

The Association for Diplomatic Studies and Training  
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Foreign Assistance Series

**GORDON W. EVANS**

*Interviewed by: Barbara S. Evans  
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Concluding observations on foreign assistance and USAID

President of International House, New York

1982-1993

## INTERVIEW

*Q: I am Barbara Evans, the spouse of Gordon Evans, who I will be interviewing for the Association for Diplomatic Studies and Training at their request. My first question is, how did your educational background prepare you for the Foreign Service?*

### Early years and education

EVANS: My entrance into the Foreign Service was pure serendipity, but I will explain my background. It started out by growing up in western New York State with a father who was an educator and a mother who was also an educator, although she died at 43 years of age. I did my high schooling in Rochester, New York, at Monroe High for those from Rochester, a very fine public school. I went off to Antioch College in Yellow Springs, Ohio, in 1950. It had a work-study program that was introduced by Arthur Ernest Morgan in 1920. He had retired to Yellow Springs in his 80s and was a mentor of mine. He had in early 1950 gone to India to visit President Dr. Rajendra Prasad. In fact, he was invited at his request. The Dr. Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan Commission established the Indian Institutes of Technology and also proposed the Land Grant Agricultural University involvement in India's agriculture. In Yellow Springs, in addition to a liberal arts college of about 1,200 students, there was the Fels Institute of Behavioral Studies. Though I did my degree in mechanical engineering, I was fascinated by the longitudinal studies that were conducted at the Fels Institute on children from conception until 18 years of age. My co-op experiences took to me Tennessee, Alaska, Pennsylvania, Massachusetts, and California. Another personality in Yellow Springs, since people shape one's philosophy of life, was Charles F. Kettering, inventor of the automobile self-starter and the improved DC battery. He was General Motors Director of Research in its early years. He lived in neighboring Kettering, Ohio, which is really an integral part of Dayton, Ohio. Charles Kettering came to Yellow Springs in my later years, maybe 1953-1954. He would sit in the dining services and look us over to see whether or not he would give some of his fortune to Antioch. He ended up dedicating a library to his first wife, Olive Kettering.

Of course, there were the engineering courses, but also courses in a wide range of liberal arts subjects. I was elected to be the community manager my last year. It involved me in a leadership role there. My job was that of liaison between students and the administration. In April 1955, I was awarded a Fulbright Scholarship to study town planning and comparative local government in Norway. I could not marry my interviewer in 1955 in the spring because we were uncertain as to whether a Fulbright Scholar could have a spouse and still be eligible for the scholarship. Barbara's assignment with the

American Friends Service Committee (Quakers) just happened to be to a project in suburban Oslo. Here again, serendipity prevailed. I went to the Norwegian-American Summer School in the summer of 1955 to learn basic Norwegian. This was our first real overseas experience together. We were married on September 3, 1955 in Oslo.

*Q: How did you perceive that Fulbright year beyond the studies? Did it in any way affect your thinking about possible work abroad?*

EVANS: Maybe subconsciously it did. I did an unpublished piece called "Comparative Local Government and Town Planning in Ten European Countries." I visited all of the other nine countries, possibly as a justification for travel under the Fulbright. I was fascinated by post war Europe. It was 10 years after World War II and Norway was still under very tight resource allocation control. It was rebuilding from the devastation of the Germans' scorched earth policy. You know that 2/3 of their shipping fleet was sunk. The whole western coast of Norway was damaged badly. Barbara and I had the pleasure (In fact, her mother when she visited introduced us) of meeting Sverre Markussen, who was a large entrepreneur of crushed stone in Oslo. He took me down the coast of Norway and showed me a conveyor belt which had a hand clasp on it. I said, "What is that, Sverre?" and he said, "That was brought to us under the Marshall Plan." This was my first exposure to foreign assistance. [Perhaps] that had an impact on my later career, maybe subconsciously. I certainly was very moved to see my first hand clasp.

In June aboard the S.S. Stavangerfjord steaming toward Norway, I was elected president of the Norwegian-American Summer School. This permitted me to get to know the American ambassador from my hometown, L. Corrin Strong. In that summer school, we had a Texan stand up when the Surgeon General of Norway, Karl Evang, was speaking. He said, "How can you place doctors throughout rural Norway at \$4,000 a year salary when there is so much more money being earned in Oslo, Bergen, or one of the other large cities?" Evang looked over the top of his glasses and said to this tall Texan, "I do not remember the salary of Jesus Christ." This I found a very fine response. I've often said this to those who in our economic development work were a little too concerned about the level of their salary.

*Q: After Norway, what was your next step educationally?*

EVANS: As an act of trust and devotion, Barbara left Antioch to marry me without completing her bachelor's degree. So, we were looking at higher education - in my case, post graduate education. We applied to a number of institutions and ended up at the Wharton School, where I obtained a master's of governmental administration and wrote a thesis that's somewhere on the shelves there called "Concepts of Leadership in the Council Manager Movement." Here again, Arthur Morgan had been a major influence on the need to look at how urban America was evolving. He was well aware that there would be increased family breakdown, increased crime, and a stress level in much of urban America that needed to be attended to and that professional leadership - i.e. city managers - in the cities was important. We had a year in Samuel Fel's home, which was the Institute of Local and State Government of the Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania.

Barbara worked at the University of Pennsylvania's hospital with a very distinguished surgeon to put me through graduate school. So, she postponed her education to advance my career, which was not uncommon in the 1950s.

*Q: You went from Philadelphia to have an internship in your field from Wharton. Where was that?*

EVANS: We packed our old Ford Fairlane and took off for Vallejo, California. Vallejo is north and east of San Francisco. It's the home of Mare Island, a shipbuilding center, where the atomic bomb was stored before it went out to do its devastation. Vallejo had a population of roughly 50,000 people. I interned there for six months in the fall of 1957 with John Fickland, the city manager, a fascinating man. I worked on many projects supporting the extensive annexation program and redevelopment of the city.

*Q: You did have in mind going into the field of city management for quite a while, did you not?*

EVANS: Yes, I did. We looked at that very carefully when in the spring, we received two proposals almost simultaneously in March or April of 1958. One was from the city of Anchorage, where I was asked to be the assistant city manager. The other was a letter from the International Cooperation Administration, a predecessor to AID, asking me to apply for the Overseas Intern (OI) Program. Antioch College had recommended my candidacy. We chose the Foreign Service. We would have two years and we could look it over. In April, we were delighted to be accepted into this Overseas Intern Program. We were told that the 29 OIs were culled from 16,000 applications.

### **Joined ICA in the Overseas Intern Program and assigned to Pakistan - 1958-1963**

We arrived in Washington on July 16, 1958. I was one of three public administration overseas interns along with 26 other interns in this special program. In 1954, Professor Henry Wriston, then at Yale University, did a seminal report on the U.S. Foreign Service. He concluded that the Marshall Plan could have been run by embassies in Europe and in some ways was, although the productivity units were also very vital. This was because there were millions of trained Europeans that were unemployed, yet with excellent training. What they needed were resources. Our work in the late 1950s was to move into former colonies where almost no trained talent was available. There was a need for a professional economic development cadre to carry out this service. Hence, the Overseas Intern Program was born in 1957 and served well into the 1960s.

*Q: When you went to Pakistan in 1958, you had taken time to study Urdu. As an intern with ICA, what were your responsibilities and how did Urdu help you in your work?*

EVANS: I should be responding to this in Urdu, but I do not want to confuse the transcriber. Also, I have lost much of that ability. I think that knowledge of the language is important. In Pakistan, the official language, Urdu, means "language of the camp." It's 35-40% Arabic. There is a smattering of Hindi and a fair amount of Persian. It was an integrating language for 1,000 years in northern India. It certainly permitted us to travel

widely in Pakistan. In fact, for the Mission Director over my five years there, I visited every region of the country. I talked about AID assistance with commissioners of these regions and the deputy commissioners at the district level. I felt they were truly interested in how we were assisting to the tune of nearly \$200 million a year. They were appreciative of new unfolding projects that affected their area directly. Whether these presentations had any long-term impact I'm not sure, but certainly my Urdu was helpful both in East and certainly in West Pakistan.

*Q: Pakistan is a post-World War II creation, is it not?*

EVANS: This is right. This is one of the great dramas of being in a country such as Pakistan. Let me give a little flavor of what we found there when we arrived in September 1958 to join the Public Administration Division. First of all, Pakistan is really called "the Place of Purity" in Urdu. This was created in 1947 by the partition of the subcontinent. It was felt by the British, who had controlled this area for almost 300 years that it was the only way to stop the internecine struggle between Hindus and Muslims. The Muslims had invaded the subcontinent in the ninth century. The Mogul Emperor in power in the 19<sup>th</sup> century lost all of it to the British after his failed great uprising, or as the British said, "Great Mutiny" in the 1860s. Pakistan was to be a regrouping of Islamic society in South Asia free from the communal conflict of the past century. Muslims by and large lost their power in the 1860s. Three weeks after our arrival in September 1958 and 10 weeks after the critical coup in Baghdad, the Pakistani armed forces staged a coup literally in our backyard. We were called by the Chief of MAAG, General Truman, at 2:00 am on October 7<sup>th</sup>. He asked me to go immediately to the Marine House and wake the Marine security guard. They were ordered to the embassy to provide protection and to destroy classified documents. So, I walked four blocks through the night as tanks were going down the street to wake up our Marines, who could not hear the telephone because of their room air conditioners. This was sort of an extracurricular activity. Hence, an early baptism into our life in the U.S. Foreign Service.

*Q: There was another aspect of that. You had just completed a rather large project for ICA with respect to counterparts in the Pakistan government.*

EVANS: You're right. From day one, I had responded to both the Chief of the Public Administration Division and the Director of the Mission to do a huge (maybe 8x30 foot) organizational chart of the federal government and two provincial governments of East and West Pakistan with all senior officers and their interface with the over 300 USAID advisors in the country by names, their ties, and how they were backstopped by senior GOP [Government of Pakistan] officials. We had somewhere in the order of 40-50 technical assistance or program assistance projects. After the October 7<sup>th</sup> coup, the first thing I did the next morning was to put a sheet over that organizational chart. It made me well aware that leadership is very temporal.

*Q: In your early weeks in Pakistan, particularly following the coup, how did you perceive the assistance that America was giving to Pakistan?*

EVANS: The USOM [United States Operations Mission], which is the old name for USAID, in the 1950s was assisting that country in a twofold fashion. The first was to assist a country that really had taken over the desert of northwest former India and the riverine region of Bengal, half of which is flooded each spring. So, the land was not of high priority to the Hindus. Hence, when the Muslims fell from grace in the middle of the 19th century, they tended to gravitate into these marginal areas. So, our assistance was in building nonexistent institutions and infrastructure (which was substantial). Secondly, it was to strengthen a fragmented agriculture base and launch newly established industries by our program loans for imports of equipment, supplies and raw materials. Our assistance averaged over \$200 million annually, which was justified in part to Congress by Pakistan's astute decision to join the Baghdad Pact in 1954. After the 1958 coup in Iraq, of course, the Baghdad Pact became CENTO, but Pakistan was still a central force. The IMF and World Bank were also substantial contributors to the birth of this nation. The World Bank, in fact, coordinated one of the most miraculous achievements in the post World War II period, in my judgment. It negotiated the division of the six great rivers in the post-partition subcontinent: three going to Pakistan, including the Indus River, and three going to India. More importantly, they assisted, as did we, in very large loans to modernize the irrigation systems from these rivers just as the Green Revolution was unfolding. In a more micro way, the Public Administration Division coordinated roughly 12 projects. I'll only touch on two of them to give a flavor.

One was the establishment of an Institute of Public and Business Administration in downtown Karachi. From 1956-1960, IPBA was assisted under a contract with the University of Pennsylvania, but this contract was terminated by a displeased USOM Director in 1960. It was replaced by a more wide-ranging contract with the University of Southern California. During my five years in Pakistan, 1958-1963, this project trained thousands of master graduates in public and business administration, but also strongly supported the creation of two National Institutes of Public Administration in both East and West Pakistan. Probably a major reason East Pakistan finally withdrew from the federation in 1971 and became Bangladesh was that there were just too few national institutions located within the Bengali culture of East Pakistan. As an overseas intern, I served primarily as the Program Officer for the Public Administration Division ensuring that both the University of Pennsylvania and USC had adequate funds in the pipeline to continue their faculty advisors, the training of the Pakistani faculty in the U.S., and supplies at their physical facilities of what became important institutions in Karachi, Lahore and Dacca. So, that was illustrative of one project.

Another was the Atoms for Peace Program, which we handled. I touch on this in part because of the recent testing in Pakistan. The Atoms for Peace Program was created by President Eisenhower by a pledge to the General Assembly in the mid-1950s that our knowledge and wisdom in respect to harnessing the atom would be extended to every country of the world, all interested people, peacefully, and to share this nonlethal use widely throughout the world. My work was to coordinate the U.S. assistance to Pakistan's Atomic Energy Commission largely through Ph.D. training of Pakistani scientists in U.S. institutions. Over 200 were so trained. The Commission's director, Dr. I.H. Usmani, went on to head the UN's International Atomic Energy Agency in Vienna in the late 1960s. In

the past two decades, China has clandestinely supported Pakistan's effort to make and test an atomic bomb, but the U.S. Atoms for Peace Program was conceived strictly to use the atom in support of agricultural, industrial, and energy development, and in the health field. President Eisenhower may have been buoyed by the idealism of the 1950s, but he also was aware that extending knowledge on its peaceful use might strengthen our effort to limit its destructive use.

*Q: Eisenhower gave this program to Pakistan. It was wonderful to be able to have him visit the Mission. Do you want to speak to that?*

EVANS: In 1959 on his way to India probably, President Eisenhower visited Karachi. I was on a second story construction platform (I'll never forget the thrill of this) hanging onto a reinforcing bar when down from the airport in a Victoria carriage President Field Marshall Ayub Khan and President Eisenhower were sitting side by side being drawn by 14 beautiful white horses. Two million people were cheering. It was incredible. This was the leader of the free world coming to our first developing country. We had worked on an arrangement whereby the President would travel by helicopter with President Ayub Khan over 500,000 homeless people in the rural reaches of Karachi. We pledged then and there that each of them would be housed. We made good on that pledge in the next 10 years. So, the huge satellite city of Karangi sprang up contiguous to Karachi. This was launched at the time of President Eisenhower's visit.

Let me touch briefly on the overseas interns' luxury when they arrived at Mission. The first six months were set aside for each of the 29 of us throughout the world to visit every division of the USOM. I did this from September 1958 to April 1959 and compiled a large book in typical public administration fashion of how each division functioned, its interaction with the Government of Pakistan, and the divisions' various goals and strategies refined also in respect to USOM's accountability to Washington. Many pictures were included and each draft was approved by the nine USOM Division Chiefs, who wanted copies. Of course, we made copies for them. This happened to catch the eye of the USOM Director, James Sinclair Killen. He asked me in 1960 to be his special assistant. When he asked me, we were going on leave in the fall of 1960. As I was leaving his office, he said, "Gordon, there is one thing that you are to always maintain." I said, "What is that, Mr. Killen?" He said, "Your sense of humor."

One of the splendid experiences that all of us had in the 1950s-1960s, and I'm sure it's true today, was to associate with men and women of action who direct the economic development program. James Killen is a very good example. A self-made man, he had risen through the ranks of the Paper, Pulp, and Sulfide Workers Union in the Seattle Area. George Meany ensured that labor leadership was hired by the International Cooperation Administration in the 1950s. Killen came in at the top. He was a conceptualizer, was comfortable with George Kennan's containment policy, and really enjoyed policy negotiations with senior Pakistani officials. He enjoyed it because he was very good at it. He was astute at the policy level. He worked closely with the Harvard Advisory Group and, in a way, was the leader of the Western Consortium in Karachi. He had immediate access at all levels of government because of the magnitude of our

assistance.

*Q: When you were the special assistant to Jim Killen, what were your major responsibilities in that role?*

EVANS: The first was probably to keep my sense of humor, which I generally did. A special assistant position is one to be envied. You sit in on all the important meetings. You don't really have any bucks that stop at your desk, but you do learn a great deal. The first assignment he wanted me to work on in January 1961 was to analyze the overlapping layers of local government in greater Karachi. I proposed a Dade County, Florida, approach whereby the Karachi federal area for planning, tax, and governing purposes would absorb over 20 archaic entities. To get a flavor of this, Karachi in 1935 was roughly 20-40,000 people. Today, it's a city of just about 10 million people. When we were there in 1958-1963, it was somewhere in the order of 3-4 million people who had arrived within just a few short years, from southern India in large measure. Mr. Killen took that report and shrewdly placed it into the hands of the 30-year-old Minister of Commerce, Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, who later became President of Pakistan and much to our dismay in 1981 was executed. Minister Bhutto and I had a fascinating evening during 1961 where there was a great deal of discussion of our role in Pakistan's future. He was largely positive, but he was very concerned about our negotiations for military assistance to India. Of course, that is still a raw nerve to this day. But Bhutto had experienced imports and exports languishing for months in Karachi Harbor, in part because of jurisdictional disputing. He also was from the Sindh, which included the federal territory. So, he was the one to look at this report. He was also the one that made many changes that grew out of recommendations in that report, we felt. But in his letter of thanks to Director Killen, he requested that my report be amended to state that "My father laid the groundwork for Pakistan in 1935, by persuading the British Raj to divide the huge Bombay state into the Maharashtra state, largely Hindu, and the Sindhi state, largely Muslim. Then the Sindh state voted to join Pakistan in 1947, offering an excellent harbor on the Arabian Sea." We made the change and sent another copy of the revised report over to Minister Bhutto.

Another assignment which came almost immediately thereafter was to accompany President Kennedy's Science Advisor, Jerome Wiesner, and his seven person team on their water logging and salinity tour of West Pakistan. President Kennedy had promised Pakistan's president Field Marshall Ayub Khan over a Camelot-like dinner at Mount Vernon that he would put his best American brains on this devastating, creeping problem. Wiesner had come down from MIT to be Kennedy's science advisor. There were well over 100,000 acres per year being lost to soil salinity because extensive new irrigation had raised the water table to the surface. This permitted the strong sun rays to evaporate the water leaving salt crystals behind. This water just could not run off because the existing drainage canals were too inadequate to cope. The recommendation of the Wiesner team was to install huge tube wells that would be sunk strategically. This was adopted by Pakistan's aid consortium and over \$1 billion of wells were strategically placed by computer simulation throughout Punjab and Sindh. Millions of acres have been saved as a result of this and the Green Revolution is alive and well in what is now



Pakistan.

*Q: During this period, you were to lose the leadership of Jim Killen. How did that affect your role as special assistant?*

EVANS: Rather directly, I would presume. As a special assistant, one is normally tied to a particular personality. But I survived the transition, which was really bringing the Deputy Director of Korea to become Director in Pakistan, whereby Jim Killen became the Director in Korea and made some fundamental changes in the Korean assistance program. This may, in my judgment, have angered the new arrival since he had worked so hard on the Korean assistance program and it became sort of a tit for tat situation. He asked us all to rethink our assistance strategy to Pakistan. He asked me to join a small team that requested each division chief to program first from a position of zero allocation. In other words, if your strategy did not appeal to him or to his team, the project would be terminated. There was a great deal of anger and certainly a great deal of insecurity in these early months. A number of senior USOM officials sought transfer. There are so many variables that one focuses on in reviewing a technical assistance project. It's almost impossible to do it in an office situation. What happened was that most of what became increased resources to Pakistan were focused on modernizing the agriculture sector. It did, in my judgment, underscore the authority of the Mission Director at that point. Also, it's very interesting that David Bell, who became the Administrator of AID, had previously been the chief of the Harvard Advisory Group working with the Planning Commission in Karachi, Pakistan. In 1961, President Kennedy appointed him the Director of OMB. It is a known fact that before he left OMB, the aid assistance package was greatly increased throughout the world, but especially in Pakistan. That gave us additional resources in the early 1960s. So, though Killen had left, the new Director after looking me over for a few months asked me to establish a development research and evaluation group.

I hired two Pakistani NIPA graduates, one from East Pakistan and one from West to give a little balance to our insights. We created a credenza behind the Mission Director's desk. It was a cardex file complex with at least 14 drawers. This held 5x7 cards and onto the cards was information related to a sector of the Pakistan economy. We used the Harvard Advisory Group format. We kept this very current. This was of great use to Director Heilman. He would spin around and pull out a file. We also had each of the AID projects related to each sector and kept this up to date quite easily with the new assistance that we provided. This tool to be valuable needs to be used. I think in this particular case, John Heilman made great use of this. Today, of course, it would be all computerized.

*Q: Overall, do you think our program in Pakistan was a successful one?*

EVANS: In 1963 when we left, the United States had been active in the country for about a decade. I would say that in partition, the five provinces that voted to join Pakistan were the most backward provinces of the Indian Empire. Literally, our assistance along with other consortium assistance brought these five provinces to life: that is the Sindh; the Northwest Frontier Province; Baluchistan, Punjab, and East Bengal. The British in the

middle of the 19th century had poured millions of pounds into the new irrigation system of the Punjab, so the first province that opted for Pakistan, the Punjab, was further developed, but it also provided a strong base for modernization. Our assistance in agriculture was magnificent. Industrial power and infrastructure development were benefitted mightily by our constant program assistance from 1954 until well into the 1970s.

Maybe the most important measure of all, now that we look at Russia, which is staggering, is how a nation that was born out of dust, born with less than two years preparation really, succeeded. The framework for nationhood that was forged during these two decades, 1947-1967, was created from scratch in an almost miraculous fashion. Granted, Pakistan does not have a truly functioning democracy, but there are elections. Political parties do stand. There have been coup d'états. There has been military leadership. Without Western assistance, Pakistan would probably have been extinguished by India in the first two decades of its existence. Thirdly, is the fact that in the early 1950s and 1960s, the George Kennan policy of containment was our global goal. The Baghdad Pact was formed in 1954 and Pakistan was a junior member. Iran was critically important. Iraq had a strategic location. Of course, there was Turkey. But in 1958, Iraq dropped out. More recently, Iran dropped out. Pakistan, even though it is critical of U.S. interests from time to time, has been a stable partner in that arrangement which no longer is necessary, but was very necessary in the 1950s and even well into the 1980s. Lastly, U.S. assistance at the level that it was offered (\$200 million a year for many years) permitted Pakistan to build its bridges to the international economy and to the world society. It became an effective member of the United Nations. It joined the World Bank. In fact, Mohammed Sharif, the Minister of Finance when we were there, became a Director of the World Bank. I.H. Usmani became the Director of the International Atomic Energy Commission. Moeen Qureshi became a senior officer in the IMF and Vice President of the World Bank. He became President of Pakistan for a brief transition period in the late 1980s. Also, Pakistan was an active member of the International Monetary Fund. Fortunately, it did not need the IMF often, but it was an active member. And it was a member of the Asian Development Bank. Here was a country that was nonexistent in 1947 and quickly became a force in world affairs during this period. So, I think overall, you could attribute some of this, very modestly so, to the effectiveness of U.S. assistance.

*Q: After we left Pakistan, what was your next assignment?*

EVANS: We left Pakistan in April 1963 just short of five years there, which is a long stretch, but very helpful in terms of continuity. On the water logging and salinity team, there was a man, a former general manager of the Tennessee Valley Authority, named John Blandford. You, Barbara, to this day feel that he was central in having us considered for career training in economics at Harvard and MIT.

But even before leaving Karachi, may I mention to the researcher interested in raising a family overseas that our daughter, Elizabeth, was born on August 9, 1959, in the Seventh Day Adventist Hospital. The fact that her mother was trapped in an elevator just before

delivery was a cause for concern, but Elizabeth, who is 39 and is in pharmaceutical marketing, never knew that this had occurred. Our son, David, was born in our next tour at the Seventh Day Adventist Hospital. Both children have interests in international affairs. Our daughter was two years in the Peace Corps in the Kingdom of Tonga. David has recently applied to teach with his spouse at an international school somewhere in the world. He is presently based in Seattle. In fact, the American ambassador in Karachi once commented that the only way he had ever known Barbara was when she was pregnant since in the period of our first 24 months in residency there, she was pregnant 18 of those months.

### **Received a foreign affairs fellowship to Harvard and MIT - 1963-1964**

We learned just before departing that I had received a foreign affairs fellowship to study development theory at Harvard and MIT. We would return home and go directly to Cambridge, Massachusetts. Upon arriving and realizing I was going to be in the School of Economics at MIT, Charlie Kindleberger, the great theorist in international trade, took me under his wing and said, "Gordon, you've not been admitted to this school. We turned down a cast of hundreds. But I will admit you if you do well in one micro and one macro economics course at Harvard Summer School. I will review those grades in August when you have finished the courses." So, that is how we started our study there. I did well enough to go into the program. I studied often until midnight. This was the remaking of an engineer/public administration type into a working economist. At that time in MIT's department, there were such names as Paul Samuelson, Evsey David Domar, Rosenstein-Rodan, Charlie Kindleberger, and many other notables. It was incredible to be present with that brainpower and experience. In economic development training, I think almost all of the institutions around the world were still very idealistic in the early 1960s. They followed Hollis Chenery's economic strategy that if you put a certain amount of investment into an economy, other things being equal (which, of course, they never are), you would have a certain percentage annual growth in the gross national product. But it still is very important for any officer working with an economic development agency to have the concept of how economies do develop, how societies grow, and how individual income is augmented. This year at Cambridge was invaluable. In fact, I would say it was an exceptional opportunity that enriched my next 18 years in the Foreign Service.

Before we leave Cambridge and go onward, may I just mention that though my spouse is interviewing me, she also was an integral part of our career life. As soon as we arrived in Karachi, she began teaching at the Karachi American School, then gave birth to Elizabeth in August of 1959 and David in April of 1961. It is significant that there is a generational involvement in foreign affairs. I think this is important for American society. Barbara also studied Arabic at Brandeis University when we were in Cambridge, presuming that we would be posted again in the Islamic world, and was very vital in backstopping so many things during the 16 hour days I spent with my books in study.

*Q: Following the Cambridge assignment, we had an opportunity to work our way back into the Washington scene, isn't that right, Gordon?*

## **Returned to USAID Washington to the Near East/South Asia Bureau - 1964-1965**

EVANS: Yes, indeed it was. I had hoped that I would have fulfilled my return to American society and would be ready for foreign posting, but all overseas interns were brought back to Washington for a tour after their first posting overseas. I was no exception. The only disadvantage perhaps (and it's not that much of a disadvantage) of leaving the Agency for a year of training is to work oneself back into the mainstream of meaningful positions. But the Near East/South Asia Bureau (NESA), at the time of what had become the Agency for International Development put me in the Capital Development and Finance Office. After studying macro and micro economics and development theory, I found this a difficult adjustment, but worked hard to move the loans that CDF was processing for the countries that I backstopped. The Assistant Administrator of NESA was a diplomatic Foreign Service officer, William Macomber, a wonderful human being and very well organized. He ran meetings where there was maximum exchange of knowledge. It was my first exposure to an Assistant Administrator in action and I felt quite fortunate. My CDF portfolio included Greece, Turkey, Iran, Israel, Jordan, and Lebanon, as well as Egypt. There were a number of smaller programs. I learned quickly that Israel's program loans, which were substantial, were literally run out of Israel's Trade Commissioner's office in New York. I received telephone instructions as to when the package should be finalized and sent up there. But it also was a very efficient operation. It had been in existence almost from the beginning of the birth of Israel.

Our assistance to Greece was minimal and was phased down. Our program in Turkey was heavily associated with Turkey's railway, steel, and rural electrification enterprises, that is the CDF portion of our assistance to Turkey. I would touch briefly on my pet project, which I worked on after hours. In fact, it was only on paper. I had found its origins in the files of State. It was a project put forth by the then KLM chairman, Laudermilk, in the Netherlands in the 1920s. This project was to construct two huge penstocks that would siphon water from the Mediterranean Sea and drop it into the Dead Sea. The Dead Sea is 1,286 feet below sea level. Such a difference in elevation would generate significant power, but also over a period of 50 years would increase the surface area of the Dead Sea fourfold and thereby increase significantly the vaportransformation rate in the Middle East. This in turn would rapidly raise the annual precipitation on agricultural lands. It would really be the proverbial return to the green pastures and the Garden of Eden of biblical writing. But in 1964/1965, this project was as dead as in the 1920s. I mention it here only because to me the scope of this project and what it could do to focus a major infrastructure project on the collaboration of nations has a much greater possibility today.

*Q: Since you were so focused on the Middle East, why do you suppose you were sent to Ghana?*

## **Transferred to USAID/Ghana as Program Officer - 1965-1969**

EVANS: Well, not unlike the military, the wisdom of the Agency for International Development was perhaps quite accurate in this case, though I have a few more things to

say about the nine months in Washington. All of the interest in Ghana started by a colleague when we were going through the cafeteria line in the Department of State, who said, "Would you be interested in a posting in Ghana? The program officer reports directly to the Mission Director. If you're posted there, you'll probably be terminating the program, but that too will be a good experience." I did put my name into the hat. This was maybe in January of 1965. About six weeks later, the Africa Bureau and the post in Accra accepted my appointment. From a career point of view, it turned out to be the most favorable decision I made in my 25 years in the Foreign Service.

My nine months with NESACDF involved writing many letters of credit, tedious preparation of loan documents, and review of the satisfaction of many conditions precedent. It seemed to be an effort to introduce New York banking analysis and procedures into the developing world. I personally believe it had limited applicability, especially when applied to state enterprises in Turkey, Egypt, and Iran. So, the appointment to Ghana to go back overseas was very much a breath of fresh air for me and for our family.

*Q: Since you went out alone due to the children coming down with chicken pox just prior to our departure, what did you find in Ghana when you arrived?*

EVANS: I arrived in early April of 1965. My mandate clearly from all parties on both AID and the Department of State's side was to assist in closing out the AID program in Ghana. The Mission Director, Frank Pinder, a former county extension agent from northwestern Florida, developed a large agricultural program in Liberia before accepting the Accra directorship in 1963. In contrast to the U.S. turning down support for the Aswan Dam on the Nile River in Egypt, the U.S. had reluctantly in the late 1950s and early 1960s put a much smaller amount into the building of the Akosombo Dam on the Volta River, construction starting in the early 1960s. The Prime Minister of Ghana, Lesajafo Kwame Nkrumah, had supported the U.S. approach for this massive project. It would supply power to the largest aluminum smelter in Sub-Saharan Africa. Nkrumah supported it against the advice of his rather famous British advisor, Sir Robert Jackson, spouse of economist Barbara Ward. The approach that Jackson objected to was that the Government of Ghana would finance the construction of the dam and the power generation facility and sell cheap power to private international investment in the newly constructed port of Tema. This was very helpful to international private capital since Kaiser and Reynolds would reap the profit. But Jackson disagreed so fervently with the head of the government, Nkrumah, that he resigned his post and returned to the United Kingdom. Another important situation in 1965, particularly in the spring of 1965, is that there were over 2,000 technical advisors from the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe and over 250 from the People's Republic of China. In one sense, this was pure Karl Marx in that he wrote: "the way to overthrow the metropole powers of Europe is through communizing the former colonies." Tragically, Nkrumah felt the Communist Bloc would support his great dream to form a United States of Africa. He had even married an Egyptian woman as a show of pan-Africanism. His vision was global. Around 1960, however, he lost interest in the effective development of Ghana.

Ghana had received its independence in 1957. It was one of the first sub-Saharan African countries to do so. Nkrumah had been at the helm from the very beginning, a graduate of Lincoln University in Pennsylvania and a very charismatic leader. Since he had little interest in development in Ghana, the vacuum was filled by a huge influx of Soviet technicians and a five year open season on supplier credits, especially from the United Kingdom. In fact, after the February 24, 1966 coup d'etat, it took almost six months to discover all of the supplier credit debts that had been established. This was one of the top priority efforts of the International Monetary Fund advisor upon his arrival in the country. So, this was the milieu into which we moved in April of 1965 with Barbara and our daughter and son arriving in May and almost crashing at the airport because they arrived in the middle of a tropical rainstorm.

*Q: As you were sorting through your new responsibilities, our children were faced with an educational dilemma.*

EVANS: You bet they were. In fact, the person interviewing me, my beloved spouse, agreed to teach at the Ghana International School (GIS) (and she reminds me that the pay was \$100 a month) in order to have our children admitted to that school, which was already over its quota of students. The American presence in Accra in the spring of 1965 was very modest, possibly eight Americans at the embassy and four at the USAID Mission, in addition to the direct hire technical assistance and contract staff in various parts of Ghana. The American embassy is an architectural reversal of the beautiful mosque and storage facilities of northwestern Ghana. It is suspended over a pool in a lovely, but very small building. We did have two individuals who went on to extraordinary career accomplishment. One was the political officer, Willard (Bill) De Pree, who became the first American ambassador to Mozambique and the very effective ambassador in Bangladesh. The second and his Deputy was Jack Matlock, who with no appointment in the Soviet world because of restrictions on embassies, was sort of marking time in West Africa. Here is a man, to give a little flavor of the team that we worked with (and it was very intimate because it was so small), who could speak 15 languages, was absolutely fluent in six of these. He went on to not only be President Reagan's principal advisor on the summits with the Soviet Union, but to be nearly four years the ambassador to the Soviet Union. In fact, he was the last American ambassador before the dissolution of the Soviet Union. Prior to that, he was ambassador to Czechoslovakia. He is now George Kennan's successor at Princeton's Institute of Advanced Studies.

But to get back to the major thrust here, there was the Akosambo Dam project, which was also assisted by Ontario Hydro in terms of the technical assistance on developing the capacity to run the power generation project after completion. We had put close to \$20 million into this project in the early 1960s. Then we also offered OPIC support in the form of private investment insurance for Kaiser and Reynolds in their aluminum efforts. Our technical assistance program was focused largely on agricultural training, public health services including family planning (in fact, a very progressive family planning program) and limited support for community development efforts. Little additional assistance was contemplated when I arrived. These six projects would be phased out

shortly - that is, within the next two or three years. Because of profligacy of the GOG, fewer resources were available to support the agricultural sector, even our AID projects. We had a presence in 1965, but little influence on developmental policy. Our projects were simple, but not far-reaching. They would not really make a difference in Ghana's developmental future.

*Q: What was the development that changed very suddenly?*

EVANS: The coup d'état in the early morning of February 24, 1966 really changed the western relationship with Ghana and especially the relationship of the United States with Ghana. This successful coup d'etat was launched under the leadership of a handful of Ghanaian army officers, most especially Colonel Kotaka and Captain Afrifa. Nkrumah had starved the military budget from about 1960 onward and had allocated significant saved resources to his presidential guard. This is not unlike what Saddam Hussein is currently doing in Iraq. Nkrumah was absent from Ghana to assist in ending the Vietnam War, showing his idealism and his global thoughts through negotiations with China and North Vietnam. He had felt that if he could bring about an end to this senseless conflict, in his opinion, he would again win the good graces of the West, most especially the United States. At any rate, in his absence the upcountry army contingent, a small group, slipped through the night, secured first Kumasi, which is the commercial center of the Ashanti people, and then went on through the rainforest to Accra, arriving around three o'clock in the morning. I was Acting Mission Director at the time this coup occurred. I won't describe making the rounds and the machine gun fire and the deaths that occurred other than to say that at about three o'clock in the morning, Barbara was the first one to hear the machine gun rounds, at least in our compound. We had a capital development officer visiting from Washington. It was quite an experience to go through what amounted to our second coup d'etat in our second post. The evening of February 24, Flagstaff House, where Nkrumah lived, was secured around four o'clock in the afternoon. There was a considerable loss of life — probably 200-300 people were killed even though officially they only noted that 18 had died. The next evening, responding to a request from the government statistician, E.N. Omaboe, I met with him at his simple little office to explore how the U.S. could respond with assistance quickly and effectively. He became the Minister of Finance and Development in the new government and so was to be a very important power. That evening, in a rather leisurely but somewhat tense session, we shaped a package of at least proposals of PL480 supply for the resource starved processing plants, a \$2 million sector loan focused on planning and development of efficient infrastructure, bringing in the International Executive Service Corps (as we called them, the Paunch Corps) for assistance to five of the languishing state enterprises, (Nkrumah had given support to the establishment of over 100 state enterprises that were largely a mess), and a pledge to work closely with the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank in forming a western consortium for ongoing assistance.

AID/Washington was supportive of most of this package in just an outstanding fashion. In fact, the new GOG leadership felt properly that the U.S. wanted Ghana to develop and to participate effectively in the international economy, which was certainly not the case in the last four or five years of Nkrumah's leadership. His principal focus was supporting

destabilizing efforts in those former colonies that did not want to join his grand plan for the United States of Africa.

*Q: What relationship did you have with Ambassador Franklin H. Williams?*

EVANS: Ambassador Williams arrived in early February of 1966, had been Director of the Africa Bureau of the Peace Corps, was a close friend of Sargeant Shriver, and was certainly known to President Kennedy. He was an African-American of fairly significant militancy. He had come out to work with his brothers and sisters. The first major policy difference that we had (Frank Pinder was still in Washington at the time) was whether or not to include tobacco in the PL480 package. The government of Ghana had requested tobacco because they had two cigarette and cigar manufacturing facilities and it was both an import substitution effort and it would save substantial foreign exchange. Williams was aware of the dangers of smoking. He took a strong stand that this tobacco component, which ran into a number of millions of dollars, should be deleted from the package. He directed me to draft a cable to the U.S. Department of Agriculture. I came over and we sat in his office. I pleaded with him to use a more informal channel, that is, the telephone, to inquire about the feasibility of dropping tobacco. He did and, of course, tobacco was kept in the program. I think in some ways by alerting him to the fact that he would get into trouble, we formed a friendship that lasted during his entire stay in Accra. In other words, he was not recalled for consultation, which is generally a prelude to transfer. It does show the nature of the tobacco lobby in the 1960s in Washington and their hold on the U.S. Department of Agriculture to dispose of surplus tobacco widely throughout the world. (Note: Tragically, Franklin H. Williams died of lung cancer in New York City in 1989. Bishop Tutu flew from South Africa to attend his funeral.).

The multimillion dollar PL480 agreement was negotiated by the late spring of 1966 with first shipments arriving in the summer. That whole PL480 mechanism was so impressive, it was prompt, it was substantial, and provided critical raw materials for Ghana, especially cotton for its languishing textile industry. Some of Ghana's textile plants (I think there were five altogether) turned out absolutely beautiful textiles.

*Q: Who were the other people that were involved in setting up this assistance?*

EVANS: The Ford Foundation with its regional headquarters in Lagos provided grant assistance to the government of Ghana. They brought in the Harvard Advisory Group to Ghana. The team's first reaction was why use precious hard currency loan money for this sector development study? They called the ambassador over and had a meeting. Believe it or not, Minister E.N. Omaboe and the GOG were adamant that we proceed with the sector loan that we had in one sense formulated the night of the 25th of February.

We were also fortunate to have Dr. Arthur Morgan visit us at near 90 years of age on his last journey around the world. I arranged a session with Ghana's then president, General Ankrah. We waited in the holding room of the castle until escorted into General Ankrah's large office. Two British suppliers had just had champagne with General Ankrah and he was in light spirits. Our discussion focused on controlling endemic diseases, especially



malaria, along the newly formed Volta Lake. General Ankrah most likely preferred his earlier visitors!

*Q: What were the various components of this sector loan?*

EVANS: As it finally was wrapped up in the agreement, it included four sectors. It took from February of 1966, when we first thought of it well into 1967, before this was all ironed out. These four sectors were critical to Ghana's reconstruction. First was agriculture. Here, there was a central focus on a transition out of the inefficient state farms and the enhancement of the private sector with a much greater show of agricultural supplies and research. No pesticides had been imported into Ghana for four years. The marketing of crops was hampered by impassable roads. Many crops just did not get to market.

The second sector was transportation. Here the strategic plan was to build and maintain feeder roads linked to the productive agriculture hinterland. During the later 1950s and early 1960s, Ghana had some major highways, but the feeder roads were close to nonexistent. This sector study was to focus largely on those critical links to the hinterland.

The third sector was telecommunications. Here the objective was to develop and take advantage of the fast, modern communication technology which would tie towns and cities to the international network. Many would not believe that almost all international calls from even other parts of Africa would have to either go through London or Paris and then to Accra. This, clearly, Ghana wanted to change.

The fourth sector was the key water resources sector. This included both the launching of a massive village potable water well program and enhancing water supply for agriculture and industry. Probably 100 state enterprises in the food processing sector involved the construction of factories with limited attention to the agricultural raw materials, or the crops that would be processed through these plants. Three of the four sector loans focused on activating a dependable supply to be delivered to these plants and supplemental markets.

*Q: All this planning you mention, was it all in Accra or were you able to get it out into the regions?*

EVANS: One of the exciting things in 1967 and early 1968 was to work with E.N. Omaboe and The Harvard Group's Jan Coopman and his staff on the decentralizing of planning and project implementation in Ghana. From 1957 onward, even during the British period, all projects were highly centralized. To decentralize, there was a focus on the nine regions and 40 administrative districts of Ghana so that they would originate projects in the planning and collection of data stages. This would encourage sector development at the grassroots level. I had the privilege for almost four months of traveling about Ghana with the Economic Affairs Ministry's senior engineer, Alex Pupilampu. We visited the chairmen and secretaries of the newly established Regional

Planning Committees. These had been set up in 1967 with an effort to move much of the planning to the regional level. We sought their input also on how the four sector team consultants could link with them through the data collection, strategic planning and project formulation process. We also involved the University of Science and Technology in Kumasi. I believe, UST's staff were hired for subcontract work on at least three of the four sectors.

*Q: In April 1969, USAID/Lagos was inquiring about your availability.*

EVANS: The Mission Director in Lagos, Michael Adler, who had previously been in Liberia, inquired as to whether I might replace Bill Wheeler, who was his Assistant Director for Programs. We knew a civil war was raging in that country, but accepted the offer by extending our second tour in West Africa a third year. In fact, my spouse reminds me that having undergone the coup d'état in October 1958 in Pakistan, the coup in February of 1966 in Ghana and a countercoup later in 1967, and then to anticipate going into perhaps the most important country of Africa during their civil war, created a reputation. There were those who heard the name "Evans" and wanted no association with them at post because of the nature of the debacles that we had confronted at post.

To sum up those five years there would be: (1) the Ghanaian people, perhaps more than any other people I've ever lived with, are people of God. They are clearly fueled to enjoy life and our residence there was so enjoyable despite all of the early hardships. (2) I tended to identify with Kwame Nkrumah's exciting dream of a United States of Africa, but clearly Africa had been balkanized so severely in the late 19th century and the metropole powers had such vested interest, including not just France and the United Kingdom, but Belgium and Portugal, that Nkrumah's grand design never had a chance. His efforts to destabilize conservative regimes in West and Southern Africa were linked probably incorrectly to communist infiltration, but by the mid-1960s, little western assistance was going to Ghana. [As I said,] (3) That all changed with the February 24, 1966 coup d'état. What that coup did indirectly, although it was probably motivated selfishly by those officers that had been terminated from the Ghanaian armed forces, is that it severed ties with both the Soviets and the PRC very promptly. In fact, all of the Ilyushin jets, and I think there were four, were flown back to the Soviet Union filled with Russian technicians that were given 24-48 hours to leave the country. (4) The effort by the western countries was sincerely motivated. It was wide-ranging, and it was based on the need to provide substantial western assistance for a stabilization effort. Also, it was not unknown that Ghana was the first country in the post World War II era that had thrown out a Soviet presence. Suddenly the new leadership of Ghana, especially E.N. Omaboe heading Finance and Economic Affairs, committed itself wholeheartedly to a major stabilization program. It was coordinated in the first three years by the International Monetary Fund and Moeen Qureshi as resident advisor. I even had the privilege of joining AID's Haven North in 1967 in Paris for Ghana's very first consortium meeting. USAID/Accra also worked closely with the World Bank as stabilization took hold and the focus was on getting economic growth underway again in the agricultural and industrial import substitution sectors.

*Q: What were the results of the 1969 elections?*

EVANS: That is sad in one sense because upon our departure in July 1969, that fall, relatively free elections brought Busia to power. He had opposed Nkrumah unsuccessfully in 1957 and had as a result gone into exile. Almost immediately, it was reported, corruption returned. Colonel Acheampong led a coup in 1972 that put him in power for a decade. Again, meaningful representative government was extinguished. In turn, the dynamism and the momentum of the stabilization effort of the mid to late 1960s was largely neutralized. I would add though that today this is not the case. Ghana is beginning to build itself back into a much more prosperous economic position.

In a coup such as the one staged by Acheampong, those who are the best minds and have the best training and are prepared to put their shoulder to the wheel and really help the economy just leave the country. I do not have hard data on how many left under Acheampong's regime. He was too atypically Ghanaian. He was vituperative, irritable, and petulant. For Ghanaians, it was a 10 year wandering in the wilderness until he was set aside.

**A brief assignment to USAID/Nigeria as Assistant Director for Programs  
- 1969-1970**

*Q: How did we find our way to Lagos after leaving Ghana?*

EVANS: In July of 1969, our eight year old daughter Elizabeth and seven year old son David, our German Shepherd, Bonita, and the grey parrot, Clyde, joined Barbara and me for the long drive to Lagos, Nigeria from Accra. It took us two days. Barbara was, unbeknownst to her, fighting amoebic dysentery throughout this entire period. Passing through Togo and Dahomey, now Benin, was easy, but in western Nigeria, we had to pass through six military checkpoints. Soldiers often were generally courteous, but there was always the uncertainty of what might transpire. Fortunately for the American space program and for our clearance through these military checkpoints, Neil Armstrong had just landed on the Moon a few days before our passage. Each of these checkpoints had a transistor radio. Our password really was "Neil Armstrong" or "Moon." It worked.

*Q: How did we find Nigeria when we arrived?*

EVANS: First of all, the civil war had been going on for three and a half years. It had really torn apart the country, especially the southeast, where over 10 million Ibos resided. In 1966, they had created the nation of Biafra and had declared their independence. The U.S. presence was barely tolerated in Nigeria since we led the voluntary agency effort to drop food most nights to the large Ibo population in the east. This was to prevent what would have been massive starvation which was, from the Federal Government of Nigeria's military point of view, exactly what they wanted to happen.

Mission Director Mike Adler was in fact coordinating two programs. One was an emergency assistance program to minimize the slaughter and death in soon to be former

Biafra. The other was the older technical and capital assistance projects that were in disarray in at least the southeast and in other parts of the country during the all-out civil war.

In the first six years of U.S. assistance to Nigeria (1960-early 1966), wide-ranged efforts were made to assist the country in rapid development. For example, John Hannah, then president of Michigan State University, committed MSU through AID contract support, to a broad-based effort at the University of Enugu. Hannah and that university's vice chancellor collaborated closely and MSU gave service to UE very high priority. The focus was on building the famous trilogy of crop research, graduate education, and effective extension. This was the center of the Ibo culture, often referred to as the Jews of Africa because of their intelligence and educational prowess.

Complimentary to institution-building was our capital assistance to upgrading the Calabar Road, an important north-south corridor close to the Cameroon border. A technical institute in booming Port Harcourt was likewise assisted significantly during this early stage of nation-building. But since these three and many other projects were located in what was in 1966 declared the nation of Biafra, Federal Nigeria insisted that we terminate all current assistance immediately. In 1970, these same federal officials were not about to support re-establishment of assistance to the Ibos anytime soon.

To preserve a semblance of political balance, the British had proposed a divided nation, three states, north, east, and west. Though Nigeria is a very heterogeneous nation, these three areas were heavily Hausa, Ibo, and Yoruba, respectively. Fortunately for stability, the Hausa were the dominant population group and effectively controlled the military, especially after the 1966 coup d'état. Even the shifting of the capital closer to the north in the 1970s had strategic as well as political overtones.

Our U.S. assistance to the west and north was likewise crafted in Nigeria's first six years to be institution-building with heavy accent on livestock development in the latter. Since over 40 projects prevailed in agriculture, education, health, community development, industry, and infrastructure, one must credit the energy and commitment of the wave of U.S. teams who established these programs in the early years.

My responsibilities as Assistant Director for Program were to strengthen our technical assistance program in anticipation of a return to normalcy. Biafra surrendered on January 15, 1970, but the GON attitude toward the U.S. cooled considerably now that they had secured their original boundaries. It was in some ways not unlike Vietnam, where efforts to advance economic development when a war is raging get very secondary or tertiary attention from the host government.

*Q: What about the evaluation team that came to Nigeria?*

EVANS: AID/W sent out a team from the Agency proper. In fact, the evaluation unit of the Office of the Administrator selected three former Mission Directors to recommend post-civil war strategy in Nigeria. They recommended (and I'll abbreviate this) a program loan as an incentive for a high level policy dialogue with the Government of Nigeria. It

would help the GON to launch a major rebuilding effort not unlike the Marshall Plan concept, but of course, much, much smaller. From July of 1969, on our arrival, until early in 1970, I had visited every AID technician in Nigeria, over 80 of them. I probably traveled 3,000-4,000 miles around the country. Most had not been visited by AID personnel in Lagos since the coup in January of 1966. [Most of] Our technical assistance efforts were in disarray, further complicated by wave after wave of new oil discoveries. There was a large exodus from rural Nigeria to oil jobs, but also from the senior ranks of the civil service to the booming oil sector. The effort of the evaluation team to have its recommendations accepted and implemented by the then Mission Director were not successful. In the end, USAID Director Adler was quite reluctant to accept the evaluation team's recommendation. I found myself somewhat in the middle on this because I thought their recommendations by and large (and I had worked closely with the team when they were in the country) were right on the mark. I still feel that the U.S. lost an opportunity in Nigeria to engage in a reconstruction effort and a development policy dialogue. Then again, Director Adler knew the ever-present corruption and the antipathy at the end of the civil war toward the U.S. might have proven just too disruptive to a well-coordinated western development consortium.

#### **New responsibilities as Program Development Officer in USOM (USAID)/India - 1970-1973**

*Q: What were your responsibilities when you arrived in India?*

EVANS: We arrived in New Delhi in September 1970 to accept the post of Program Development Officer. This indeed was an eye-opener. India was a very substantial recipient of U.S. assistance. The program was in its third decade of implementation. Since the early 1950s, the U.S. had supported a growing Indian development effort. There were nearly 1,100 U.S. and local employees of the USOM. USOM was used because India did not want to change it to USAID. Over \$400 million of U.S. assistance flowed to India's 15 states annually. USOM's program office employed over 20 Indian economists, programmers, and implementation officers. They had such a wide experience and competence that the Program Development Officer, my role, was largely that of supervision.

Side note: In 1960 upon returning from Kathmandu, Nepal to Karachi, Pakistan through New Delhi, India, I visited the Indian Institute of Public Administration. The Deputy there said, "Why don't you call upon Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru? He has open house each morning at his residence before Parliament." Presuming a cast of thousands the next morning, I was surprised when I found myself alone with him in his rose garden. He said, "Please tell Dr. Morgan that I still keep on my desk always the bust of Lincoln that he brought me in 1950. It gives me confidence when confronting the myriad of secessionist problems throughout our land."

Twenty-three years later, I brought the International House's World Council (alumni) for three days of meetings in New Delhi. Our scheduled 15 minute session with Nehru's daughter, Prime Minister Indira Gandhi, turned out to last for over an hour, because our

first question turned her on. We asked, “What was Macaulay’s impact in the 19<sup>th</sup> century on Indian education?” In summary, she said, “My dear friends, it was devastating! He led us away from our values and traditions. He was obsessed with industrialization, with wealth, with material progress. He was the arrogant justifier of the British Empire.” Indira Gandhi was assassinated tragically by two of her Sikh guards one year later.

*Q: Who was your Mission Director?*

EVANS: We had Leonard Saccio, a fascinating Italian-American who had for a period of time been the former Acting Administrator of AID in Washington. He was the Director when we arrived and he was replaced by Korea's USAID Director, Howard Houston in 1971. Director Saccio used a very interesting proven technique before he signed any agreement, implementation order, or even official letter. He would call me in and with the document before him fire off three or four questions as to how the project was faring and how this new agreement would assist its development further. If all the answers were solid, he would sign it. If there was any uncertainty in my response, we would go back to the drawing board. Princeton's professor of economic development, John Lewis, personally had shaped U.S. assistance during his USOM directorship in the 1960s. India had been an effective member of the World Bank's consortium of donors since the late 1950s. USOM's policy dialogue with the GOI was focused on liberalization of import controls and foreign private investment. Most other donors (and there were literally, if you include the not-for-profits, hundreds) were in full support of this framework. GOI took steps toward liberalization. I'm convinced it never would have on its own. Senior Indian officials always did their homework. Negotiating sessions with them were formal and constructive, whether involving PL480, program lending, capital projects, or technical assistance. Since there were over 100 programs and projects in the early 1970s, I'll just touch on three.

*Q: What three projects have you chosen?*

EVANS: It was hard. There are at least 15 that were my favorites, but we're going to look at the agriculture universities, family planning, and U.S. owned local currency support for low cost housing throughout India. On the agriculture university front, as noted earlier, the American Arthur Ernest Morgan, who was the first Chairman of the Tennessee Valley Authority and a friend, had joined Dr. Radhakrishnan's (later President of India) Higher Education Task Force in 1950. Morgan was the only American on the task force. A central recommendation of this task force was the establishment of outstanding agricultural and engineering universities in each of what became India's 15 states. Over 20 years later, when we arrived in New Delhi, it was exciting to work on the advancement of this program, implemented by nearly 10 U.S. Land Grant Universities ranging from Kansas State University to the University of Tennessee. The majority of Indian faculty were trained in the States at one of these sister institutions. They returned with real insight into the power and resilience of American agriculture. Hence these Indian agriculture universities were very receptive to the Green Revolution sweeping the world in the latter part of the 1960s and certainly in the 1970s. The Revolution was based on solid crop research, the optimum use of irrigation water, and the maximization of the

growing cycle. India tied in effectively with these western consortium supported research stations. I would mention especially ICRISAT, which concerned itself with semiarid agriculture research near Hyderabad, India, and IRRI, powerfully focused on rice, in Los Banyos, Philippines. We also supported hundreds of U.S. owned local currency research projects at each of these U.S. assisted agriculture universities. India, known as an empty rice bowl early in the 20th century, has only had to import grains once in the past 30 years to the best of my knowledge.

On the family planning front, John Cool and Alvin Roseman were two forceful leaders in support of a dynamic Indian population program. Perhaps less sensitive then than now, foreign assistance in support of population growth limitation had to be administered carefully. Urban India is as sophisticated as most societies on Earth, but how to reach the then 600 million rural Indians? Both program lending and U.S. local currency grants made contraception widely available. The policy was to never have a shortage of contraceptives - at least condoms. A more ambitious and hence controversial program was Indian's Health Ministry's support of the 333 clubs throughout the land. Though voluntary, fertile Indian couples were encouraged to limit their families to three children. If that number was exceeded, the men were encouraged to have a vasectomy when they reached 33 years of age. If one examines the policy and supply structure of our four decades of family planning assistance, it has been [recently] said that 15 million less Indians will have been born by the year 2000.

The third project is the low cost housing program. It used the millions of dollars of U.S. owned local currency. The researcher in the next century may not realize how we came by so much local currency, but in the period of the 1960s and 1970s, even the late 1950s, there was a plan for India to purchase our imports with local currency. We owned the local currency and we had limitations on how much of it we could sell or revert to the U.S. Treasury. So, we had literally millions of dollars of local currency in New Delhi in support of our development effort. This low cost housing program is just one example. The Delhi-based coordinator came out of the Bombay banking community. He was a dynamo. By streamlining the grant procedure, he was able to approve thousands of applications within three days of receipt at low or no interest. Each day he notified his approval to a cluster of pre-approved banks so that implementation could begin at once. Hundreds of thousands of simple homes were constructed while creating a repayment fund for the Indian Housing Authority for relending in future decades. The typical Indian bureaucrat could learn a lot from this man. He had worked closely with the Tatas in the Tata steel industry in addition to his banking experience and was one of the most charismatic and galvanizing individuals that I've met in my AID career.

*Q: What changed the program in India?*

EVANS: At last, our honeymoon of assistance to India was over in early December 1971 when the GOI military actively supported the creation of an independent Bangladesh in what was up until then the former East Pakistan. The Secretary of State, Henry Kissinger, who I was later to work for, when he left State, announced at a news conference that the U.S. would tilt toward Pakistan. This was not well-received in New Delhi. The U.S.

government terminated all PL480 and commodity import programs overnight. A tribute to the GOI's maturity, however, was not to ask all Americans to leave the country at once. Instead, they methodically phased out one or two technical assistance projects each month over a period of two years. I often said that destiny made me one of the most deprogramming officers in the AID ranks.

But the Evans family thoroughly enjoyed our nearly three years in India. Ambassador Kenneth B. Keating was from my hometown of Rochester, New York. He was very kind to us, as was his DCM, Galen Stone. USOM Director Howard Houston was a non-career political appointee with compassion, commitment, and quiet intelligence.

*Q: What was your general feeling about assistance to India?*

EVANS: In India, we had seen U.S. assistance received graciously. It was utilized effectively in massive programs and projects. The growth rate in India never has equaled that of the People's Republic of China, but it has been based on a relatively democratic experiment and has been people-oriented and consistent over the decades. We were there at the ending of an era with unilateral termination of our assistance. On my last three week tour through India of AID projects, Indian project directors were truly sad that U.S. assistance was ending. Although they too felt that perhaps they could run these institutions, programs and projects on their own. They expressed time and time again their appreciation for our constant support in the early decades after independence. We left India with a very solid feeling of what U.S. resources had done over a period of nearly 25 years.

In January 1973, I accepted the chiefship of AID's liaison with the United Nations in AID/W's PPC.

#### **New assignment in USAID/Washington as liaison with the United Nations - 1973-1976**

*Q: What did you find in Washington?*

EVANS: We arrived in Washington in mid-January 1973. I was involved immediately in a TDY assignment to our USUN Mission in New York, where the Governing Council of the UN Development Program was in session. One of the first experiences was with Israel's country program. Normally a nation's five year country program is approved at the formal Governing Council's session in less than an hour. In respect to the debate on Israel's country program, it took three days. But it also offers insight into the UN. One remembers that the UN voted and approved the establishment of the State of Israel in 1949. The 1967 war and the occupation of the West Bank and the Sinai had only intensified regional anger. Letting off steam in this way was far better than having no arena to vent one's frustration and sense of hopelessness. At this session, what the Middle Eastern countries had done, and some countries of Europe, was to examine each of the projects in the Israel country program as to whether or not they advanced peace in the Middle East.



Over my three and a half years as chief of the UN Relations in AID/PPC, I came to respect what one could call almost the magnificent framework of the UN and to wince at the occasional pettiness of UN officials.

*Q: Why are you so positive about the United Nations?*

EVANS: Answering it indirectly, central to the UN ineffectiveness is the fact that all sovereignty rests with member states. Impasses in the Security Council or the General Assembly come from policy conflicts among its members, not from the lack of ability of UN officialdom. So, I would say that as countries become more collaborative and more open in their working relationships within these UN bodies, the UN will in turn become more effective as a global institution.

*Q: How was this liaison with the UN carried out in Washington?*

EVANS: We had a series of meetings. I had my weekly Policy Planning Coordination meeting with all of the heads in PPC. I also met with State's Bureau of International Organizations on a weekly basis. Because the U.S. participated in almost all UN agency meetings, our collective role involving eight or 10 U.S. officials in AID and State was to ensure that our mandatory and voluntary contributions were well-planned, effectively spent, and audited against wastefulness. After the UNDP Governing Council meeting in Manila in January of 1974, I had the privilege of traveling through Asia, Africa, Europe, and the Caribbean. I visited the Regional Economic Commissions in Bangkok, Addis Ababa, and a number of specialized agencies including the UN Environment Program in Nairobi and the FAO in Rome, as well as select UNDP programs in five countries, including Haiti. The meager resources allocated for the UN development system are golden when compared with the hundreds of billions of dollars spent then and now for military hardware, often in support of repressive military regimes. This is not to argue that there are not inefficiencies within the UN. It is to argue that in terms of resource allocation, the very meager monies that support the UN development system glean for the world and for most member countries far more than any other allocation those resources could bring about. This in no way belittles the U.S. security shield indispensable in achieving 50 years of relative peace.

*Q: You were a member of various U.S. delegations?*

EVANS: I probably participated in at least 30 U.S. delegations up through July 1976, including the sixth and seventh special sessions of the UN General Assembly. Let's focus on that just for a moment. After the 1973 war with Israel, most Arab oil producing countries did not ship oil to the U.S. for many months. This fact frightened European countries. They were very, very much at the beck and call of Middle East leadership. Iran and Algeria, among other oil producing nations, were successful in calling for a special session of the General Assembly. This was the Sixth Special Session. It was to focus on the lack of development progress in most former colonies and to indict the western world for not doing more to ease the debt burden. This Sixth Special Session also elicited pledges of one percent of the gross national product from the industrialized countries for

transfer to the developing world. The U.S. position (and we were caught off guard a bit by the rapid development of this Sixth Special Session and our special support for Israel) was to contain this movement by practicing damage control in each of the working groups leading up to the actual Sixth Session in 1974.

But the Seventh Special Session, also on development, in early 1976 was a different story. Daniel Patrick Moynihan was our ambassador at USUN. He was personally involved in shaping our position, which basically set forth fully our wide-ranging, constant support through the IMF, World Bank, regional development banks, the remaining UN specialized agencies, and our substantial bilateral programs. The U.S. welcomed each and every new nation into the world society and international economy. The private trade sector was powerful and the U.S. would redouble her efforts to lower tariffs and enhance market access. Secretary Kissinger was to have delivered this address, but he was detained in the Middle East at the last moment. Ambassador Moynihan delivered Kissinger's address, much of which he had written from our earlier drafts. He took two hours in addressing the Seventh Special Session in the august General Assembly and consumed five glasses of water. I know this for a fact because I saw that his pitcher was full.

*Q: Was the AID Administrator ever involved in your work?*

EVANS: We had a very exciting thing happen in June of 1975. I had arranged for AID Administrator Daniel Parker to address the UNDP Governing Council in Geneva. My arrangement was not so significant as the fact that he accepted this invitation. His theme was the power of trained people and the world we could build together if we used our minds and our hearts. It was a refreshing address. It was unique because most of the heads of delegations would speak about level of support or the percentage of giving or how many projects their country had contributed to over the course of time. This was dealing with the world's people in a way that was both unique and challenging. Most of this address he had written himself. In fact, he had taken an earlier draft that I had done and pretty much ripped it to shreds. It was one of the most moving presentations that I had ever heard in a UN chamber. He also supported my interest in attending the 19th session of the Senior Seminar on Foreign Policy that was to begin in August of 1976.

*Q: What was your overall view of the three and a half years you spent with the United Nations?*

EVANS: I tend to subscribe to Dean Rusk's statement, which probably was copied from an earlier spokesperson: "If the UN did not exist in the post World War II period, we would have had to invent it." I tend to feel that the majority of American people are ignorant of the fine tuning of the UN. Its image in this country is one of gross bureaucracy and lack of productivity, which is clearly not the case. On the other hand, the Fifth Committee, which is concerned with budgets and with expenditures always needs to do its homework because we are a very substantial contributor to the UN. Even in 1973-1976, we were in arrears in some of our contributions. Of course, today, 1998, we are over \$1 billion in arrears. This is despicable. It is not a position a great nation should find

itself in. It's in our own selfish interest that the UN succeed. So, I left my three and a half years working with the UN, visiting most of the specialized agencies throughout the world, with a very positive feeling of the potential of this organization.

### **Attended the Senior Seminar - 1976-1977**

*Q: How do you regard the 19th session of the Senior Seminar on Foreign Policy?*

EVANS: In April of 1976, I was selected as one of two Agency participants in this 19th session from August 1976 to late June of 1977. Our 26 members included at least eight agencies of the United States government, heavily State, but Agriculture, Treasury, AID, USIS, USIA, the CIA, and four of the branches of the military service. A fascinating cluster. We traveled for six weeks throughout North America from Mexico City to Toronto. We had sessions with at least five governors and a two-hour session with Secretary of State Henry Kissinger right after the defeat of President Gerald Ford in November of 1976.

The central mission of this seminar had been for its 18 preceding years and continues to be today to examine many aspects of American society and its neighbors so that our country's interests can be represented more vividly and persuasively abroad.

*Q: In this case, was there a research paper involved?*

EVANS: I published a research paper which was, of course, the requirement of all of my 25 colleagues. Mine was entitled "The Urban Crisis, a National Dilemma in the Nation's Capital." The paper and my six weeks' work on it focused on the incongruity of the District of Columbia governance and the need for a metropolitan approach. The District not only lost 30% of its 100 square mile original area when Virginia slipped away during the Civil War, but a constructive governing pattern needs to go far beyond the original territory. My paper touched on the enhancement of every aspect of local services from education to water supply, transport to health services, if the District plus three county governance (Montgomery, Prince Georges, and Arlington) could be forged. It was a highly idealistic approach. There is a metropolitan entity that is concerned with very limited powers such as air pollution and long term planning. But we have experienced in the last decade a relative breakdown in the quality of governance within the District of Columbia.

The 10 month seminar is an exceptional opportunity for a career officer. I would recommend it without hesitation to any candidate. The only downside is that you are outside of the working career ladder and you must literally fight your way back in after the year is over. Insights gleaned through this lively tutoring have benefitted me long after leaving the Service.

### **Assignment as Deputy Director Sahel Development Office, Africa Bureau - 1977-1978**

*Q: What followed the seminar?*

EVANS: The new Assistant Administrator for Africa, Golar Butcher, and her Deputy, Haven North, took me in from the cold. They agreed to my appointment as Deputy Director of the Sahel office in July of 1977. Its Director, David Shear, was a principal architect of an assistance approach to the devastation caused by the advancing of the Sahara throughout former French West Africa. Also by the tendency for these former lands to become less and less collaborative and more pugilistic in disputes over water, migrating livestock, and migrations of people, among other concerns. These six countries (Mauritania, Senegal, Mali, Niger, Burkina Faso (Upper Volta), and Chad) extended over an area nearly the length of the United States. The U.S. limited assistance within this region under this plan would be offered largely on a regional basis to benefit from economies of scale and to enhance greater collaboration. The Sahel is a fragile environment experiencing significant overpopulation of livestock in the northern tier and requiring a measured approach to agriculture production and marketing.

Complicating our direct assistance was the need to be nearly fluent in French. There were perhaps 200 Americans working within the program both in a Sahel regional sense and in bilateral efforts in these six countries and few of them were truly fluent in the French language. The Sahel approach was brilliant in concept, especially when you consider the alternatives. Yet American planners and technicians were required to work within a French institutional framework still dominated by French technicians. The Sahel program never seemed to be embraced fully by the French presence.

**Returned overseas as Director of the Regional Economic Development Services  
Office in Abidjan (REDSO/WA) - 1978-1982**

*Q: Your last overseas assignment was with REDSO. Explain what that was all about.*

EVANS: REDSO is a product of the late 1960s. It refers to the Regional Economic Development Services Office. There was one based in Nairobi for East Africa and one based in Abidjan, Cote d'Ivoire, for West Africa. My appointment as Director of REDSO/West occurred in August of 1978. Here again, the team of Butcher and North believed in my ability to run such a program and I was always appreciative of that.

I directed REDSO from September 1978-September 1982. The 85 staff included agronomists, economists, capital development officers, civil and water resource engineers, lawyers, contract officers, health planners, nutritionists, and a variety of other specialists. Its principal function was to develop projects within bilateral and regional programs and occasionally to evaluate existing projects. The REDSO Director's authority was subordinate to that of each bilateral Director, but REDSO teams of two to five specialists would arrive in the requesting county after data collection and the rough project paper outline was reviewed by the Director and his or her staff. They would generally return to Abidjan to complete a series of such papers. Often, one of my staff would be working on three or four projects simultaneously advancing them each week. These roving teams were a bit like Johnny Appleseeds, spreading ideas and approaches

from country to country. They kept USAID directors current on what was going on in neighboring countries and in the region in general. That idea alone was very valuable. The 24 countries within the REDSO/West bailiwick constituted an area larger than the Continental United States. During my four year assignment, I visited 23 of these 24 countries.

*Q: Did you have specific goals when you arrived in West Africa?*

EVANS: I believe I did and, to a certain extent, they were controversial. But I still feel they were right. My first goal upon arriving in Abidjan was to attempt to have REDSO/West get a better feel for the dynamics of this vast region. The UK, France, Belgium, Portugal, and Spain had controlled the destiny of these 200 million people until just two decades earlier. Balkanized and non-communicating, the region would clearly benefit from institutions of collaboration and sharing. The Economic Commission for Africa in Addis Ababa provided helpful planning data, but was really too remote. Our work with the Entente Fund in the four countries bounding Ghana was too restrictive. Therefore, much of our effort was focused on strengthening ECOWAS, the Economic Commission of West African States, based in Lagos, but directed by a brilliant, dynamic Ivorian. Though ECOWAS did not include the Cameroons, Gabon, Equatorial Guinea, and Zaire within our region, it did cover a substantial part of the REDSO region. We furnished them every AID project description within their countries and supported strongly their movement toward a West African common market facilitated by an infrastructure geared to that region. This was in contrast to what was left behind by the metropole powers. The ECOWAS framework is solid, but evolving the political will to allocate national resources for the good of the region will take perseverance and constancy. ECOWAS does have a legitimacy and a focus that Kwame Nkrumah's grand design for a United States of Africa never had. There is a reason to hope that future AID regional projects in West Africa could and should be planned and implemented through entities such as ECOWAS.

*Q: What about the African Development Bank?*

EVANS: A second major focus was in strengthening the staff of the African Development Bank based in Abidjan. This institution was one of three regional development banks that the U.S. supported throughout the world, including one in Asia and in Latin America. Our principal effort was in improving the quality of project design, implementation, and evaluation, especially in the productive and infrastructure sectors. The ADB hired bright, aspiring officers from all over Africa. Its missions, not unlike those of the World Bank, supported competent professionals in many of the 51 countries of Africa.

The African Development Bank was not unlike our REDSO in concept. Much of its good work was done through contract sector teams. They ranged widely throughout Africa building field experience and often focusing on, if not breaking, major logjams in a specific sector. Our AID advisors worked with the resident staff in ADB/Abidjan. They assisted in advancing a career service with improved position descriptions, annual

evaluations, and more formal peer-competitive promotion. They assisted in sharpening project contracting so that field project implementation could be reimbursed more accurately and measurable progress accomplished. They assisted in computerizing project record keeping including repayment schedules for recipient countries. They also arranged training in the U.S. for key ADB staff and worked closely with other advisors to ADB from the World Bank and other countries. Our AID assistance was minimal, but in its steadfast manner important.

The U.S. Department of Treasury maintained principal liaison to the African Development Fund for the lesser developing countries of Africa and kept their resident director informed of our assistance. The three regional development banks were an important supplement to the World Bank, UNDP, and bilateral assistance.

*Q: Are population dynamics important?*

EVANS: The continent of Africa is underpopulated relative to South Asia, but in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, overpopulation in Sub-Sahara Africa is likely to be one of its greatest constraints to development and quality of life. Ghana was a leader in having a broad based population policy as early as 1970. The informal migration involved probably 20 million people over my 10 years in Africa. This migration was dynamic in the sense that movements were largely from the interior to the coast, but also from one country to another along the coast. The vast bulk of these 20 million people were coming to the coastal countries for employment. Families who joined the wage earner often were not acknowledged by the host government and so schooling, health services, housing, and other benefits to the resident population were generally not available. Population growth still averaged an estimated two percent annually in West Africa. Dakar, Abidjan, Lagos, Douala, and Libreville, among others, were examples of urban breakdown due to uncontrolled migration. The Population Council, the work of the World Bank, and to a certain extent the African Development Bank, would support population programs, particularly knowledge of ways in which to bring the two to three percent annual growth down. But by and large there was little support from AID/Washington after Golar Butcher left office.

I'll never forget the new Assistant Administrator for Africa sitting in our REDSO/West briefing room. I tried to set the stage for REDSO's work within the region and touched on some thoughts about a regional population strategy that we were working on with the Bank and with ECOWAS. His eyes literally glazed over. I presumed he felt that this should be none of our concern. He may have represented the mentality that has devastated the population programs in countries receiving AID assistance and in shackling the UN Fund for Population Activities. Fortunately, countries such as Scandinavia, Canada, the UK, and Germany are much more supportive and the UN continues to do extremely important work in the field of population dynamics and control.

*Q: Can you make comparisons between the regional or bilateral approach?*

EVANS: Of course, it is easier to provide assistance to a subcontinent under one central government such as India, but I found the REDSO assignment in West Africa challenging and intriguing. In our small way, the U.S. was patiently assisting through modest projects to undergird a movement toward national and regional participation in the world economy. A generation ago, this was far from the mind of the controlling metropole powers. The REDSO staff were true professionals who knew the region and worked long weeks, often far from Abidjan. We initiated, reshaped, or evaluated over 50 bilateral and regional projects during my tenure in Abidjan. An over-simplified conclusion is that well managed regional projects represent solid developmental assistance if the participation of host governments are strongly supportive. The nature of nationalism tends to assure great host government support for bilateral projects. In respect to Cote d'Ivoire, AID assistance has always been minimal because of its high per capita income and significant French resistance to our presence. Our limited assistance was in the agricultural sector through the Entente Fund. The Entente Fund was directed by Paul Kaya, said to be Houphouet Boigny's son, and focused very limited U.S. resources on Cote d'Ivoire, Burkina Faso, Niger, and Togo. Though Côte d'Ivoire and Ghana had nearly identical per capita incomes in 1960, by 1980 Cote d'Ivoire's was nearly four times that of Ghana!

But Barbara and I had agreed that I would retire at 50 years of age. This was not because of disappointment with our career, but because of a feeling that a post-REDSO directorship would be anticlimactic. Therefore, we initiated the retirement action in the spring of 1982 and departed Abidjan in October of 1982.

### **Concluding observations on foreign assistance and USAID**

*Q: What do you have to say about the 25 year career with AID?*

EVANS: I had the good fortune to have 10 specific assignments including two years in long-term training. The training at Harvard and MIT and the Senior Seminar 14 years later had a tremendous impact on my perspective on development. The insights extended far beyond my career in the Foreign Service. It's always controversial as to whether taxpayer's money should be used for career development, but I, having so benefitted, am a great supporter for at least one year of such training. I had the creme de la creme experience of two. But both were quite different.

The other AID postings were in Pakistan for five years, in NESAC/CDF for a year, Ghana for five years, Nigeria for one year, India for three years, UN relations for three and a half years, the Sahel office for one year, and Cote d'Ivoire (REDSO/WA) for four years. Out of those experiences, I truly believe the Marshall Plan to Europe and the 40 years of bilateral and multilateral assistance undergirded a period of relative world peace. Could former colonies feel truly welcomed into the arena of multilateral trade and financial flows without such an openness on behalf of the western world? I doubt it. Many countries lacked the discipline to optimize resources for development, but many did have this discipline. The U.S.' solid support for the UN, IMF, World Bank, and regional development banks put in place a powerful institutional framework for the former colonies in Africa and Asia and to a lesser extent in Latin America. We seem now to be

in a third phase of maximum utilization of multilateral institutions and eclectic programming of limited bilateral assistance, especially in areas controlled by the former Soviet Union.

I doubt that our aid will assure democracy takes root in any struggling developing country, but there is no harm in stressing the importance of involving all the people in the electoral and developmental process. I'll never forget traveling deep into the forests of the Ashanti region in Ghana two years after John F. Kennedy had been assassinated and calling upon a lesser chief in the smokey interior of his adobe village palace of sorts. I talked through his linguist to him and the first thing he did was to stand up with all of the 15 or 20 villagers in this room and said, "We shall have two minutes of silence in the memory of American President John F. Kennedy." So, the point here is the humanistic impact of American assistance in the developing world is our greatest gift in the 40 years since the end of World War II. The U.S. was persistent in shaping a very relevant institutional framework and in ushering former colonies into the international economy.

*Q: What do you think about AID's role in general?*

EVANS: I've been away from AID for 16 years and so am not fully cognizant of the major operational issues, but the power of the Economic Development Service to me was its ability to track productive Americans in both the career service and as contractors and consultants and to send them all over the world, often under the most difficult of circumstances. A substantial portion of the billions of dollars transferred abroad, of course, came back to American farmers, factories, and universities. Presumably international trade and greater access to the markets of the developing world will replace much bilateral assistance. But in the 1950s and 1960s, these former colonies either knew little of the U.S. market and certainly were not encouraged by their former colonial masters to know more. The U.S. bilateral aid flow is too low today because the communist threat has been removed. Our arrears in payments to the UN and the IMF may have a greater impact on the world economy than lower bilateral flows, but I feel strongly that the U.S. should remain deeply engaged in the developing world. In addition, the U.S. should use international trade and investment, as we now are doing, as the creative new tools and also shape disaster relief to be ever more efficient, immediate, and provided by the latest technology.

Closer to my own career experience, I am convinced that western assistance to South Asia avoided a major continuing conflagration between India and Pakistan. Their transition from British rule went smoothly overall. The predicted large scale starvation never occurred and dynamic economies were forged, anchored in increasingly efficient agriculture. My feeling about the successes of West Africa are more ambivalent. This is in part because of Nigeria's abhorrent performance and the sad 19th century balkanization of this massive region by the former metropolises. Where South Asia knew that its land was fragile and vulnerable, traditional patterns of life predominate in much of West Africa. There are pockets of hope where Africa's rich natural resources are exploited so that the majority of these resources flow into development. The Cameroons and Cote d'Ivoire are two good examples of agricultural resources and oil benefitting their



economies under enlightened leadership. Both countries also have held to agricultural development as their first priority. On the other hand, Nigeria, Chad, Liberia, and Sierra Leone represent examples of fairly chaotic nationbuilding, where development was by no means the all-consuming priority. But I feel many other of West Africa's 24 countries would have succumbed to this pattern if western assistance, especially technical assistance, had not flowed to them right from independence.

Some basic guidelines for those interested in successful development would include these: (1) support for improvement in the quality of life of all of its people must come from the top year after year; (2) individual initiative should be rewarded through incentive prices, salaries, and wages; (3) governments benefit by effective relations with the World Bank, IMF, UN, regional development banks, and their neighbors; (4) responsible political freedom is a great catalyst for development even though its supporting institutions and the process may seem chaotic at times; and (5) for the future, private financial flows and international trade will dominate national health more than ever before.

The Agency for International Development was an extraordinary success if its principal goal was to keep the emerging world free of communism. The rationale for bilateral and foreign assistance in the 21<sup>st</sup> century will test the genius of our successors. Perhaps a focus on support for private or not-for-profit philanthropy along with efficient disaster relief and emergency assistance will predominate. The U.S. did assist in building a global economy interlaced with effective multilateral institutions. Bilateral flows may now be less vital to the developing countries than continuous, efficient access to the large, wealthy markets of the world.

*Q: What of your assignments in Washington?*

EVANS: I had six years of assignments in Washington and I was truly impressed with the variety and quality of AID/W officers in both the foreign and domestic service. True, the rationale for assisting the developing world is weakened now that the communist menace has receded. I think this is unfortunate but it's a reality vis a vis Congress. Space and communication technology have shrunk the world. The U.S. opened up active trade with the developing world and sort of jump started their trade by U.S. assistance programs in the 1950s and 1960s. It is likely that the U.S. will use disaster relief as a major instrument in the decade ahead. It is not costly, but it impresses a U.S. Judeo-Christian society on its intent to help those who have been devastated by natural calamity. It is clearly quite different from the massive flows of assistance dating from the Marshall Plan through the early 1990s. Our large resources will probably flow through the multilateral institutions. The tragedy would be if even these institutions do not receive the level of U.S. support that they deserve.

### **Eleven years as president of International House, New York - 1982 - 1993**

*Q: How did we link into our next career, which was so closely connected to the work we had been doing?*

EVANS: I think serendipity would be the link. We did not, as some have said, seek the next appointment, but were called on the eve of our departure from Abidjan by a member of the presidential search committee of International House, New York. They asked for us to submit an application and to pass through New York on our way to retirement in Michigan. We were offered the job on the spot. Perhaps they were desperate. In early November 1982, we began an 11 year career on the Upper West Side of New York City. My candidacy was enhanced first by my spouse and secondly by my Foreign Service career. In my introduction to New York City in "The New York Times" with I House board chairman Henry Kissinger, he said, "Gordon, you are stupid." I said, "Henry, I didn't come to New York to hear this." He replied, "But Gordon, no one works for Henry Kissinger twice." We had a very cordial relationship. I saw him maybe every other month during the four years he continued on as chairman of the board.

*Q: What is International House?*

EVANS: International House was founded in 1924 by the driving force of Lehigh University engineer Harry Edmonds and the largesse of John D. Rockefeller, Jr. It was created in the wake of World War I. It was designed with 500 small student rooms with eight large public rooms, really a very beautiful building on the Upper West Side close to Grant's Tomb and adjacent to Columbia University. In 1982, there were 107 nationalities residing at this residential and program center when we arrived. 97% were graduate students studying or training at over 100 institutions in greater New York. The average residence was just over two years, while a three year stay was maximum. Edmonds, Rockefeller and others theorized that living in this community would build friendships for a lifetime. Residents and staff arranged a wide variety of programs each night. Residents felt truly fortunate to be admitted. If one counts short term as well as long term residence, over 60,000 have experienced this program since 1924. Each year, the number of Americans residing at I House is limited to 30%. Having visited or resided in over 95 countries before arriving at I House, interaction with its residents was a joyful part of the presidency. Dr. Kissinger, in fact, had lived north of I House in Manhattan when he arrived from Germany with his parents in the mid-1930s. He chaired an illustrious I House board, including the granddaughter of John D. Rockefeller, Jr., many heads of Fortune 500 corporations, banks, and service institutions. Working under the guidance of a not-for-profit board with its seven committees was a new experience and a test of one's resilience. The president was expected to carry a tin cup and to raise considerable amounts of money, of course, with the assistance of the board of trustees. One trustee and senior IBM executive said, "Gordon, I can see you have many ideas. Please ensure that they are introduced to the board by another trustee. Then we'll all buy into the concept if it's a good idea." This was helpful to me. I tried to follow that practice over my 11 years. Our board consisted of a core of 35 and then we had international trustees from 10 countries of the world and honorary trustees including John J. McCloy, a former chairman, David Rockefeller, Shelby Cullom Davis and, when he retired, Henry Kissinger. It was a very powerful board that could do anything it decided to do. Of course, it made the presidency just that much easier.

*Q: How did Gerald Ford enter the scene and what did that do to our links in Michigan?*

EVANS: Our links in Michigan were underscored because the chair of one of our important committees was also from Michigan, so President Ford and this individual plus the president were referred to as the "Michigan Mafia." We were very proud of that connection with the heartland, a very vital part of our country. In 1985, we were fortunate to attract former President Gerald Ford to replace Henry Kissinger as chairman. In the search committee, we had him listed as number one. Most people said "Do not approach him." We often felt that because he jettisoned Nelson Rockefeller when he ran for the presidency in 1976 against Jimmy Carter, he always had a sense of guilt and that this was a payback for a Rockefeller institution. We would hold our board meetings late in the afternoon of the same day the American Express board met. President Ford, being on both boards, would just be driven uptown in his ubiquitous Secret Service car. He served four eventful years. In that four year period, we had 14 board meetings, 12 of which he attended even though he lived most of the year in either Southern California or in Colorado. He was replaced by John C. Whitehead, the former Deputy Secretary of State, in 1989. In that year, we also purchased a second building adjacent to I House for \$15 million with assistance from the New York State Dormitory Authority, where we obtained a low interest loan, and increased our occupancy to 750 residents. During my tenure with tin cup in hand, we raised over \$11 million and engaged in a fairly extensive renovation program. It should be pointed out that most buildings in New York average 15 years of life and then they're torn down. International House is still going strong 75 years after it was constructed on the Upper West Side.

*Q: How did you find being surrogate parents to all of these hundreds of students as you worked your way into International House?*

EVANS: Certainly there is no privacy in an environment such as that. Barbara and I lived on the 10th floor of the building we purchased in 1989 from day one. We would meet residents in elevators, on the sidewalk. We would eat some of our meals in the beautiful dining room at International House. So, we were constantly in the presence of those whom we theoretically were supervising and whose programs we administered. I would say it was exhilarating at times and tiring at other times. But there were approximately 15 programs of one sort or another each week at I House. Of course, this was the heart of why people try so hard to obtain residence there. It is not just that the cost per room is low (It can average as low as \$15/day.). But for example, when John Whitehead came aboard, we introduced the Corporate Chairman Program in 1989. Over 20 Fortune 500 chairmen came to International House, dined with us, and spoke to a packed auditorium or large public room. Always, there was a heavy accent on doing business throughout the world. In other words, these chairmen had a global perspective and felt very comfortable speaking with over 100 nationalities, often 80 of whom would be represented in these meetings. Over its five years, I believe, many misconceptions about corporate goals were corrected by the heads of, for example, IBM, Texaco, American Express, Prudential-Ache, J.P. Morgan, Dow Corning, Meade, Citicorp, AEA Investors, and the like.

We also had an international visitors program that attracted the UN Secretary General for

a question and answer evening to a packed auditorium; Bishop Tutu, who was both vivid, lucid, and humorous; Kim Dae Jung, the current President of Korea; Tatsuro Toyota, then president of Toyota Motors Worldwide and an alumnus of International House; and many other dignitaries. The Marshall Visitor Program (named for former Board Chairman George Marshall) brought such leaders as Sandra Day O'Connor, Isaac Asimov, Leontyne Price, who was convinced to join our board, David Rockefeller, and John J. McCloy. A National Cultural Hour was held every Thursday evening, staged solely by the residents of that nation while the Night of Nations welcomed benefit booths to raise money for the House each year. International House was jam-packed on that occasion.

Let me emphasize that this would be a very excellent follow-on career for any retiring Foreign Service officer. In 1982, retired FSOs were presidents of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, Asia Foundation, African-American Foundation, and American Council, among others. There are approximately 70 international houses that have students in residence throughout the world. Heads of 15 of these houses, including those in Japan, the Cité Universitaire in Paris, International House in London, Sydney, and Melbourne get together every third year. The experience that a Foreign Service officer has gleaned in his or her first career is amply utilized in running an enterprise of this nature. The alumni of the House have the privilege of being elected to what is called a World Council. This body met every 18 months all over the world, including Berlin, Kyoto, New Delhi, Sao Paulo, Johannesburg, and Prague. The Internet now has facilitated interaction among alumni and current residents. We had one computer in 1982 when I arrived. There were 65 when I left, plus probably five hundred PCs that were owned and operated by residents. The current move is to tie these in with modems throughout the 750 rooms at International House.

*Q: What was the real value to the residents and to us of having served abroad for so long and then be able to greet foreign visitors to this country?*

EVANS: I am not sure of the value to them, but the value to us was to feel as though our earlier experiences were truly utilized, that we were comfortable in the milieu of many, many nationalities resident at International House. When problems of finance or of family loss or weakness through addiction would affect a resident, we had similar experiences abroad. When there were killings in certain countries, coups, the invasion of Lebanon by Israel, the breakdown of the social structure in Yugoslavia, these produced enormous sadness and tensions within concerned residents and we felt as though our experience could be comforting. As I say, I recommend a career of this nature very strongly. I think every effort should be made to have an international house on every university campus.

### **Closing**

Before I wrap this up, may I just say that, starting with our Fulbright year in Norway, and the other 17 years abroad, and six years of service in Washington and the 11 years in New York, one gets the feeling (and I have it very strongly) that the United States miraculously is the most exciting social experiment in the world. It is hard to conceive of

the chaos that could have resulted in the period 1945-1999 without the U.S. presence, its leadership and strong earlier support of international institutions. Its ability to remain a leader of the free world, with certain slips perhaps by being sucked into Vietnam, is anchored in the basic objective of wanting people of the world to live free lives and to live in a spiritual context that enriches their soul. Our national spirit was omnipresent in our 36 years of interaction with people in four continents. It was even acknowledged by critics of our country.

We were active in the international arena until September of 1993 when we boarded our 29 foot Chris Craft bound for Michigan over a 5,250 mile journey through the eastern waterways. Just as in every step of my Foreign Service career and in this interview process, my spouse, Barbara, has been at my side. One recommendation I would make to the researcher is, if you can choose a life partner of the quality, commitment, and love that I was lucky enough to find, then the career's strains and stresses are comfortably accommodated. We had spent just short of 36 years in one international arena or another. Little did we realize that this would continue when we opened our bed and breakfast Between the Lakes in Interlochen, Michigan in 1994. I want to thank you, Barbara, very much for assisting me in this oral interview, but more importantly, for being at my side throughout this very rich career.

*End of interview*