because she was working five days a week, and that's unreasonable to expect anyone to do that. That's been going on for years, and more and more money is obtained, so we are able to give money to inner city concerns. It's really a business now.

Q: The money really goes to scholarships, doesn't it?

DORMAN: Yes, that's exactly right. The main part of the money goes to scholarships.

Q: For Foreign Service children?

DORMAN: For Foreign Service children. And the scholarships... some are merit, which are not very large, and most of them are need. The need, of course, is done through Princeton. They determine that. They deal with that. But the merit, we have a panel every year... I've sat on that. In fact, I'm happy to say, I just remembered it, isn't that frightful? That the first time that the scholarships were honoring an AAFSW member, I was the honoree. It was given in my name (laughs). I was rather embarrassed by it all.

Q: I think it's wonderful.

DORMAN: I should take these accolades more graciously. (laughs). I sort of giggle nervously and go into a decline.

Q: What can you tell me about the Hertz Symposium. What is the title? "Diplomacy: The Role of the Spouse." When was that put together.

DORMAN: Well, Martin Hertz called me and said he was going to do a written symposium and would I please write an article for it.

Q: It was in 1981?

DORMAN: Yes, it was.

Q: Georgetown, wasn't it?

DORMAN: It's under the auspices of the Institute for the Study of Diplomacy. It's the

Edward A. Walsh School of Foreign Service, Georgetown University, and the written symposium is "Diplomacy: The Role of the Wife," and it's edited by Martin Hertz with a Forward by the Honorable Ellsworth Bunker, dear Ellsworth. Bless his heart. I agreed to do that and started to write the article and really was quite far ahead. At that time, however, I was trying to get out of being President of AAFSW with some urgency at this point, not because I hadn't enjoyed it, or for any particular reason, but I felt it had been too long. Even felt four years was too long. And I had, by fair means, I trust, got a colleague of mine, who had been head of the Forum, Patricia Ryan, to agree to take the Presidency. I felt, because she would be coming aboard in six months or so after the writing of this, that it would be a good idea for her to have her name in print. I also felt she probably could make a good contribution to the article, so we both did the article, and the whole thing was very successful. You, Penne, are here, having done a noble task in this.

Q: Mine was the last article in it.

DORMAN: Oh, last, but not least, I would suggest. Ours is the first. (laughs). It's all very funny. Of course, Ellsworth gives his little introduction, no Forward, and the first thing is an introduction by Martin Hertz, and then comes Patty and myself.

Q: What was the main gist of your article?

DORMAN: Well, it was the concerns, really, of the Foreign Service. Pure and simple. We said that it was a very stimulating life and had undeniable rewards of personal growth, travel and inter- national friendships, but for women in developed areas of the world, the role of the wife of a diplomat presents problems, and that's exactly what it does do. As a matter of fact, I'd like to read you... we talked about the political, social, and economic role of women in America that has changed significantly, which is really the whole crux of the change.

Q: I think so too.

DORMAN: And this change is going to continue in various ways. And that's why when people say, "How do you think the Foreign Service is going?" how can you evaluate the future of the Foreign Service wife, the spouse, whether male or female, in the Foreign Service? It's an impossible question to answer, because how do we know how the Foreign Service is going to evolve? It has changed itself, remarkably, far more than any of us would have expected, and probably has a lot more changing to do. Perhaps not a lot, but some, I would suggest.

Q: I think it might get very drastic.

DORMAN: I think it might get drastic, just as I said earlier. I don't want to see a single Service.

Q: They are bringing in so many consultants from outside and there are so many political appointments...

DORMAN: That, of course, I think is most regrettable, and in some cases...

Q: That's the aspect that Bruce (Laingen) is trying to work on, is how can we stimulate the career service. I feel, frankly, with the spouse, it is necessary to bring back this feeling that the spouse is also in the Foreign Service. It is perhaps the only thing that's going to help revive that sense of service. Too many are staying home, you know, while the husband goes overseas.

DORMAN: Yes, I would have liked to see... of course, it's very difficult to do this fairly, because who adjudicates the ambassador's wife and who really can say who are the bees and the drones. And we do know there will always be drones given the opportunity. Life is like that. But I would have liked to see, have some sort of stipend given to, frankly, every Foreign Service wife (who goes abroad), because I think in this day and age... And I feel that whatever they do, there should be a definite recommendation to go on a resume from the ambassador or from the head of the division. That is something that can be arbitrated, but I do really feel quite strongly that something has to be done, because it is a job that you're doing. It is an upheaval.

Q: It's a job that you're not doing.

DORMAN: Well...

Q: And what a shame. (laughs)

DORMAN: Well, that, of course, is very true. And we talked in this article about how the role of women in America has changed. It's not just the role of the Foreign Service spouse, I don't think. It's increased mobility, longevity plays a great part today, education combined with economic necessity. The rise in school fees has just been simply traumatic and it's just awful.

Q: Yes.

DORMAN: Inflation, soaring divorce rates, which we've already discussed, and so forth. I think that one of the interesting things that... we went on, of course, for several pages in our article, but I think that this is a piece, if you think that I should read it, that is very interesting. "It is a time of transition and redefinition for the wife in the diplomatic service. At present, it is far from clear how the role will evolve, (which is just what we were discussing). Diplomatic wives are on the whole talented, intelligent people, and with the good will and cooperation of governmental institutions, they will find creative solutions to the problems posed by diplomatic life in the years ahead."

Well, that is all quite questionable in a way, I think, because as we said a minute ago, it is

difficult to predict. We don't have esp. If anyone had told me that Tropicana Orange Juice would go up from 85 cents to well over $2.00 today, or whatever it is, I wouldn't have believed it then. I would have told them they were out of their minds.

Following this written symposium, Martin Hertz called me and said he wanted to do an oral one, and he would like me, if I would be willing, to put together a team to discuss the possibilities of it and how it should evolve. I invited Jean Vance and Janet Lloyd to join me in this, and he had David Newsom aboard. And we sat down with a secretary present to take notes, and did indeed bring about, I hope, a fairly decent oral symposium.

It was well attended, very interesting, quite controversial in some ways, and it just told some more. But all these things are useful. And I think one of the things that AAFSW should be thinking about in the years ahead is to keep innovative. You can't become stagnant. You've got to go forward. If you can't, if you haven't the personnel, because they're all working, to do everything, well then, you just have to play it by ear and try to do things as they are possible to do. But nothing is impossible. That is a word that should not be in anyone's vocabulary.

Q: What do you think are today the prominent concerns? Do you think it's "terrorism"? Security of families?

DORMAN: To be very frank with you, I don't think "terrorism" is. I think it is frightening and scary, but I think that, basically, the chances of one being involved in it are very remote.

Q: How about at posts overseas, would you say it is "anti-Americanism"?

DORMAN: I think that may well become a very difficult situation, and it depends where one is posted to... the way the arms situation is... where we have positioned armaments... and the locals' reactions to those armaments, like in Great Britain and in Western Germany, that could be very controversial and, I would say, present some very real problems. Usually when a country rises up, it goes for the United States Information Agency Libraries, which is unfortunate, but that's where usually their wrath seems to descend. I think as far as families individually are concerned, the likelihood of their being accosted in the countries that I've mentioned are very remote. But when a rabble gets loose, who knows? There've been some very bad things in soccer matches, I understand, in civilized parts of the world.

Q: Well, I was thinking that we've gotten through the pensions and we may still have some medical problems to work on, but they're pretty much under control now, don't you think?

DORMAN: Yes. I had heard some disquieting things, but without knowing the full story, it's not fair to comment really.

Q: Do you think spouse employment and economics are the big things?

DORMAN: Yes, I do. I think economics is the really outstanding thing today, because we really don't know where we're going from here. I mean, that's the problem. With the deficit now, which is astronomical... it's bound to affect each one of us in one way or another. I am very concerned about the scholarship situation for the young people in the country that affects the Foreign Service children, the offspring. I really feel very distressed by this, because nobody should have something for nothing, but the opportunities should be there for higher education. Education is really so very important, isn't it Penne? We find all along that an awful lot of problems exist because of lack of it... whatever sphere is being addressed, and I really feel this is something the Government has simply got to give more thought to.

Q: Well, Lesley, you've had a long and varied career in and about the Foreign Service.

DORMAN: A lot I haven't told you. (laughs)

Q: I'm sure there's more.

DORMAN: That sounds sad... oh, Hum d'Allah.

Q: Can you tell me what you're doing now?

DORMAN: Yes, I'm very happy to say what I'm doing. My husband isn't entirely retired. He's now a member of the Academy of Arbitrators, doing some voluntary work, too. But I am President of Orientation International Incorporated, which is an organization that a group of us started because we felt the private sector needed to have the preparation for going overseas that the Foreign Service families get... and plus... because usually they don't have the same support systems that Foreign Service people have within the framework of an embassy. Sometimes they have more support systems. They are not persuaded to take language training, which is really essential today. In many countries -- Egypt is a very good example -- when I lived there, English was absolutely spoken everywhere almost, and now it's very different. I know for a fact, you cannot get a house domestic help that speaks English much anymore.

Q: Well, is it a rising nationalism?

DORMAN: It's a rising nationalism, and also I think, it's not only that, I think it's a fact that foreign nationals... the British Raj, for example, which really brought about English to be spoken in these various countries, of course, is no longer there. And the years now have elapsed where the generations have grown up, who were not involved with it, so language, even if it's taught in schools, is not encouraged in the way that it was before. Anyway, this organization prepares both employees and business executives to do business.

We just did a contract to prepare a whole group of international business executives to go to nine Asian countries to do business. And we're very pleased to see that this firm has gone up on the Stock Exchange since we did this preparation, (laughs), quite noticeably. We do hope that the work had something to do with it, and indeed, we have got some sort of assurance that if they do send their families, we will be preparing their families.

We do have somebody marketing for us... a man, who happens to be British, married to an officer in USIA, so he's a male spouse. He also does other things. He's a freelance writer, a very good one. He's marketing for us. We are really going out very wide to the corporations. We've done some preparations for people going to the People's Republic of China and families going to Singapore. And so, we've been concentrating on mainly SE Asia. I think that has come about because the Middle East is at the moment lying rather low. Business is pretty static at the moment. South America is in a bit of turmoil, but we would do preparation for anyone going anywhere.

And we do. Our consultants are really the best that we can find. They really know their stuff. We have developed our own cultural mores listing which was commented upon very favorably by briefers that have worked for us, really good people. We've also cultivated our negotiating skills list. The evaluation sheets have been excellent. Our written materials are very good. And we also have done a preparation for incoming people, foreign nationals, in Washington. We had some of the World Bank people we've helped. We've really done... we work both ways. We are able to help foreign nationals and we are working on a contract, a possible contract at the moment, to help people coming in with a foreign motor firm. These people are here for a year or so and they need help. But lots of things that have to be addressed they don't understand.

Q: So, your life in the Foreign Service, in summation, has really helped to contribute to your ability to do this work.

DORMAN: Yes, without a doubt. Every one of us that works with us, including our marketing consultant. Long before, I suppose he's in his early forties, but long before he married a Foreign Service person, he's lived with her in Belgium. He's been all over the world, in Asia, and everywhere. Yes, that is one of the things that I really do insist upon, because unless you've been there, you really can't understand. It's not understanding for us to impart to our clients, because we have experts to do that, but it's understanding what sort of experts we should be reaching for. That is important. It's very interesting. You have to really search for good people. You hear all sorts of people and you think, thank goodness, I'm not using them for a contract, because they get a name, they're on television and radio and all over the place, but they mumbo-jumbo, you know, and it's got to be very clear, because a lot of people that one prepares have never been out of the country. We also, whenever possible, use teenagers to prepare teenagers. They can go to a pizza parlor and do their preparation. It's just marvelous. They're told to end on a positive note, but to be truthful, too.

Q: Well, let's end this on a positive note then. If you had to do it over again, you'd do it,

wouldn't you?

DORMAN: Oh, yes, like a shot! I loved every minute of it.

Q: Thank you very much. Great interview, Lesley.

DORMAN: Thank you, Penne.

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BIOGRAPHIC DATA

Spouse: Philip Dorman, Retired, now member of American Academy of Arbitrators

Spouse entered Service: 1950
Left Service: 1987

Posts:

1950-53	London, England
1953-56	Cairo, Egypt
1957-59	Tehran, Iran
1959-63	Washington, DC
1963-64	Lusaka, Northern Rhodesia
1964-66	Lusaka, Zambia
1966-68	Khartoum, Sudan
1968-69	Washington, DC
1969-71	Bangkok, Thailand
1971-87	Washington, DC

Date/Place of birth: In England, as an American National (Father American; Mother British)

Profession: Speech Pathologist; President of Orientation International, Inc.

Date/Place of Marriage: 1950, London

Children:
Mark, born in United Kingdom
Timothy, born in Tehran, Iran

Volunteer and Paid Positions:
At Post:
Egypt: Helped at YWCA

Iran: On Board of Governors of British Embassy International School; Taught class

covering all subjects under British PNEU SYSTEM.

Zambia: Member of YWCA; Fund Raising Chairman for three years; Started Craft Shop; Arranged Ball as fund raiser; Helped in the building of YWCA house and hostel; Participated in milk run into the bush for undernourished children; Worked with National Council of Women.

Sudan: Member of International Women's Club; Worked with abandoned babies in the hospital; Lobbied to secured house for children; Unpaid representative for the Experiment in International Living Headquarters.

Thailand: Vice President, International Women's Club; Member of Board of the YWCA; Fund Raising Chairman; Produced "A Man for All Seasons" with members of British and American Equity; Did public relations work, including program and posters as publicity for "Beckett".

In Washington:
Nursery School activities; PTA Meetings 1959-1963

Chairman of Program Committee entitled "World Events" for Women's Club of National War College. 1968-1969.

Association of American Foreign Service Women Corresponding Secretary, Membership Chairman, and President for five years, Program Chairman and member of Think Tank Report Committee, 1971-1987.

Honors:
Award from the Prime Minister of Thailand for work on behalf of the Young Women's Christian Association (YWCA); Certificate of Appreciation from Secretary of State Cyrus Vance for contribution to the formulation of the Family Liaison Office, Department of State; Nominated for the Woman of Conscience of the Year Award in 1980; Association of American Foreign Service pin.

End of interview