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AMBASSADOR WILLIAM J. GARVELINK

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Childhood, Education and General Background	
Growing Up in Holland, Michigan	
Calvin College, BA	
University of Minnesota, MA in Latin American Studies	1974
Volunteer, Office of Congressman Don Fraser	1976
House Foreign Affairs Committee Research Assistant	1977–1979
Human Rights Hearings	
"Koreagate" Investigation	
USAID/Inspector General Office and Policy Planning Bureau	1979 –1981
Audit Experience	
Policy Bureau - Africa Budget Office	
Development Studies Program	
Study of Displaced Persons and Refugees	
USAID/Bolivia, Assistant Program Officer	1982–1986
Hernan Siles Zuazo Election and Growing USAID Program	
Congressional Delegation Visits	
El Niño Flooding—Introduction to Disaster Assistance and Bob Gersony	
Early Steps Leading to Creation of Famine Early Warning System (FEWS)	
Electoral Support—and Surprising Termination	
Eastern Airline Crash	
State Department, Bureau of Refugee Programs	1986–1988

Displaced Persons in El Salvador — Art of Listening
 Refugees or Rebels in the Camps - Visit the Health Clinics
 UNHCR Training Program
 Mozambican Refugees and RENAMO — Gersony Report and Policy Change

AID/W/Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance (OFDA) 1988–1999
 Displaced Persons and Refugees: Division of Labor
 Sudan: Changing the Paradigm — IDPs and Operation Lifeline Sudan
 Coordination with UN Agencies
 1988 Armenia Earthquake Relief — Introduction to the USSR
 South Sudan Rebel Movement: Garang and Machar
 Center for Competence on Humanitarian Negotiations
 Growth of OFDA and Use of DART Teams
 Coordination with Other USG Actors: DOD and U.S. Forest Service
 Field Operations Guide (FOG) Manual
 OFDA Becomes Model for Other Donors: ECHO and OCHA
 Select Committee on Hunger — Mickey Leland
 Soviet Union's EMERCOM
 Eritrean People's Liberation Front (EPLF) and Polish Sailors
 Somalia Civil War and Humanitarian Relief — Precedence for Greater
 Cooperation between OFDA, UN, NGOs, and military
 Iraq Invasion and Relief Efforts
 Angola Civil War and Humanitarian Response
 Haiti — Working Around Fuel Embargo
 Balkans Conflict and Dayton Accords
 Rwanda Genocide and Humanitarian Response
 Tufts University Creates New Master's Program in Humanitarian Assistance
 Eastern Congo and "Sixty Minutes"
 Kosovo Conflict and Humanitarian Response

USAID/Eritrea, Mission Director 1999–2001
 Embassy Disaster Response Simulation
 Ethiopia - Eritrea War
 Evacuation of Staff
 "Crisis Modifier" and Revising USAID Programming

AID/W/Democracy, Conflict, and Humanitarian Assistance (DCHA), DAA 2001–2007
 Staffing a New Bureau and Creating a New Foreign Service Backstop
 Food Aid Reform and the U.S. Shipping Industry
 Expanding Collaboration with Department of Defense
 Creation of State/INR Humanitarian Information Unit (HIU)
 Iraq War Planning: No Iraqis to Go Hungry
 Bam, Iran Earthquake Response and Expressions of Appreciation
 Indian Ocean/Aceh Tsunami Response

U.S. Ambassador to the Democratic Republic of the Congo	2007–2010
Meeting President Kabila at the White House and After Effects	
Embassy Staffing and Morale Boosting Steps	
Establishing Office in Goma	
Search for New Embassy Property	
Congolese - American Language Institute (CALI) and Dikembe Mutombo	
American Private Sector Support	
Increasing Knowledge of U.S. Programs in the DRC and Expanding	
Collaboration Across the Embassy	
Kisangani Military Training Facility and Program and New SOFA Agreement	
Impressions of President Kabila and Senior Congolese Leaders	
Early Attempts to Confront Corruption	
IMF and Chinese Infrastructure Loan	
UN, SRSG, and Donor Coordination	
Regional Issue: Uganda, Rwanda, and Eastern Congo	
Secretary Hillary Clinton Visit	
Deputy Coordinator for Feed the Future Initiative and Assistant to the Administrator, Bureau for Food Security	2010–2011
Creating New Bureau in USAID	
Building a New "Whole of Government" Initiative	
Donor Coordination	
Senior Advisor to the USAID Administrator	2011–2012
Strengthening Collaboration with CSIS and Other Think Tanks	
Retire from Foreign Service in 2012	
International Medical Corps, Senior Advisor	2015–2024

INTERVIEW

Q: Okay. Today is March 20, 2023, and we're beginning our interview with William Garvelink. Bill, where were you born and raised?

GARVELINK: I was born in Holland, Michigan, which is essentially a Dutch community. So, that's my heritage and background. And I had three sisters and my father worked for H.J. Heinz Company. He ran their shipping department. And I was the first person in my family to go to college.

Q: Okay. What was the town like? Was it the principal economic driver?

GARVELINK: Holland was largely a Dutch agricultural community. When I was growing up there, it had maybe 30,000 people or so. Holland is located near the shores of Lake Michigan and on Lake Macatawa and was known for its tourism. The area has

beautiful sandy beaches, and, in May, Holland hosts its annual Tulip Time Festival, one of the largest festivals in the United States.

Q: Very interesting. All right, before we rush out of Holland what sort of education did you have? Was it public school, private school?

GARVELINK: Private. The Holland Christian school system is closely associated with the Christian Reformed Church of North America, which was founded in Holland, Michigan. I received an excellent education in a very friendly and supportive environment.

Q: Now, you mentioned that you lost your father relatively young at age sixteen. Did your mother work?

GARVELINK: She worked in the food service system at Hope College, a small college in Holland, Michigan. Neither of my parents finished high school. We did not have a lot of money, but I never wanted-for anything. It was assumed, as far back as I can remember, that I would go to college. It was never really discussed, just assumed by my folks.

Q: Was your father drafted for World War II?

GARVELINK: No. he did not serve in World War II and was too old for the Korean War. He told me that during World War II, one of his tasks at H.J. Heinz was to go each morning to a German prisoner of war camp located in Allegan, Michigan about 20 miles from Holland and pick up some of the prisoners to work at Heinz for the day and then drive them back to their camp in the evening.

Q: Now, as you are going through school, were there other extracurricular activities you were involved in?

GARVELINK: Yeah. For me, it was primarily sports. I played tennis, baseball, and soccer. I was the first person in our high school to letter in soccer. Holland Christian started a soccer program when I was a sophomore. No one wanted to play the position of goalie. In baseball, I was a catcher, and the goalie seemed somewhat like a catcher to me, so I signed up for the goalie position. I played every minute of every game during the first season and became the first kid in school to letter in soccer.

Q: Anything else, drama, debate, speech?

GARVELINK: I was on the debate and speech teams for a couple years, and I was in the senior play, *Jayne Eyre*. I was the second young man and had one line. My mom came to see the performance and she missed me, as I was only on stage for a minute. She did see me at the curtain call, however, and later scolded me for chewing gum.

Q: Did you work?

GARVELINK: I worked some nights and on weekends during the school year and fulltime in the summer in my uncle's ice cream store, Maple Grove Dairy in Holland. The dairy offered about 25 flavors of ice cream. I worked in the store selling ice cream cones and, during the summers, I made ice cream.

Q: During this time, elementary and high school, did you begin to get interested in international relations, foreign languages or things you might have seen on TV in the newspaper and so on?

GARVELINK: Not really. I was focused on sports. And my folks just assumed I was going to go to college. And we never talked about it much. They never went to college. I had two older sisters. They went to high school, and I had a younger sister who did attend college and graduate school.

Growing up in a Dutch community and attending Holland Christian High School, which was affiliated with the Christian Reformed Church, it was assumed I would go to Calvin College, now Calvin University, in Grand Rapids, Michigan which was also affiliated with the Christian Reformed Church. I never actually thought a whole lot about it, and I also assumed I would go to Calvin. I was looking forward to playing soccer there.

Q: The assumption was that you would go to Calvin College. Is that where you went?

GARVELINK: Yeah. I went to Calvin on a State of Michigan scholarship.

Q: Okay. When did you start college?

GARVELINK: Let me see, I graduated from high school in 1967, so I started in the fall of 1967. During my freshman year I started to take an interest in history and political science. My advisor at Calvin was Robert Bolt, a professor of American history. He was an excellent historian and a patient and wise advisor. I was a slow learner, a late bloomer, and he coaxed me along and spent a lot of time with me. There was also a Political Science professor, Stephen Monsma, who worked with me and stressed the importance of government service. Monsma later resigned from Calvin and became a Michigan State Senator. Over the years at Calvin, my interests shifted from American history to Latin American and African history. Professor Monsma's emphasis on government service also intrigued me.

Q: While you're in college, did you also begin to think about going to a foreign country? Were there exchange programs?

GARVELINK: No, I don't think I ever thought much about that. Also, I don't recall if Calvin had any exchange programs. My first year and a half was focused on soccer, but by the end of my second year I was more focused on my studies. Between my junior and senior years, Linda Arendsen and I got married. We went to high school together and were married in 1970. She was a sophomore at Calvin and quit school to put me through

my last year of Calvin and my graduate studies. Years later when we moved to Washington, DC, she finished her BBA and MBA at George Washington University.

Q: Now, how did you fund college? Did you work?

GARVELINK: No, I did not work during the school year when I attended Calvin. My state of Michigan scholarship and my family covered my expenses. During the summers, I worked for my cousin who owned a lumber yard in Holland. I drove a lumber truck. After Linda and I got married, she worked full-time, and I worked summers as a night security guard in Grand Rapids.

Q: How did you select the graduate school you would attend?

GARVELINK: I decided to apply to graduate schools in Latin American history. I applied to the University of Minnesota and the University of Nebraska. I also applied to Michigan State University in American history, where my mentor Robert Bolt got his PhD. I was accepted into the Latin American history program at Nebraska and to the American history program at Michigan State. I did not hear anything from the University of Minnesota.

Toward the later part of the summer of 1971, Linda and I took a few days off from our jobs to travel to Lincoln, Nebraska and look for an apartment and to meet the faculty. A few weeks later, I got my acceptance to the Latin American history program at Minnesota, and I was offered a teaching fellowship. Apparently, the history department had moved to new offices and misplaced their acceptance letters. Since I didn't get a fellowship at Nebraska, we quickly changed our plans. We visited Minneapolis to search for an apartment and a few weeks later moved to the Twin Cities.

Q: Okay. One other question before we follow you into graduate school. You were doing all of this at the height of the Vietnam War and the height of the counterculture. How did that affect you, if at all?

GARVELINK: (Laughs) It was very interesting. I was, I guess, a junior at Calvin and was in the 1969 draft lottery. It was the first lottery since 1942 for me, born between 1944 and 1950. I was born in 1949. The lottery was held on December 1, 1969, and 366 capsules containing the days of the year were drawn by hand from a large glass container. Those with birthdays on the first 195 capsules were drafted. My lottery number was 326. Within a week or so, I got a letter from my draft board saying I would not be drafted.

Then, I had a really interesting experience with a Marine recruiter when we got to Minnesota. The week when I enrolled for my graduate courses, I signed all kinds of documents for my fellowship and office, for my courses and a slew of other new arrival things. A day or two after that I got a call from a guy who said: "Hey, Bill. We're all ready for you. The Marines are looking forward to your enlistment." I wondered what I had signed during the graduate school enrollment process. This Marine recruiter was really gung-ho, like my best buddy. And after a few minutes I said, "Who are you

calling?" And it was Bill, somebody else. And when I told him I wasn't the guy, he asked if I would be interested. I declined, saying that I was going to graduate school.

Q: Let's go ahead and go into the graduate program. It was in Latin American studies? History?

GARVELINK: The University of Minnesota had two professors of Latin American history, Stuart Schwartz and Stuart Wagner, both excellent professors and great guys. I also studied with Gary Wynia, a Latin America focused political scientist; Bert Ellenbogen, a sociologist; and Kinley Brauser, a diplomatic history professor. When I finished my MA in 1974, Professor Schwartz began a sabbatical to do research in Brazil, and Professor Wagner decided to quit teaching. If I wanted to continue with my doctorate, I would have to transfer to another university.

With strong recommendations from my professors at Minnesota, I applied to and was accepted to New York University, Vanderbilt University, Indiana University, the University of Washington, and the University of North Carolina. I decided to attend the University of North Carolina. Unfortunately, my experience at UNC was not what I expected. I took most of my courses at Duke with Professors Chuck Bergquist and John Tepaske. I was unable to find funding to do my doctoral research in Latin America, which was essential for a university teaching position. Linda and I were not sure what to do.

Then, out of the blue, I got a call from an old high school and college friend, Henry Berghoef. After Calvin College, Henry went to Johns Hopkins and then to their Bologna School and was now living in Washington, DC. He suggested that Linda and I visit him in Washington for a weekend. He was working for Dick Vander Veen, a Grand Rapids, Michigan Congressman, who replaced Gerald Ford when he became Vice President. We decided to visit Henry and then he came and stayed with us in Chapel Hill. We visited back and forth a few times. I began thinking that I would like to work on Capitol Hill. After a month or so, I arranged with Henry to sleep on the floor of his efficiency apartment from Monday through Thursday nights and job hunt on the Hill during the day. On Fridays, I would return to Chapel Hill where Linda was working in the student aid office at UNC.

Henry was extremely helpful. I not only slept at his place, but he also helped me maneuver around Capitol Hill. He introduced me to two or three staffers in the House and Senate who I could check with about job openings.

I didn't have much money, so Henry helped me eat some of my meals for free. He gave me a Dick Vander Veen badge that said staff on it. I did not work for Vander Venn and never really met him. I just had a name tag. On the Hill there are receptions and lunches midday and lots of receptions in the evening. With my name tag I would walk in and help myself to the hors d'oeuvres and drinks and no one said anything. Henry kept me posted on where the receptions were and he would usually meet me there.

The hors d'oeuvres were my lunch and often my dinner most days. Every now and then a constituent of Vander Veen would come up to me and ask what the Congressman thought about some issue. I had no idea what his views were, but I would offer what I thought he would say. I found out later when I actually worked for a congressman that you never speak for the boss; you say what you think and be clear it's your own personal view.

After a month or two of this, Linda and I decided to move to Washington. Linda found a job right away with the State Department Federal Credit Union, and I kept job hunting. It was frustrating. I gave up hunting for a paying job and began offering to work as a volunteer. Eventually, I did find a volunteer job working in the Office of Donald M. Fraser, a Democratic congressman from the Fifth District of Minnesota.

As an aside, when I retired from the foreign service, I found among my papers a folder of Capitol Hill rejection letters. I was turned down for a job close to 300 times. I had forgotten that I had been turned down by members, committees, and subcommittees that often.

Q: What did you do as a volunteer in Congressman Fraser's office?

GARVELINK: I got to know Congressman Fraser very quickly and realized that he was a kind, extremely smart and supportive boss. I had only worked in his office for a few weeks when he pulled me aside and said, "I have a special task for you that I need your help with."

There were three refugee families from the Philippines in a refugee camp in Thailand that Fraser wanted to get into the United States. The parents of these families were the children of Raul Manglapus, who was a senator, future foreign minister of the Philippines, and enemy of Ferdinand Marcos, President of the Philippines. Manglapus was in the States giving speeches and Marcos wouldn't let him back in the Philippines. Manglapus's children and their children had been detained by the government in the Philippines. They somehow managed to escape from the Philippines and ended up in a refugee camp in Thailand. Don told me that he wanted me to spend all my time getting these three families out of the refugee camp and into the United States. He told me to talk with State, the United Nations, and anyone else who could help. After months of work, the three families were released from Thailand and allowed to enter the U.S.

One of my most prized possessions is the letter the three families wrote to me once they got to the United States. Since 1977, that letter has always been on my office wall. That task was the beginning of my interest in refugee and human rights issues and introduced me to State, USAID, and the United Nations. It sparked my interest in the foreign service.

Fraser was the chairman of the House Foreign Affairs Committee's subcommittee on international organizations. As a volunteer from Fraser's office, I assisted the subcommittee in drafting Law of the Sea legislation. During this process, I learned a great deal about how Congress works, how it drafts legislation, and how negotiations are carried out among members of Congress and with the Executive Branch and the public.

During this Law of the Sea legislative activity, I got to know and work with Bob Boettcher, the Staff Director of Fraser's subcommittee. Bob was a former State Department FSO and an expert on Asia, particularly Japan. As the Law of the Sea process was winding down, Bob suggested I shift, still as a volunteer, to the subcommittee and work for him. I quickly agreed as did Fraser. On the subcommittee I worked on human rights issues. Fraser was the leading Congressional voice on human rights issues. John Salzberg was the subcommittee's human rights staff and I supported him. We were essentially the two folks on Capitol Hill focused full time on human rights.

The subcommittee held human rights hearings on Brazil, the Philippines, and South Korea, as well as some other countries. I helped interview and select witnesses to testify at the hearings and drafted some of Fraser's opening statements and prepared questions for the subcommittee members to ask the hearing witnesses. I had the opportunity to work directly with Senators Hubert Humphrey, Walter Mondale, Edward Kennedy, Alan Cranston, and others. It was a great experience.

On September 21, 1976, shortly after I got to the subcommittee, Orlando Letelier, a leading opponent of Chilean dictator Augusto Pinochet and Ronni Moffitt were killed by a car bomb on Sheridan Circle in Washington, DC. Bob Boettcher told me to write a press release from Fraser condemning the assassination of Letelier and Moffitt, including "some forceful quotes from Don." A few hours later, Bob asked me for the press release. I told him I had not been able to get hold of Fraser to get some quotes. Bob rolled his eyes and said, "don't bother Don, just make them up." I was learning how the Hill operated.

The subcommittee's offices were in the old Congressional Hotel. The building had mostly small one-bedroom apartments, and each House Foreign Affairs Committee subcommittee got one little apartment for its office. My office ended up being in the subcommittee bathroom. I had my typewriter on a moveable table and would have to move out when someone had to use the facilities. Starting out with a bathroom office, I have never complained about any office I was assigned to during my career.

Q: How did you become involved in Congressman Fraser's investigation of Korean American relations?

GARVELINK: In late 1976, after I switched to the subcommittee, Bob Boettcher asked me to draft a staffing plan and budget for a two-year subcommittee investigation of South Korean-American relations. There were allegations of improper or illegal South Korean activities in the U.S. to buy support for the Korean government and to counter U.S. criticism of President Park Chung Hee's policies, especially his human rights policies. Don Fraser hired Mike Hershman, the head of the Federal Election Commission Investigation Unit and former Watergate investigator, to be Bob's deputy. I was preparing the staffing pattern and budget after being told that we would have a staff of about twenty people and that we would need a robust travel budget for trips to South Korea and visits to the Korean communities in Hawaii, Los Angeles, New York City, and other places. I

had never done anything like this before, but over the course of a week I came up with a budget and staffing plan.

Fraser had to get the approval of the House Rules Committee to create and fund this two-year investigation. Watergate was still fresh in everyone's mind, and the House and Senate had already begun their own ethics investigations into questionable South Korean efforts to influence members of Congress. Bob, Mike and I had been talking to members of Congress and staffers, and it appeared that no one wanted another investigation. We had concluded that the investigation would not be approved by the Rules Committee. My hopes for a paying job were dying.

We discussed this with Fraser the day before his hearing before the Rules Committee. It was not an optimistic discussion. After our chat, Fraser said he was calling it a day and was going home. The next morning at the Rules Committee hearing, Fraser's investigation and budget were unanimously approved. When Fraser returned to the office after the hearing, we asked him what had happened. He said, "I went home yesterday and made a few phone calls." We never did find out what specifically he said to his colleagues, but the vote went from zero to 100 percent overnight. Bob Boettcher immediately offered me the position as the Research Coordinator of the investigation. I finally would have a paying job beginning on February 3, 1977.

Q: Let me ask another quick question. From the time you entered as an intern, how much time elapsed before you moved into a paid position?

GARVELINK: Almost a year. I became a volunteer in Fraser's office in early 1976 and started getting paid as a subcommittee staff member on the Korean investigation in February 1977.

Q: What was this investigation of Korean and American relations all about?

GARVELINK: The Subcommittee on International Organizations was authorized "to conduct a full and complete investigation and study of all aspects of the political, military, intelligence, economic, educational, and informational relationships between the Republic of Korea and the United States."

The investigation ran from February 1977 to November 1, 1978 when our findings and the final report were presented by Fraser in a press conference. During the investigation the media began referring to it as "Koreagate." More than 1,500 interviews were conducted in eleven countries. Thousands of documents were examined, and twenty hearings were held with thirty-seven witnesses, all testifying under oath.

The investigation found that the South Korean government went to extraordinary measures to influence American policy and opinion. The Korean government feared that the U.S. commitment to South Korea was weakening. Korea was upset when President Nixon withdrew 20,000 U.S. troops from South Korea and worried that the U.S. might reduce its substantial military assistance support. By the early to mid-1970s, South Korea

also became concerned about the U.S. criticism of President Park Chung Hee's human rights violations and the impact of U.S.-Korean relations. The Park regime wanted to increase American public and Congressional support for military assistance. South Korea's influencing efforts focused on members of Congress, military leaders, academicians, journalists, businessmen, and clergymen. A South Korean government defector provided the investigation with a 1976 Korean CIA plan for operations in the United States.

My tasks as the Research Coordinator were to supervise six research assistants and organize all the information we acquired from the media and the public, government documents provided to us, subpoenaed materials, and our interview notes. This was all before computers. I participated in many of the interviews our investigators conducted. Based on my extensive knowledge of our materials, I would feed questions to the investigators, depending on how the person being interviewed responded to questions.

With Bob Boettcher, I also wrote most of Congressman Fraser's opening hearing statements and drafted questions for the subcommittee members. I also did most of the work on the economic and aid relationships between South Korea and the United States; this included drafting much of the economic sections in the final report.

When the investigation received the KCIA operations plan, we divided into teams of two to interview all the folks mentioned in the document. Gordon Freedman, an investigator and I were assigned to travel to the Pacific Command in Hawaii to interview the officers mentioned in the document. We would later return to the Pentagon to interview others mentioned in the document. When we arrived at PACOM in Honolulu, the military leadership was polite and allowed us to conduct some interviews but told most of the folks we wanted to see were not available. Clearly, they viewed a couple of young Hill staffers as an annoying inconvenience. We were not taken very seriously.

We returned to Washington and set up meetings at the Pentagon to interview the rest of the officers mentioned in the KCIA plan. Again, we basically got the run-around. We were told that most of the officers were busy and would not be available to be interviewed. As in Hawaii, we had not mentioned that we had a Korean CIA plan for operations in the U.S. This time, at the conclusion of the Pentagon meeting, we were blunter. We handed the military a translated copy of the Korean CIA plan and said the officers mentioned in the document could plan on testifying in a couple weeks in a public Congressional hearing; then we left. The next day, a Friday, we got a call from the Pentagon and were told all of the officers named in the plan would be flown in from around the world and be available for interviews the following Monday. The Pentagon's attitude had changed, and the military was fully cooperative now. We concluded that the Korean CIA plan looked great and listed the key officers involved in Korean-U.S. relations. But the document appeared to us to be only aspirational, more for show in Seoul. None of the officers had been inappropriately contacted by the South Korean government officials or their influencers.

Beyond the military, we conducted interviews with members of the Nixon and Ford Administrations, officers from State, USAID, USIS, Commerce, USDA, and the military, university professors, journalists, and members of the Unification Church (Moonies), and former members of the Korean government. Some of the witnesses included Henry Kissinger, John Mitchell, John Dean, Ambassador Phillip Habid, Harlan Cleveland, Princeton Lyman, Tongsun Park, Pak Bo Hi, Sohn Ho Young, and Kim Yung Wook.

We were very much interested in how people were influenced. And we didn't find a whole lot of influence peddling with members of Congress. It was interesting that—the mindset of the Korean government at the time. They were very focused on academics whom, they thought, had more influence on U.S. policy than I would think. And it was a variety of different groups like that. So, I went to the Aspen Institute to talk to folks there.

It was a really interesting time. All different sorts of things were going on. So, we had eight or nine hearings and—but at the same time, Hubert Humphrey had died. And—

Q: I'm sorry, now what year is this?

GARVELINK: This was 1977 to 1979, so it would have been probably 1978 when Hubert Humphrey died; Muriel Humphrey was appointed to fill his Senate seat. Hubert Humphrey had brought two people into Minnesota politics, the DFL (Democratic-Farmer-Labor) Party, Fraser and Mondale. So, Muriel said, "Don, you got to run for the Senate seat." And so, he continued with the investigation the last year, but he spent most of his time in Minnesota campaigning for the Senate. He in fact lost in the primary to a guy named Bob Short, who owned the Washington Senators. And then, Bob Short lost the election to David Durenberger, who was senator from Minnesota for a few years. Our investigation came to an end; I stayed on to pack all of Fraser's documents for the archives.

They all went up to Minnesota. My job was going to end January 3 or when the new Congress came in. I didn't have a job and didn't know what I was going to do. But—midway through this investigation Mike Hershman, who was the deputy director of the investigation, left. He became the deputy inspector general of AID. Or auditor general in those days. When they created the inspector general act they forgot AID. They had to amend that a year or so later. So, in late December or early January, when I was finishing up packing stuff, Mike called and said, "Why don't you come work at AID for me as a management auditor?" Unemployment. Auditor. Why not? Why not?

USAID/Inspector General Office and Policy Planning Bureau, 1979 - 1981

I had about two weeks off and then late January of 1979 I started in AID. And interestingly, I went in to get sworn in and I remember coming home that night and I said, "Linda, guess what? I'm a Foreign Service officer." She said, "What do you mean?" I said, "They swore me in as a Foreign Service officer. I didn't know I was taking a

Foreign Service job.” Auditors hire their own people. They can hire whoever they want. So, I was hired as a Foreign Service officer.

Q: Now, what year were you hired at USAID?

GARVELINK: In 1979. I was happy but concerned that I didn't know anything about auditing. The only thing that I had done was rewrite audit reports so you could read them. And given the Koreagate work, I had a fair background over the couple years in investigations, so I was asked to do the first draft of rewriting the investigator's handbook for AID. And so, I worked on those sorts of things.

Q: This is a complicated subject. How did you learn it all?

GARVELINK: Frankly, I wasn't interested in it. It was hard for a history type to get into this stuff. Most of my time was working on the investigator's handbook. I would just edit for grammar and that sort of thing, a lot of reports. I was in the management office, the program and management office of the inspector or auditor general.

And so, people were very nice to me. They were talking to me about what's going on and how they did things, but my heart wasn't really in it. Frankly, as this time was going on, I was job hunting, including on the Hill. I came close and was one of the final of two to be the foreign affairs advisor for Senator Bradley from New Jersey. But he wanted to hire somebody from New Jersey, which I wasn't.

And then, they sent me out to Cairo for a month to work in the regional office there, which was a really interesting experience. I arrived in Cairo the day Sadat returned from the Camp David Accords, the actual signing, the second meeting. That's the first time I was ever out of the United States. So, it was an interesting experience. I was a little paranoid about traveling and didn't know what to expect. And again, folks were very nice to me. I stayed in one of the embassy guest houses in Cairo.

After being there a couple weeks, I wrote to my wife and said, “Everybody was telling me, they'd be paranoid about the food and all this sort of stuff but everything's fine.” And that night all of us in the guest house went to the hotel on the island in Cairo and I got violently ill. They were going to medevac me but didn't. I lost thirty-some pounds.

Q: So, was it a parasite?

GARVELINK: The doc thought I got three different kinds at once.

Q: Wow.

GARVELINK: So, I got hit with just about everything. (Laughs) I was a mess, but I recovered and had a great time. Folks showed me around; I visited the pyramids, and went to Khan El-Khalili, the market. I got run over by a horse and—a donkey cart. Just all sorts of weird stuff and it was great fun. And while I was not excited about the audit

side of it, I found out I really liked being in Cairo and I liked being overseas. And I thought, this is good. I found out I liked international travel and meeting people. They took me all over the place in Egypt and Cairo which I really enjoyed. The audit part didn't excite me at all.

I got back from Cairo and I continued job hunting. I was in an office in Rosslyn, one of those old green buildings. There were also six or seven mission directors in the suite; they were between assignments and doing mission audits. One day I walked out of my office at noon, and this guy stopped me and he said, "You look awful. What's the matter?" I said, "I hate my job." He asked what I did and about my background. Once I told him, he insisted we go for lunch. We did and talked for two hours. And he said, "Well, you're in the wrong place." He offered to make some phone calls. This was Don Finberg, a former USAID mission director in Peru and Chile, Portugal. And just a super guy. And so, he called Alex Shakow, who was the head of the PPC (Policy and Program Coordination) bureau at the time. And within about a month I was transferred to the PPC bureau to work on Africa budgets.

Which I did. I worked for a guy named Art Lezin, who was a great guy. It was a two-person office. We coordinated in Washington the policy meetings on country strategies, project reviews and that sort of thing. We were the budget folks who participated in all those meetings. And so, I learned a great deal about AID. I worked with the technical bureaus and got to know a lot of people I had no contact with before.

They also arranged for me to attend the Development Studies Program, which went on for almost two months with faculty members from various universities. We actually did a field trip to the Eastern Shore and looked at the seafood industry and did a study. I traveled with watermen for quite a few days as they were going after crabs. There were about twenty of us in the course. This also gave me a much better understanding of the AID planning process and budgeting processes. That was a great opportunity to go to that course and to learn from the university faculty members and the senior AID officers participating in the program. I learned a great deal.

While in PPC, I was also asked to do a study of displaced people and refugees. Few people in AID really cared about the issue. This was also about the time RP came into existence and I said, "I'll do it. What the heck." So, I spent three or four weeks in Somalia and a long time in Kenya as well as South Africa. My last stop was Zimbabwe and I was dumbfounded. I stayed at the old hotel downtown and when I got up for breakfast, I knew everybody in the breakfast room. There was a team in Zimbabwe to develop a new AID program. Mugabe was to become president in 1980, and they wanted the AID program to start on that day. So, I stayed for about a week and worked with those guys and helped out there.

Somalia, I'll never forget. I'd never, obviously, been there before. I was traveling with the AID economists, and we went way up in the Ogaden, staying in a little guest house. At night we were watching for an hour Bedouins coming in on their camels. When they got off their camels, they looked at us and they said, "You guys Americans?" And we said,

“Yeah.” And they said, “Well, what does it mean—now that Reagan’s elected—for Somalia?” And I’d forgotten it was election day the day before and I was dumbfounded. They wanted to know what that meant for Somalia. I had no idea what to say to them. And then, they killed a small goat, and I had goat for the first time, and we had a little party. I was getting little tastes of overseas work and learning so much in that Policy Bureau job.

After about a year, I started getting cables about assignments overseas. And I went to Art and I said, “I don’t understand this.” I said, “I really like what I’m doing, I’m happy here. But I’ve heard from Tanzania and other places about an overseas assignment.” And good old Art rolled his eyes and he said, “You’re a Foreign Service officer. Three of your first five years have to be overseas for tenure.” I wasn’t aware of that, so I told him, “I’d really rather go to Latin America. I know a little bit more about that.” There were also visions in the back of my head of finishing the PhD. Art went to bat for me and made some calls and I got assigned to Nicaragua. That got me into language training. And by the time I finished Spanish, the Nicaragua mission had closed, and I was assigned to Bolivia.

USAID/Bolivia, Assistant Program Officer, 1982 - 1986

Q: You went out to Bolivia in what portfolio, what responsibility?

GARVELINK: I was the assistant program officer and worked with a guy named Roberto Leon de Vivero, who was my boss, another great guy. And the AID director there at the time was Hank Basford and the deputy was David Cohen. I worked primarily with David Cohen.

Linda, my wife, did not come out with me initially. She was finishing her BA in business at George Washington University and was going to come out a few months later. So, I got out there and they put me into an apartment building about three or four blocks from the AID mission. Roberto’s wife said, “You don’t want to be there. You want to be in Calacoto, which is further south, where most of the expat community is. You’re going to be a bit isolated here.” She told me to tell the GSO (General Services Officer) that your wife is pregnant and that you have to have a house.” She added, “Trust me. When your wife comes and she’s not pregnant no one’s going to ask you any questions.”

So, I didn’t say directly that Linda was pregnant because she wasn’t, but I hinted. They had a house in Calacoto on a busy intersection, and people with kids didn’t want it. So, about a week or two before Linda arrived I moved into that house. And so, we had a nice place in Calacoto for the two of us. It made sense to move there although I’m not sure it was quite cricket the way we went about it, but I was following my boss’s suggestion.

Q: Right. But overall, the house was safe and you were happy with it?

GARVELINK: Yeah. But two years later, somebody in the State Department objected to it because we were a couple without kids. So, we found another even nicer, but smaller, house in Calacoto. So, instead of a busy intersection we had a huge yard.

I arrived in 1982 and the Bolivia program was just growing rapidly. Immediately preceding, during the Garcia Meza years, 1980-1981, the program was small because he was seen as a pretty nasty, brutal dictator. Hernan Siles Zuazo won the election and came in as President in 1982. The AID program then began to grow. So, it was a fun place to be.

When I was still living in the apartment a few blocks from the AID mission in those early days in 1982, there were a couple of military coups or attempted coups. And at one point I was walking home with Ricki Smith, who was the AID director's secretary. She was staying in that building too. And we got caught in a demonstration and tear gassed. That was my one experience with tear gas. We dodged into a restaurant on the main street and didn't get hit too hard with tear gas. We hung out there until the demonstrators dispersed and went away. But a few weeks later I was in our fifth or sixth floor office on a Saturday morning and saw a small trainer fighter jet go below me, right above the Prado, the main street. That's a good way to clear folks very quickly off the sidewalks. It was one of multiple coup attempts by disaffected military groups. Siles was there from 1982 to 1986. He was not really affected.

But it was an interesting time. My job as an assistant program officer was to develop the country strategy and budget with my boss, Roberto. Being a program officer in AID is kind of the equivalent of the political office in the embassy. You're working closely with the AID director and deputy director in developing strategies. I also evaluated projects periodically. So, again, it was a good experience.

We also started getting a lot of congressional delegations, in part because the AID program was growing by leaps and bounds, but there was also a coca problem. They didn't produce cocaine in Bolivia, but they grew the coca and sold it to Venezuela or other places. So, there were a lot of folks coming to look at the crop substitution projects. Because I had been a Hill staffer, Ambassador Corr included me in the planning and asked me to be one of the greeters when these folks showed up. In those days it was before computers. We were in a different building a couple blocks away from the embassy. So, they would draft cables about the CODELs and send them over to me for clearance. I'd make my comments and then a day or so later I'd seen the comeback copy. I was quite impressed. Most everything I wrote in as additions was accepted. I thought, hmm. I'm getting the hang of this. One afternoon the ambassador's secretary came over and handed me a little note from Ambassador Corr (laughs) and it said I'm the only person in the embassy who uses green ink. Well, I happened to collect pens, and at that point I was using a fountain pen with green ink. Once I stopped using green ink, I noticed that none of my edits were included in the cables.

I used to play racquetball with Ambassador Corr twice a week. We got to know each other quite well. I never did ask what stupid comment I must have made that made somebody in the embassy actually go to Corr and say, "Did you really mean this?" I'm sure something like that happened.

We would set up the CODELs at the main hotel downtown. Each of us was assigned a different member of Congress to take care of. I was once assigned Ben Gilman, who was the ranking Republican on the House Foreign Affairs Committee in 1982. Later he became chairman. And I lost him—we were in a panic and for about an hour, searching around La Paz looking for him. We finally found him in a jewelry store. He wandered off from the rest of the delegation, and I hadn't noticed. He was quite content going from store to store, but Ambassador Corr was not amused that we lost the ranking Republican.

The AID mission was very near the French embassy on the Prado, or main street in La Paz. Across the street was the German Club. We went there quite often for lunch. Whenever we went in, there was always this little guy sitting in the corner all by himself having lunch. After a few months I asked one of the waiters who he was. They said, "Well, it's Klaus Barbie," who was known as the Butcher of Lyon. He was a Nazi that had escaped from Germany and went to Bolivia to train soldiers. The Garcia Meza folks had protected him. When Garcia Meza lost the election in 1982, he lost his protection. Somebody in the Bolivian government, a mid-level functionary, had him arrested because he didn't pay some kind of tax. I don't think the guy who had him arrested had any idea who he was dealing with. But the French were watching that very carefully and when it happened, the French convinced the Bolivian Supreme Court to allow them to fly a plane in the middle of the night to grab him and take him to France, where he did stand trial for crimes against humanity.

But the next morning after that happened, the Bolivians were furious that this could happen. There was no extradition treaty. The French had simply convinced the Supreme Court. So, we came out of our office and people were throwing stuff at us, eggs, spitting. I guess you couldn't tell the difference between the French and the Americans in those days. And they were really, really upset with the French. The same thing happened when the Falklands War started. Bolivia was a big supporter of Argentina. When President Reagan announced his strong support for the Brits, Bolivians began throwing junk at us again. Fortunately, nobody got hurt.

Another major event in Bolivia ended up having a great influence on my career, that was the El Niño flooding in 1982. Santa Cruz, a major city in the southeastern part of the country, suffered major flooding and thousands of people were killed. Ambassador Corr decided to declare a disaster and get funding from the Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance. So, I got a call from the embassy and they said, "You're the mission disaster relief officer." I, of course, had no idea that I had this responsibility. I had never heard of OFDA before. I didn't even know what the acronym was. They told me to draft a disaster cable to get the process started. So, I got the manuals out and during the course of a day figured out how to send this cable to Washington. Because OFDA was planning to provide major assistance, they said they would send a guy named Bob Gersony out to coordinate this. I was told to work with him.

As an aside, a book was written about Bob Gersony a year ago by Robert Kaplan called *The Good American*. It's an excellent book. Bob and I became very close friends, although we sometimes disagree on politics, and worked together many, many times.

You'll see as we go through my history that I've done a lot of crazy stuff with Bob. After he showed up, we went to Santa Cruz to coordinate the relief supplies and water and sanitation for displaced-person camps.

We got to know each other over the month or two while he was there. The El Niño that hit in 1982 and the floods in the south in 1983 became a massive drought in the Altiplano, Bolivia, Peru and Ecuador. As a result, there was a Supplemental appropriation passed in 1983 for all three countries. Again, I was the disaster guy, so I was coordinating this assistance. And again, OFDA sent out Bob Gersony. A few weeks after he got there, we decided we had to take a trip through the Altiplano and really get a good look at what's going on.

Our Bolivian driver was a very nice gentleman who had worked for the AID mission for twenty-some odd years. And before we got out of the city limits of La Paz, Bob and I were shouting at each other about politics in the backseat and it upset the driver so much he had his first ever accident, ruining his record. Bob and I were arguing in good fun, but it bothered the driver. He had had a perfect driving record for his entire career, so he felt very bad and so did we.

But to get a good handle on what was going on in the north, we went out for several weeks. We went to various towns and in each one followed the same methodology: we'd go to the market, we'd go to the cemetery, see how many new deaths there were. We talked to priests usually and health clinics about health conditions. We looked at livestock: how many have died; are they selling their livestock quickly before they waste away and that sort of thing. That's how we made our judgments about the situation.

Q: Let me just ask a quick question. You're doing this evaluation. Were there other embassies or other international organizations also there looking at the same kind of thing?

GARVELINK: Yeah, the Brits for one, but not in the same way. The big players there were the Japanese. There was a big Japanese population in Bolivia, usually located in the southern area. And then, of course, the big UN agencies. There weren't as many NGOs (Non-Governmental Organizations) as there are now.

We traveled throughout the area over three or four weeks with our favorite driver in a new car. As a follow-up step, I did a contract with a guy named Bill Bertrand, who was a professor, a Latin American specialist at Tulane University. He came out to develop a system to run for a year or more to monitor the El Niño impact. It was a surveillance system to look at the crop situation on the ground, the livestock situation, costs of food, deaths, health, all of that. It was a regular circuit. We hired ten or fifteen Bolivians. They each got a vehicle and they each had a route to follow where they hit the same towns once a week or once every ten days, something like that. They would do the reports and get back to us so we could find out where the impact was greatest and whether it's a health issue or food security issue or livestock.

It was really interesting to me. About a decade later, when I was in OFDA, I ran into Bill Bertrand, and he asked what had happened to the surveillance thing we had done. I told him I didn't know. After leaving Bolivia, I hadn't paid attention, but it became the basis of something called the Famine Early Warning System, FEWS, which is one of the best things AID has ever done. It was after Bolivia. It was expanded a bit by Bertrand and Tulane in the Sahel and East Africa for droughts. And it's now the standard that the UN and everybody else uses. It's called FEWS Net now. I didn't realize I had a small hand in the initial concept of it. It started in Bolivia. It's usually attributed to the Sahel and East Africa droughts, but actually the guy who had a lot to do with it was Bertrand and his group at Tulane. Their work started with Bolivia. And that was the first surveillance-type system that was set up. And now FEWS uses satellites and other kinds of imagery. But this was the initial part of the ground verification.

Q: Here is just another kind of practical question. Once you established where the needs were, how did you get the assistance there?

GARVELINK: That was done with CARE and Catholic Relief Services. There were NGOs there as well as the World Food Program. We were coordinating our findings with everybody. But I had not known what became of that project and how it had evolved into something very, very different and more elaborate.

A little different aspect of Bolivia now. When my wife came out, she was hired to do administrative stuff in the embassy and then at AID for a bit. But she ended up being hired to run the largest program in the AID portfolio, the Bolivian savings and loan housing program. She ran that for a couple of years, and everybody said, "Well, you ought to join AID too." She was interviewed at post by the management officer, the deputy mission director and one other. HR had her offer papers prepared when Reagan initiated a hiring freeze. After that she began to talk about leaving Bolivia; I didn't blame her. She really didn't want to leave but she did want to get on with her education.

At least 3 years later when we were back in Washington, HR called her and said they were contacting everyone who had been "hired" before the hiring freeze, was she interested? Everybody said, "You ought to get this. You're good at what you do." She went through the whole process again, starting with an in-box test and then another interview. Aaron Williams was supposed to be a part of that interview – he knew her work from Bolivia – but he was on TDY when it was scheduled. She also took a Spanish test. It all took another year, and the HR person, I forget the woman's name, said, "Nope, you can't be a housing officer." She said, "If you're going to be part of a tandem couple, housing is a tougher job to match. Nope, can't do it." And my wife said, "That's what I want to do. That's our problem to sort out. I want to do housing." She said, "Absolutely not." Then Linda said, "I've had it with AID."

My portfolio in Bolivia changed in 1985 when the Bolivians were having presidential elections. Ambassador Corr offered the Bolivians help in computerizing their election machinery to include registration and everything else. They said, "Great." And so, I was

the project manager, and Deloitte came in and rented three or four floors in an office building. They were setting up small units in various parts of the country. They brought in four or five former politicians from Argentina to keep an eye on and maintain close relations with the Bolivians. If they had any questions, it would be Latins talking to Latins, not Americans. Huge set up. I was having a good time. It was an interesting project. But, in a late-night meeting, the cabinet changed their mind. They said, "It would be bad if it looks like the U.S. is running our election." So, they called Corr around midnight. He was very unhappy, but immediately called Deloitte directly and said, "Get out. The project's over, it's done." I had hundreds of people there, millions of dollars' worth of equipment and by the close of business the next day they were gone. Everything. Everybody. The equipment. I don't know how they pulled it off so fast because they had so many people scattered around the country, computers all over the place. They were gone in twenty-four hours. So much for my elections project.

Then, after the election, the mayor of La Paz, Ronnie MacLean-Abaroa, wanted some help setting up a tax system. There was no tax system in La Paz. Again, I was the project officer for this very interesting effort. Ronnie had gotten a degree, I think, at the Harvard Kennedy School and he had this brainstorm for a tax system and asked us to hire Jeffrey Sachs who had impressed him at the Kennedy School. So, we hired Sachs. He had a nifty idea on how to tax everybody. The approach was innovative: if you owned a business, a house, whatever, you decide how much it's worth. It's up to you. And you pay taxes on that. Of course, there was like a ninety-day period in which other people could buy it at that rate. So, it got people to be pretty realistic about what their property was worth.

Another side of our time in Bolivia revolved around sports and activities for the embassy. We played a lot of tennis. Like I mentioned, I played racquetball twice a week with Ambassador Corr. I also played a lot of golf. It's the highest golf course in the world at the Valley of the Moon just outside of La Paz. Also, there was a group of five or six of us who got very interested in mountain climbing. We'd climb a different peak in the area every six weeks or two months. The guy who got us started on this was a fellow named Peter Cross. His wife Kumie was the nurse in the embassy. Peter had climbed K2 in Nepal when he was in Peace Corps. So, we spent several weekends just going to the foothills and going through different exercises on how to climb with crampons and ice axes. We needed that skill because we would often stay on the glacier for four or five days when we were climbing. That was an interesting sport that I very much enjoyed.

And then, on January 1, 1985, an Eastern Airline plane crashed on Illimani mountain. Eastern Airlines wasn't able to get a mountain rescue team going so Bill Walker, who was the DCM (Deputy Chief of Mission), called and asked us to go with the Bolivian Red Cross and look for survivors. We, of course, agreed. Illimani is almost 22,000 feet and is one of the higher peaks in Bolivia. If you ever see a picture of La Paz, it is in a little valley. On one side is the airport, on the other side is a very pretty mountain. That's Illimani. The plane was coming from Argentina and Paraguay on January 1, and it flew into the back of that mountain. The wife of the U.S. ambassador to Paraguay was on the plane. A number of Marine guards from Argentina and Paraguay were also on the plane.

So, we went up with the Bolivian Red Cross. We set up three base camps on the way up the mountain before going down the other side. I ran the highest base camp and didn't actually go to look for bodies at the crash site. But, I was the unfortunate one who had to call Ambassador Corr with news that there were no survivors. The Ambassador from Paraguay was with Corr. It was not a pleasant experience.

Afterwards, Walker said that he wanted to write meritorious honor awards for everybody. Mike McKinley from the Consular Section was the one who got stuck with doing all the writing. Mike ended up becoming an ambassador in multiple places. Steve Seche, who later became ambassador to Yemen, also got an award. The three of us started together in Bolivia. My award saved my career in the 1989 RIF in USAID. Do you recall that RIF?

Q: Oh, yes.

GARVELINK: They had to let a lot of people go. I was in OFDA then and they had put together a formula; if you were above a certain line, you stayed, if below you were cut. My award for this mountain search and rescue came from the State Department, not AID. Nevertheless, with my length of service and various recognitions, that award put me over the top to remain employed.

Q: But now, in this interim period, did your wife finally enter USAID or what happened to her?

GARVELINK: No. She continued working on the Bolivian savings and loan housing program during the five years we were in Bolivia. We did two tours, a little bit more and, for all intents and purposes, she was an AID officer at that point, but she and AID could never get on the same page as far as her career. At the end of two tours, she said, "let's go back." She really wanted to get on with her education.

So, I started looking for another job. And I just couldn't find anything that appealed to me in AID in Washington. I was talking to Panama and Costa Rica about a program officer's job and oh, maybe I'll go there. But as I was snooping around, out of the blue I got a call from the State Department Refugee Bureau. They said, "We have an emergency office in the bureau. How about doing a detail to work on refugee issues in our emergency section?" It was Gene Dewey, who called, who was a DAS (Deputy Assistant Secretary) at that point. It sounded pretty good, so I brought it up to AID. I don't know if they do that much anymore, but they agreed to the detail. So, that solved our problem. Linda went on to get her MBA at GWU, and during the rest of my career, she worked for the Independent Community Bankers trade association, and the National Automated Clearing House Association (electronic payments), and for Grant Thornton, a CPA (Certified Public Accountant) firm, where she worked on financial institution issues. She traveled as much domestically as I did internationally. One of our biggest challenges was getting the dog to, and from, the kennel. So, she ended up doing very different stuff all financial institutions related, but it was what she really liked doing. She did "retire" and go with me to DRC.

About two or three years later I found out that it was Bob Gersony who got a hold of Gene Dewey and said, “Why don’t you see if you can get that guy to come over and work for you?” Bob Gersony and Gene Dewey still today are really close.

Q: And now, this is 1986 when you get back?

State Department, Bureau of Refugee Programs, Multiple Offices, Deputy Director, 1986 - 1988

GARVELINK: Yes, I was initially Deputy Director of RP's Office of Emergency Assistance, but after a few months, they had a reorganization, and I became Deputy of the African Refugee Assistance Office. Since RP didn't do emergency assistance like OFDA, they didn't see much purpose for my original office. Nonetheless, I had some interesting experiences while in the emergency office, especially in Central America. Civil war was raging in El Salvador with the government, the FMLN (Farabundo Martí National Liberation Front). Bob Gersony and I went to El Salvador. (Laughs) There were a lot of displaced people in El Salvador because of the fighting—and we were trying to talk to people about their current needs as displaced persons. We also wanted to know what would be most important to them when the fighting died down. What would convince them to go home and resume their lives? So, Bob and I would meet in the embassy each morning, then a U.S. Huey helicopter would drop us off in a town we had already identified. The Huey would then go back and refuel; a couple of hours later they would come back and get us. While on the ground, we would go to the market and the health clinic and talk to people over a couple hours to find out what was most important to them. Turns out, the most important thing was education, school for the kids.

Then, the chopper would return to pick us up, and we'd return to the embassy. We would then do the same in the afternoon at another location. We (laughs) had done this for about a week, and I was learning a lot from Bob. It's in the book about him. He can talk with anybody and is a master at getting information. and all of that, he somehow can talk to anybody. He's an interesting guy with an interesting background, including service in Vietnam in the Army. He also started a Spanish language school in Antigua, Guatemala.

Q: Wow. Because that is a well-known Spanish fluency school.

GARVELINK: Yeah. Bob started that. He has perfect Spanish. And he can talk to just about anybody. When we were in Bolivia, we would be driving down the road, and he'd see a farmer working in his field or with his livestock. Bob would ask to stop the vehicle, and he'd get out and go talk to him. Most campesinos are pretty cautious about talking about their livestock because it is their bank account. But, they would talk with Bob. He would lure them over to the car. I would be crouched down in the car below the window ledge taking notes. He could always get people to open up.

This is a skill and process that is frankly not done often enough in designing programs. You need to talk to the people. Don't only talk to the other experts. The line I used to hear was: "I've met a lot of people who can't read, I've never met one who can't count." They

know what's important. So, talk to them before designing programs. Don't talk to the Brits and the UN and the NGOs. Or Bill Gates, who has a great idea for everybody. Talk to the folks who are having the problem and that you're trying to help. They most often know exactly what they need and what's important to them. I learned that with a vengeance with Gersony and another guy who will come up later, Fred Cuny.

On one of our visits in El Salvador, we were going to talk to a Salvadoran general for the area we were looking at. We flew in in a helicopter with the general's aide. Gersony said, "Shut down the helicopter, we're going to be here a while." And the general's aide said, "No, no, no. He'll greet you but you guys will be gone in five minutes. He doesn't really like to do this." We stayed for three hours. Gersony and this guy, they were crawling around on maps on the floor. The general completely opened up to Gersony. We had another interesting experience in El Salvador when the helicopter dropped us off on the wrong side of the hill. It was an active warzone. We got off the helicopter and walked into the central plaza. There were dead and wounded all over the place. We had a U.S. general with us and a Salvadoran general as well. There were four of us, all of us wanting to talk with people about their needs. As soon as we got into the plaza, fighting with the FMLN started again. We scrambled and hid in a building for a couple hours while the fighting was going on outside. When there seemed to be a lull, we radioed the helicopter to come get us. The helicopter hovered in a field about three feet above the ground, and we all ran for it and dove in. We could see sparks from bullets bouncing off the side of the Huey, but fortunately no one got hurt. I couldn't help wondering what had I gotten myself into. We safely got back to the embassy -- but an interesting adventure because they dropped us on the wrong side of the hill.

After we did that, we were requested by UNHCR (UN High Commissioner for Refugees), the State Refugee Bureau, and the Honduran government to look at three Salvadoran refugee camps across the border in Honduras. The government believed that the camps were controlled by the FMLN, not UNHCR. The Hondurans, in essence, told UNHCR to straighten it out or they (the Honduran government) would militarily force them back to El Salvador. Bob Gersony was asked to assess the situation, and he asked two of us to go with him to look at the three camps. We visited all three and stayed in two of them for a couple of days each, and we did find, to a certain degree, that the camps were controlled primarily by the FMLN. For example, when we would arrive at the gate of the camp, an UNHCR guy would let us in; then, a hundred yards down was an FMLN checkpoint. And if you didn't have a pass from the FMLN, they would not allow you into the refugee camp. Many of the people in the camps had been wounded in El Salvador and were recovering in the camps. Their wives would join them, and they would live there until recovered.

During this I learned a lesson that I applied for the rest of my career. That is to visit the health clinic at any camp -- it should be the first place to go. You need to see what they're being treated for, what medicines are being used in the camp? The health clinics were run by local nurses with only periodic visits by MSF expatriate staff. When we looked at the health clinic's medical records, almost every patient requested valium, regardless of what was ailing them, and received it. When we pointed this out to the MSF doctors, they were

surprised. Valium is a very portable medicine used for field surgeries. The valium went immediately into El Salvador for the medics to treat wounded FMLN soldiers. MSF hadn't really noticed until we raised a fuss.

Q: I thought the Valium was going to be for PTSD (Post Traumatic Stress Disorder) but okay.

GARVELINK: No, surgery. Give somebody four or five Valium tablets then you can take the bullet out or whatever you have to do. We stayed in the camps, talked to the refugees, the NGOs, MSF, World Food Program and the UNHCR. We made a number of suggestions to UNHCR and the Honduran officials on ways to reorganize the camps so that UNHCR could reassert its management of the camps. The Hondurans were satisfied with the recommendations and permitted the reorganized camps to remain open. While encouraging refugees to be involved in the life of the camp, you can't let them control the health clinic, mail, and determination of who gets food. Fortunately, it all seemed to work for UNHCR and the Hondurans.

As an aside, a decade later, I was in eastern Congo at a camp populated by the Génocidaires who came across from Rwanda. The same things were going on. When I visited those camps, I spoke to UNHCR representatives about the Honduras experience and asked if UNHCR had shared any of those lessons. No one had ever heard about those earlier lessons. Either the lessons were never written up or they stayed within the Latin American region and never made it to Africa. The same issues were in eastern Congo; they had lost control of those camps and the Génocidaires were running the show.

Q: Just one other thing to notice is that, UNHCR, however it was run, did not share vital information about how they manage crises, and that was a problem in the State Department as well for a very long time, sharing data among offices, even unclassified data was difficult to come by.

GARVELINK: UNHCR was not unique with that problem. But it really hit me the first time I got into the Rwandan camp. As I walked around, it all seemed too familiar. UNHCR was complaining about the same problems, NGOs were talking about leaving because the people in the camp were heavily armed. They were moving weapons as well as medical supplies.

The last thing I did in the RP/emergency office was to spend a lot of time on the Mosquito Coast. This was when the Contras and the Sandinistas were fighting, and a lot of the Miskitos moved into the eastern part of Honduras. It's all little rivers. I spent about six weeks with UNHCR helping to provide humanitarian assistance to the Miskito Indians. I lived with them and did what they did. All the camps for the Miskitos were small with only 500 to 600 people. Everything was delivered by canoe. Two people in a canoe with a couple of bags of food means a lot of trips! (Laughs)

Q: The Nicaraguan Atlantic Coast, where the Miskitos live, was practically impassable, especially after a rainstorm.

GARVELINK: I never got to Nicaragua, but I'm sure it's very similar.

Q: Interesting thing—yeah, I met them once because I was working in Costa Rica from '86 to '88 and periodically they'd come out for talks or R&R.

It was fascinating to be there for a while. There was one restaurant very near the UNHCR camp office. We would go there at night and we'd say, "You got food?" If they said, yes, we stayed; if not, we would leave. We didn't have to worry about a menu. Either they had food or they didn't. It was a much simpler process.

Gene Dewey left RP to become the deputy high commissioner of UNHCR. They had just put together an emergency manager's course for UNHCR country representatives at the University of Wisconsin. Dewey invited me to attend the course, the first time a non-UNHCR person had been invited. It was six or eight weeks at Madison and was fascinating. They had the world's leading disaster/emergency experts as faculty, including Fred Cuny, John Seaman, a British water and sanitation expert, and Mike Toole, an Australian epidemiologist who was working for CDC (Centers for Disease Control) at the time. He runs a big institute in Australia now. Fred Cuny became a very, very close friend and mentor, like Bob Gersony, although those two guys had very different ideas about many things. I used Fred throughout my disaster career wherever I went. When in doubt, take Fred with you because he'd figure out a solution for any problem. He was assassinated in Chechnya in 1995. After he was killed—this is an aside—people had planned to make a movie about him. Harrison Ford bought the rights to the movie and was going to play Fred. So, I had three lunches and breakfasts with Harrison Ford. He wanted to talk about Fred and his personality and his quirks and all that. But the movie was never made.

But anyway, this course was on how to run refugee emergencies. I wasn't experienced and took enormous amounts of notes. Don Schramm was the guy at the University of Wisconsin who ran it. They (laughs) all teased me about my copious note taking. But a few years later, when I got to OFDA, I got together with a couple of our guys from the U.S. Forestry Service to prepare OFDA's Field Operation Guide (FOG). It's still used and is in its sixth edition. It can tell you how much food you can carry on a bicycle or on a 747, as well as how to do any kind of assessment you'd want to do. It covers all the military ranks so the non-military folks can figure out who they're talking to because once you get the army and marines right, the air force and then the navy show up with different ranks. It all started with my notes from that course. It has been fleshed out since and twice the size. Demand for the FOG was so high that we eventually gave it to the GPO Bookstore and told people they could buy it there. It was expensive for OFDA to print and give copies away. Now, And it's on every OFDA computer.

So, that UNHCR course had a great impact. I am still thankful that Gene Dewey asked me to attend, as it gave me the foundation for all I later did in my career. .

Q: The other interesting thing is this all happened, within a year, a year and a half. That's a lot of life experience in a relatively short time.

As I mentioned earlier, the emergency office in RP was disbanded, and I moved to the Africa program. Margaret McKelvey, who had been there forever, was my boss. It was just the two of us in those days, so we drew a line through Africa. I went south and she went north. So, within a week or so of getting back from Wisconsin I was off to Malawi where Mozambican refugees coming across the border because of the fighting between RENAMO (from the Portuguese Resistência Nacional Moçambicana, literally Mozambican National Resistance) and the newly independent government of Mozambique. I was working with UNHCR and the NGOs at the biggest reception center that had 800 or 900 people a day showing up to be processed before being moved to refugee camps. Everything I had been focused on academically for two months was put into practice almost immediately.

I made a dozen trips to Malawi over the next couple of years. One of my earliest experiences was on the border between Mozambique and Malawi. There were two or three of us in a car and some kid who maybe was ten years old had an AK-47 and stopped us. He was a RENAMO. It was pretty clear that the kid didn't know what he was really doing, but he did stick the gun in the windows of the car. We weren't sure what he was going to do or how to handle the kid. I finally reached into my pack and came out with a pack of Winston cigarettes and gave it to the kid. He smiled and just walked away. I had a similar experience with child soldiers later in Uganda, eastern Congo, and Rwanda. It was always sad. Once a kid was playing with a squirt gun while toting his AK-47; in another, the kid was in a jeep and making the roaring sounds of a vehicle. There was no rational way to deal with them, but, for years, I carried four or five packs of cigarettes in my bag.

Q: Yeah. And it's not just in Malawi and Sudan and so on. There are lots of other places for a long time where cigarettes were a form of currency.

GARVELINK: Oh, but you never know what these kids are going to do—and you don't want to excite them. It's a strange and sad experience dealing with those kids.

I also traveled a lot in Mozambique and it being a much bigger country that always had its own difficulties. We would usually charter planes from Maputo with bush pilots in little six- or four-seater planes to take us to where we wanted to go. At one point we were going to displaced persons camps in Mozambique right on the border with Malawi. Again, it was an active warzone with RENAMO, Mozambicans soldiers and Zimbabwean soldiers fighting with the Mozambicans. By that point, I was traveling with Tim Knight, who was the assistant director for Africa with OFDA. We had a couple of local staff with us, so there were four or five of us.

We got in to look at a camp and when finished we got into the plane and were taxiing down the runway. Suddenly a Zimbabwean soldier came running at us, waving his arm so the pilot stopped quickly. A missile then went off right through our flight path. We sat on

the runway and after fifteen or twenty minutes, the soldier motions for us to go on to takeoff. So, we took off and were a bit on edge. When we got to about 9,000 feet, the plane shook like crazy. The pilot thought we had been hit. I was sitting next to the pilot and then Tim and the other guys were in the back. We asked Tim to go to the back of the plane to see where we were hit. All of a sudden, he started to laugh like crazy. We looked around and the two local guys were covered with white powder. While we were on the ground, they went to the market and bought two tins of NIDO powdered milk. When we hit about 10,000 feet, the covers came off with such force it shook the plane. And these guys were head to toe covered in white powder. It was caked on them like snow. (Laughs) Never a dull moment.

Again, we were doing all of this travel in order to talk to the local, displaced populations. This would have been 1985-86. RENAMO was perceived to be freedom fighters by the South Africans and by the Reagan Administration, that these are great guys trying to overturn a communist Mozambique government. Tim and I were getting very different ideas talking to the displaced people. They spoke about RENAMO and how vicious they were. There were child soldiers; there was sexual abuse. None of it rang true with what we would hear from people in the South African government or even our own administration. So, I hired Bob Gersony and said, "Go into Mozambique and find out what's going on."

He spent about a month in Malawi and neighboring countries talking with refugees and came out with a report, like ours, that outlined RENAMO abuses. When he returned to Washington, I set up a multi-hour briefing with the head of IO (Bureau of International Organizations Affairs), Elliott Abrams. Then Elliott sent him to Europe and South Africa to talk with their foreign ministries. Bob also briefed countless other policymakers in D.C. Largely because of his work, the South Africans and the Reagan Administration backed away from RENAMO. So, that was Gersony doing his thing.

I also spent a lot of time in Lesotho and Swaziland, including radio interviews there on refugee issues. The embassies set them up. I went to Botswana and the other frontline states because of problems ANC (African National Congress) refugees had in those countries. They could be there for three or four days, but, if any longer, the South African Defense Force would come in and get them. They had to be moved quickly through the transit centers. I went to Botswana most often and got to know Johnnie Carson, the DCM at the embassy. IOM (International Organization for Migration) was there in a big way, but they had one very odd problem. The folks coming into Botswana would get money from IOM to buy winter clothes because they would be heading north. Most didn't understand the cold they would encounter, so they would simply buy a sweater. IOM finally developed an interesting plan. They would take them to a meat locker and make them stand in it for about ten minutes. When they'd come out, the IOM folks would say "That's what we mean by cold. Now, buy a winter coat, don't buy a sweater. That's not enough for you."

I also visited Angolan refugee camps along the western border of Zambia. That prompts another weird story. We were driving along the border and for some reason went over a

tree limb that ripped the fuel line off. So, after about half an hour we ran out of fuel. We ended up walking all night until we found a little village and could get some help. In the process, just at sunset, ten or fifteen elephants came running down the road that we were on. They weren't turning, so we ran out of the way and dived into a ditch.

While working in RP, I also often had to stop in Europe to visit UN agencies in Geneva or Rome or other capital cities. Linda Thomas-Greenfield was the Refugee Coordinator at the Embassy in Geneva, so I got to know her well. She often hosted great barbecues at her house. She was also very helpful in later getting me my ambassador's job. We'll get to it later, but I worked closely with the European Union. When they decided to establish ECO, their emergency office. They began with the OFDA model.

Those are the kind of activities I did for the Refugee Bureau. Then, at one point, I got a call from Julia Taft, who was the head of OFDA, while I was in Malawi. It was typical Julia, she said, "You're an AID guy, right?" And I said, "Yeah." She said, "Well then, get your ass back here and work for me in OFDA. Tim Knight's quitting and he told me I should hire you for the assistant director in Africa position." I said, "Okay." So, that was my job offer from Julia Taft out of the blue.

USAID/Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance (OFDA), Multiple Positions, Including Deputy Director and Acting Director 1988 - 1999

In those days, there were clear differences between the Refugee Bureau and OFDA, including the groups with whom they worked. OFDA would do natural disasters, droughts, famines, floods. RP would do refugees. That was it. RP would work with international organizations, ICRC (International Committee of the Red Cross), IOM and the Federation and UNHCR and WFP (World Food Programme). No NGOs. None. OFDA worked with NGOs and much less with the UN except for UNICEF and WFP. It was simple, and everyone knew who was responsible for what.

After Julia left OFDA, she subsequently became head of InterAction and then after that she took over PRM (the successor bureau to RP). She started using NGOs to do refugee work. Then it started to get pretty confused about who's doing what to whom. I'll get into this a little bit later, but much revolves around working with internally displaced people. In the early days when I was in the Refugee Bureau, we did not work directly in warzones. We waited for them to become refugees and then provided services. ICRC did a little bit with displaced persons, but nobody else. That changed in 1989, and Julia and I had a lot to do with it. Anyway, it has become much more confused between OFDA (now USAID's Bureau for Humanitarian Response) and PRM on certain issues. I was sort of running the OFDA side when Rich Green was the PDAS (Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary) in PRM, and we had an understanding.

When I initially went to OFDA, I was the assistant director for Africa and Europe. Strange combination. But except for the hurricane season in the Caribbean and cyclones and typhoons in Asia, virtually all the activities focused on Africa. After a month or two

of working together, I began to function as Julia's Deputy, although she actually didn't want to fill the formal Deputy position.

I will talk primarily about three main countries, Sudan, Ethiopia and Somalia, and some Soviet Union stuff thrown in during my early years in OFDA. I'll probably talk about them separately, but they were all going on simultaneously. But, it is easier than flipping back and forth.

Soon after I arrived, literally days after I arrived, there was a big flood in the Nile that hit Khartoum. The embassy declared a disaster to get the process started, and I convened my first disaster meeting in OFDA. We decided to send a planeload of supplies out on a military C-5. I also asked my old mentor from refugee days, Fred Cuny, to join the group going out. Our meeting was in the morning. When I went home that evening, I saw on TV news the C-5 taking off from Dover, heading to Khartoum. That's when I realized that OFDA really does work. It did exactly what we expected. I was quite impressed.

A day later, we sent Mike Harvey, the fellow who had made all the arrangements to ship the humanitarian supplies, to join the team in Sudan. The next day I learned a bureaucratic lesson. Mike didn't work in the Africa division, but on the Latin America team. His boss, Barry Heyman, wasn't all that happy that I sent his guy out to Sudan. But, Barry also understood that flexibility is needed in responding to disasters, so he quickly accepted the situation. When Mike came back, we talked and agreed that he would switch over and work with me. Eventually, he was hired as a direct hire employee of AID. By the time he retired, he had been an AID director in three countries in the Middle East and in the "Stans." He was also the Assistant Administrator for the Middle East during the first Trump administration. He had quite a career.

About this same time, very early on after I got into OFDA, there was a UN conference in Oslo on SARDP, Southern Africa Refugees and Displaced Persons. Ambassador Jonathan Moore headed the U.S. delegation. Because of my work on Southern Africa with RP, he asked me to join the delegation. Julia quickly agreed, even though I was relatively new to OFDA and not very senior. There were about twenty people on the delegation, including representatives from EUCOM and the Pentagon. He later became head of the refugee bureau and even later as one of the ambassadors at the United Nations. So, we stayed in touch for a long time on refugee and displaced persons issues.

Jonathan put me on the key negotiating team with State and DOD folks and, although I had little to offer, I learned a lot. This was all new to me. But I learned so much on how to negotiate agreements. There were two or three issues that were very important to the military that we won easily. We worked very closely with the Canadians and the Brits -- and sometimes they were more effective in international organization meetings because we in the U.S. were burdened with some "old baggage." So, I learned a great deal, not only about the issues, but also how to operate at international meetings. I really appreciated the opportunity that Jonathan gave to me. The lessons learned helped me throughout my career.

Q: Do you recall a particular example of how you worked in the negotiating team that achieved a bottom-line goal?

GARVELINK: As I recall, the military was very concerned about hot pursuit of rebels who would go into a neutral refugee camp, and they couldn't go in after them. They wanted to be able to follow them wherever they went. Others were not going to give in on the issue. So, once we realized we couldn't win, the solution was to take the language out and not talk about it. Everybody let out a big sigh of relief, and they moved on. I used that technique during my career a number of times when faced with a real contentious issue. Sometimes the easiest way to get through the negotiation is simply to just drop it. Everyone is usually happy to move on to other things.

Soon after this, I made up my first trip to Ethiopia. There was a major drought going on, and I went to see internally displaced persons in the southern part of the country. I remember going into a health clinic where they were providing supplementary feeding for severely malnourished kids. It was really bad. I don't remember why, but one of the nurses handed me a little girl who looked like a shriveled up old lady. She stared at me with her big eyes, shook violently and died. This was way back in 1988 and I am still haunted by it. But, it did cement my passion for humanitarian assistance.

Also, at the same time, there was fighting in Sudan between the government in Khartoum and the Sudanese People's Liberation Army (SPLA) led by John Garang. There were several hundred thousand people displaced, but nobody was providing assistance to them. As internally displaced people, they're the responsibility of the host government. It would be a violation of their sovereignty if donors went into the country to help the displaced people without permission. The international community policy was to wait until they became refugees. Once they crossed a border, then UNHCR and the NGOs would take care of them. Also, there was reluctance to go into a warzone. A delegation of NGOs came to see Julia and me and said, "You have to do something; people are dying. It's getting worse. Can't you go to the Africa Bureau of the State Department to get agreement to provide humanitarian assistance there?" We agreed to try. Julia was in some ways a spokesman for the NGO community at that time. That's why they came to us. The State Department said that it would violate Sudanese sovereignty and we could not go in. So, we explained that to the NGOs.

Three or four weeks later, the delegation came back and said it was getting worse, that we need to help these people. So, Julia decided to go to Deputy Secretary of State, Larry Eagleburger. We made the case to him, and he told us to tell the NGOs that they should get visas and ready themselves to travel to Sudan. He then asked that Julia and I go to Khartoum to meet with Omaar al-Bashir who had just taken over in a coup and to Nairobi to meet with John Garang. We would tell them that the U.S. NGOs would be going into southern Sudan to assist internally displaced folks. We did not ask for permission; we simply advised that the NGOs would be going in. He also ordered that no USG officials go into Sudan with the NGOs. He dealt with the Africa Bureau of State, which was very nervous about the decision.

After Julia and I had met with Bashir and Garang, it was agreed that I would go with an assessment team of NGOs to Lokichogio, Kenya on the border. I would stay there while the NGOs would go into southern Sudan for three or four days to do their assessment. Then, we would come back to Washington and figure out how to provide the needed assistance. It was my first experience in Lokichogio. It became the biggest airport in Kenya a few years later, but when on that first visit, there was only one little hangar for a couple of ICRC planes. ICRC also had a hospital there for people who had lost limbs, primarily. I stayed in their compound and unfortunately still remember an ostrich they had in a pen; it seemed to know I was not ICRC and pecked at me every time I went anywhere near it.

Anyway, I waited for the assessment group to return; we then went back to Washington and decided to begin providing assistance to some towns from Kenya. We were also considering cross-border activities from Ethiopia, perhaps shipping relief materials by rail through Khartoum So, we started providing small amounts of assistance.

Q: The assistance was principally to the displaced people or the refugees who had come over from Ethiopia?

GARVELINK: No. These were the internally displaced folks in Sudan due to the civil war.

We started our program with AFRICARE, International Medical Corps, and IRC, the lead NGOs that had been pushing for action. And after this started, Julia got a call from Jim Grant, who was the executive director of UNICEF. Jim asked for a briefing, so I went up with Mike Harvey to do the needful. We thought we would spend an hour or so talking with him. Instead, we stayed till about 8:00 at night with Jim Grant and Abbi Farah, the Under Secretary General for Political Affairs and UNICEF's humanitarian assistance coordinator, Charles La Muniere. We went into great detail about how we started and what we were doing, as well as future plans.

Q: How did you account for the fact that you needed to deliver all these humanitarian supplies while there was an active civil war going on?

GARVELINK: At the point that I'm talking about, virtually none. We didn't have any real appreciation for what we were getting ourselves into. Two or three weeks later, Jim Grant called a press conference in New York. He announced Operation Lifeline Sudan, showing very nifty maps and charts, laying out what they were going to do and the transit routes. Interestingly, UNICEF was proposing to provide assistance to southern Sudan from the same locations and in the same ways we had been planning. Then, a day or so later he called me up and he said, "Now, you've got to come with me. I've got to talk to Bashir, I've got to talk to the SPLA, I've got to talk to the Kenyans, I've got to talk to the Ethiopians about this plan." He hadn't told anybody in advance. He just announced it. Julia agreed for me to go. We were happy that it was no longer a U.S. initiative, but an international one. We wanted to be as helpful as possible.

So, I accompanied Jim to those meetings in Sudan and Ethiopia. Since Julia and I had met with Bashir earlier, the meeting with him was relatively routine. Then we went to Ethiopia to meet with the government and the SPLA. The meeting with the SPLA was very contentious. When the meeting ended, Grant met with the press and said it was a very cordial meeting and that everything was agreed to. I felt as if I had been in a different meeting (laughs).

Not too long after, there was a kickoff for Operation Lifeline Sudan. Lokichogio was the key location, and we started the first food convoy from there, although this first effort was primarily for show. Grant wanted to film the food trucks leaving and heading for southern Sudan. Then, a couple of weeks later, Grant wanted to do the same thing from Khartoum, putting food on a train headed to southern Sudan. I remember, we were in Khartoum the night before we were supposed to start all of this. Jim and I were sitting in the lobby of the Hilton Hotel talking about what was going to happen the next day. This woman came up and stood between us; we kept talking, but she stayed and I was thinking she was very rude. Then, Jim Grant said, "Oh, excuse me, "Let me introduce Audrey Hepburn."

Q: She was a goodwill ambassador for UNICEF.

GARVELINK: That was my first meeting with her. The three of us had dinner that night at the Hilton. And then, the next day we showed up at the train station. The train was all loaded, and there were UN flags everywhere. She was front and center for all of this. Again, lots and lots of publicity. That was the final step that really began Operation Lifeline Sudan in 1989.

In spite of its goofy start and Jim Grant's theater, it saved hundreds of thousands of lives. It ran for sixteen years, until 2005, and there were no peacekeeping forces. It was UNICEF, the UN and NGOs. And as it grew and the infrastructure appeared, UNICEF and the NGOs moved into southern Sudan. The U.S. government, including OFDA, expanded our program and operated freely wherever we wanted in Sudan. It was remarkable the way this worked. It also fundamentally changed U.S. humanitarian assistance policy. Previously the world paid no attention to internally displaced people; after Operation Lifeline Sudan, they became a focus. We need to recognize that there are three times as many IDPs in the world as there are refugees. And they have been the most ignored group in the world and the most at risk. Now it is routine to work in war zones, such as Syria, to provide humanitarian assistance. That didn't happen prior to Operation Lifeline Sudan. So, this was a rather dramatic shift in how the international community provided humanitarian assistance and to whom it provided the assistance.

I started going in and out of southern Sudan a lot. I'd like to share one story. I was walking through a Displaced Persons camp in Malakal near one of the garrison towns. There were hundreds of people, crowding around with their scant belongings. I noticed one guy wearing Bermuda shorts only; he didn't have anything else. As I was walking past, he said, "Hey, Detroit Tigers. You from Michigan?" I was wearing a Tigers baseball cap but was surprised that it was recognized in southern Sudan. He had received his PhD

at Michigan State and was the principal of a region in southern Sudan who had gotten caught up in the fighting -- and was now a displaced person. From then on, I always wore a Tigers baseball cap, although I am still waiting for the second person to identify the classic script D.

Q: Oh. Take a second to describe what the aid was. I'm sure it was food but were there other things?

GARVELINK: Operation Lifeline Sudan provided health clinics, water and sanitation, as well. Airstrips and some access roads were made where they needed to be. Elaborate shelter. IDP camps. The full range of assistance. It was led by the UN and UNICEF, but the World Food Program was also huge, as were UNDP, WHO, and other UN entities. NGOs from around the world were there, not just U.S. NGOs. The British, Norwegians, and Danes were very big, along with a lot of other countries. ICRC had been there originally, but they got much bigger. Probably hundreds of NGOs, big and little, were there.

Q: Were you able, since you talked about the principal, were you able to also deliver something where the kids could get educated?

GARVELINK: Oh, yes. There were education programs. You name it, everything that was normally provided in a refugee camp was provided for the displaced persons.

When I mentioned the key role Deputy Secretary Larry Eagleburger played in setting up Operation Lifeline Sudan, I didn't refer to his history with OFDA. Eagleburger was a junior political officer in 1963 in Skopje, Yugoslavia when it was hit with a massive earthquake that killed a lot of people and wiped out a big portion of the city. His job as the junior political officer was to respond to that disaster, and it did not go well. Afterwards, he wrote a letter to the Secretary of State recommending that the U.S. set up some kind of organization to deal with disasters. In 1964 OFDA was created within AID as a direct result of Eagleburger's letter. He always, from then on, kept an eye on OFDA.

He was someone we could always go to for help. He would then make phone calls and do whatever was necessary to work things out for OFDA. I'll get into it a little later, but when I was running the disaster team in Somalia, I got a very nice letter from him, thanking me for what I was doing personally and for OFDA. At that time, he was secretary of state at the end of a presidential administration. After he left government and went to the Holocaust Museum, he would still offer to help OFDA when there were issues. OFDA was his creation and he kept a close eye on it, which helped us.

To wrap this up, Operation Lifeline Sudan went on for a very long time, more than most organized relief efforts. It saved hundreds of thousands of lives and changed the way we did business.

Q: And forgive my ignorance, but what caused it to end in 2005? Was it the war?

GARVELINK: No, because the war kept going right on through the whole period. It just started to peter out. Jim Grant had died and new UNICEF leadership was not particularly interested in humanitarian work. In the days of Jim Grant, the humanitarian or emergency response office in UNICEF was the best in the business, but it was sort of dismantled and they began to focus more on development activities. So, it was a combination of things that brought it to an end in 2005. But it was a remarkable and game changing activity that Grant managed to pull off with smoke and mirrors at the very beginning.

Also, about this time, OFDA I was working on a locust infestation in West Africa. We chartered planes that would spray and kill the desert locusts, but two of the planes crashed into each other. This was in December of 1988, and I had the unpleasant task of faxing dental records to Senegal, where the bodies were, as they were needed before bringing them back to the U.S. Then, on December 7, there was an earthquake in Armenia.

At that time, Gorbachev was in New York and President Reagan, as was our custom, offered assistance. To everybody's surprise, Gorbachev accepted and Colin Powell, the National Security Advisor, contacted OFDA to get its teams ready to go. Julia and I talked to the Soviet desk at State, and they laughed, saying "No way. They may say that, but they'll never get you your visas in time. So, don't sweat it."

Julia called Powell, who by way of background was a close personal friend of hers. Ten minutes later, he called back saying that folks from the Soviet embassy will be in your office in half an hour. Get together a list of all the search and rescue folks, everybody going. You're not going to get individual visas, so they'll take the list back and within an hour have a blanket visa for everyone on the list. He added that it was up to us if we wanted to invite the Soviet desk to the meeting. Anyway, the embassy folks did come; we gave them the list and within an hour of their return to the embassy, they called to say that we had all the visas. The State Department folks were dumbfounded.

So, then we had to find an aircraft. We would normally take a U.S. military plane, but it wasn't possible to take a U.S. military plane into Armenia. We tasked Jeff Colyer, a medical doctor and presidential management intern, with the task. He later became governor of Kansas. Anyway, by mid-afternoon, Jeff did find a plane out of Indianapolis. We were still working out the flight path with the embassy and were not sure where the plane would be refueled, so we recommended the flight crew bring cash. By 8:00 or 9:00 that night, we were at the private terminal at Dulles Airport. We had Fairfax County Fire and Rescue, their urban search and rescue team and Miami Dade's search and rescue team and some assorted other folks. And we took the guy I always took anywhere I could, Fred Cuny, along on the plane.

We took off and refueled in Shannon, Ireland, which is a standard thing. We had to refuel one more time in Belgrade. The pilots got off to talk to airport officials about refueling, but it was taking a long time. Our search dogs were pacing on the plane, wanting to get off. Julia and I were concerned, so I got off to see what was happening. The pilots were in the airport manager's office trying to figure out how to pay for the refueling. They didn't

do what we told them. They had credit cards and traveler's checks and neither worked in Belgrade at the time. The airport manager said, "I don't know this stuff. I'm not going to refuel your plane." I asked the airport manager for the phone number to the U.S. embassy and ended up speaking with the DCM. I asked him to reassure the airport officials that the embassy would pay the landing fees if the company did not. The DCM faxed a letter to the airport manager, and then they went ahead to refuel the airplane. But it meant a couple extra hours to the trip.

When we arrived in Yerevan, there was no one there to meet us. I don't think Gorbachev communicated with anyone -- or, at least the message didn't get to Armenia. After a few hours, the governor showed up and it was decided that we would go to Leninakan. After a few more hours, buses were arranged and we departed to begin our search and rescue operation.

Julia Taft was along but she was spending most of her time talking to Moscow, so I was running the operation. I had never dealt with fire departments before. And Miami Dade and Fairfax are very large fire departments and as structured and organized as the military is. When we arrived in the middle of the night in Leninakan, their first question was, "Who's in charge? Is it Fairfax or is it Dade County?" Finally, I told them that I was in charge and would tell them where they were going to work, but that I would not try to tell them how to do their work. They accepted that, although they might not have been happy.

But then, very curious problems began to arise. It was early December and the day after we arrived it began to snow like crazy. This didn't faze the Fairfax guys, but the Miami firemen had never before seen snow and wanted to leave. They felt it was not safe and that they couldn't work under those conditions. I wasn't sure what to do but grabbed Fred Cuny and asked him to go to the airport tower and call me on the walkie-talkie, saying that the weather people were forecasting for the snow to stop within half an hour. He did and when the Dade Country folks heard that on their radios, they went back to work. Fortunately, the snow did stop.

Also, several Soviet generals and a lot of military personnel arrived about the same time we did, and there were armed troops on all the streets. There were even tanks moving around. The Fairfax team had heard rumors of coups and violence, so they then announced that we needed to leave. I reassured them by saying that I would work with the generals and watch it carefully. If warranted, we would then leave. Fortunately, they also went back to work. Each fire department seemed to have its own quirks.

We were supposed to coordinate with the mayor of Leninakan, but he had lost ten members of his family in the earthquake and was so distraught that he could not be helpful to us. So, we worked primarily with the Soviet military. We had Armenian speakers on the Fairfax team but no Russian speakers. The generals were all Russian speakers, not Armenian, so we were having trouble. Fred Cuny had the brilliant idea of asking if any of them spoke Spanish; he assumed that some might have served in Cuba. That turned out to be the case, so we used Spanish during the response to the earthquake.

Our initial estimate was that 50,000 people were killed.

Q: Fifty thousand people killed and then tens of thousands more displaced.

GARVELINK: It was terrible. You would see coffins on almost every street corner. When they found someone dead, they'd put the body in a coffin and leave the cover off, hoping somebody could identify them.

We set up in the old KGB building downtown and there were constant tremors the whole time we were there. After the first day or so, we didn't even notice them. We were there for about two weeks doing search and rescue. Fred Cuny stayed to work with the follow-up OFDA team that came in on the plane that was picking us up to go home. The follow-up team was focused on the needs after every earthquake: water, sanitation, health issues, shelter, and those sorts of things. They stayed for another few weeks.

That was my first on the ground earthquake response and also my first time dealing with the press and doing television interviews with CBS from the earthquake site. Julia was there for a day or two and then went to Moscow to work with the embassy. About a year later, we were invited by the Soviet Union just before it broke up to visit. We were with Marilyn Quayle, who was the second lady. We were wined and dined, literally, for a couple weeks in the Soviet Union. I've got on my wall here a civilian award from the Soviet Union for earthquake assistance.

Q: Here I just want to throw in one quick comment. I was assigned to Armenia from 1999 to 2001 and I did go up to the affected area. And even from 1999 to 2001 you still saw the destruction, you still saw buildings that were never cleared and never rebuilt. There were still people in temporary housing but very few.

GARVELINK: Oh, yeah. I'll get into more of that but would first like to go back to southern Sudan for a bit. During Operation Lifeline Sudan, I would go in and out of Sudan, particularly to the South, a lot. I got to know John Garang and his head of security, Riek Machar. It was always interesting dealing with John Garang. He got his PhD at Iowa State in ag economics and when he found out I got my master's degree at the University of Minnesota, we seemed to bond. Most of our conversations started with Big Ten football. He was also a fan of the Minnesota Vikings. After the football preliminaries, we would get down to it.

At one point, the SPLA stole a couple of trucks that were loaded with food. I happened to be in Somalia at the time, so I went down to Nairobi and then up into southern Sudan to meet with Garang and demand that the food and trucks be returned immediately. He apologized and promised to deliver them the next day. He was true to his word, so the trucks and food were returned to the NGOs. He understood the United Nations, the donor community, and NGOs, and knew that you couldn't do those kinds of things. He was very cooperative, very understanding, and very different from rebel leaders today.

I also got to know Riek Machar fairly well. He had a PhD from the UK in philosophy and was married to a British woman, Emma McCune. She was a photographer. Kate Farnsworth, our regional OFDA advisor, and I also got to know her well. We would often take rolls of film from her to Nairobi to be developed; then, others from our group would return the photographs to her. Unfortunately, Emma was killed in a car accident in Nairobi a few years later. There's an interesting book called *Emma's War*, by Deborah Scroggins from the *Atlantic Constitution*, about Emma's time married to Riek Machar. I guess my point in all of this is that we got to know these folks well.

There was one government in Khartoum and there was one rebel movement. Both Riek and John Garang were much easier to deal with. In my early conversations with John Garang, he said we could do anything we wanted to do, but that we must not go into an area if they told us not to do so. We followed that instruction and they did not interfere with anything that we or Operation Lifeline Sudan were doing.

If you fast forward, when I was in the Congo there were about one hundred rebel movements in Eastern Congo. They were essentially thugs, not standing for anything. They have no interest in the UN or NGO neutrality, and they have no long-term goals or experience negotiating with expats. More than once during my career, I ended up trying to negotiate with twelve-year-olds holding AK-47s. Therefore, in 2016, I worked very closely with Claude Bruderlein, a Swiss fellow with the International Committee of the Red Cross, as well as WFP and UNHCR, to set up an organization called the Center for Competence on Humanitarian Negotiations in 2016. The Center provides training and learning opportunities for humanitarian staff on how to negotiate with both disciplined and undisciplined rebel groups. The Center is able to put participants in contact with folks who have faced the kind of situation you're in. This all falls with the rubric of "disaster diplomacy." You don't hear a lot about disaster diplomacy, but it is critically important these days in carrying out programs, whether in Northern Syria, Damascus, Eastern Congo, or Yemen. You can pick any place in the world today and you've got to negotiate with people who may or may not understand the UN or NGOs and what they do. It's a very different kind of environment than what we saw those years ago under Operation Lifeline Sudan.

Q: Do you have an example of "disaster diplomacy" that would explain some of the context and unique elements that you had to deal with in such a situation?

GARVELINK: Well, some will come up as we go along. My first encounter was on the border between Malawi and Mozambique when I came across the twelve- or thirteen-year-old kid with an AK-47. He put his gun in the car and pointed it at us. He had no idea what he was doing or who we were. I gave him cigarettes and he smiled and walked away. He never said a word. Another time, I ran into a kid who had an AK-47 in one hand and a squirt gun in the other. He was a border guard but was playing with his squirt gun. You never know what to say to these characters because they really don't care and are simply doing what they've been told to do. It's very tricky dealing with them. There needs to be much more attention to how humanitarian workers can deal with them. So, I'm glad ICRC came up with this Center.

By late 1988, Julia Taft was leaving OFDA to join her husband Will who had become the U.S. ambassador to NATO. She was replaced by Andrew Natsios who had no background in humanitarian relief. He had been a state legislator. I was in Julia Taft's office just a day or so before she left when she got a call from Andrew. I didn't hear the whole conversation, of course, but did wonder why she had been laughing. She said that Andrew wanted to know what kind of characteristics are needed for the job; she said that you've got to have a sense of humor. And Andrew said, 'Sense of humor? I'm the chairman of the Republican Party in Massachusetts. I've got a sense of humor.'" Which was true. He was a great guy and still is, of course.

Andrew took over and I was still the assistant director for Africa although Andrew always introduced me as the assistant director of operations. We did almost everything together. I took him on his first trip to Africa. We went to Uganda and Ethiopia, and he was a very quick study. He probably was the best AID administrator I dealt with in my career, and he started from zero. He didn't really know anything about disaster assistance when he got into OFDA, but he studied and talked to everyone. Before talking about more field work and countries, I would like to discuss some of the organizational changes in OFDA. Some were started with Julia and continued with Andrew; others were started by Andrew.

In 1988-1989, when Andrew came in, OFDA had about twenty-five to thirty employees, and the budget was a whopping \$25 million a year. We did have something called a borrowing authority, which we could use to take money from other AID accounts, as well as another \$50 million emergency fund. Sometimes we also got supplemental legislation for special disasters. But if you fast forward to today, this year's budget for what would be OFDA is \$10 billion. And the staff is somewhere between 700 and 1,000 people, most of them personal services contractors. It's grown faster than any other part of AID. It's massive now compared to what we were back then.

In those early days, OFDA had only one field office. That was in Costa Rica to cover the Latin American region. It was headed up by Paul Bell who was phenomenal and was set up to deal with hurricanes, landslides, and other natural disasters. When the office wasn't managing emergency responses, it was training people throughout the region. That is why Mexico, Chile, and Peru now have capacity to deal with their own emergencies. When the U.S. offers to help, they say thank you, but "we know how to do it." That's because of the training Paul Bell led.

Because of expanded work in Africa, including the complex work in southern Sudan with displaced persons and the work in Somalia alongside U.S. troops in a war zone, it became clear that the U.S. government had unique capacity to dispatch humanitarian workers globally. This also made it clear that OFDA would have to expand its presence. So, in 1989, we opened a second regional office to cover Africa in Addis Ababa with Kate Farnsworth as head. She was initially with the embassy and then moved over to AID as our regional advisor for Africa. Several years later, we added somebody in Senegal and then someone in South Africa. We also put people in Thailand, in the Philippines, and in

the U.S. UN office. They could go quickly into a disaster situation, determining needs and advising us. We also opened regional warehouses in Gibraltar and the UAE which held supplies and our first armored vehicles.

Over time, we added OFDA staff more broadly into other parts of the USG and UN community. For example, Nancy Kahlo was assigned to the U.S. mission in Geneva where she worked for twenty years. We also seconded one or two people to the National Security Council to facilitate disaster response. Then, a few years after that, I started to put people into the U.S. DOD commands: PACOM, SOUTHCOM, Special Operations Command, EUCOM, and AFRICOM eventually. In return we asked the commands or Pentagon to second people to OFDA. There are always three or four officers in OFDA. We did the same with the Centers for Disease Control. We put people in Atlanta and they assigned some of their folks to OFDA in Washington. So, we expanded our connections around the world.

Another innovation was DART teams, Disaster Assistance Response Teams. Traditionally, OFDA went into a disaster area for search and recovery and then left. That began to change, e.g., after the Armenian earthquake, Fred Cuny and several others stayed on longer. Julia Taft started to rethink the model; Andrew and I continued to talk about the kinds of management teams needed in the field to coordinate with the government, the United Nations, and other donors. We needed more operational capacity in the field, as it didn't make sense to try to run from Washington. The big policy issues could be handled from Washington, but the decisions about use of epidemiologists and ag experts needed to be done in the field.

We prepared scopes of work for everyone, and they were trained in the States before going out on a DART team. They knew exactly what they were to do; they didn't have to figure it out after arriving in the field. We did have some laughs when deciding on the name. Since it was part of the Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance, we initially thought of calling it a foreign assistance response team. Fortunately, we quickly realized that the acronym wouldn't work, so we decided to call it a disaster assistance response team, a DART.

Q: (Laughs) Right.

GARVELINK: So, we settled on a DART team. Andrew and I decided that OFDA would need the capacity to support five DART teams in the field at one time. That meant expanding the number of operation centers because when a DART team goes out, they are supported by a team operating on a twenty-four-hour basis in order to respond to their needs. We had one little Operation Center in the State Department at that time. Today, if you go to OFDA, they have three, two of them in the Ronald Reagan Building and one in that building on Eleventh Street, which is even bigger. It's a much bigger operation now.

Q: As you began deploying DART teams, how did you manage the interaction with the Defense Department? Did you need any logistical support or resourcing from the military?

GARVELINK: The team leader is normally a direct-hire from OFDA or now BHA (Bureau for Humanitarian Assistance). The first DART team was in 1992 to Kenya to work in Somalia. I led that team. I had a budget of about \$100 million to spend on programs. We would write the projects out there; I would approve them and inform Washington. Our understanding was, if you didn't like what the DART leader was doing, don't second-guess him, get rid of him and put another person out there. But as long as they're out there, leave them alone.

I did maybe ten of these in my career. Kate Farnsworth led more than anyone else. DART teams, by definition, are a management team to work with the embassy and the AID mission in-country, the UN, the host government, and NGOs. They are responsible for managing the use of U.S. resources. Sometimes it could be two or three people, but it could also be much larger. I know in response to the Rwandan genocide we had six or seven offices in Uganda, Rwanda, Burundi, Kenya, and Eastern Congo with several hundred people. All reported to Kate. You could ask for epidemiologists to perform certain tasks -- and then, when no longer needed, the DART leader could send them home and bring in other folks with needed skills. It's a very flexible management system. Embassies and AID missions had long had the authority to hire personal service contractors (PSCs). At some point, OFDA got permission and at some point also got authority to hire PSCs. Of the OFDA staff of 700 to 1,000 people, 70 percent are personal services contractors.

OFDA also planned with other government agencies. Interestingly enough, in responding to disasters, the agency still today heavily uses the U.S. Forest Service. Those smoke jumpers are great in disasters. You can't ruffle them and they usually handle logistics and communications and a lot of the other stuff. There is a Forest Service team that's assigned to OFDA in Washington all the time. And those guys—actually, they're mostly women—are trained in the fire line work of the U.S. Forest Service.

Q: What about FEMA (Federal Emergency Management Agency)? Was it at all involved?

GARVELINK: Not much because in the early days, FEMA was strictly focused on nuclear stuff. We do talk with them, and I went to help them out with Hurricane Katrina, primarily to help coordinate international offers of assistance. Interestingly, FEMA is not used to dealing with earthquakes. There aren't that many, fortunately, in the U.S. So, when OFDA responds to an earthquake, FEMA comes to our after-action meetings to talk about how we responded. They see it as a learning experience. But, when you are talking about international emergencies like those in Sudan or Somalia, there's not much FEMA can do.

Q: And I'm sorry, just one last return to how you integrated with the Defense Department and their assets?

GARVELINK: Oh, sure. If you need airlift from the military, OFDA goes to the PM bureau which then goes to the Joint Staff to make the request. I made the mistake once of

telling them what kind of plane I wanted and almost got my head chewed off. They just said, "Tell us what you need to move and we'll decide." In terms of ranking, our request from OFDA ranks immediately below the request of the president. So, it gets attention real fast. Normally, OFDA can get the aircraft it needs within hours and they'll take you anywhere. This works well for the first couple of days, but by the fourth day you start getting faxes from private companies saying, "You're forcing the U.S. government to interfere with private business." So, you can use the military at the beginning and at the end. No one can move as fast as the U.S. military can. But after a few days, you start hearing from the private sector. Lawyers start sending you things saying, "Wait a minute. We can do this now. The other thing, which people forget about, is the U.S. military is incredibly expensive. It's not free. We've got to pay and it costs a fortune. With the response to earthquakes, you usually have a C-5 or C-17 because you take firetrucks and ambulances and other big items. After the earthquake, you donate it to the host country, so it's a smaller plane that comes to pick you up and that can be from the private sector. But going out no one can compete with a C-5. It's remarkable how fast they move but for short periods of time. That's also why it's important to have the military guys in your Operations Center. They can talk military-to-military. Similarly, when responding to an earthquake, OFDA has firemen come into the Operations Center so firemen can talk to firemen about what they need and what the problems are. They have a vocabulary all their own, just like the military does. Again, all of this developed as a result of changes starting with Andrew.

I spoke about it earlier, but the Field Operations Guide (FOG) was another important innovation within OFDA. It tells you how to deal with the press, how to deal with the military, what the different ranks are, and what you should take when you're deployed. Everything from soup to nuts. How to write cables. You name it because a lot of these are personal services contractors who have never written a cable before. Now it is on every OFDA computer and has become a standard in the international humanitarian area.

So, we set up these changes, many started by Andrew Natsios. People began to notice. In 1991, the European Union had decided to change how it was doing humanitarian relief. Two staff members from the European Commission came to OFDA for a few weeks in 1990 to see how we operated. The European Community Humanitarian Office (ECHO) was then created in 1992.

At the same time, the UN was paying a lot of attention and its disaster relief organization, UNDRO, no longer seemed fit for purpose. The UN reached out for our suggestions. Andrew hired Gene Dewey, the now retired but former State DAS in the Refugee Bureau and former Deputy High Commissioner for Refugees at UNHCR, as a contractor. Gene and I then worked with Jan Eliasson, the Swedish ambassador to the United Nations, as well as others in the UN system, to set up OCHA (United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs), which is the new humanitarian office. Jan Eliasson left the Foreign Service in Sweden to become the first undersecretary of OCHA. As an aside, after I retired and was working for the International Medical Corps, I was at a conference in Geneva in 2013. At this point Eliasson had become the Deputy Secretary General of the UN and was one of the featured speakers. I hadn't seen him in twenty

years and assumed he would not remember me. After his speech, I started walking up to him and he said, “You,” and he pointed at me. “Garvelink, you guys made me quit my job and take this job on,” and he cited the date that he became the undersecretary general for humanitarian affairs. I hadn’t seen the guy in over twenty years, but he obviously remembered the work we had done together. Then we sat down and had a nice chat. I should add that OCHA was created in 1991, I believe, and by 1993, they had come up with UNDAC teams, United Nations (Disaster) Assessment and Coordination teams. Their version of a DART team. So, lots came out of the work that we did to help the UN modernize its disaster relief efforts.

There’s one more change that we made right after the Armenian earthquake. that I’d like to mention. The coordination did not go really well among the various donors, including the Austrians, the Swedes, the Israelis, the Icelanders. As an aside, I should add that Iceland probably has the best search and rescue capacity. The head of their team is a woman who had worked for Fairfax County Fire and Rescue after finishing graduate school in the U.S. She went on to become the head of Iceland’s search and rescue team.

Anyway, after Armenia, some of the earthquake responding countries agreed that there should be a country-level advisory group on urban search and rescue under UN auspices. OFDA played a lead role in that effort. As a result, the International Search and Rescue Advisory Group (ISARAG) was established in 1991. It now includes more than 90 countries and organizations under the UN umbrella. We set up minimal international standards for urban search and rescue, as well as a methodology for international coordination that is still being used. This even includes standards for search dogs and what they have to be able to do if you’re going to use them in earthquakes. This was another big-ticket item that we worked hard on during Andrew Natsios’s time. It was so important to get it up and running and to get UN ownership.

Q: Yeah, ninety countries and all of them having something to contribute, deconflicting so that they don’t all arrive and try to do the same thing at the same time is vital. That’s principally a UN job now?

GARVELINK: Yes. That’s probably done mostly by OCHA, but the advisory group meets and is recognized by the UN and listened to.

Anyway, I finished a lot of these efforts, but they started with Julia and Andrew. They’ve worked to the advantage of USAID, and all were important things to do that I am very proud of. There are a couple more I’ll get to down the line as they happened a bit later.

Q: One last question about the overall development of OFDA. Did the technology and the equipment and so on begin to change, especially given the information revolution and the ability to use cell phones?

GARVELINK: Yes, dramatically. Everything has changed. When we got into Rwanda, that was the first time computers were used in a very big way. And it drove us nuts because we kept getting copies of things going to the administrator of AID and the

secretary of state. You would want to know when Ralph, the epidemiologist, would arrive, but you'd also get talking points for something at the United Nations?

To manage this, we set up a Rwanda Information Center in Washington. Everything went to them first, and they would send us stuff. I wrote an article about it in a book a few years later. The amount of stuff being sent almost broke us. We couldn't figure out when medicines were arriving but had this steady stream of stuff that you didn't want. So, it was a big change when computers were used. And it drove everybody nuts.

I don't know how they decided to sort that out after I left, but I assume the Operations Center has some control over information. Last year I went into one of the Operation Centers, and they are so different from what we originally had in the Ronald Reagan Building. They have three Operation Centers now and they're big and all high-tech. So, yeah, everything's changed.

Now back to Southern Sudan. We dealt a lot with John Garang and the SPLA . Because of his ties to the U.S., he came to Washington several times. I remember one of those meetings because of Garang's willingness to meet with one of our staff members, Valerie Newsom, who was doing her master's degree at American University and her thesis was on the SPLA. He stayed for almost two hours and answered all of her questions. They had a great time together. Valerie, whose name is now Guarnieri, is the number two or three person in the World Food Program now.

We did have one big issue with Garang that took a lot of time. We were providing a lot of humanitarian assistance in southern Sudan and were dealing primarily with the SPLA and soldiers. We told him that we couldn't really deal with militaries, that he needed to form a humanitarian or development link to the SPLA. He agreed and the Sudan Relief and Rehabilitation Association (SRRA) was established in 1991. It became the main contact point for OFDA. Of course, these guys were military and they just changed uniforms. But over time they developed a cadre of folks who were not in the military and who became a good humanitarian arm as the main contact point for OFDA, the UN and other humanitarian organizations.

We also worked very closely with the Select Committee on Hunger on Capitol Hill. The chairman at the time was Mickey Leland, the guy from Texas. The ranking Republican was Bill Emerson from Missouri. Andrew and I briefed them regularly. At one point they asked how they could be helpful, and Andrew suggested holding a public hearing. They put together the hearing and became very, very helpful in explaining what's going on in Sudan and what we were doing. They also traveled to the Horn of Africa and Sudan frequently, and they often asked me to travel with them. When we came back, they always went to brief the national security advisor, Brent Scowcroft. I was always invited to go along to participate in the briefing with Scowcroft. And so, it was a great relationship with the Congressional representatives. At one point, we were in Southern Sudan and a bunch of guys were playing traditional music with something similar to bongo drums. They didn't realize Mickey Leland went through graduate school in a band playing bongo drums. He jumped in to play them, and they were flabbergasted that this

U.S. congressman was terrific at playing these drums. He was a really neat guy. And the Sudanese adored him.

There was one last trip in August 1989 that I was supposed to go on, but I was chairing the board of zoning appeals in Falls Church. There was a meeting on the old Falls Church, which is where George Washington was a vestryman. I had missed a number of meetings because I was traveling and thought, I couldn't miss this one or they'll boot me off the zoning board. So, I called Mickey and said, "I can't go." Mickey understood. It turns out that Leland and those with him were killed in a plane crash in Ethiopia on that trip. I was supposed to be there. Everybody on that plane I knew and worked with on his staff, the wife of the AID director in Ethiopia, a couple of guys from the embassy in Addis. Just dumb luck that I missed that flight. And I still think about that quite often.

But, back to South Sudan. I went in and out not only to deal with the SPLA, but also to visit the garrison towns, like Juba, that were controlled by the Sudanese government but surrounded by the SPLA. It was a pretty good-sized town with an ICRC base, a UN base, and an AID office that had about three houses, a swimming pool, and a meeting room. The AID compound hadn't been used in years and years, but it was being maintained by three or four Sudanese. Whenever we went to Juba, we'd stay at that compound for a couple of days, do our thing, and then catch the next food plane out and back to Nairobi. The only way you could get food and medical supplies in was by air. The local residents tried to grow sorghum, which they would eat, but it grew too tall and the SPLA could sneak through it to get very close or even into town. As a result, the Sudanese army would burn the sorghum down.

Fred Cuny was there at various times, and he suggested that they grow red sorghum which doesn't grow so high. It worked and the South Sudanese started to call it Reagan sorghum. It didn't grow that high, so the military didn't burn it down. I used to travel there often with David Rhoad, the Regional Food for Peace Officer based in Nairobi. We would always meet with the Sudanese governor of the region -- and always left a case of beer in his office. Nothing was ever said about this, but it did ensure his availability when we went to Juba, and it did help as we did our business.

The Juba compound was very important. And at one point, for reasons I don't understand, the government in Khartoum claimed that the three or four people maintaining the compound were spies so they grabbed them all. Thereafter, every week, there was a shortwave radio call to Khartoum that things were okay, that they didn't need anything. I was in Somalia when this happened and got a call from the embassy in Khartoum, saying, "Go to Juba and deal with this somehow." They didn't know whether they were going to sell the compound or what they were going to do. We ended up giving the compound to ICRC for a dollar a year. They took very good care of it until it became the U.S. embassy after South Sudan became an independent country.

So, we had all kinds of interesting stuff going on with the South Sudanese. At one point—just one last story—the SPLA decided to issue visas. This was in 1991 or something like that. So, Andrew and I were going into South Sudan and decided to honor

their request. They instructed us to go first to their office in Nairobi to get our visas before heading to southern Sudan. After going to their Nairobi office two or three days in a row, no one showed up. We then got on the ICRC plane and flew into Wau or Torit. After landing, we were arrested. Andrew Natsios was fed up, and he lit into those guys, saying that if they wanted to act like a country, they'd better get their act together. They then put us in a little tukul and asked who we wanted to see. We told them and they brought everybody to us from two or three different towns. And they fed us quite sumptuously for South Sudan. We caught the last ICRC plane out and saw everybody we wanted to see. They dropped the visa idea after that. I continued to travel often to Sudan, including Darfur, the border with Chad. Sudan and South Sudan were big parts of my life in the early years.

Let me go back a moment to a visit I made to Russia in the last days of the Soviet Union in 1989. We were invited by EMERCOM (Russian Federation's Ministry of Civil Defense, Emergencies and the Elimination of the Consequences of Natural Disasters), which is the equivalent of OFDA in the Soviet Union, to visit. So, our group included Marilyn Quayle, Andrew Natsios, one or two other people from OFDA, a couple of FEMA people, and me. We went down to Armenia and not much had changed since the earthquake. They told us that they were going to rebuild houses right on the flood plain. We asked, "Do you realize that when an earthquake happens on a flood plain it vibrates this way and it flips buildings. You don't want to build there. That's why everything disappeared with the earthquake."

We also went to Chernobyl for a day only a couple of years after the nuclear accident. FEMA loaded us up with dosimeters so we could track the radiation. It was very interesting. You would drive to a certain point and, before entering the Dead Zone, you would transfer to special buses. You could drive around these little villages, and you'd see tables and chairs flipped over. They took us literally to the reactor, up to the wall where the contamination was. And they took us into where they were running the other reactors. We spent an entire day there. I got all kinds of photos, which are really interesting.

Then we returned to Moscow and visited some military installations. They showed us medical research centers. They took us to the Bolshoi Ballet where we sat in the czar's box. Everybody was looking at us trying to figure out who we were. Then, we went to Saint Petersburg where they closed down the Hermitage, the art gallery, for an afternoon just for us. It was an incredible trip. We had a state dinner in the Kremlin. I was sitting next to a retired four-star, the head of the civil defense staff. We were working through the dinner and drinking wine when he poked me to say they have really good vodka and that I should ask one of the waiters for some. I asked a waiter and about half an hour later they came out with glasses of brandy for everyone. I found out later that there is a list of what is acceptable to drink at a state dinner. Vodka is not on it. Brandy is. Then, after dinner we went downstairs to the basement of the Kremlin and a museum with gold statues. We had a great trip over a couple of weeks.

We invited them to the United States the next year. I was involved only in the Washington part of the trip, but we took them to the Kennedy Center and showed them the movie *Star Wars*. They had never seen that before. Andrew Natsios had them for dinner at his home the first night, and they were amazed by the size and asked how he could afford it. He explained about mortgages; they were dumbfounded by the idea. They also went to Nashville for the Grand Ole Opry. (Tauber laughs) And then, they took them to California where one of the TV networks simulated an earthquake in their studio. They got a kick out of that. The thing they liked the most, though, was one of the last days here when we took them to one of the big shopping centers. That impressed them more than anything else. They had never been to a shopping center before.

There's one more interesting anecdote from this period – late 1989 to early 1990. Steve Morrison, who was working on the House Foreign Affairs Committee, the Africa subcommittee, wanted to do an assessment of the humanitarian situation. It was bad in Ethiopia. He wanted to go to the EPLF (Eritrean People's Liberation Front) territory and come out through Sudan, go around to Addis and look at the humanitarian situation on that side. He asked if I could go with him, but the State Department said I could not go into rebel-held territory in Eritrea, that it wasn't recognized by the U.S. government. Then, Morrison went to the chairman of the subcommittee, Howard Wolpe, who then wrote a letter to the State Department. Long story short, State said I could go. The group included Steve Morrison, who worked for Howard Wolpe, the chairman of the subcommittee, Gil Kapen, who was the staff member for the ranking Republican on the Africa subcommittee, and Jane Perlez, reporter for the *New York Times*.

We flew to Sudan, went to Port Sudan, and left our passports there. We met the EPLF and they took us into rebel-held territory. We spent about a week traveling around, and it was very interesting. The EPLF became very well-known for their hospitals and factories, many of which were underground in the mountains. They took us into caves, and you'd see operating rooms and dentists. They made some of their equipment and even refurbished tanks, all inside and underground. The Ethiopians had fighter jets and they blew up buildings, so the EPLF put hospitals and factories underground. We would travel from about 3:00 or 4:00 in the afternoon until a little past dark because by that time the fighter jets had to be back in Addis. If they had seen us on the ground, they probably would have shot us from the jets. So, we stayed underground, sleeping and visiting facilities, until about 3:00 in the afternoon. They also showed us prisoner of war camps and battle areas.

At the end, we had a nearly eight-hour meeting with Isaias Afwerki, the rebel leader. At the end of the meeting, he pointed at me, noting that I was the sole member of the Executive Branch on the trip. He wanted to turn over thirty Polish sailors to the United States government. Steve Morrison immediately agreed, but I said we had to first talk to the State Department in Washington. Isaias then took us in a truck around the hill where he got a satellite phone and we called the State Operations Center. And of course, they knew where I was. I spoke with Mike McKinley who was then working for the Deputy Secretary of State. After a lot of back and forth with multiple people, Eagleburger finally got on the phone and agreed that we should take the Polish sailors. Apparently, unknown

to those of us on the ground, the EPLF had sunk a Polish ship that it thought was carrying weapons to Ethiopia. There were on-going negotiations in Cairo between Poland, the EPLF, the Egyptians, the United States, and the United Nations that had been going on for a while. We didn't know anything about that. Anyway, it was great that Eagleburger stopped all the back and forth between the various parties and made the decision.

Then came the challenge of how to take the sailors with us on the several days trip to the Sudan border. The EPLF provided trucks and wanted to put the Polish sailors in the back and drive as fast as possible to the border. We were concerned about doing that in the hot weather, that they could become dehydrated and die, especially since some were wounded. So, we got agreement to go slowly and to make frequent stops. Then Steve Morrison asked if we could take three Russian soldiers the EPLF had been holding for three years. Isaias said absolutely not, but he did say we could see them. So, we drove out to the end of a ravine where there were two little huts. They had free run. They had a garden in the back. They played cards and did lots of exercise, and all looked like Arnold Schwarzenegger. They listened to a little bit of radio and had nothing else to do. Since they were in an isolated spot, the EPLF didn't worry about them, they just left them back there. Jane Perlez told them that she was with the *New York Times* and asked if they wanted to pass on anything. Since they considered themselves still in a war situation, they gave only name, rank and serial number. That's all they'd say.

Anyway, we continued on to the Sudan border. We thought Jim Cheek, the U.S. ambassador to Sudan, would meet us, but he wasn't there. But, three or four Sudanese generals met us and they were angry and very upset with the EPLF. They had wanted the sailors turned over to Sudan and threatened to not let us enter Sudan with them. Then, we began a full night of argument and negotiation with the Sudanese military and the EPLF. Finally, in the early morning they agreed to let us go on up to Port Sudan where we connected with Jim Cheek. We rested a bit and hoped to leave for Khartoum after turning over the sailors to the embassy folks. But, we were told we could leave only after the ambassador.

The airport at Port Sudan was not much more than a Quonset hut, so we went over to sit in a corner. Then, Jim Cheek arrived. There was lots of press there with microphones and cameras. When the Polish sailors entered, they walked right past the microphones; since we were the only folks they knew, they came over to us and we chatted and took photos for some time. The embassy obviously didn't like the optics of the Ambassador standing alone in front of the microphones while the sailors were chatting with us. Anyway, we quickly realized and ushered them to where they were supposed to go. Cheek made his statement, shook hands with each one of them and then they got on a Polish plane and started their journey home.

When we got back to Khartoum, we went to the Soviet embassy and told them we had seen their three soldiers and that they were fine. That night, we each got a big jar of very expensive caviar from the Russian embassy.

Q: Did you find out why these three Russians didn't want to be turned back in?

GARVELINK: I think it was because they didn't trust us. The whole trip was very peculiar. We went on to Addis after Khartoum. We saw both sides of the ward, sometimes from the EPLF trenches and sometimes from the Ethiopian side. Very weird to be in the trenches looking at the other side a quarter or half mile away. We also did a humanitarian assessment in Ethiopia for another week or ten days.

About a year later, I was at a reception at the Foreign Service Club and Isaias Afwerki was there. I asked him whether he had planned from the beginning to stick us with the Polish sailors when we initially asked permission to visit the EPLF area. He said, "You bet. We didn't know what to do with them and when we got your request to come visit, we thought, ah, we've got a way to get rid of these people. Of course we were going to stick you with them." He just laughed. But that was a really peculiar trip.

I wrote this up in a book edited by Janet Ballantyne (*Fifty Years in USAID, Stories from the Frontline*). Janet had asked me to provide a goofy story from my disaster days. This one definitely qualified. We had gone out to look at how bad food shortages were and ended up with quite a different adventure.

Q: OK, if you've just completed your story about going to the Soviet embassy and notifying them that there were three of their citizens lost in Eritrea, we are ready to move on.

GARVELINK: About the same time that all this was going on, you need to remember that Operation Lifeline Sudan was happening. In addition, Somalia was coming to everybody's attention. Clan conflicts, anti-government actions, and drought had created massive displacements of people and thousands of deaths in 1989 when we became involved. This got even worse after the president Mohamed Siad Barre was ousted in 1991 and the country went into civil war. Andrew Natsios, who now was the head of OFDA, and I went to Somalia a couple of times to take a look around, given what we were hearing from the United Nations and the NGO community. It was a very different place than Sudan and much more dangerous because of the various clans fighting with each other and the general chaos.

So, our first couple of trips to Somalia, we got to know the head of Conoco Oil, a Belgian, former Special Forces Belgian guy, who lived most of the time in Texas, but was the president of Conoco Somalia. We would stay at his compound that had two big houses. We would fly in on a little plane out of Wilson Airport in Nairobi and land in Mogadishu. He would come with three cars to pick us up. Each of the cars had a couple of guys with a M-18 rocket launcher they carried with them. So, no one would mess with us. For the next couple of days, we'd visit the UN and NGOs that were working there.

As I mentioned earlier, I have long been partial to the international Red Cross. During one of our visits to Somalia, they arranged for Andrew and me to meet with clan elders. The food that we were shipping in for the NGOs was being stolen regularly, and this was a major problem. During our discussion with the clan elders, Andrew made clear that this

would have to stop. Their reaction was very interesting. They saw it as free food that didn't belong to any clan; it didn't belong to anybody. Andrew, as always quick witted, explained in great detail that this food belonged to the American clan and that you can't do this anymore. And it worked. It cut down on the theft a great deal for some time, but then it started up again.

So, we went back a few more times, taking our old mentor, Fred Cuny. He suggested that it would be better to try to work within the existing system on the ground. He recommended selling the U.S. food in Mombasa, Kenya, to the clans, letting them bring it into Somalia with agreement that they would have to sell it to various clans in certain areas of Somalia and below a certain price. The U.S. would monitor the system, and if they violated the agreement regarding sale to designated clans and areas or sold at a higher price, they could never buy food from the U.S. again. It worked pretty well. The clans knew exactly which clan owned that food and that if they went after it they'd have war on their hands. So, the lesson learned was to work with the existing system and set our rules. In this case, they followed our rules for the most part.

We had another interesting problem that involved donated rice from the Middle East. It is a real high-value food and would therefore be stolen from the port and from warehouses around the city of Mogadishu. It would then be sold at very high prices to those who could afford it.

Q: This is interesting. Rice is coming from the Middle East where it isn't grown so it must have been purchased by whatever the Middle East governments are and stored and then shipped on.

GARVELINK: I didn't understand it either but that's exactly right. The donated rice was supposed to be used by the NGOs and ICRC in Mogadishu and the surrounding area for wet feeding for displaced persons. Fred watched this process for a little while and came up with a proposal that the ICRC, NGOs, UN, and we agreed to. He recommended hosing down the rice as soon as it arrived in the port. It would rot within 2 or 3 days, but that would give ICRC and the NGOS time to cook the rice but would not give enough time for thieves to steal, store, and re-sell.

Q: So, it was coming in fast enough that you could use it that quickly?

GARVELINK: Yes. There wasn't an enormous amount of rice coming in so when it came, they would be ready to use it quickly for the noon feedings, especially for little kids and mothers. There were a lot of IDPs in Mogadishu and in the surrounding region and that's where it was used. It wasn't shipped to other parts of the country.

Q: For this feeding, were you able to include vitamins or other ingredients to make it a little bit more nutritious?

GARVELINK: I am not sure, but would be willing to bet that ICRC, the International Medical Corps, CARE, and some Irish NGOs did. Certainly, supplementary feeding

programs were happening at the big health clinics. I can add that the clans who had been involved in the theft of rice were very upset. The Somali who managed the process, the early hosing of the rice and rapid loading on trucks, was assassinated. I happened to be at the port one day and waved to him. I was going over to talk to him when there was a shot from outside the compound. He was killed. It was a very dangerous place, which will come up a number of times while I was in Somalia. But it was getting worse all the time.

Andrew asked me to take a delegation of NGO CEOs (Chief Executive Officers) to Somalia to see the situation. We went to Mogadishu and then to a southeastern city, Baidoa, which was fairly large. That resulted in yet another memorable experience. We went to a health clinic that happened to be run by the International Medical Corps. They were doing surgery on a young woman who had been shot in the leg, only they didn't have any anesthetic. They were taking the bullet out, and it was awful to witness. The volunteer doctors were equally upset, saying they couldn't do this anymore, that they had the skills to operate but they couldn't bring themselves to do it without anesthetics. It was tough to witness.

Q: Right. And if they don't have anesthetics do they even have antibiotics for the post-surgery and all that?

GARVELINK: Sometimes but not always in those days. The next day in Baidoa, while the NGO heads were in another meeting, I went to see old friends at the ICRC and spent the day on something called the Death Wagon. It was a bus that would drive on the roads coming into Mogadishu—or Baidoa. People were walking to the cities to get food, and some were in such bad shape that they dropped dead. So, ICRC was picking up bodies along the road. They did that every morning and every evening. It was a rough environment.

After a while, the Conoco people closed their compound, so we would then stay at the International Medical Corps guesthouse in Mogadishu, which was an interesting place on its own. The guy who was the country director there, Stephen Tomlin, is now retired and living in Los Angeles. In hiring local staff, he tried to have equal representation from different clans. At one point, he fired some staff, and their clan came by later that day with guns and tried to kill him. Fortunately, they missed, but the wall behind his desk was peppered with bullet holes. It was a very weird place to do business.

As another example, there was an American nurse with IMC who was very shy and quiet; everyone called her Mother Teresa. The IMC did some of its work at a local hospital in Mogadishu, and I was there at one point when three or four clan members came in, heavily armed, and they said to the surgeon, “You're going to work on our person. We don't care about this guy you're currently working on.” She was the head nurse and drove them out. It was absolutely astounding, this quiet, shy person chased these guys out of the operating room and out of the next room, and the surgeons continued doing what they were doing. It was amazing to watch her come to life when her operating room was threatened. Afterwards, she returned to her shy, quiet self.

Bob Arnot, the CBS News doctor, would also stay at the IMC guesthouse. He would set up his satellite phone in the compound for broadcasts. Since he only had to use it for about an hour a day, he told others at the guesthouse that they could also make calls. So, that's how I called home most of the time when I was there. He did the same thing when I ran into him later in the Rwandan refugee camps in Eastern Congo. We got to know one another well, and he would sometimes call to ask where the next emergencies would be. He said that CBS was not big on sending reporters overseas to cover this stuff, so he needed extra time to make a strong case.

Q: Okay. And just a quick milestone. You had mentioned that the president was finally overthrown. It was 1991 when he was overthrown.

GARVELINK: Yeah. The fighting has been going on since 1989, and then Mohamed Siad Barre was overthrown in 1991. This was followed by more civil unrest and violence. Mohamed Aidid was one of the rebel military leaders and became a very big player. By 1992, with deteriorating conditions and an agreement that the U.S. military would provide some airlift support for food delivery, we decided to send a DART (Disaster Assistance Response Team) into Somalia. It was in fact the first time an official DART team went out; I was the head of it. The decision had already been made about U.S. military involvement, but it was still not widely known, so we made our plans independently. We flew initially to Nairobi where we would be based. When we landed, the embassy was waiting for me with a car. They said I had to go to the foreign ministry to explain what we were going to be doing there. We zipped past the embassy, and I switched into a suit and met General Frank Libutti, who would be leading the airlift. Apparently, ten C-130s and fourteen C-141s had landed the night before in Mombasa where there is a big warehouse just off the runway that is owned by the U.S. Navy. The airlift was going to operate out of there. Because of a local holiday, they had not cleared the landings with the Kenyan government. The Kenyan foreign ministry was beside itself. It was an interesting meeting—I didn't really have any role to play. General Libutti explained what was going on. So, after a couple of hours it was all sorted out.

The DART team set up at the Hilton Hotel in Nairobi which was right across the street from the USAID mission. The military had a much larger team in Mombasa with about 700 people. We also put about three or four of our people there. We also had access to a small charter plane at Jomo Kenyatta Airport, so I would go down to Mombasa four or five times a week to see General Libutti and to sort out issues.

The DART had a few problems from the outset. just getting going. When we arrived, the NGOs had been there for several years, and I wanted everyone on the DART to recognize that we were relative newcomers and that we should be humble. I tried to show this sensitivity at our first briefing for the NGOs. Fred Cuny was with me, and he was a bit more straightforward, telling everyone to "Listen up. Here's what's going to happen. You guys gotta keep up with us." It took me two or three weeks to apologize to everybody. While a brilliant man, Fred could sometimes not be sensitive enough to others.

Q: Let me ask you here. Since you've got the DART team on the ground, you're getting underway, U.S. military has its assets deployed, was the general talking to you about how dangerous the overall situation was? Because we're not very far away from Black Hawk Down.

GARVELINK: Yes, we were about a year, year and a half away from that. We did know it was dangerous through the RSO (Regional Security Officer). I'd forgotten about this, but at one point I was in the hotel in Mombasa, near the airport, and there was a *USA Today* reporter. She was asking lots of questions of me and the other people from my team. When I asked what she was doing, she said they were preparing obituaries in case any of us got killed. So, everybody was very aware of how bad it was.

This was the first time we really worked with the military on a food airlift. Initially, they would airlift food to Wajir in Kenya where the NGOs would pick it up and then distribute it into Somalia. A bit later, the airlifts expanded into three or four locations in Somalia. There were some interesting issues that arose, such as inconsistent data on food delivery. We'd report on the food delivery and then, on the daily briefing at the Pentagon they'd report on the food delivery. And the numbers were always different. That was driving the Pentagon and us nuts. It took us about a month to figure out that the international community used the metric system, but the U.S. military does not. So, it took us a while to get the military to use the metric system so the data would be consistent. Finally, they made the change.

The other issue, which persisted long after I stopped coordinating this from the field, was airdrops. It's sexy, it looks good, but you've got to have more people when you do an airdrop on the ground than you do when you deliver it by truck. Way back in Somalia we did it with the UN and a young woman got hit and she was paralyzed from the waist down. She got hit by a bag of something. I told them that we're not doing this anymore.

So, for the whole time I was there it drove them nuts. They said, "We want to practice. We can use this. It's a tricky maneuver and this is our opportunity to work on it too." I said, "No, you're not going to do that." Without more people on the ground, the guys with the guns will get most of the food. It doesn't make any sense unless you're on an island. It's a very unique circumstance where airdrop makes sense. So, I never let them do it. It's interesting that in disaster response, the military defers to a small government office like OFDA on these kinds of issues.

Q: The only other question I have about airdropping aid is that the amount of aid that reaches people in need must be considerably less than the amount you could deliver by land using trucks or other forms of land transport.

GARVELINK: True. And that's why, to me, it's only appropriate in very specialized, isolated places where you can't get a truck in, where there aren't guys with guns waiting to steal it all. They still wanted to do it, and it was a bit of a sore point between us and the military, but they nonetheless never did an airdrop during that airlift period.

Throughout this, we were based in Nairobi, although there was an agreement that I could go to Mogadishu overnight or for maybe two days. That's it. Otherwise, we were in Nairobi for security reasons. We would take off from Wilson Airport in small planes, chartered by the International Medical Corps, about 9:00 in the morning. These flights were for people, not relief supplies, so we had to compete with others going in and out of Somalia. If the plane was full, we would have to wait and go the next day. We used to see the multiple khat flights that also went back and forth between Kenya and Somalia. The khat flights would land at Kilometer 42; the flights would land and trucks would be waiting for them. They would then tear down the road very fast. People learned not to be on the road during that time; it was too dangerous as the vehicles sped and slowed for no one. We usually landed later and also hurried along the road.

Q; Yeah. One—just one question about khat because it's so popular and every clan wants it. Were you able to extract any benefit from supplying it? Little agreements with the clans.

GARVELINK: No, we never did that. Never thought of that. So, no, it never came up. That's how we lived until December 1992. Then the U.S. decided to expand the U.S. presence from Operation Provide Relief to Operation Restore Hope. I had returned to the U.S. in November, and then in the very first days of December, I was heading back to Somalia, and I ran into General Tony Zinni at Dulles Airport. He said that he was going to the same place as I was, although he was first heading to the EUCOM offices. I went on to Nairobi and was there for a few days before heading to Somalia. We had made arrangements to take over the Conoco compound that would be used as the U.S. embassy, and I was moving the headquarters of our DART team to Mogadishu. The main office would still be in Nairobi because of better communications there, and we also maintained a small office in Mombasa. We ultimately also opened other places in Somalia.

But, we started out in the Conoco compound. When I flew in, our plane was diverted to a place north of Mogadishu where we had to spend two nights at an ICRC health center. That was when (Dec. 9) the first 1,800 U.S. marines were coming ashore in Mogadishu, and the airport was closed. You may remember that they arrived in landing craft and waded ashore. So, I didn't get into Mogadishu until the next day.

The United Nations was also growing its numbers; its head was Phil Johnson who had previously been the head of CARE. The Marines had a CMOC, a Civil Military Operations Center, set up there too, headed by Colonel Kevin Kennedy, who later retired from the Marine Corps and became a senior official in the UN. And then, General Zinni had a humanitarian advisor, Colonel Bob McPherson. I worked very closely with those three guys; we would have morning and afternoon coordination meetings with the U.S. military, the NGOs, the UN, and as more coalition partners showed up there, about how to escort convoys. We dealt with all the issues that came up from working together.

We soon got word that Bob Oakley would be coming as the Special Envoy for Somalia. I had never met him but did hear that he could be grumpy at times. In those early days, one of the houses in the old Conoco compound was for offices and the other for living and

relaxing. There were a couple of SAT phones. I was on one of the SAT phones one afternoon, talking to Washington, and this guy came upstairs and told me to get off the phone. I assumed it might be Ambassador Oakley and therefore quickly got off. I hung around a bit, wondering who he was calling. He called President Bush, so I thought it was perfectly legitimate to tell me to get off the phone.

We ended up spending a lot of time together and became very good friends. I became an incredible fan and learned a great deal from him and John Hirsch, who became ambassador in Sierra Leone. He became the DCM in Somalia a bit later. I always laugh when I think of Oakley and his early attempts to keep the little embassy in Somalia from getting some of the normal communications systems. He joked that he preferred to work through phone calls; that a formal cable system would lead to too many instructions from Washington. Ultimately of course, the systems were put in.

Q: That's great, yeah.

GARVELINK: He was quite a character.

So, that was the set up in Mogadishu. We were operating out of the UN office in Mogadishu but were living at the Conoco compound. Again, it was a dangerous place. And we were packed in, often four or five to each bedroom. They kept it very confined for security reasons. We set up some room on the office roof with some canopies where we could sit and relax, even have a drink or two, play cards, listen to music, and simply relax. One time, many of us were up there and all of a sudden bullets started bouncing off the wrought iron table and we dove. Fortunately, no one was hit. The next day there were snipers, marine snipers, on every one of the taller buildings nearby. So, we could go back out there now and relax. Twenty-four hours a day, the snipers were there.

Oh, one issue worth mentioning: at one point I had to go to Merca, which is a port just below the Port of Mogadishu, a little port. Colonel William Ward, an Army guy, and I were going to talk to some clan elders. Even though he was Army, we were accompanied by a fellow from the Marine Reserves. He was Somali American and spoke Somali. After the meeting I asked him his name and he said Adid. Ward and I said that it sounded like the name of the warlord that seemed to be running things. He smiled and said it was his father. The next day Colonel Ward had him sent back to California, and we never heard from him again. Later when I was ambassador in the Congo, General Ward, a four-star, was the first head of AFRICOM.

Fred Cuny and I had a meeting with Oakley, Hirsch, General Zinni, and General Johnston, the three- or four-star who was head of the whole operation. Fred suggested that more of the troops be dispersed to the major cities, so that the people could see that they were not evil forces. Ambassador Oakley and I devised a plan to build trust with the local communities. For example, the day before troops arrived in Baidoa, Oakley and I traveled there to meet with the local town and clan elders and explain what would be happening. Oakley also encouraged them to put away any weapons and strongly said that security was essential. We explained that the troops would meet with them to talk with

them and learn the most important humanitarian needs they had. Oakley also stressed that we wanted representation from women and religious leaders in the meeting and urged them to hold their community meetings immediately in order to be prepared to talk with the troops the next day. To reinforce the importance of security, Oakley would look to me, and I would then signal a Navy officer standing in the back; he would then call in two fighter jets to make two passes over the meeting at treetop level. Oakley wouldn't say anything but would then get on a helicopter and leave.

I would spend the night. For example, in Baidoa, I stayed with the IMC folks. In other towns, I stayed with other NGOs. As the sun came up in the morning, a convoy of trucks and Humvees would drive in -- often preceded by helicopters crisscrossing the town at low altitude. The first guy would be Colonel Buck Bedard, a Marine. I can't remember what the three or four most important needs were for the leaders from Baidoa. But, in general, it was usually a school, a health clinic, a well dug, something like that. I would have usually met beforehand with the NGO community to see what they thought the major needs were. Once we got the priorities defined by the communities, I would say that the NGOs would be there the next day to start the work. The next morning the NGOs showed up and did indeed start. It worked well and had a big impact on the local population. I did it in Baidoa, Bardere, and one or two other communities. Kate Farnsworth, who was my deputy, did others. It was a smart thing to do and built confidence.

I also learned a lot about the military and who does what to whom. On one of my trips out to a town, I was told by the presiding Colonel that they couldn't give me a ride back to Mogadishu that day. I was feeling sorry for myself that I had to spend one more night there. I happened to walk by a sergeant who saw that I was unhappy and offered me some fresh fruit. I thanked him and then mentioned that I was stuck because there were no vehicles. When he found out I was only going to Mogadishu, he said he'd have a truck there in a few minutes and would drive me back. So, I got in the back of this truck and waved at the Colonel as I went past. (Tauber laughs) You've got to learn who you need to talk to. It may not be the colonel; sometimes, it is best to find the sergeant who runs everything.

Q: Beautiful.

GARVELINK: I certainly learned a lot about dealing with the military. Kate Farnsworth and I worked very closely with General Zinni and his team. This was the first time that we, the DART team, had such a close working relationship with the military, especially the Marines. It served us well over the longer term, especially since General Zinni became CENTCOM commander.

He was a big supporter. We got on his nerves at times, but he saw the importance of the humanitarian work we did and was very supportive. He pops up multiple times in my career, including the breakup of the Soviet Union, and later when he was CENTCOM commander. He and Colonel Kevin Kennedy stand out as two who did more than others

to build the relationship between AID, particularly OFDA, and the military. They were outstanding in every sense of the word.

I need to mention another very noteworthy event in Somalia. The UN Secretary General, Perez de Cuellar, was coming to Somalia. I went into work early that morning from the Conoco compound to help Kevin Kennedy and the UN folks to get ready for this big event. For some reason, Mohamed Aidid and his clan were unhappy about the arrival of the secretary general and attacked the compound. Kevin Kennedy and the Marines took up defensive positions around the compound. I was still there, as were a lot of local staff and a team of Norwegian chefs who were there to prepare the meal. But the place was surrounded by Aidid's men, and no one could get in or get out. I would call Kate Farnsworth at the embassy/Conoco compound every hour. She would then update Oakley. When Perez de Cuellar arrived in country, he was diverted to the U.S. military compound. He never made it to the UN compound. Oakley was trying to tell Aidid to stop the siege, that it was counterproductive. They finally left around 3:00 or 4:00 that afternoon, but the SGY's group never got to us. The Norwegian chefs had, of course, continued their work throughout the siege, so those of us in the compound had a very fancy two-hour lunch with salmon and other fine things. There were lots of leftovers, so we told the local staff to take them home. I had to laugh that we had this feast while General Zinni and the others were probably stuck with only MREs (Meals Ready to Eat) at the military base. It was an interesting time!

At the very end of December, we then began planning for a visit by President Bush.

Q: His last days in the presidency.

GARVELINK: Yes. He was going to be there from December 31 to January 2, if I remember correctly. I was working with Bob McPherson, who worked with General Zinni, to plan a big chunk of the visit. One day late in the afternoon, we were going to the embassy/Conoco compound to have dinner and brief Ambassador Oakley on the plans. We had a Humvee assigned to us, and as we left the airport, there were three guys waiting in the parking lot who got out of their car and started shooting at us. McPherson and I stayed low in the Humvee, and our driver, a long-time sergeant, jumped out and used his M-16 to kill the three guys who were shooting at us. We then continued on our way to brief Oakley. Yet another very unpleasant experience. Interestingly, when some news media spoke with the sergeant the next day, asking him for his wishes at Christmas, he said he hoped he wouldn't have to kill anyone else. He acted automatically to save us when he began shooting the rebels, but he was also very affected by it. The military faces lots of challenges the rest of us don't really understand.

I should also make clear that President Bush did come, and it was a very nice visit.

More generally, this collaboration with the NGO community, the military, and the United Nations worked well and set a precedent for future crises in which we all worked together. I went back to Washington shortly after the Bush visit, although the operations continued for a long time. Kate Farnsworth was the DART leader -- and probably the best

DART leader ever. She ran most of our DART teams. When new teams were deployed, I would quite often go out for a week or two to get things started. Then, for the next six, eight months Kate would run everything. usually started the DART operations because she was already running one some other place. She was based in Ethiopia but would head anywhere in the world to lead the DARTs.

My last trip to Somalia was in October 1993. I went out with someone from the USAID Africa Bureau to look at some refugee camps and displaced persons camps. It was on October 3, 1993. I had spent the day before there and was at the airport to catch one of the C-130s to Mombasa. I remember thinking that something was up, as the Special Forces guys were usually playing volleyball or relaxing at the airport base. That day, however, they were packing up to do something. By the time I landed in Mombasa, a couple of those helicopters with the Special Forces guys had been shot down. That was Black Hawk Down Day. By the time I got into the AID mission, the embassy in Nairobi had a lot more information on how bad it was. That was the last time I laid foot in Somalia.

Q: Since this is the end of this part of your story, were the huge refugee flows leaving Somalia into Ethiopia, some into Kenya, was this already going on?

GARVELINK: Oh, yes. That started really in the late eighties.

Q: Mm-hm. And how were they being serviced? Were USAID or DART teams there or was that more UNHCR and the internationals?

GARVELINK: That was more UNHCR and State/PRM. Or RP, Refugee Programs, in those days.

Most of the work was being done out of Wajir in Kenya. The U.S. Ambassador to Kenya, Smith Hempstone, often went up to Wajir. As I recall, he was promoting early on the need for U.S. military support and wrote a cable, "A Day in Hell," which described the situation and got a lot of attention. It may even have influenced the decision to do the air lift.

The refugee camp in Wajir is probably the biggest in the world and the home for two or three generations of Somalis. The camp is on the Kenya side of the border and is made up of about four camps but is usually referred to as one. In total, there's probably 100,000 people now, so it's down from bigger numbers in the past. UNHCR has been the lead actor at the camp, along with the NGO community and PRM. OFDA sometimes helps because of its flexible funding, but, in general, refugees are handled by PRM. IDPs in Somalia are a different matter. The camps in Kenya and Southern Ethiopia are unfortunately very grim.

Q: All right. We've basically gotten to the end of at least this tour with regard to Somalia. What new disaster looms ahead?

GARVELINK: Oh, this is a familiar one. It's the Iraq war. The first Gulf War was in 1991, but in the aftermath, the Kurds had thought the U.S. would support their efforts to challenge Saddam Hussein. We did not. Saddam Hussein responded in an incredibly vicious way, so the Kurds fled to refugee camps in the mountains of Turkey.

Not too long after that happened, the Secretary of State (James Baker) went to Turkey in April 1991 and was shown the Kurdish refugee camps up in the mountains in Turkey. He was appalled by what he saw and called the administrator of AID, asking him to "Do something." That meant OFDA. Also, hearing about the conditions of the camps, Dick Cheney, then Secretary of Defense, had diverted some civil affairs officers who had been on their way home to the Kurdish camps.

Q: Interesting. Interesting.

GARVELINK: I was in Somalia at the time so Dayton Maxwell, who was the deputy director in OFDA, was going to take the team out for the first ten days or so. I would then head out and take over the team. That was the plan. Dayton and the DART were very surprised when they arrived to find CDC (Centers for Disease Control) people and Forest Service people in the camps. There were also Special Forces guys immunizing kids and dealing with malnourished kids in the camp clinics. When asked what they were doing in the camps, they simply said "That's what we do. We come in, take care of the kids, talk to the mothers, that's how we find out what's going on. And we always do this." That was the first time our DART team ran into Special Forces folks in a displaced persons camp.

Q: That's fascinating.

GARVELINK: Yeah. They didn't think anything was out of the ordinary. They were just medics doing their thing and being helpful.

Anyway, I got all geared up and headed first to the European Command where I met with General John Davey. He was an air force two-star and was the head of planning, the J5, at EUCOM. Because we had never really worked together this way before, we decided to set up a EUCOM-OFDA team in Stuttgart to help coordinate the U.S. humanitarian response. They called it Care-A-Cell. I asked them not to, that it would create confusion with the NGO Care. But, they still went ahead and called it a Care-A-Cell. I asked an old friend and a senior manager within AID, Walter North, who was between assignments to run this for OFDA and to coordinate with the military. He fortunately agreed. At this point, the military had little experience working with NGOs. Among other things, the military had trouble believing the lack of resources and sophisticated technology of the NGOs. It was important to have Walter there, so they could bounce ideas off him -- and he could then give them a better picture of reality. I actually wrote this up in a report called "Meeting the Challenge of International Peace Operations: Assessing the Contribution of Technology." It was initially delivered at a conference at Lawrence Livermore Laboratories, and it's in a book they published. It was good that we set up the coordination unit in Stuttgart.

I then went off to Incirlik, Turkey, arriving later than expected because of delays at Rammstein Air Force Base in Germany. We arrived late at night and I was beat, but a car was there waiting to take me to a meeting with Colonel Zinni. The driver told me that he was "pretty upset." Colonel Zinni was the chief-of-staff for General Shalikashvili, who was running the entire operation. Apparently, they were having a disagreement with Fred Cuny on how to set up the IDP camps. The military wanted to set them up similar to a military camp with long lines and latrines at the end. Cuny told them they couldn't do that in a refugee or IDP camp, that they needed to set it up around sanitation systems and families. It should be set up in a circle with the sanitation system in the center. This would ensure greater safety, especially for the women, and ensure better upkeep of the systems by the families. He emphasized that it was not a military setting. But Zinni was angry and my assumption was that Zinni was representing the boss. So, I assured Zinni that I would work things out with Fred.

The next morning, I met with General Shalikashvili. We had a relaxed conversation over coffee, and there was no mention of the meeting with Zinni the night before. The UK force commander also joined us, and it was decided that the British General and I would go by helicopter that afternoon to General Garner's base in Zakho, Iraq. I spent three or four days in northern Iraq. Each day General Garner and I would take helicopters to identify potential places to set up the Kurdish IDP camps. Several times, we stopped at Saddam Hussein palaces for a look around. They were pretty opulent.

The UN and NGOs were also starting to show up, although they, especially the European NGOs, were uncomfortable in those early days dealing with the U.S. military. General Garner and I began to hold humanitarian coordination meetings. On the fourth day, after our flight landed, I saw Julia Taft and an NGO delegation. When I waved to her, I couldn't see my hand for some reason. But, lots was happening, so I ignored it. That night, the Kurds began coming out of the mountains, crossing into northern Iraq. We were up all night assisting Kurdish families and reuniting kids who had been separated from their families. In the morning, there was a civil-military meeting at the UN. I went to it with Colonel Mike Hess, an Army Civil Affairs Officer. Each time I looked at my hand, I saw less of it. Finally, I asked Hess to get me to a doctor. He commandeered somebody's Humvee (Tauber laughs) and we took off down the road and found a couple of marine flight surgeons in a little health unit. The doctor said he could see my eye "coming apart" and that I needed to get out of there immediately. Fifteen minutes later, I was on a helicopter to Silopi, Turkey and a MASH (Mobile Army Surgical Hospital) unit there. They spent several hours working on my eye and determined it was a detached retina. They arranged for a helicopter to take me to Incirlik. I can still remember hearing them tell the pilots not to go above a certain altitude because of the eye injury. When we landed in Incirlik, General Shalikashvili was there. He and Fred Cuny both stayed with me for four or five hours until an Air Force air ambulance was ready to take me to Landstuhl.

Q: Interesting.

GARVELINK: Since they were with me, I didn't waste the time and got them to agree to set up refugee camps like Fred wanted to. Then, I went off to Landstuhl in the wee hours

of the morning. There were also two young soldiers on the flight who had been injured in a fuel truck explosion the day before. They both died on the flight, so we diverted to Italy to offload their bodies before heading on to Landstuhl. They did not have the capacity to deal with my eye but arranged for me to go to a university hospital in Homberg. I had three operations there over about six weeks, but none were successful. Linda, my wife, had been checking for experts in the U.S. and identified Howard Cupples at Georgetown University, one of the world's experts on the retina. So, Landstuhl agreed to release me to Dr. Cupples.

So, I flew into Andrews Air Force Base and went by ambulance to Georgetown. Over the next three or four years, they did eight or nine operations on the eye. None of them worked. I don't see out of this eye and lost my medical clearance. Since I was seeing the doctor for years, he was able to write letters to State/MED each time I wanted to travel, saying that it would be okay with him. I then would be allowed to travel. But the lack of a medical clearance did mean that I stayed in OFDA until 1999. During those years at OFDA, I was traveling all over the place and doing whatever I wanted to do. It never slowed me down. Also, it had the benefit of helping my wife's career in Washington. She liked doing her thing, and I liked the OFDA people and the work, so I didn't push it too hard. Anyway, that's why I ended up staying for nine or ten years in OFDA as assistant director for Africa, deputy director and two or three different times acting director.

Q: But through all this time it really didn't matter for the work you did. You compensated and it was adequate.

GARVELINK: Yeah, it was like people who are born with one eye. You get used to it. I'm not really good at parking between lines, and I might not get wine into a glass when I try to pour it. (Tauber laughs) So, depth perception is a problem.

Interestingly, when I first started in OFDA in 1987, several AID people told me that I was ruining my career, that AID does development work, not this disaster stuff. Some of them never spoke to me again.

During this same time that OFDA was doing so much work in Somalia and Sudan, similar problems were arising in Angola. There was a civil war between the government and Jonas Savimbi and UNITA (National Union for the Total Independence of Angola). There were many displaced persons and refugees, and the humanitarian situation was really bad. In this case, there was no U.S. presence in Angola. So, Julia Taft and I talked it over and decided that I would go out to look at the situation in Angola with a guy named Richard Howe, a Food for Peace officer. Because there was no U.S. presence, the Brits met us at the airport and took us around. And (laughs) interestingly, we were told the Consular Affairs for the United States was being held by the Italians. So, when we got there, we went to see the Italians to check in, and they were surprised. The people we talked to had no idea about an agreement, but we nonetheless checked in with them.

Q: Okay.

GARVELINK: We made the rounds to see the United Nations, which had a fair presence there, the British and Italian embassies, and a group of Canadian NGOs called Canadian Workshop. Of course, we also touched base with the government. But, we had the most contact with the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) which had the biggest presence in the country.

Q: Did anyone give you a security briefing on your own personal security in a country in conflict?

GARVELINK: No. I don't recall a briefing, but the Brits, I'm sure, talked a little bit about it. But, nothing formal except with the ICRC. We met with them shortly after arriving and they said we would need a security briefing before flying with them to sites around the country. The next morning, we went to the ICRC offices, and their chief of party began to brief us. And it was interesting. A new C-130 that ICRC had chartered from Canada had just arrived and the pilots, still half asleep from their long trip, were also in the briefing. Midway through the briefing, the ICRC guy said, "Oh, and by the way, the reason you fellows are here with a new C-130 is because UNITA shot down the other one." And boy, did they wake up and pay more attention to the ICRC briefing.

Q: Right.

GARVELINK: And it was interesting for me. The next day we went with ICRC to one of the provincial capitals. Because of the conflict setting, the pilots had to do a corkscrew landing. I was standing in the cockpit with the pilot and co-pilot and they hadn't bothered to mention that would happen. It was the first time I experienced that kind of landing. In later years, I did many. This first one was very interesting. (Laughs)

Q: Just a very quick kind of wonky question. C-130s typically are not outfitted for passengers. They're outfitted for soldiers, troops to just sit in long lines.

GARVELINK: Right.

Q: And sometimes they don't even have a bathroom facility on it.

GARVELINK: Right.

Q: Were your trips long and uncomfortable?

GARVELINK: No, this was a cargo plane, so there were slings on the side of the plane in the back or you could stand by the pilots if they let you up into the front with them. You're right, it had no bathrooms. Around Angola the longest flight was about an hour and a half for a C-130, so it wasn't a big deal. But no, that's exactly how this was outfitted. There were no seats on the plane other than slings on the side.

Q: Right.

GARVELINK: We also drove around the country when we could, working with the UN. The World Food Program was very big, so we spent a lot of time with them. We also went to displaced persons' camps and small villages that had been isolated because of the fighting with UNITA. The other interesting thing was the large number of Russians and Cubans. They seemed to be everywhere.

Q: Of course.

GARVELINK: We were kind of a novelty, and everywhere we went they were photographing us. We'd go back to our hotel rooms and obviously, someone had gone through the room and luggage. When you'd make phone calls, they weren't very subtle about it, you could hear them on the phone (Tauber laughs) as we were talking to Washington. I assume it was the government, Russians, and Cubans at different times checking on us.

The only hotel in those days was the Presidente Hotel, which was right downtown and about two blocks from the port in Luanda. During the day, when the port was open, there was nothing going on. But once it closed at dark, oh, man, it was the busiest port. They were moving stuff in and out with a vengeance. It looked like a hub of illegal activity, but only at night. Richard needed to see the port in order to determine if it would be capable of handling the kinds of ships that would bring food in. So, he did an inspection of the facilities, which were fine. (Laughs)

When we got back to Washington, we briefed everybody about the situation and asked InterAction, the association of NGOs here in Washington, to identify a team of NGOs to go to Angola for a more detailed assessment. Representatives from OFDA and Food for Peace would accompany them. That happened in 1989; it was the beginning of humanitarian assistance in government-held areas of Angola.

Not too long after that assistance started, a representative from UNITA's lobbying firm in Washington came to see me and said they wanted the same amount of assistance as we were giving to the government. I explained that we would first need to do an assessment and that it would determine the amount and kinds of assistance. UNITA's rep said they simply wanted the money, that they would then decide how to use it. We said no and they said, "forget it." (Laughs) We did expand our programs in the government-held areas with several NGOs. The main ones were the International Rescue Committee, CARE, Save the Children, AFRICARE, and International Medical Corps. They were all starting health and food distribution programs.

About a year later, 1990 or so, the lobbyist came back and said, "Okay, okay. We really do need humanitarian assistance. You can do your assessment. You can do whatever you want in our territory. We'll facilitate everything but we need assistance." So, again we asked InterAction to identify an NGO team to accompany us on an assessment trip into UNITA territory.

Q: Let me just ask one quick question here. This is now—you're talking about 1989-1990?

GARVELINK: Yeah, somewhere around there, maybe 1991.

Q: The reason I'm asking about that particular moment is because you have the collapse of the Soviet Union and the end of the closest relations between the Soviets, the Russians and Cuba. The Soviets are no longer subsidizing a lot of things in Cuba. Is that what you began to—in the background gave you the opportunity then for a change in U.S. policy to be able to interact more with the government and UNITA?

GARVELINK: I never got very much involved in those discussions. I went to a few meetings with the Assistant Secretary for Africa, Chet Crocker, and then George Moose a bit later. I know that once we settled into our program, we started to see the Cubans depart. They didn't have the kind of presence they did when we first arrived. I don't think the Russians did either, as a matter of fact. They backed off a bit for other sorts of reasons.

Q: Yeah.

GARVELINK: That first assessment of needs in the UNITA-held areas was done, so we were working on both sides of the conflict. Andrew Natsios was still the OFDA director when we began work in the UNITA areas. He, Kate Farnsworth, our Africa coordinator, the CEO of the International Medical Corps, Nancy Aosse—her folks were the most active NGO in UNITA territory, and I went out to see the work. We went to Jamba in southeast Angola, flying in in the middle of the night from Pretoria on a little plane. I still remember Nancy asking why we were going in in the middle of the night. The answer was that Botswana had not approved us in their airspace and they could shoot us down if they wanted to. She simply said "okay." We landed about 2:00 in the morning and assigned us each to our own little tukul (round hut). I was quite impressed with my tukul. It had a sitting room, a full bar, and a shower. When I woke up in the morning one of their troops was there with a croissant and coffee.

Q: Wow.

GARVELINK: I was pretty impressed. It turns out that they had mixed up Andrew and me (Tauber laughs). Andrew was in a little tukul with a cot. We were only there for three or four days, and Andrew said to leave it as it was. So, I got the royal treatment.

We met with Savimbi's main doctor, who was a Portuguese doc, and visited multiple villages. We had decided where we wanted to go, and they didn't argue. (Laughs) At one point we were tearing along the Savannah in a pickup truck. I was sitting next to the driver in the front and all of a sudden, he slammed on the brakes, skidded to a stop, grabbed his rifle and took off. I didn't know what to think. (Laughs) And he came back with a gazelle he had shot. He said, "Dinner" and threw it in the back of the pickup and then off we went on our business.

We also met with Savimbi. He had a big bunker, big office, about thirty feet underground. You had to go down a stairwell. We had a long discussion with him about the humanitarian situation. He seemed to know what was going on and was quite impressive. They also had a fancy dinner for us the night before we left. In our final discussion with him at the airport as we were getting ready to depart, Savimbi threw his hat at me, asking that we not forget about them. I still have that hat. He was an interesting character. After that visit he came to Washington a number of times. UNITA used the Black, Manafort, Stone and Kelly law firm as their representatives.

Every time he came into town, they would call me to meet him. Once I asked him to come to OFDA to talk with Andrew. I explained that Andrew was the important guy, the one who approved all funding. He declined, saying that “He scares me.” (Tauber laughs). I thought, a little guy like Andrew. But when Andrew gets wound up, he can be very animated and point his finger at you for emphasis. I don’t think Savimbi liked that.

Q: Wow. (Laughs)

GARVELINK: So, we had a fairly good relationship with him, and UNITA did not interfere with anything we were doing there and were in fact very supportive of all the humanitarian activities the NGOs and the World Food Program were carrying out. We made regular trips to territory held by UNITA and by the government. We began to talk more with the UN, seeking a way to set up a program like Operation Lifeline Sudan. We wanted to make it more formal. We proposed bringing humanitarian assistance into UNITA controlled territory via Walvis Bay to a crossing point in Namibia adjacent to UNITA controlled territory. Everyone would agree upon the crossing points, and the government could check to assure that it was only humanitarian supplies. So, we decided, after talking briefly to everybody about it, that Andrew, Kate, and I would first go to Namibia and finalize arrangements with the government and UNITA.

Q: Just a quick question about Namibia. You were talking to Namibia because it borders and there were some cross-border issues about UNITA and displaced people?

GARVELINK: No. We wanted to bring the humanitarian supplies in through Walvis Bay.

Q: I see. Okay.

GARVELINK: And then drive up-country in Namibia and then cross into Angola. We wanted to make sure the Namibians would go along with that. So, we flew to Namibia, and the embassy facilitated us getting around. We had some meetings at a fairly low level and then decided to go to Walvis Bay to talk to the South Africans who were still running the port at that time. All the roads and other infrastructure were great, so it all seemed very doable. The manager of the port also agreed that they could easily handle the ships and humanitarian supplies.

We then returned to Windhoek but never did get to see senior folks before we had to leave. But, the signals had all been fairly positive so we felt any follow-up could be done

by the embassy. Kate then went to South Africa; Andrew and I then caught the Air Namibia flight to Frankfurt. The plane took off and we were in the air for about an hour and one of the flight attendants said, "Will the U.S. delegation please identify themselves." And Andrew and I were sitting next to each other, we thought, who in the world was in Namibia that we didn't know about? I mean, it's not that big of an embassy. About fifteen or twenty minutes later they repeated the announcement, and we thought, nah, couldn't be us, could it? So, I waved at the flight attendant and sure enough, it was us. The plane was a 747 and in the upper deck was President Nujoma of Namibia and his staff. So, we were escorted up to the upper deck of the 747. We were up there for about two hours. He knew that we had been seeking a meeting with his office, and he suggested we have the meeting on the flight. He agreed to everything.

We continued back to Washington, and a few weeks later we traveled again to Luanda to talk to the government. We had Savimbi's agreement, we had Namibia's agreement, and now we just had to get the main one, the Angolan government, to agree. An elaborate trip was planned for about ten days, and they sent us a schedule that included everything we wanted to do.

Q: Right. Uh-huh.

GARVELINK: We took a flight to the northern city of Malanje to meet with provincial and UN officials. The timing was not great. There had been very recent fighting between the government and UNITA, and the airport in Malanje was a mess, including a blown-up runway. But, we were able to have our meetings with the UN folks and visited the displaced persons camps, as well as some refugee camps with Congolese. We then headed back to Luanda. Every meeting that the government had set up for us was cancelled. And on the third day they had a big reception scheduled for us. We went to the reception, and we were the only ones there. No Angolan government representatives, only the NGOs we invited and the UN guys.

Q: Did you ever find out why?

GARVELINK: No. Again, it was Andrew, Kate, and me. We each had a car assigned to us, and they just sat outside the Presidente Hotel because there was nothing to do. After the reception fiasco, the three of us went up to the bar on the roof of the Presidente to discuss next steps. We decided to leave. Interestingly, while there, I saw one of the lobbyists from Black, Manafort and Stone at the bar, and he was all smiles. I lit into him with a vengeance and told him that we were leaving in the morning, that we would be meeting with Ambassador Swing in South Africa and then head back to Washington.

So, we left the next day and had our meeting with Bill Swing at his residence in the late afternoon. That evening he was hosting at his home a large charity ball to raise funds for the poor in South Africa. As we were departing at 5:00 or so, he came out of his house waving for us to stop. (Laughs) And he was laughing, saying that only the Angolans would do this. They were flying a military C-130 directly into Pretoria without any permissions. They wanted to talk to us, so Ambassador Swing told us to stay. He set up

some rooms in the back of the residence where we could meet with the Angolans. The South African military would be providing translators. He also offered to go back and forth from the gala to the meeting to provide help as needed.

So, about 7:00 at night the plane did land, and they drove a couple of generals to the residence. They apologized to Andrew, and we told them what we wanted to achieve. Then, Kate and I, with the two generals, wrote an agreement to support an initiative similar to Operation Lifeline Sudan. We finished up around 11:00 at night. After the Angolans left, the South Africans, Bill Swing, and our team had a good laugh and ate leftovers from the gala for dinner. The next day we flew back to Washington.

We never did find out why the Angolans did what they did when we were in country. It was the perfect schedule with all the people we needed to see, but none was true. I never did find out what set them off.

Q: But okay, so you're now talking to basically all the stakeholders in Angola but what were the key kinds of assistance that you were looking to provide or that they wanted you to provide?

GARVELINK: It was going to be healthcare, food, maternal and child healthcare, all the basic kinds of humanitarian assistance that you'd provide for displaced people and for communities riddled with landmines and thus unable to farm. Food, including supplementary food, and other basic emergency supplies like tarps would be needed.

Q: Yeah.

GARVELINK: They really didn't get involved. They were mostly concerned about where we crossed the border. We told them they could have people there to inspect every truck and that we or the NGOs would give them lists of everything. We told them that they had to leave the NGOs alone, that they are humanitarian workers. It was to be similar to the setup we put together for the Operation Lifeline Sudan. We had worked things out with the United Nations. There was a Portuguese guy, Ramiro da Silva, who was the head of the UN operations there who basically ran it. I don't think it worked as well as in Sudan or for as long. But we got it up and running to meet some of the urgent needs.

During the process, in 1992, a liaison office was opened in Angola, headed up by Jeff Millington. He kept an eye on it, and Kate Farnsworth, who was based in Addis, would go back and forth periodically and check on everything that was going on. So, we did get the thing set up and working for a few years.

Q: Yeah. Just one last quick question in terms of the areas of assistance. Were you already needing to provide prophylaxis and treatment for AIDS?

GARVELINK: No, not at that point. I don't think so. Doesn't ring a bell.

Q: Okay.

GARVELINK: At the same time, from 1990 to 1993, I was also going back and forth to Angola with Jeff Davidow, who was the State Department's PDAS of the Africa bureau. It was Jeff, Jim Woods, Bob Periet, and Charlie Snyder, all from State/Africa bureau, trying to negotiate some kind of peace agreement. I was the AID guy working with them. There were discussions on a ceasefire between UNITA and the government, as well as demobilization. During each visit, we would meet with dos Santos and his senior military and political folks. I would always get a half an hour or so to talk about humanitarian needs and our programming. This included discussing DDR, Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration of troops and how we'd set up camps. Jeff Davidow was very clear in telling the Angolans that the humanitarian side is just as important as all the other issues we have. He always gave me as much time as I needed.

Q: Okay.

GARVELINK: Again, this was all before the liaison office was set up. The Brits would pick us up and help with logistics. After our meetings, we would have a briefing for selected diplomats at the British Embassy. On the way back, we sometimes flew to Nigeria to brief Savimbi, usually staying at a government guesthouse. On one visit, Davidow had to make a stop in the Congo. There was no U.S. Ambassador at the time, so the DCM/Charge asked us to stay in the residence. So, the four or five of us stayed at the residence. I never thought that a decade later I would actually be living there. That was my first trip to Kinshasa.

Q: One more quick question with Angola. Did you continue working on Angola up until when Hank Cohen began the negotiations or continue the negotiations for a settlement between the government and UNITA?

GARVELINK: No. I was moving on to other things at the time because that was after 1993, I believe.

Q: Okay.

GARVELINK: This was really Davidow's thing. He got the process started but was always also helpful to me on the humanitarian side.

But then, things got really goofy at OFDA. It was at the end of the Bush Administration, and they made a decision to form a bureau and not just have an Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance. OFDA had always been an independent office reporting directly to the USAID Administrator. It had special legislative authorities, a borrowing authority, and notwithstanding authority. All of these enabled the office to act quickly. OFDA was also exempt from many of the reporting requirements of the bureaus.

But, the decision was made and Jim Kunder, who was the Assistant Administrator for Public Affairs became the head of OFDA at the tail end of the Bush administration.

Andrew Natsios moved up to be the Assistant Administrator of the new Bureau for Humanitarian Response.

Q: Mm-hm.

GARVELINK: I strongly argued with Andrew against the change, pleading that OFDA be left as an independent office, exempt from the bureaucratic requirements of the bureaus, that not doing so would limit its rapid response capability. Andrew assured me that OFDA's effectiveness would not be compromised and promised that if it didn't work out, OFDA could be separated out. I argued that once done, it would never again be independent. I was right. But he was too. Since the time it became part of a humanitarian affairs bureau (names have changed over time), their budget now is \$10 billion a year and they have somewhere between 700 and 1,000 employees. Seventy percent of them, I believe, are personal services contractors. But it's probably grown faster than any part of AID. So, it's maintained its ability to move quickly and maintain its special authorities. So, it worked out but I didn't think it was going to at the time.

Real work, of course, also continued throughout this period. So, even while worrying about bureaucratic structures, I began to become very involved with Haiti. Aristide was booted from power by a military coup in September 1991 and Cédras, a military guy, took over. Embargoes were being imposed by the OAS (Organization of American States) and the UN. I got a call from the AID director in Haiti, David Cohen, who was my boss in Bolivia way back when. The fuel embargo was affecting much of USAID's program, including support for orphanages, health care, and NGOs. He asked me to go down to Haiti to design a plan to keep fuel going to these humanitarian organizations. The most I knew about fuel was how to get gas in my car at a gas station. I reluctantly agreed and went down to Haiti on an initial trip to talk with David, the embassy, the UN, and others. When I got back to Washington, I reached out to the Association of Retired Oil Executives in Old Town Alexandria and hired a couple of guys who'd worked on rigs and in oil company front offices.

I pushed and they agreed with me to follow the model that was used in Somalia with food. Since there were about a dozen families that really ran businesses in Haiti, including the oil business, we decided it would be best not to set up a parallel system. Rather, we decided to sell the fuel to them with the understanding that they would sell the fuel at a certain price only to the organizations we identified. They agreed as it was better for them to retain their employees and to keep their businesses open, albeit at a reduced pace. But the trick was, who was going to run it and supervise this thing? I had worked very closely with a guy named Claude de Ville, a Belgian, who was the emergency coordinator for PAHO, the Pan American Health Organization for Latin America. I had known Claude for a long time. So, I proposed to the AID mission and embassy in Washington that Claude, if he would do it, could run this thing. They thought I was nuts, that he was a health expert who knew nothing about fuel. I continued to push for him because I knew that he was a great manager. Finally, my USG colleagues agreed and asked me to present it to the OAS, that they would have to agree with the proposal as an exception to the embargo. Hattie Babbitt was the U.S. Ambassador to the OAS so she

arranged a meeting for me with all the appropriate ambassadors and staff of the OAS, to make my pitch. I had also talked to Claude, and he agreed to do it if the OAS gave its approval. So, I made my pitch at the OAS headquarters here in town and they agreed. Claude took it over and I went on to other things. But, for as long as that fuel embargo was in place, Claude ran it and it worked well.

Q: How did it work?

They would inform the organizations that were supposed to get fuel on a given day to have their trucks or other vehicles at a certain intersection in Haiti. A truck would show up, and they'd refuel them and then they'd go their separate way. The next time would be at a different location. Because the locations were always moving, the bad guys couldn't find a way to interfere or steal the fuel. So, the plan worked and the port stayed open and functioned. Again, this task came out of the blue, but fortunately I knew Claude. He made it work.

This was all around the time of the Bush-Clinton transition. Andrew left and went to the international NGO, World Vision. He was one of their vice presidents but didn't stay there very long. Jim Kunder left and twice I was the acting head of OFDA. When Brian Atwood came in as the administrator of AID, there were some people in AID and outside who thought I should be the OFDA director. They pushed it. At some point, Atwood called me into his office to say that I would not get the job, that he would be bringing in a woman named Nan Borton to become OFDA Director. Since I had not expected to be nominated, I was fine with it. When I met Nan, we hit it off right away. I was soon afterwards named Deputy.

And then, in addition to all this stuff that we've been talking about, Sudan, Somalia, Angola, other places, there was a little bit going on in the Balkans at the same time in the early 1990s.

Q: Yeah.

GARVELINK: Through 1995 when the Dayton Accords were put together.

Fighting had begun in 1991 and in 1992, I believe, UNPROFOR (the United Nations Protection Force or Peacekeeping Force), was sent into Croatia and eventually into Sarajevo until they were replaced by IFOR (Implementation Force) and NATO in 1995. By early 1993, Nan and I thought there would soon be a need for humanitarian assistance and that we should send in one of our DART teams, Disaster Assistance Response Teams. About the same time, the guy I replaced in OFDA, Tim Knight, called me up. He had just finished his MBA at North Carolina and was missing humanitarian work; he asked if we had anything he could do. I quickly proposed he head up the DART to Croatia on a short-term basis. He ended up staying four years.

During those early days, the Balkans were not a big focus for OFDA, especially given the amount of time I had been spending in Somalia, South Sudan, and Angola. It was hard

for Tim to get our attention. We kept thinking of the Sarajevo that had hosted the Winter Olympics in 1984, and there were no displaced persons trying to survive in the desert. Instead, many of the affected people in Sarajevo were highly educated professionals living in high rise apartments. We couldn't deliver bulk food to them in the way we did in traditional displaced persons camps. They wouldn't know what to do with a bag of sorghum -- nor would I. It was a very different environment for OFDA. Tim came up with the great idea of reopening pasta factories. Similarly, he noted that they have factories that can make heavy winter coats; they needed to become operational. The displaced persons camps were high-rises. The power was cut off there. These were older folks. They couldn't walk up and down twenty flights of stairs carrying food. Somebody had to bring it to them. There were also Serbian women snipers, so trenches had to be built between the high-rises so you could go back and forth into the various buildings, bringing food and medical care. It was a very different environment than certainly we had ever worked in before.

UNPROFOR, was based just outside of Zagreb and in Sarajevo, and the UN was working very closely with them. The UN coordinator for humanitarian assistance was Sérgio de Mello, who was an interesting guy, Brazilian. I got to know Sérgio a bit. Tim knew him really well. Our folks were based in Zagreb and they'd go into Sarajevo for a day at most two and then come out again. They had to fly in and out on UNPROFOR planes and rely on their vehicles to get around. So, every time I came, one of my first stops was to see Sérgio and chat with him and make sure he was all right. He was very, very helpful. He became the under-secretary-general for humanitarian affairs after that and spent a lot of time in Washington. And then, of course, he became the high commissioner for human rights and then, unfortunately, took a leave of absence and went to Iraq and was killed at the Canal Hotel.

Q: Right.

GARVELINK: He was a great guy and was very helpful to us there. On an early trip to Croatia, I went to see the NGOs and UNPROFOR office in Split, a beautiful spot on the Adriatic. Right near the border with Bosnia there was a bar and it was closed down because of the fighting. Most of the NGOs were operating out of that bar -- each NGO got a booth that served as an office. During the day, it was a joint office for NGOs and provided an easy way for them to communicate with one another. At some point the bar re-opened and began serving drinks at night. I don't how it worked after that happened

We worked with the NGOs and UNPROFOR there, which was shipping supplies in on those roads. We'd fly in from Zagreb and again, we were going for a day or two and then back to Zagreb. We were also beginning to plan, when the opportunity arose, moving the main into Sarajevo, leaving Zagreb as a backup office. This was the first time in OFDA's history that we needed armored vehicles to move around, especially through Sniper Alley and all of that. The only armored vehicles were Mercedes made in Germany. Because OFDA has "notwithstanding authority," we were going to buy some Mercedes armored vehicles. State and AID in Washington asked us not to do so, that it would create a fuss. So, we talked to Chevrolet and put in a special order to armor Suburbans. We ordered

about a dozen initially and they were shipped from somewhere in the Midwest to the Port of New York and then on to Rotterdam. They were needed in a hurry, so we had license plates made up that said U.S. Government -- DART 1, DART 2, and so on. Our folks drove them to the port in New York and then across Europe from Rotterdam to Croatia. We had some creative logistics people. (Tauber laughs) No one said a word, no one ever stopped them and asked what the plates were.

When they got to Rotterdam, folks from Croatia showed up and drove them to Croatia and then into Sarajevo. So, we made our own license plates. I don't think that was quite cricket. One of our guys had some connections to a prison in West Virginia and got them to make license plates every time we needed them for our armored vehicles. So, we got our armored vehicles out there. While I was still at OFDA, we set up a place in Gibraltar where the vehicles could be sent when no longer needed. They would be stored in Gibraltar and sent wherever else needed in the world after that. I don't know if they still do that.

It was steadily getting worse and in 1994 there was a horrible bombing of the market in Sarajevo. Tim and I were about two blocks away when that happened. We were in a meeting with the UN when we heard the explosions. I don't know how many people were killed, but it was terrible. So, it was a pretty dicey place to work and to operate.

In 1995, in the lead up to the Dayton Accord negotiations, we got a call from the European Command, which was, honestly, very much in the leadership role. Because of our humanitarian assistance work, they asked us to go to Naples to review their plans. Tim Knight, Tom Frey, and I went to review the plans for deployment into Bosnia. Their plans called for shutting down the roads for everything except IFOR troops. We argued that we needed to continue sending in humanitarian supplies; if not, people would not for food, water, and medical supplies. We couldn't shut down in the way they were planning. I was there for only two days, but Tim and Tom stayed on, working almost page by page through the plans and giving advice. The EUCOM folks reoriented all their plans to accommodate the humanitarian situation before they went in at the end of 1995.

And then, the fighting toned down a bit. Shelter programs became a priority. It was getting cold and fighting had eased, so you could actually do something about it. As I recall, the United Nations had a shelter program, but it was not working very well. They would go into a village and talk to people still living there and say, "Are you going to rebuild your house?" and they'd say, "Sure." And so, the UN would provide building supplies, nails, wood whatever was needed, but most of these were women-headed households. The men were fighting or had been killed and so, they found very fast that a lot of times nothing was done. The supplies that had arrived were being sold. It just wasn't working well. So, Tim and I decided to bring in Bob Gersony. I mentioned him before.

Q: Yep. Mm-hm.

GARVELINK: Bob did his normal thing, interviewing people at great length, and it drove home to me how important it is to ask the right questions. Bob would say, “Are you going to rebuild your house?” And these people would say, “Yes.” And he’d say, “Are *you* going to rebuild the house?” They’d say, “No, we’ve got to hire somebody to rebuild the house.” And the woman said, “We don’t know how to do it. We just want to be here. We want to get this house habitable again.” The plan was that they wouldn’t fix the whole house. They would do a kitchen, living room, a bedroom or two and a bathroom and seal it for the winter. And if you want anything more than that then you’re on your own. It enabled people to stay in their homes and have basic services. Bob’s plan worked really well. We did 25,000 houses or something like that in 1995. He simply asked the right questions, and we gave vouchers so they could hire local carpenters. It had the added benefit of stimulating local business. The local guys who knew how to do this got paid, and people who needed their houses fixed got them fixed.

Q: Now, here is just one question. You’re working above ground. Were you able to restore basic services like electricity, sewage and so on?

GARVELINK: We weren’t—the UN was doing that. That was a much bigger activity. And we were working through NGOs. I don’t know if it was CARE or another NGO that facilitated the movement of money and all that. But the big infrastructure stuff was done by the UN.

Q: Okay.

GARVELINK: At one point, perhaps early 1996, Tim and I were in a village in Bosnia, and one of the local leaders was showing us around. There were IFOR troops there and we were looking at housing rehab work. We spoke with IFOR folks, and they said that the place is secure with about 95 percent of landmines cleared. The guy who was showing us around the project got ahead of us and went through a little creek. He stepped on a landmine, and it blew him up. Tim and I were 100 yards or so behind him and we ran toward the old guy and before we could get there, he pulled a gun out of his pocket and blew his brains out. He killed himself. That was awful. We were too late to get to him and probably couldn’t have done anything if we had gotten to him. The landmines were washing down rivers, and it was a mess. The whole Bosnia experience was surreal. You’d go to the Olympic stadium, and it was a cemetery. It was a very different kind of place to provide assistance.

Q: Were we also engaged in the landmine clearance or was that also run by larger organizations?

GARVELINK: No, we were not, meaning OFDA at the time. There’s a couple of U.S. organizations that do it, a couple of really good British outfits, and then the militaries. So, we were not using our resources for that, but it was going on.

Anyway, that’s what was going on with the Balkans, at least for me.

The Rwanda genocide of 1994 was another huge crisis in the 1990s. I was in Washington and was going back and forth to New York with Admiral Skip Bowman. He was the J5 planner for the Joint Staff, and we were meeting with the undersecretary for political affairs at the time, Kofi Annan, and General Dallaire, who was the Canadian general who headed up peacekeeping in Kigali. He was asking for equipment and wanted armored personnel carriers (APCs), and other things to help them stop the genocide.

Bowman and I went back and forth four or five times over a couple week period to New York, to meet with Kofi Annan. It was clear that Dallaire needed this stuff and Kofi was urging us to come up with the equipment, saying that we must have at least 20 or 30 APCs somewhere in the world that could be sent to Rwanda. It was very interesting to have dealt with the military and seen how efficient and fast they could act and how bureaucratic they could become when they were not about to do anything. I can remember Bowman saying, "What do you think, we're a used car lot, we can just let stuff go that fast? It's a complicated process to release these things. It's going to take time."

This was 1994. If you go back a year, 1993, actually almost—October 4, that was Black Hawk Down day in Somalia. The Clinton Administration and the military were adamant that they would not let that happen again. So, we talked a lot at the UN, but nothing really came of it. In the immediate aftermath of the genocide, Colonel Dan Layton, who was on loan to the State Africa Bureau, and I went to Uganda and then on to Rwanda. We flew into Entebbe Airport which was hardly functioning because of the troop movements from Uganda into Rwanda. We went up to the roof of the Entebbe Airport, set up our satellite phone and were going to call Washington to let them know we had arrived. Then, we got a call that lower in the airport, the U.S. ambassador to Uganda, Johnnie Carson, was meeting with some UN folks.

So, we went down to join Johnnie for the meeting. Afterwards, we went back up to the roof to use our satellite phone. There was a line of about thirty U.S. soldiers. Someone had seen that satellite phone sitting there and being very enterprising, he'd written a sign, "Three minutes per person to call home." (Tauber laughs) We didn't want to cut the troops off but did ask that no one else join the line. We were able to make our call about an hour and a half later. Fortunately, Layton made good use of that time and found a pilot with a small jet who had come in to ferry a EUCOM general to do an inspection and to meet with Dallaire in Rwanda. Since the general wasn't arriving for two days, we arranged to have the plane take us into Kigali, Rwanda the next day. We met with General Dallaire and looked around a little bit before returning to Entebbe. The next day we went to the refugee camps in Goma in North Kivu in the Congo and to Mokambo, the capital of South Kivu. There were refugee camps around there too. As I normally did, I visited the health clinic to see what they were treating people for and if any disease outbreaks had occurred. I stopped in my tracks when I entered the health clinic. The WFP, World Food Program, guy was someone I had met in Ethiopia when I was holding a little girl who died in my arms. That was ten years earlier, and I hadn't thought about it for a decade. It stopped me in my tracks. He was a Russian-American, but I don't recall his name. We then continued to check out the camp before getting back on the plane and flying to Mokambo which is on the other side of Lake Kivu. We met with local officials

in the camp and then headed back to Entebbe. I had put that out of my mind. It was awful. But it was the same WFP guy who was working in Ethiopia a decade ago. And I cannot recall, I'm trying to—he was a Russian American. I can't recall his name. Anyway, that was a bit of a shocker. But we looked around and looked at the camps, walked through the camps and saw what was going on. Then we got in the plane, flew to Mokambo, which is on the other side of Lake Kivu, and spent a few hours there, talking to local officials in the camps and that sort of thing. And then flew back to Entebbe. Late that night, I flew back into Goma with WFP on a Ukrainian Ilyushin plane. There was a temporary set-up for traffic control of the planes, and the Ilyushin was directed where to park, but it ended up going off the runway into the dirt. I was in the back sitting on top of food bags when the Ukrainian pilot jumped out of the plane and got into a fistfight with the guy who had been directing him where to park the plane. Fortunately, we were able to unload the food and get the plane back on the runway within a few hours. We had arrived around midnight, and the reporter, Bob Arnott, was there at the airport observing the food deliveries.

The next day, Layton and I joined the EUCOM general when he flew into Rwanda to meet with Dallaire and Kagame. While the general had lots of questions and visited various sites in Rwanda, he was clear that he had no intention of having any U.S. troops come into Rwanda. There were some in Uganda, and they weren't leaving Uganda.

The next day I hitched a ride back with the military to Rammstein Air Force Base and then went on to the Frankfurt airport for a commercial flight home. As a result of our initial trip, we decided to send a large DART team to the region. Kate Farnsworth, who was a far better DART leader than I ever would be, and her team were initially based in Nairobi because of the better communications and logistics. People were also located elsewhere in Kenya, Rwanda, Burundi, Uganda and the Congo. I mean, there probably were sixty, seventy or more people at any given time in those locations that reported up to Kate. I made periodic trips out but for short periods of time, but she ran the show there and did a really great job.

A couple of interesting things happened. With every disaster response or humanitarian response, people want to do good and help. They want to give stuff which is really a bad idea. Give money to your favorite organization.

Q: Oh, I see.

GARVELINK: Don't give stuff. And sure enough, in the Rwanda case, there was a lot of talk about malnourished kids and I happened to be there when this one happened. A big plane came in with a load of Gatorade. They said this would be good for the malnourished kids. The people from CDC who were on our team almost had a heart attack, and they quickly had that stuff taken off the plane and isolated in a corner. Gatorade is great if you play for the Green Bay Packers, but if you're a malnourished kid, it will kill you. We had to get a statement from CDC headquarters stating that nothing worse could be given to a malnourished child.

Q: Right.

GARVELINK: I don't know what happened to the Gatorade, but hopefully they gave it to the people who were working there. They could have it, but not little kids who are malnourished. There was another crazy case in Somalia where someone from the West Coast sent in thousands of sunglasses and suntan lotion. They figured that it would be sunny and that would be helpful to the Somalis. And somebody else at one point sent shoes but they were all size fifteen or sixteen or something like that. They were, I guess, big shoes that nobody used. You could get two people in one of those shoes. I shouldn't go on—one—I don't know if it was Somalia or if it was the Congo. I couldn't help but smile. Some folks from Iowa are Dutch, I'm Dutch, and if you have tea, you use your tea bag more than once. They sent a pile of once-used teabags. They meant well but—

Q: Yeah. Holy cow.

GARVELINK: But you can find so many strange things. But this Gatorade, that could have been very bad.

One of the problems that came up in the refugee camps, particularly in Goma, is that the UN, again in my estimation, lost control. The Génocidaires were playing a big role, rewarding people with supplies and all of that. A number of big NGOs like the International Rescue Committee refused to work there until the UN regained control. The international community, the NGOs, the UN, all seemed surprised that this happened. I mentioned earlier, when I was in El Salvador that the FMLN took over those camps. It happens in every refugee camp to one degree or another. And why the international community was surprised by this in Rwanda still is a mystery to me. I don't care what camp it is. We call them refugee camps; rebels call them recruitment centers.

Another interesting thing is that the response to the genocide was the first time computers were used in a big way.

Q: Okay.

GARVELINK: There was of course some use of computers and word processing Wangs before, but in Rwanda, computers were everywhere in the field. It was an absolute nightmare -- and a learning experience. The information flow was overwhelming and often dysfunctional. Agency heads, the White House, the NSC, the Pentagon, field managers, logisticians, and health experts were all receiving the same information, not just the information they needed. Everybody was getting everything. And so, it was an absolute disaster for a while. We soon realized that we needed a clearing house and set up the Rwanda Information Center (The RIC) in USAID/Washington to receive, synthesize, and disseminate information to the appropriate decision-makers. This assured that the right folks knew when sorghum was going to arrive or when they had to meet with Senator So-and-So. And a website was created that's still well-known, ReliefWeb. That's what the UN set up in Rwanda for their information purposes. There's a book called *After Rwanda*, which is a collection of articles, and I wrote one on the Rwanda Information

Center. It's in that book. It was initially an absolute nightmare. People were getting so much junk they just quit reading any of it. But, we learned a lesson from this first-time with omni-present computers.

Q: Right.

GARVELINK: Before that, they were starting to appear but not the way they were in Rwanda. So, that was the international community's first experience with full-blown computer access. Not near like it is now but it was a bit of a problem to get the right information to the right people. It was a real learning experience.

A few months later, again, this was in the fall of 1994, I was in Geneva meeting with Gerald Walzer, a German and the Deputy High Commissioner for Refugees. I don't recall exactly what I went in there to see him about, but we were talking about Rwanda and he said Madam Ogata, Sadako Ogata, who was the High Commissioner, wanted to do a study of what really happened in Rwanda. Walzer suggested that such a study could be best done by Bob Gersony. I told him that Bob was going to be working for OFDA the coming year. He could be seconded to UNHCR to do that work for them and then return to OFDA.

So, Bob went into Rwanda in the second half of 1994 and did his own assessment of what went on there. He briefed her, obviously, and wrote something up. And he did some briefings in Europe and he briefed Kagame. And then, he had to get out of Rwanda really fast. I understand that he was quite critical of what the Rwandans had done. Although we were paying Bob, I never saw his report. Ogata did not want it public, so he honored that. He's never talked to me about the details, and I don't know what she did with his written report but it never appeared anywhere. But it was highly critical of the Rwandan military and Kagame. I've asked him a couple of times and he said, "Nah, I'm not going to talk about that." So, I can take a hint. (Laughs) I stayed out of it once it was agreed that he would do this. So, I really am not even sure who he talked to, just heard rumors.

And then in—later in November 1994—the international community decided to do a study of how they responded to the Rwanda genocide and provided assistance. There was a meeting in Copenhagen and John Eriksson, who was at the time the head of evaluation for AID, was invited to it and he asked me to accompany him. He had never been to Rwanda. So, I joined him at the three- or four-day conference led by Niels Dabelstein of Denmark, the head of evaluation for Danish aid. John already knew Niels. We went to his house for dinner the night we arrived, along with some Brits, Swedes, and probably the Norwegians. The head of evaluation for Britain's Department for International Development (DFID), Mukesh Kabila, was there. He's also a medical doctor who teaches at a British university and lives in Geneva now. He's quite a character and got PNGed (Persona Non Grata) out of Sudan as the UN representative a few years ago by the government. In any case, he started laying out a complex evaluation plan that would require fifteen or so vehicles to get around and other equipment not available at the time in Rwanda. I challenged his plan, saying that "the roads don't work. There's no gas. It ain't gonna work." (Laughs) Mukesh asked Eriksson who I was, and John explained.

Mukesh suggested that I didn't know anything about evaluation and shouldn't be there. John countered with the fact that I had been in Rwanda. (Laughs)

Q: Right.

GARVELINK: And Eriksson said, “Well, you don’t know anything about Rwanda so you’re even.” We’ve since become good friends but it was very unpleasant.

Anyway, the meeting started the next day, and it did not go well. The participants didn’t like the outline that someone had prepared of what the report was going to look like. So, I was asked by Niels to join one of his guys and we went off for the rest of the day and rewrote the scope of work that was presented later that evening. It was accepted and the study went forward. It ended up being a five- or six-volume study.

Q: Wow.

GARVELINK: Four volumes and a summary volume that was written in 1994—1995 about how the international community responded. And it got pretty good reviews.

While all this was going on in Washington Nan Borton and I and a guy named John Hammock were talking about the future of humanitarian assistance and that sort of thing.

And John had been the CEO of Oxfam U.S. for a number of years and now wanted to do different sorts of things. We were sitting around one afternoon—John was a friend of both Nan and me —and started talking about the fact that there were no advanced degrees in the humanitarian response area. You can get an advanced degree in health or agriculture, but not in humanitarian assistance, and you end up pigeonholed. To be a true profession, you need an advanced degree. We agreed that day that there should be an advanced degree in humanitarian assistance management. A few weeks later, John called with the idea of establishing a master's degree in humanitarian assistance, focused on management of an entire operation. He had his PhD from the Fletcher School and proposed talking with them about a joint MA to be offered by Tuft's School of Medicine and Fletcher. Students would take courses at the school of public health, as well as classes at Fletcher. We would also design three or four other courses on how to manage humanitarian crises which would be required. We went to the school of public health first, and they bought in right away. They said, “Absolutely. We’ll do this.”

Q: Interesting.

GARVELINK: And then, we went to see General John Galvin, who was head of Fletcher. He didn’t buy it. He wasn’t sure that was a good idea. It took us about a year and several meetings to convince him—

Q: What convinced him? Did you just come back with a more detailed pitch or—?

GARVELINK: Relating it to the importance of international security in countries. His initial negative response was simply because so many people had come to him over time proposing this and that course. But, because he had been a force commander when we reviewed the NATO plan, it started to make sense to him. He knew that humanitarian assistance is a factor in all these kinds of settings and the better we are at that, the easier it is for the military. I always get a kick out of the fact that the biggest supporter for humanitarian assistance and OFDA is the military.

Q: Interesting.

GARVELINK: I used to testify on Capitol Hill and their reaction was always kind of "yeah, yeah. It's your job, you've got to say this sort of stuff." After a while I learned to take a one- or two- or a three-star with me and they would pretty much say the same things as I was saying, but the reaction was always different. "Ooh, that's important." A general wouldn't say that if it wasn't important.

Q: Right, right.

GARVELINK: So, on the humanitarian road you're best off having someone with stars with you. Your credibility goes right up the pole.

Q: It's fascinating because often, well, in the early years of Iraq and some of these other interventions that we had where the military came in, both for military purposes, security and so on, but also to secure humanitarian aid, there were complaints we're not a humanitarian organization. We're a war-fighting organization. So, I just wonder in your conversations with him, what had convinced higher-ups in the military that indeed, humanitarian was important.

GARVELINK: Well, it's a lot of what you just said, they don't do this stuff. And if you look at a lot of the things that happened in Afghanistan and Iraq, they built lots of schools. But there were no teachers, no books, nothing. And the military are the first to say, "Hey, we can build stuff, but we can't do the rest of it. That's not what we do."

Q: Right. So, in essence what they were saying was, "Yeah, we can provide sort of the framework and the base, but we've got to have the humanitarian operators doing this."

GARVELINK: Yeah. And if you go way back to Somalia, neither side trusted each other at all. The military thought these NGOs were a bunch of dumb do-gooders who really didn't know what they were doing, and the NGOs thought they were crazy military guys who really don't know what they're doing. That's changed. Nowadays they understand each other. We've worked together so much over the years that now those aren't issues anymore. Everybody appreciates each other's skills and does what they do best and then helps each other.

So, we got General Galvin to buy into the new graduate degree program. I remember at one point we were at Tufts with the president, John Di Biaggio, going over the final

details. At the end of the meeting, he told us about a potential donor interested in giving a big donation to Tufts to set up an international famine center. But the donor didn't want to donate unless someone else also gave a big chunk of money. Di Biaggio was trying to figure out how to deal with this.” I asked him how much he needed. When he said around \$5 million over the next couple of years, I told him I could get it for him, that it wouldn't be a problem. He then invited us to dinner at his home that night with the donor. (Tauber laughs)

So, they put the donor—Feinstein was the guy’s name— between John Hammock and me and we talked to him all night. At the end of the night, I told him I was coming up with five million if he'd put up his as well. And so, in 1996, the MAHA, Masters in Humanitarian Assistance, the MAHA program started at Tufts. Still going strong. And the Feinstein International Famine Center is now just the Feinstein International Center, and it's one of the best research centers on humanitarian issues. They're doing really well at Tufts University. And John Hammock became the first head. He led it for three or four years, I believe. And, about the commitment I made for funding, I had to go back to Washington to convince Nan to pony up a minimum of \$5 million for the center. She fortunately agreed.

Q: Interesting.

GARVELINK: I got an award from the Feinstein International Center in 2011 at their second world conference on humanitarian assistance. And after the conference, I asked Peter Walker, who was the head of it at the time, about the entrance requirements. I couldn't help but laugh. I would never have made it. I had none of the qualifications. I had been to a foreign disaster when I got into the disaster business.

Q: Right.

GARVELINK: They have fifteen or twenty graduate students every year, and the Feinstein International Center is now well respected in the humanitarian area. So, I'm very proud of how the program is going.

We also placed some of our disaster response leaders at the center on short term assignments, folks like Tim Knight, who had been in Croatia and Sarajevo for a couple of years or Kate Farnsworth, who ran the DART in Rwanda after the genocide. We would pull them out for a while and send them to Tufts for a semester, letting them take any courses they wanted at Tufts, Harvard, or MIT. The only requirement for them was to talk with students about their recent experiences while decompressing from the difficult environments they had just come from. I don't know if that still goes on. I also used to lecture there a lot and visit three or four times a year. I am very proud of what we helped create.

We are now at the end of 1995, early 1996 at the end of the first Clinton Administration and Nan had had it. She wanted to retire and married a *Time* photographer, I believe, and they moved to Vermont, I think. The Assistant Administrator for the bureau, Doug

Stafford, who at one point was the undersecretary for management at the United Nations, had some health problems and he also left. So, in the second Clinton Administration, they appointed Roy Williams as the head of OFDA. Roy had a long career at the International Rescue Committee, and I knew him well. When he first moved to Washington, he even stayed at our house for a few weeks before he found an apartment. The new Assistant Administration for the bureau was Hugh Palmer, the former mayor of Dallas-Fort Worth. He was a lawyer and had also been in the Texas state Senate. And these guys disliked each other.

Q: Hah. Beautiful.

GARVELINK: They would barely speak to each other. And they would come to me with their differences. I got along with both of them individually and told them that they had to work out things between themselves. I didn't want to be in the middle, but often was. It was a very unpleasant time.

Fortunately, we are now in 1997 and there was lots and lots going on. About two million Rwandan refugees were planning to return home from Uganda, Burundi, and the Congo. We decided to send a team out to Rwanda to begin preparing since the country was not going to have the resources to absorb so many people so quickly. We set up the DART team on the AID compound in Kigali; it had a building in the back. I was the leader of this team and had an initial notional budget of about \$100 million. At this time, the regular budget for the USAID mission was around \$20 million, a pretty small budget. So, one of the problems that DART leaders always deal with is the management burden. I could fund all kinds of stuff, but after a year or so the DART would leave and the small AID mission would need to take over.

So, I made sure that the Mission Director approved everything we did and didn't fund anything that the AID director didn't want. Also, we left people there to run the project for their life, usually one or two years. They would remain when the DART departed, working under the direction of the Mission Director to finish up our projects. I assume they still do that. I hope they do.

Bob Gribbin, who I had known from Uganda days, was the ambassador. At one point he called and asked me to meet him at the embassy on a Sunday morning, asking me to wait outside. A few minutes later he showed up and a few minutes after that a guy named Roger Winter, who ended up becoming my boss later on, showed up with Laurent Kabila, who was the rebel leader fighting in the Congo. We spent about an hour or so talking about the Congo and refugees. A few days later I went to the southern part of Rwanda and then into Bukavu, where the refugees were. When I went to the old governor's office, Laurent Kabila, the old one, was there. So, we met again and talked about the needs of the refugees. While there, he sent some of his staff out to get us sodas. In the process, he introduced me to the young fellow bringing us the sodas, his son, Joseph. So, that was the first time I met Joseph, never dreaming that I would be dealing with Joseph Kabila thirteen or fourteen years down the line when he was president of the DRC.

A couple of weeks after that I got a call from Brian Atwood telling me that “*Sixty Minutes* and Ed Bradley would be coming to do something on the DART team with a particular focus on Dwight Swartzendruber, who is the oldest guy on the team. He was in his seventies then. Dwight is about ninety-five now. He’s still around. [Dwight died in May 2025 at 97.]

Q: Wow.

GARVELINK: They wanted to do a story on this old guy doing his thing in refugee camps. CBS was to go to Mokambo and Atwood asked me to get there a couple of days ahead of time to arrange things for him.” So, we went to Mokambo, staying at the Black Orchid Hotel on the lake. It’s been there for thirty or forty years, run by a Belgian family. In spite of all the things happening around them, it remained a very nice place.

Bradly and his producers then arrived. He wanted to visit refugee camps to see Schwartzendruber at work. I went to see Kabila to get permission since the camps were in the area controlled by his troops. He said it was too dangerous, that he instead would like to show the film crew all the arms he had captured from the refugees in the camps and from the Congolese military. I told Bradley in detail about why Kabila would not let us go into the camps. He was not interested in seeing captured weapons, so I went back to Kabila the next day. Kabila still would not approve our visit to the camps. When I got back to Bradley, he said he didn't do that kind of story. One of the producers tried to convince him, saying that Kabila was a rebel leader and might win the civil war and someday become leader of the Congo -- and Bradley would have been the first to interview him. Bradley laughed and they left the next day.

Q: Hah.

GARVELINK: I’m sure that producer brought that up to him later. But he was adamant that he didn't do that kind of story.

So, I left. But we kept our preparations going for the refugees to return to Rwanda. Because they were walking, we were setting up stations along the roads where there would be health facilities, food, and water. I was going back and forth quite often from the town of Gisenyi on the border, Gisenyi on one side and Goma on the other. Rwanda did change the name to Rubavu, but most still refer to it by the old name. I was going back and forth a lot to see the NGOs, refugees, UNHCR, and the UN folks. One day, there was a long line at the Gisenyi border crossing to Goma. We'd been sitting in our car for a couple hours when a woman came up and tapped on our window. It was Christiane Amanpour. (Tauber laughs) She was in the car right behind us with a CNN crew. She had recognized that we were in a car with U.S. diplomatic plates for Rwanda going into the Congo and wanted to know what we were doing. (Tauber laughs) After I told her, she went back to her car but returned a bit later suggesting we do an interview. So, we did an interview and never did get into the Congo that day. That evening back at the hotel, Amanpour invited Dwight and me to join her and her crew for dinner. We had lots of fun, sharing stories about world travel. She was quite the host, making sure everybody was

included and happy and had everything they wanted. That was our first meeting, but I have met up with her in weird places since.

The refugees did return, and it all worked fairly well. Because there were so many people on the roads, emergency vehicles could not get through. So, it was fortunate that we had set up the temporary stations along the various roads where they could get healthcare, food, water, bathrooms, etc. It was about two million people moving over several months. As they started going to their villages, people would be following up from Kigali with agriculture projects and resources for people to start farming or other economic activities. That also worked fairly well.

Let's stop here. Next time we can cover Kosovo and then a bit more on Angola. Then, we will go on to my assignment as the AID Director in Eritrea.

Q: Okay. Today is October 20, 2023. We're resuming our interview with Bill Garvelink.

Bill, we concluded the last session talking about the master's program that you were in and helped found and you had a few remarks about where it is now.

GARVELINK: Yeah. It has evolved a little bit but it's basically what we put together some years ago. It's a twelve-month professional degree, jointly done by the School of Public Health at Tufts and the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy. They are targeting people who have had three to five years of experience in the field. About fifteen or twenty people a year take the master's degree program. So, it's up and running and going well, administered by the Feinstein International Center that was set up at the same time.

Q: Very good.

GARVELINK: So, that's basically it.

Q: All right. So, as that program and that attachment to the program concluded, where were you going next or where did you want to go next?

GARVELINK: In terms of what I was up to, the next thing that came up in my role as the Deputy Director in OFDA was the Kosovo conflict. That was 1998 to 1999.

I had of course been to Kosovo a few years earlier when I was doing so much in the Balkans. In fact, I had one of my more interesting meetings during that time period with Ibrahim Rugova, who was the rebel leader for the Albanian KLA. He became the first president of Kosovo. He was a journalist by training and kept lights pretty much off in rooms. It always seemed dark. Also, he spoke in such a soft voice that if you didn't sit right in front of him or on the couch next to him, you'd never hear him. It was always a chore. I was also warned ahead of time about his hobby, geology. He always gave visitors a rock from someplace in Kosovo, so I was warned to be sure to take something small.

So, I have my—where is it?—my Rugova rock (Tauber laughs) that is pretty small. I ended up seeing him several times over the next two or three years.

Q: Okay. Just one quick question. The rock you showed me has a green hue. Is it just green quartz or jadeite?

GARVELINK: Not a clue. I didn't want to push him too much because if you showed too much interest, he would want to give you more. He had rocks everywhere, all over the table, the floor. He'd make a point of giving them to people so you would always have a piece of Kosovo with you.

He was a very bright guy and very thoughtful, and I always enjoyed talking with him in 1996-1997 about what was going on in the country. In 1997, I began going there more often. I went with the KVM, the Kosovo Verification Mission, that was set up by OSCE (Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe). The head of that was Bill Walker, from the U.S. He had been DCM in Bolivia when I was starting in the Foreign Service, so we quite often traveled together around Kosovo when he was overseeing that mission for the OSCE.

Q: Now, just a quick question about that. What was the mission of the verification mission? In other words, was it the peace mission, the separation of forces? What were they responsible for?

GARVELINK: It was more because violence was increasing all through the 1990s. The Kosovo Verification Mission was set up in 1997 to see what was going on in hopes of tamping down the violence. They had these bright orange Land Cruisers that were traveling all over Kosovo. It went on until 1998, just a year. Then, the violence became so bad that they had to close down. That is when OFDA decided it would be best to send a disaster team (DART) to Albania because many of the Kosovars were crossing into Albania, disrupting the population on the Albanian side of the border. It was getting pretty nasty. UNHCR really wasn't very active there, so it was one of the few times we worked with both refugees and displaced persons. One of our team members was Kelly Clements, who's now the deputy high commissioner of refugees. She was in PRM, in the refugee bureau at State. She worked closely with us because the embassy was new and small and the AID mission was just one guy getting things started. Because it was such a new set-up on the ground, we had no idea about the facilities that would be at post. So, when we initially went out, we thought we should carry cash with us. We were leaving out of National Airport, going through Newark to Pisa, Italy, where we would catch a C-130, into Tirana, the capital of Albania. After I got through the security checkpoint at National, there were two guys from AID there to meet me from the controller's office. They pulled me into this little room and made me count the \$100,000 to verify that we had it all. Then, they put it in a Safeway paper bag and handed it to me. (Tauber laughs) I stuck it in my briefcase and then came out.

We went on to Newark but that outward flight was delayed, so we got into Pisa too late to get to the NATO base and catch our flight to Tirana that day. So, we had to stay overnight

in Pisa and the next morning I had to rearrange the flight again, which was kind of complicated. The folks in Pisa felt that we should have gone directly to Frankfurt to catch the U.S. C-130; since Tirana was considered a warzone, we should not have involved NATO. We did finally get it all arranged, and I could see the C-130 was a little different than what I normally flew on. There were a lot of heavily armed guys on the flight too. They were using it as training in a war zone. We landed in Tirana at the airport, but it was actually closed. There was not a soul around. The pilot referred to it as a "hot landing" and said that they would not be shutting down their engines. He asked if we were going to stay or return with them. I told them to unload our stuff.

Q: Okay.

GARVELINK: So, his folks did. About fifteen minutes after the plane left, a couple of embassy cars arrived and took us to the Rogner Hotel. It was the only nice hotel in Tirana and that's where all the international folks were staying. We got rooms there for ourselves and an additional three or four rooms that served as our offices for our DART team. I can remember one night (laughs) I was working late in one of the offices and I heard banging on the staircase door across the hall. It went on for a while, quit, and then about an hour later started again. I finally opened the door, and it was Christiane Amanpour. (Tauber laughs) She had the top suite and for some reason in the mid-evening she decided to walk down to the lobby, I guess for a little exercise. Well, all the doors were locked, and she had spent an hour and a half going up and down banging on doors hoping somebody would let her out. So, it was interesting to run into her again.

We operated out of there and did eventually open an office in Skopje, as well as in North Macedonia as folks were coming across to that place as well at this time. Soon after we arrived, NGOs started to complain to us about not being able to get their humanitarian supplies out of Albanian customs. Supplies were stacking up at warehouses at the port. I met with senior government officials, and they explained that they had no provision in their customs regulations for expediting humanitarian relief supplies. I offered to bring in a customs/logistics expert to help resolve the issues. They agreed; Vic Tanner arrived soon thereafter. He reported to the presidency and got everything sorted out within a few weeks.

I spent a lot of time going up to the northeast of Albania, which was where the main road came out of Kosovo.

Q: Now, since you've set the stage, what is—from OFDA's point of view, what is going back and forth into Kosovo or what were you expected to do from Albania and Skopje?

GARVELINK: I spent a lot of time in the northeast and that's where the Kosovars came across. That was the main crossing point. It was a pretty nasty situation. As you came across, you could see the road, on one side there was a hill and on top of that hill were Serbs shooting at everybody. They didn't make any distinctions between men, women or children. They were shooting kids. We had set up at the border tents with food, doctors and nurses doing surgery, and shelter. We were working with local Albanian populations.

Some folks would end up staying with friends or relatives, but some needed shelter. One time I took Congressman Frank Wolf up there for about three days and we stayed in a local family's house. There were no hotels. Other CODELs came, including one led by Nancy Pelosi. I was usually asked to join those groups.

Q: The CODELs were simply trying to inform themselves or were they particularly looking at how the money was spent or what was their general purpose?

GARVELINK: They were basically looking at what was going on. I mean, this was not something people had focused on in the U.S. It had been brewing for almost a decade in the region, but not as an issue back in Washington. So, this was more just to see it; they wanted to talk to refugees or displaced people and just get a sense of what was going on. They were quick in and out trips.

Q: And just one other question about this. The people coming across were principally refugees or were the fighters as well?

GARVELINK: They were principally the Muslim population of Kosovo and old folks, women, and children. Not a lot of young guys. They were in the KLA (Kosovo Liberation Army) and still in there.

We had tents set up all over the place. On one of these trips, I was going to a meeting in one of the tents with UN and NGO representatives. I mistakenly went into a medical tent, and they were doing surgery on a kid who was about ten years old. He'd been shot. Christiane Amanpour was talking to him. It was the saddest thing. I mean, the kid couldn't have been more than ten years old. He had been trying to save his younger sister, who was killed, shot by the Serbs and then he got shot as well, but some folks who were also fleeing grabbed him and took him across the border. This little kid was in bad shape. I later talked to Christiane Amanpour when she emotionally spoke about how hard those kinds of interviews are. She kept repeating how awful it was. The number of children being harmed was stunning.

After one of these trips to the northeast, I returned to Washington Fort Dix in New Jersey, and there were a bunch of Kosovar refugees there. I don't remember why this group was there, but it was families with little kids. These kids were in school or preschool, and the teachers had them drawing pictures. All they drew were pictures of dead bodies and guns and people shooting each other. And I thought, these little kids of four, five years old, this is what they grew up with and all they could remember of where they came from was the violence. It was really, really sad.

Q: Wow.

GARVELINK: But anyway, that's the kind of stuff we were working on and as time went on our programs got bigger and other organizations came in as well and participated in all of this.

At one point in 1998, the head of the World Food Program was there, Catherine Bertini, who I'd known for some time. She asked if OFDA could provide funding for an air service for humanitarian workers, going between Italy and Tirana. She wanted something akin to what we had funded through the International Medical Corps in Somalia a few years earlier. I agreed, and other donors also provided funds. It has since become a regular WFP activity in disaster responses, thus facilitating transportation of humanitarian workers. In 2007 it was made a formal part of the United Nations. There's the UNHAS, the United Nations Humanitarian Air Service, run by WFP. They have thirty or forty planes and helicopters on contract and so, now it's just the standard operating procedure for the UN in emergencies. It started there, but it blossomed and now it's an agency of the United Nations.

I was only there for about six months when I got a call from Keith Brown, who was the senior deputy assistant administrator for the Africa bureau, asking if I would be interested in the AID director's job in Eritrea?" I explained that I did not have a full medical clearance, that State MED would let me go for six, seven months at a time but I couldn't be assigned overseas. But, I did offer to check with my doc at Georgetown, Howard Cupples. He said that things had not changed much but did offer to write a letter indicating that I could get my medical clearance back. So, I got it.

But I wasn't quite done with OFDA yet, I found out. In 1998, the AID mission in Angola and the embassy asked me to help them develop a system to reduce the mishaps between the Angolan military and the humanitarian community. You will remember that I had made a lot of trips to Angola with Jeff Davidow several years earlier and I got to know a lot of military guys. By this time, several of them had moved into the general officer rank, so I had some good contacts with officers who had some understanding of the issue. The USAID Director, Ambassador Joe Sullivan, and I met with many of Angola's senior military intelligence officers and convinced them of the importance of respecting the neutrality of humanitarian workers. We agreed that the Angolans would set up a unit within the military to which NGOs or the UN could present their issues and complaints. A general would be put in charge to work to resolve the issues and promote cooperation between the two groups. When we put the process in place, we agreed that I would return every six weeks or so to review actions and see if we had accomplished our goals. So, I made frequent three-to-four-day trips over an eighteen-month period. Throughout that time, we were fine tuning the mechanism.

On one of the trips I told Sullivan that I would be going to Eritrea and someone else from OFDA would fill in for me. He didn't like that idea, arguing that I had started the process and needed to complete it. So, my last trip to Angola was about ten days before I left for Eritrea. I think everything was more or less worked out by then. Ironically, I continued to run into Sullivan over the years. I went to Zimbabwe during the election of Mugabe when he was Ambassador. When Hurricane Katrina hit New Orleans, FEMA (Federal Emergency Management Agency) asked OFDA to manage the international offers of assistance. So, we set up a small office in New Orleans; Sullivan was a Diplomat in Residence at Tulane at that time.

Q: Okay. Before we get too much further, when were you in Eritrea?

GARVELINK: Ninety-nine-2001.

Q: Okay. Because you sort of skipped over it to get to—

GARVELINK: Oh, no. I'm going back there again.

Q: Okay. All right.

GARVELINK: I was just saying that I kept bumping into Sullivan over the years. Then, when I was ambassador in the Congo, 2009, he headed up the embassy inspection team. It shows how small the diplomatic world can be.

Q: Interesting.

USAID/Eritrea, Mission Director, 1999 - 2001

GARVELINK: I assume part of the decision to offer me the Eritrea position was because of my familiarity with the region, country, and Isaias Afwerki, the former rebel leader and now head of Eritrea. I had gone in from Ethiopia with Kate Farnsworth on humanitarian missions, including one visit when we ate lunch at the big old hotel in Asmara. The dining room was huge, filled with white table clothed tables, and tuxedo clad waiters; but, we were the only customers. A very surreal experience. Also, I had experience with Eritrea when we took care of the Polish sailors. That is when I got to know Tesfai Ghirmazion who had become the Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs when I was assigned as Mission Director. I had also met President Isaias during some of his visits to Washington. He was popular in those days. So, I had a little background on Eritrea and some of the personalities.

The ambassador was Bill Clarke who arrived not too much before me. Don Yamamoto had been the Charge and was gone by the time I arrived. Howard Perlow came in as the new DCM; after about a year, he moved on and was replaced by Vince Vallier. Bill Clarke had come out of DS (Diplomatic Security) and was, I believe, the first DS guy to become ambassador.

Q: Interesting.

GARVELINK: He was out there the whole time. It was a relatively small embassy and a small AID mission. Right after I got there, Diplomatic Security came out to do a disaster response simulation to see how the embassy would respond to a natural disaster or terrorist attack. The RSO suggested I take the lead on it since I had worked in OFDA. I got the clear feeling from DS that they weren't expecting much since we were such a small group and didn't know each other very well. We blew their socks off. We (laughs) handled it expertly. Shortly after we started the simulation, I realized I had written it in OFDA. So, I (laughs) sort of knew what was coming. I didn't tell them that, but it

probably helped a lot with our response time. I wrote four or five of them for different countries and I happened to write the one for Eritrea.

Q: Now, just a quick question about this. It's very interesting that you wrote a plan for DS. Was the plan a country-by-country plan? In other words, either you were explaining to DS the kind of security that needed to be provided to the American community, the OFDA—or in other words, what did it cover and what was the DS responsibility?

GARVELINK: This training was being done at embassies all over the world. The simulation usually started with a disaster, an earthquake or something like that. Since the DS folks didn't have experience with natural disasters or humanitarian response actions, they asked us to write up that portion; they would then add on to it. So, we did a whole bunch of them over the years, including periodic updates. We didn't get real involved in it, but we saw the final copies of the exercises.

Q: The reason I'm asking is because every embassy has an emergency action plan, an emergency action—

GARVELINK: Yep.

Q: —a huge binder with every possible thing that every possible section and individual will do. Was your plan part of that? Was that separate for DS? In other words, how did it integrate with embassy—

GARVELINK: Well, it was really designed to see how those people who had assigned tasks operated when they were thrown into a situation they weren't expecting.

Q: Right.

GARVELINK: And to make sure that they knew what they were supposed to do.

Q: Okay. And just to drill down a little bit more, as I moved along in the Foreign Service emergency action manuals and plans grew more and more detailed. Eventually, embassies were expected to conduct one mock emergency, and it became quite a thing when almost every person in that embassy, from the marine guards all the way to the community liaison officer, everybody got involved in telephone banks to be in touch with American citizens.

GARVELINK: Yep.

Q: Could you give a detail or two of your contribution to that or what you were expecting people to do on top of what was already planned.

GARVELINK: Well, these were sort of like I said, testing this out and our contributions to what DS was doing was on the humanitarian side. How do you get people the medical care they need? How do you get food to them? How do you prioritize needs? Remember

the old rule about lasting for three minutes without air, three days without water, and three weeks without food. When the exercises dealt with terrorist attacks, that was just DS. We didn't have anything to do with that.

Q: Now, did your plans assume an OFDA team or some natural disaster team would be arriving in-country and how—

GARVELINK: Well, that would be one thing that would be done in the exercise. It would cover the basics. First, the ambassador has to make a disaster declaration. OFDA would then give money and possibly send people or even a team. So, that is part of the decision-making process in the exercise. Once they requested a team to go it, then OFDA would take over and manage the response.

Q: Okay. Yeah, because all of the emergency actions and the practices that we did, did not include the arrival of OFDA. That was—in other words, the embassy tried to handle it entirely. To add that into a practice, an emergency practice activity would have been quite complicated. Because as you say, at some point OFDA takes over and becomes the lead on stuff that's gonna happen.

GARVELINK: Yep. So, anyway, that was one of my first experiences in Eritrea and the DS guys were kind of flabbergasted that we seemed to know what we were doing.

But the AID mission was a small one. It had about 30 staff members with four or five FSOs, a couple Third Country nationals, and the rest were local staff. We focused on four sectors, primary healthcare, rural enterprise development, education, and democracy/accountable governance. We were linked up to Cornell University and the University of North Carolina and Oklahoma State.

The thing that overshadowed my whole time there was the war between Eritrea and Ethiopia over a little plot of land called Badme that started in 1998. They signed a cessation of hostilities in mid-2000, I believe, but it was actually resolved until a year or two ago. Between the war and the fact that Eritrea was in its second year of a drought, it was a bit of a mess. So, we also had a fairly large disaster program taking place. A priority throughout all the programs was supporting women's organizations. In the struggle for independence and in the war with Ethiopia, the Eritreans made no distinctions in their military between men and women.

Q: Interesting.

GARVELINK: Some of their senior generals were women that I met. They were determined that their daughters not resume traditional roles when the war was over. They wanted to ensure it would not be a male-dominated society. There were a lot of women's associations set up in Eritrea and I pushed all of our programs to work with the women's groups. They're the most innovative sector of what's going on in Eritrea. The female veterans were the entrepreneurs in the country and great to work with. So, our program

was focused on the four sectors, along with some disaster response work, with a real emphasis on women's groups in all of these areas.

At the time, still, of course, the main focus in East Africa was Ethiopia, not Eritrea.

Q: Right, right.

GARVELINK: In those days the relationships were good, so I had a lot more freedom than some other mission directors. There was also lots of contact back and forth between Addis and Washington on all sorts of issues, but I was largely left alone, to my own devices. I had a great desk officer, Mikaela Meredith. She's now the AID director in Uzbekistan and it's her third or fourth AID directorship. And the office director for East Africa that I worked with was great, Pam White, who ended up being ambassador to Haiti.

Q: Also to Gambia, no?

GARVELINK: Yeah, first Gambia. After the East Africa office director job, she was AID director in Tanzania and then from Tanzania she went to Gambia and then Haiti after that. She was great to work with and could move mountains. We had a really good relationship and were doing a lot of different things to push our program along.

During most of the time I was there, we had a great relationship with the government. I got a kick out of the Minister of Health, Saleh Meki, who had studied in San Francisco, and he'd spent a lot of time in Germany as well. So, he was fluent in German. (Laughs) For several months, my German-speaking niece came out to stay with me. The minister always insisted that I bring her with me to receptions so he could practice his German. I worked closely with other senior officials as well, including Tesfai Ghirmazion, Perm Sec or the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and Woldai Futur, the Minister of Finance. Futur got his PhD at the University of Wisconsin and was an Eritrean World Bank employee seconded to the government of Eritrea. These guys were really easy to work with. We knew each other well and were very relaxed and comfortable. I can remember signing a couple of projects with the minister of finance after we played tennis. We'd go to his office in our tennis shorts and sit down and sign the documents.

Q: Lovely. Uh-huh.

GARVELINK: That, unfortunately, changed. But, at the beginning we had a really good relationship with the government. There weren't many donors or embassies there. The Scandinavian countries, Norway, Sweden, Denmark had people. The Italians, of course, were very big in Eritrea. I was hounded by the Israeli ambassador all the time. He wanted us to fund training programs and then send the people for training to Israel. And he wanted us to fund agriculture programs. They'd send their experts to participate, but we had to pay for everything. Every time I saw him, he'd ask me about a new project or a new idea he had. The problem was a lot of the European countries covered Eritrea through their ambassadors in Ethiopia. They didn't get to Eritrea very often. So, it turned

out that the resident international embassy community was small, although the UN had a fairly big presence. Only a couple of Dutch and Norwegian NGOs were there initially. I did get CARE to start programs in Eritrea, and the International Medical Corps to begin working there.

As I mentioned, the war between Ethiopia and Eritrea overshadowed all of this. It started in May 1998 and was focused on Badme, which if you look at the map, is on the border between Ethiopia and Eritrea in the southwest of Eritrea. It's territory not worth fighting over. During the war, about 100,000 Eritreans may have been killed. Some put the number up to 300,000 killed if you add in the Ethiopians. At the same time, there was a drought displacing many people. On top of this, the Ethiopians forcibly repatriated 75,000 Eritreans who just happened to be living in Ethiopia. So, there were thirty-one displaced person camps scattered all around the country. It was a brutal war with trench warfare, like World War I.

In mid-2000, the fighting flared up for the third time, and it ended up being the most destructive period of the war. I can remember, at one point I was sitting in my office which was separate from the embassy. Our office was about three miles from the Asmara airport. I was looking down the street and could see Ethiopian planes bombing the airport. Ambassador Clarke, at the embassy from a couple miles away, saw the same thing. This prompted us to talk about a possible evacuation of non-essential staff and families. It was already an adult-only post, but there were spouses. My wife had not come with me to Eritrea because of her job, but other spouses were there. So, we began talking to DS in Washington about an evacuation, and we eventually did evacuate. That was my first experience with an evacuation. And when you tell folks a plane's coming in, you get one suitcase, one carryon, no pets. What do you pack? That's a hard decision when all your belongings are there. It took about a week to make the final decision to evacuate so no work got done. Everybody was sitting in their office thinking about the logistics of departing post and trying to decide what to take with them. Decisions about photographs, documents, and the things they would need. I wasn't going so I didn't have that problem. It was agonizing to watch. The evacuation went on for about eight months. While we had been afraid that the fighting was going to reach Asmara itself, it never did. It never went beyond the airport bombing. So, everyone's homes and belongings were fine, and local people took care of their pets. So, when folks returned, they had not lost anything.

When Ethiopia and Eritrea started negotiating a ceasefire in Algeria, I decided that we would need to revise the USAID program. By this time there were 1.1 million internally displaced Eritreans, one-third of the population. The agriculture sector had been destroyed and the economy had ground to a halt. Eritrea was in the midst of a humanitarian crisis. We needed to expand the food program, but there were some longstanding issues with the government. They had been storing our food in lousy warehouses, and they owed us reimbursement for food that had been used improperly. So, with my tennis buddy, Woldai, we resolved all the issues and expanded the food aid program. I also requested a DART team, a disaster team, to come out to take charge of humanitarian assistance for those thirty-one displaced persons camps.

We were able to make all the program changes fairly easily because one of the AID Directors before me had built in a "Crisis Modifier" into the country development strategy. It said that the mission could change its program if/when a crisis arises. I reprogrammed \$15-20 million in development programs for emergency rehabilitation programs which would complement what was being done by OFDA. The reprogrammed funds remained in their functional categories, so I was able to avoid doing Congressional notifications. The money remained in the original sectors, so, for example in the health sector, money was shifted toward working with the OFDA people on rehabilitation of buildings and health clinics. I left the development programs with just enough money so that staff could be maintained, albeit working at a slower pace. Lots of folks came to me in later years to ask how we made the changes. It was all because of the original "crisis modifier." It was short and sweet, and it worked really well, including the coordination with OFDA.

Also, along with the USAID mission in Ethiopia, we designed a Border Development Fund that would promote peacebuilding and reconciliation programs among Eritreans and Ethiopians. The Fund would support economic development activities that would promote enterprise development and trade, thus strengthening economic ties within the Badme region.

After the official cessation of hostilities, the international community started to push Isaias Afwerki to open the political system and hold elections. Apparently, as I recall, Isaias held a couple of what you might call town hall meetings and to his surprise he was not the overwhelming choice to be the head of the country. He then stopped the meetings, began shutting down the political system, and arrested about a dozen of his close advisors.

Q: Interesting.

GARVELINK: He got outsmarted pretty badly by the Ethiopians and that was visible to the population. I don't think there was direct opposition to him at the meetings. I think folks simply brought up other names that might be considered as well and he was not expecting that. And so, after about two of these he shut them down. I suspect the other guys that were recommended had been his advisors during the struggle with EPLF, but he arrested all of them and threw them in jail. None of them were ever released. Tesfai Girmatsion, the guy I've mentioned several times, by this time was ambassador to the European Union. He would have been one of them thrown in jail, but he faxed in his resignation and went to join his family in Springfield.

Everything started to shut down. The government started taking over more businesses. They eventually started to ask NGOs to leave the country. Up to that point, we were able to travel wherever we wanted in the country. The government then decreed that U.S. diplomats could not leave Asmara without permission. I mean, he just tightened up on everything and became rather a weird guy.

And then, in the fall of 2000, I was medevaced to London. I had pancreatitis. I had a wonderful night in the ER in the Asmara hospital, which was really weird.

Q: Yeah, I can imagine.

GARVELINK: The nurse sat at the end of my bed all night long and wouldn't let anybody do anything unless she approved it. The next day, I was sent to Princess Grace Hospital in London, which is a private hospital and a very nice place. I was there for about six weeks, most of it, unfortunately, in intensive care. When I got out of intensive care and into the regular hospital it was very interesting because I was the only U.S. official there. I had this steady stream of doctors and nurses who wanted to know what this recount was between Bush and Gore and what it meant. I, of course, didn't have a clue, but I was the only American they could ask. (Tauber laughs) They were all fascinated by that. I don't think they quite believed me when I said I had no idea about what was happening. I got the feeling they thought I wasn't telling. (Laughs)

After about six weeks, they still had no idea what had caused the problem, but thought I was doing better and should return to Washington. So, I came back here and for the next month or so, I went to every kind of doctor you could think of. The last guy State Med sent me to was the tropical medicine guy at George Washington hospital. He looked me over and took some samples which he then sent to the Centers for Disease Control. He said they would get back to me. In the meantime, the State medical unit said I could return to Eritrea, that I was doing fine. AID didn't agree and suggested I instead go to a senior manager training at the Executive Management Institute in Charlotte. It was the only course in my entire career; it's the only course I ever took.

Q: Right.

GARVELINK: After being there for a couple of days I got a call from CDC and asked if I had ever walked through muddy, fresh water in the Balkans or Africa?" I laughed and said "lots and lots of times." They then sent me a prescription for two pills to be taken within a twenty-four-hour period. I took them and that was it.

Q: But did they tell you—

GARVELINK: I forget the name of it, but it's some kind of a bug that comes in through your legs and attacks your pancreas, but it can be dormant for up to ten years. So, for all of that, I only needed two little pills.

Q: Wow. Amazing. Just amazing.

GARVELINK: I was looking forward to returning to Eritrea and implementing our new program. I was very proud of it and wanted to work with my folks and get that going.

The election had of course been settled by then. In early 2001, I got a call from Andrew Natsios who was the appointed new AID administrator. He wanted me in Washington. ,

and he said, “I want you back here.” Because I had agreed to go to Eritrea for four years and it had only been two, I initially declined. But, he wanted to be the senior DAA (Deputy Assistant Administrator) of the humanitarian bureau.

Q: I just have one question. You go back to Eritrea after this whole awful pancreas issue. Did you at least bring your waders so the next time you go through a muddy swamp or whatever you're going to be protected from whatever the parasite is?

GARVELINK: That's a good point and no, never thought of it 'til you mentioned it. Because I've since walked through more fresh water in Africa, but I never thought of that. That would have been a smart thing to do. (Laughs)

Q: I'll give you one quick story about waders. Another person I interviewed was going through the part of Bolivia that is swampy. And of course, it's full of snakes.

GARVELINK: Yeah.

Q: And they—the people leading him through said, “Now, you've got to wear these waders because there's some danger.” And they're walking through and so on and so on and he keeps hearing these little bumps. And yeah, they're snakes trying to bite him. And they're hitting his waders and they can't get through.

GARVELINK: I lived there for five years, and I never got into that area. That must be way up in Beni in the north by the Amazon River?

Q: Exactly. Right. A relatively small area but an indigenous area where they were going to talk with the local people. Anyway, just an aside. And get those waders when you go to these places. (Laughs)

GARVELINK: That's right. That's a good point. People ought to have a pair with them just in case.

So, it was a long, drawn-out medical affair but that was what it turned out to be. I should have started out with the tropical medicine guy rather than all the other ones. But live and learn. Next time, if I ever had something like that, I would start with the tropical medicine doc.

Q: Right.

GARVELINK: But anyway, so I came back early from Eritrea, in May of 2001. And I really enjoyed my time in Eritrea. But Andrew Natsios had been my boss in OFDA for some time and became a very good friend. He now runs the Scowcroft Institute at Texas A&M.

So, now I'm switching to my time as the senior DAA in a new bureau called DCHA, Democracy, Conflict and Humanitarian Assistance.

AID/W, Democracy, Conflict, and Humanitarian Assistance (DCHA) Bureau, Senior Deputy Assistant Administrator, 2001 - 2007

Q: Okay. Take a moment to distinguish what this office does from OFDA and any of the other relief aspects of the department or USAID.

GARVELINK: Yeah. Well, if you go back to 1992, when Andrew had been head of OFDA and head of the new Bureau for Humanitarian Response. It was made up of OFDA, Food for Peace and maybe the Office of Transition Initiatives. That was it. So, when Andrew came in this time, he again wanted to rationalize the various independent offices in USAID. He created the new DCHA Bureau which included the humanitarian offices, OFDA and Food for Peace, as well as the Office of Transition Initiatives (OTI), Civil-Military Affairs, Conflict Mitigation and Management (CMM), the Democracy/Governance (DG) Center, and ASHA (American Schools and Hospitals Abroad). So, that's the bureau I was the senior DAA for.

Q: Okay.

GARVELINK: I also got involved in some of the senior appointments. When I got back, Andrew was in the process of appointing Kevin Kennedy to become the Assistant Administrator of the new DCHA Bureau. He was a retired Marine Corps colonel who had gone on to work for the UN. I had worked with him in Somalia. Roger Winter was already in place as the new director of OFDA. Roger had been the CEO of the U.S. Committee for Refugees for many years. He knew the refugee issues very well.

Q: Ah-ha.

GARVELINK: So, I had been in my job for only a couple days when Kevin Kennedy called, asking me to tell Andrew that he couldn't take the DCHA job. I suggested he call Andrew himself. He must have done so right away, because I got a call from Andrew about an hour later. He called me to his office to discuss finding a new AA for DCHA.

So, Andrew and I sat in his office talking options. I suggested that he move Roger Winter into the position, that he knows the issues and also had experience during the Mariel boatlift with the Department of Health and Human Services. Andrew asked me to tell Roger to go upstairs to see him. I did so. Roger returned half an hour later, laughing that you never know what's going to happen when you go to the Administrator's office. So, Roger became the AA, and we then had to find a new OFDA director. This was hard, and there was turnover of several folks who did not work out really well. When we began another search, I happened to have gone to a dinner with a lot of NGO-types, hosted by the Norwegian government. I sat next to Ky Luu, a Vietnamese refugee who was vice-president of the International Medical Corps. I had known him for some time and thought highly of him. I asked if he would be interested in the OFDA position. He was, so I suggested him to Andrew, and he got the nomination approved through the White House. The OFDA director job is a political appointment. Anyway, Ky Luu ended up

being a very good OFDA director, remaining in the position through the end of the Bush Administration. I did not overlap with him as I had to go into language training before my Congo assignment.

Fortunately, throughout this time, including the changes in directors, there was a terrific OFDA deputy director, Tami Halmrast-Sanchez. She was the steady manager to keep OFDA working and growing.

So, I did a lot of personnel-related work. One other interesting recruitment effort was for the director of the Food for Peace Office. Several folks had been identified and had meetings with the White House, but nominations didn't happen. Finally, Andrew asked me to focus on the job. I approached Lauren Landis who was already in the bureau and coached her a bit on the politics of any White House interview. She passed and did a great job. She is now the WFP representative in Kenya and she was the WFP representative in Geneva and in Chad before that. I tried to get her to come back to the government, but she likes WFP. So, anyway, she's terrific.

But anyway, those weren't my main responsibilities, but Andrew and I knew many of the same people and worked closely together so I spent a lot of time during my six years there on staffing issues.

Q: Yeah.

GARVELINK: One of the changes we wanted to make in the new DCHA bureau was to develop a closer relationship between the development and humanitarian sides of the house. It was too easy to go for years doing disaster stuff and have no contact whatsoever with any of the development folks. They wouldn't even know each other if they passed in the hall. In the old days they used to talk about the disaster-development continuum. You do disaster assistance first, then development. That is baloney. It's all mixed in many countries. You can be doing development in one part of the country and disaster assistance in another part of the country. The two sides must work in tandem. So, we decided to create a new Foreign Service backstop in AID, Backstop 76. To work in the backstop, you had to have spent time working in the disaster business, OFDA primarily or Food for Peace, and in the development side of the house. You had to have experience in both if you wanted to move up in that cone. I believe they have created a new Backstop 70 to perform this function now, with Backstop 76 now reserved for people working on OTI-like issues and democracy/governance.

The other change we wanted to make related to the Food for Peace Office. We wanted to shift more of the FFP budget to cash to buy food in a neighboring country rather than only shipping U.S. food at great expense and with multiple month-long delays in delivery. We needed to respond more quickly to drought situations.

Andrew and I kicked the idea around quite a bit and recognized the difficulty of doing so. One part of the problem was that the Food for Peace budget is in the Department of Agriculture budget. It's a very small piece of the USDA budget, but it's really important

for the shipping industry. They profited from the requirement to ship U.S. commodities on U.S. ships.

Q: Interesting.

GARVELINK: And so (laughs), we had to testify before the House Agriculture Committee, which was very loyal to the shipping lobby. I can remember discussing this with Roger Winter and Andrew, and they didn't want to testify, so I had to do it a couple of times. That was not an entirely pleasant experience, but we did make progress and got a small percentage of the budget to use cash to buy food. And now it's grown. It's gotten much bigger. But it was a real battle in those early dates. And in fact, at one point it required 60 percent or 70 percent of the food to be shipped on U.S. ships, and they wanted to make it 100 percent. We had to get Colin Powell, Secretary of State, to make a bunch of phone calls to stop that. But, it is still around 70 to 80 percent, something like that.

Q: So, that percentage that you were able to buy in a neighboring country would be sufficient to do drought relief?

GARVELINK: It was a drop in the bucket. But one of the craziest things I have observed is that there is not usually a super shortage of food during a drought. It's just that people can't afford it. So, if you bring it fairly quickly by truck, the price goes down because the food's coming in -- the supply increases. And you want to do that as fast as you can in a drought situation. Otherwise, the negative effect of the drought continues to grow.

Q: Now, just one other question about the process of getting the food there. Would it have been possible to buy lots of food from a neighboring country and then tell the neighboring country, "Okay, in three months food from the U.S. will come in and replace what has been purchased from you," so , you're not left in the lurch?

GARVELINK: Yeah, I don't think that's been done very often. Maybe a few times. Often the neighboring country wants to sell the food because of its own surplus, so they may not want it replaced.

Q: I see.

GARVELINK: But it's a touchy political issue in Washington more than anything else. (Laughs) And I really didn't enjoy testifying because I knew it was going to be very contentious and it was.

Q: And just one last remark about this. It's just interesting as kind of a study of how, when you are trying to move a natural resource like food, something as unexpected as simply the old transportation method becomes the problem.

GARVELINK: Yep.

Q: Not the growing of the food, not the quality, nothing other than the mere fact that there's some little industry in the U.S. or some little interest that wants to reserve to itself the right to move the food.

GARVELINK: Well, to my understanding, and I may be wrong, some of these old ships would be mothballed or whatever you do with ships if they were not delivering food aid. So, the shipping industry wants to keep them going.

Anyway, that was a big issue at that particular time and now it's resolving itself. I don't know what percentage of the budget now allows cash purchases locally, but it's fairly high now.

Q: Okay.

GARVELINK: We also were working very hard to increase the relationship between AID, particularly the DCHA bureau, and the Pentagon.

Q: Really? Interesting.

GARVELINK: So, we created an office of civil-military affairs in DCHA, and it's staffed by OFDA people and seconded folks from the Pentagon. So, there are probably more Pentagon folks there than there are AID folks in that office. And for the first time we put senior AID Foreign Service officers in the military commands, that is EUCOM, PACOM, CENTCOM, SOUTHCOM. The AID officers work in the office of the commander and travel with him just like the political advisor to the COCOMM.

Q: A question here. You were in this new office created by Natsios from 2001 to 2007? That is, of course, the period when we became involved in Iraq and much more involved in Afghanistan.

GARVELINK: Yeah.

Q: When you mentioned that you're creating an office of civil-military affairs, my mind immediately goes to the fact that the military is taking on more and more of these necessary activities to stabilize, including the bringing of food or other essential materials that typically OFDA had done or USAID had done. Am I right and what did that mean for the work you were doing?

GARVELINK: It has not made a big difference. It's very interesting in all of these cases, when it's humanitarian stuff, the Pentagon defers to OFDA.

Q: Okay.

GARVELINK: We're the final word on humanitarian assistance, including where it goes. Security around it is a different matter. The military will help out with food at our request, but otherwise they don't get involved in it much. You had the PRTs (Provincial

Reconstruction Teams), and the deputy commander of the PRTs, for a long time in Afghanistan, was Tami Halmrast-Sanchez, who was the deputy OFDA director for a long time. So, the OFDA folks have been very involved in those sorts of things. As this relationship developed, I would go once a year or twice a year to Quantico to do courses and training sessions with the Marines. I traveled to a lot of the commands. They used our FOG manual, the Field Operation Guide. And the generals are pretty aware of the relationships on humanitarian work. They understand that this is not their bailiwick and defer. So, it works really well. Sometimes it gets really complicated, but I've not heard lots of complaints. The military and OFDA, now the Bureau of Humanitarian Response, coordinate very closely and have a very good relationship, particularly with the Marines. General Tony Zinni was a big reason—he had a lot to do with the cooperation between the disaster folks and the Marines. He would joke (laughs) that we drove him nuts, but we still have to work together. So, he'd make it happen. And he was great. He had—still does—so much credibility that everybody in the military at his level noticed what he was doing. He's a big reason that the disaster folks get along with the military. He may not realize it, but he was a driving force and much appreciated.

Q: Interesting.

GARVELINK: Because of this, we had people at the War College lecturing. We also participated in training at the various commands, providing yet another way for the disaster folks and military to work together.

We also tried to expand our relationship with the National Security Council. I was the first or second person to provide the NSC disaster advice. Now there's several more people there and they're all from OFDA. They will spend a year or two on the NSC staff, which is something we were very big on. I mentioned earlier, in the past we put a disaster specialist at the USUN office. Now, there's three or four people there.

I am also very proud of our work with INR, the State Department Bureau of Intelligence and Research. From my early days in the refugee bureau (PRM), I got to know Bill Wood, who was the Geographer of the State Department. He had for years helped me with maps and other geographic materials. From my new position in DCHA, I spoke to him about how we could increase the availability of this information. And so, we agreed that we would set up a humanitarian information unit, the HIU, and it would be part of INR, headed by an AID FSO (Foreign Service officer). That was signed off on by Colin Powell in 2002.

Q: Wow.

GARVELINK: We got the AID person into that position. It was a multiagency organization based in INR with State, AID, Pentagon, National Geospatial Agency folks assigned to the unit. They would have classified and unclassified information. The unclassified stuff they'd make available to AID and then on to the NGOs. It's still a huge office in INR, although I don't think an AID person heads it anymore. We enticed Dennis King, one of the world's experts on humanitarian and crisis information management. He

had worked previously for OFDA when I was there; he then went on to UN/OCHA where he was the principal developer of the UN's humanitarian and emergency response information website, Relief Web. He was the real brains for a lot of this, along with the fellow who replaced Bill Wood as the geographer, Lee Schwartz.

Looking at the Relief Web website now, it became a much bigger operation than what we envisioned in 2001-2002. It's a growing concern now, and it makes information available to NGOs, AID, other countries, anybody who needs it when a disaster hits. So, it's a very nice addition to what INR does normally. And it was needed.

Q: These are interesting connections that indicate that, at least during the George W. Bush Administration and maybe driven by the fact of the 9/11 report and then subsequent needs in Iraq and Afghanistan of whole of government work.

GARVELINK: Yes. During his term, everyone spoke about the three Ds, Diplomacy, Defense, and Development/Disaster. It was taken seriously in my view, and they are much more integrated. Another one of the final steps for that matter happened in the past couple of years, that is putting the head of AID on the National Security Council and therefore at all those important meetings at the White House. I quite often went to those meetings, but I was the backseat person for the State Department.

Q: Yeah.

GARVELINK: But now, AID is invited to the National Security Council meetings as a standard matter. That's good —and that did not happen when I started in this business in the eighties. So, it's evolved exactly as you said and it's a good thing.

So, that was one of the other side activities I was involved in a lot. It's kind of like the master's degree program on humanitarian assistance. It took a long time arguing with people and convincing them that it was a good idea to put a lot of money in INR for computers. Also, at the beginning, their offices were a long way from the State Department, but we eventually got them moved closer. It was a long process but it worked.

Also during this period, around 2004 - 2005, I chaired the OCHA (United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs) donor support group. That is the group of countries that are the principal donors to the UN humanitarian agencies and OCHA. My predecessor as chair was from Switzerland (Tony Frisch), and my successor was from Sweden (Per Orneus). The three of us did a lot of work together. As chair, I really pushed to get some new participants, especially countries in the Middle East.

Q: So, they were not donors.

GARVELINK: They were not big donors. We first focused on Turkey because its Geneva representative expressed some interest. My Geneva colleague, Nancy Kyloh, and I made several trips to Turkey, and they soon joined up as a donor. We then focused on the UAE

(United Arab Emirates), and that was a hard sell. I went there three or four times, but they saw the UN as a western organization and preferred donating to their own Red Crescent societies and their own charitable foundations. I suggested that they host one of OCHA donor support group meetings in either Dubai or Abu Dhabi, that I would run the meeting and my Swiss and Swedish colleagues would also be there. They would then be able to see how it works. After the meeting, they also agreed to join and become donors. They are still members of the support group. We then went after Kuwait. And that was the hardest sell of all. They were very bitter. During the first Gulf War they donated a lot of humanitarian assistance but somehow got left off the UN donor list. They were still unhappy that they had not gotten any credit for the millions of dollars they had donated. It took us quite a while to apologize and explain that it had simply been an error. Finally, they also agreed to join, so we did get at least some Middle Eastern countries to provide humanitarian funding to the UN. I haven't checked recently to see if they're still there, but I wouldn't be surprised.

Q: Right.

GARVELINK: And the Swedes were going to continue to pursue that when they took over as chair. Also, in this OCHA donor group capacity, I led a delegation to Pakistan after its devastating earthquake in October 2005. Eight or nine of us made the trip, coordinating with the Pakistani military on relief efforts. Anyway, I spent a lot of time on and enjoyed doing the OCHA work and getting very much into the UN system.

Q: You were there until 2007. I'm trying to think. I'm not sure if this overlaps. There was a typhoon in the Philippines that was bad enough to create serious problems for the embassy there. It may have been after 2007, but Manila flooded. Manila's famous for flooding for a whole variety of reasons. But was your office involved in any flood relief—

GARVELINK: Is that the Indian Ocean tsunami?

Q: No. This was—this was one that—it was a typhoon that hit principally just the Philippines. And—

GARVELINK: Well, I'm sure—I don't recall it, but I'm sure we were very involved in that.

Q: Okay. Yeah. The reason I ask is because the embassy was flooded. In fact, all the embassy buildings were flooded, and it created a bit of an evacuation issue while they were remediating. Ultimately, OBO (Bureau of Overseas Building Operations) came in and rebuilt aspects of the foundation to raise it so that the next typhoon would not impact them or impact them only in a minor way. But this may have come well after 2007.

GARVELINK: I'm thinking it may have. Because the time I spent a bunch of time in the Philippines was when Mount Pinatubo exploded. I've got a picture on my wall. It's very interesting. You see this dirt road with a cross that's about this big. The day before that it was a steeple of a church.

Q: Holy cow. Buried in ash.

GARVELINK: And, it was hard enough so trucks were driving on it then. But it looks like one of these little crosses you'd see next to the highway where somebody died, but, no, that was a steeple.

Q: Wow. Incredible.

GARVELINK: It was interesting. But that's the only time I was physically in the Philippines. So, these were some of the things I did in my DAA position.

The next thing I'd like to talk a little bit about is the Iraq war.

Q: That's actually where I hoped we would go, so please go on.

GARVELINK: For about a year before the second war happened, there was a planning group in the National Security Council. Elliott Abrams chaired it. State, AID, Treasury, Pentagon and assorted other agencies were involved. We would meet once a week, sometimes twice a week, on what could possibly happen with a new Gulf War. Ambassador Wendy Chamberlin was working in AID as the head of the Asia Near East Bureau, so she went to these meetings as the development person. I went as the disaster guy. There were a couple of subgroups to this, primarily in State. This group was going through every issue that could possibly come up related to Iraq.

Q: Just a quick question. Was this the Iraq Study Group?

GARVELINK: No. The Iraq Study Group was a State Department subgroup.

Q: Okay.

GARVELINK: So, the folks who set up that group were the people from State on this NSC group. I don't think the NSC group had a name. This group did an enormous amount of work. And then, when it shifted to the Pentagon, it was completely ignored as near as I could tell.

But (laughs)—a couple of interesting things happened. At one point before the war President Bush sent a note to the group through Elliott saying that when the war started, he wanted to make sure that no Iraqis would go hungry. So, I was dispatched to Rome to (laughs) tell the World Food Program about their new task. So, Lauren Landis, head of Food for Peace, and I went to Rome to see Jim Morris, who at that point was head of the World Food Programme. We told him what the President wanted, a plan to feed the entire country during the war that's coming in order to make sure that nobody dies of starvation because of the war. We said we needed at least a rough draft of a plan. He laughed, asking if we were kidding. Did we really want a plan to feed the entire country of Iraq for however long? I told we would for whatever it costs, but we needed a plan.

So, they got their best logistician, Amer Daoudi, to put a plan together. We went over it a few times over the course of the next month or two and it was a good plan. And if you think back to the war, there was never a news report of anybody going hungry or starving during that war. It worked. The WFP put together one of the most elaborate plans I've ever seen, and it worked. I was really impressed with WFP and what they put together at our request. Anyway, that was the one specific task I was involved in with that group.

We continued our meetings at the NSC and one day, General Jay Garner showed up at the meeting. You could see that Elliot Abrams was a little puzzled and asked why Garner was there. Garner said he was now in charge and that was no point in holding any more meetings. Everybody got up and walked out and that was it.

I got a call from Garner a couple of days later and he asked to meet with Lauren Landis and me to talk about humanitarian issues. So, we actually met with Garner at the Pentagon a number of times. He asked us to go out with him to Kuwait, but we both told him we could not leave our Washington jobs but would make periodic visits to Iraq as needed. He seemed satisfied with that. He then began to conduct regular meetings at the Pentagon. He also conducted an all-day Iraq drill at the War College to observe how subordinates would behave under certain circumstances. Jay invited Lauren and me to that session, although we were primarily observers.

A few weeks after, Garner went to Kuwait, I went out there for a month or so. He had meetings almost every night with local leaders from Iraq to talk about their situation, and he invited me to participate in those meetings, asking for my humanitarian perspective. I ended up spending a lot of time with Garner and other military leaders just before they headed into Baghdad. There was a DART team out there too, working directly with the military and making plans for what they would do once they could get into Iraq. I was just focused on Jay Garner.

I went in on a military plane from BWI (Baltimore-Washington International Airport). Right after we got off the plane in Kuwait, there was a scud missile attack (laughs) and that's when they gave me my first gas mask. Still got it on my wall here.

Q: Wow.

GARVELINK: What caught me by surprise, as we were going into a building, was that it was Geraldo Rivera who handed me the gas mask. He was out there covering stuff and somehow or other got involved with handing out gas masks to all of us coming off the plane. I ran into him a couple of other times when I was there.

When we checked in with the DOD folks, I went to this little table where they were checking everybody who arrived and I handed them my passport and this sergeant looked at me, and he asked instead for a driver's license. Anyway, I went about my business and was there for about a month. I was leaving by a commercial flight back to Washington, and, because of the original DOD process, they had no record of my arrival in the country and wouldn't let me on the plane. It took two or three days for the embassy to sort this out

with the Kuwaitis. I almost never got out. I could still be in Kuwait and trying to figure that one out.

I went in and out quite a bit over the course of the war, a lot to Baghdad to see our people there. I also spent a lot of time, actually, in Jordan with Kevin Kennedy, who was the humanitarian coordinator during the Gulf War. So, I'd go in and out of Jordan and then into Baghdad. I also spent a lot of time in northern Iraq in the Kurdish areas. So, I probably made a dozen or more trips in and out to see our humanitarian teams that were dispersed all over the place.

Q: Now, in light of the security situation for everyone, what were the security concerns or how did you resource the security you needed to move food?

GARVELINK: Well, in a sense we didn't worry about that because this plan we put together was for implementation by the World Food Programme.

Q: Okay.

GARVELINK: So, that was their issue. More generally about security, when I traveled around, they would tell me when to get into a car, when to get out of a car. And God, we crossed the river (laughs) that was shallow and the guards ran next to the car I was in. They ran through the water. You didn't move without those guys telling you to and you didn't get out of the car until they told you to. It was very structured. But I never ran into any problems, fortunately.

And then, in 2003, just about the same time, there was the Bam earthquake on Christmas Day in the U.S., the day after Christmas, the twenty-sixth in Iran. On Christmas night, my wife and I were having Christmas dinner with friends in Fairfax. The phone rang, and the host said it was for me. It was the White House Operations Center, and they told me to go home, pack my bag, and then head to the coordination center for Fairfax Fire and Rescue. There would be buses to take us to Dover to get on a plane to fly to Bam, Iran. They said it was an instruction from Rich Armitage. I still have no idea how they knew where I was. This was before I had a cell phone, and I hadn't told anyone where I was going.

So, I went home and packed and got back out. A police escort took us to Dover Air Force Base, and we were getting on a C-5 to head to Kuwait. We were delayed there a couple of hours in order to get all the needed equipment, including fire trucks. The Fairfax team has doctors that go with them. They're not really to take care of the people they find, but to take care of their team. They asked about health issues, and when they got to me, I mentioned the scratches I'd received from the kitten at my friend's house -- I'd been playing with the kitten while talking to the White House Operations Center. The doctor looked at my arm and saw a red line. He said that cats are dirty animals and I need an IV immediately. He sent out to a pharmacy for the medicine and then hooked me up to an IV. And as soon as they got started, there was a loudspeaker announcement to get on the plane. The doc then started squeezing the solution into my arm, and I got a bit shaky. It was the trip from hell. During the course of it, I got pneumonia and a pinched nerve. I

couldn't lift my arm above my waist for (laughs) about two or three months afterward. I spent more time in the MASH General hospital than the Iranians did. I was running the thing from there. I would hold meetings laying down in the ER. They hung a blanket to separate me from the rest of the ER, but I could still hear people screaming and babies crying. It was bizarre.

On the way out we stopped in Spain to refuel and I got reports from the United Nations that there were already enough search and rescue teams there. So, I contacted the L.A. County team which was enroute and told them to stop. They just made a big circle around the United States and flew back to Los Angeles. I don't think they ever forgave me for that (laughs). And then, we flew to Kuwait from Spain and we had to wait a while there before going into Bam. We, again, changed into three C-130s and headed to Bam. When we landed, I assumed it was Bam, but the pilot announced it was Kerman City, that the president of Iran was in Bam and the air space was closed.

Q: Ahh.

GARVELINK: So, this was another hot landing, and they said we would either have to return with the planes to Kuwait or they would have to unload the trucks and all the equipment. I asked them to unload all the equipment. By miracle (Laughs), there was an Iranian American from Chicago who showed up on the tarmac.

Q: Uh-huh.

GARVELINK: He was looking for relatives. Kerman City is the provincial capital of Kerman Province and Bam is about 100 miles away. I asked him if he could get hold of the governor of the province and ask him to come to the airport. The governor showed up a couple hours later, and he said we could spend the night in a big Haj warehouse where people would stay when the Haj was on. He also arranged a military escort to drive the firetrucks and ambulance and most of the people the hundred miles to Bam. I also asked for an airplane for the MASH General folks and others. He agreed to have a plane for us in the morning. I thought, oh, yeah. We'll see.

So, we went into the Haj building, spent the night there and at dawn the next morning the military was there. And so, the folks took off with all the firetrucks and other vehicles. Then, a commercial plane landed. Apparently, they diverted a plane going someplace and threw everybody off of it. We got on and flew to Bam. I spent most of my time there working on visa issues for us and dealing with the press. I mean, this was a time where the relations with Iran and the U.S. are like they are now —really bad.

Q: Right. Any concern that, as an American, you might be taken hostage? (Laughs)

GARVELINK: Yes, there was.

Q: Oh. (Laughs)

GARVELINK: So, I stayed in touch with Mr. Armitage and his folks. But the Republican Guard cleared an area for us to set up our tents. And the first day there, I probably spent eight hours just talking to the press while everybody else did their thing. And I remember a day or so later a guy from a German newspaper, came up to me to ask if, as an American, we had our own security. I told him we didn't have any. The Government of Iran had invited us, so we were relying on them to protect us. He was dumbfounded, but I don't know if he ever wrote anything about it.

Q: Right.

GARVELINK: About 30,000 people were killed in the town and another 30,000 or more were injured. The buildings were mostly sand and adobe, and there were no areas where people could survive once they collapsed. We drove around, and you could smell all the dead bodies very quickly. But there weren't any survivors. Everything just pancaked down.

We did what we could. We set up two hospital tents, surgical tents with MASH General. They were delivering babies, they were treating people for normal stuff, including a lot of drug addiction. There were relatively few injuries due to the earthquake itself. We were there for several weeks, and our firemen did a lot of training with the Bam Fire Department. And the standard process, when OFDA goes, is you leave the equipment. It's too expensive to fly home again, so the hook and ladder, all these firetrucks, were donated to the government.

And it was interesting talking to some of the medical doctors. They said that everyone they met— from cab drivers to government ministers—said they were happy to see the Americans. The doctors they met all asked them to send medical journals because they could no longer get them. Our doctors agreed to send journals and other things.

Q: Wow.

GARVELINK: So, we spent two or three weeks training and continuing to search for people that may have survived. There really weren't any.

And it was a very interesting experience. On New Year's Eve, around 10:00 at night their time, the deputy foreign affairs minister, the head of the Republican Guard, and the interior minister came by to chat. They said they knew how important the Christmas and New Year's holidays were to us and thanked us for coming.

Q: Wow. Fascinating. I cannot think of another situation where the U.S. was similarly involved.

GARVELINK: Yeah. They were very grateful that we came out, and we were treated wonderfully by everybody we ran into. After we left, another OFDA team came in to start rebuilding some things and to set up some medical structures. The search and rescue guys didn't do that. But that was a very interesting experience. The whole experience was

night and day different from the rhetoric in the newspapers from political leaders. That didn't reflect on the ground. They were very pro-American, everybody you talked to—including the ministers and the Republican Guard. They all said nice things. They said, “We really appreciate that you would come out here on a really important holiday. Thank you very much.”

Q: Interesting. So, your involvement there was a relatively short time and then you turned it over to OFDA or the group with USAID and partners that then began the reconnection of vital humanitarian supplies?

GARVELINK: Tami Halmrast-Sanchez was the head of the team that came out then we left. We met in Germany while in transit and I was able to pass on information to her. They helped to provide some rudimentary facilities that could be used to replace the health clinics and hospitals that were destroyed. They helped set up these alternative facilities to take care of normal business and left some medical equipment and medicines. They were there for probably another two or three weeks. The Iranians have plenty of money and didn't really need any development assistance. But, they did need some short-term help to care for their own people. Just very basic stuff.

That was the last DART team I ever led. But it was interesting dealing with the press because they could not fathom that there were 250 or so Americans in Iran without their own security and without U.S. military support—and that no one was bothering us and no one was threatened. What we heard later is that there were some groups thinking about grabbing some of us, but they wanted to be paid, and the earthquake had destroyed the banking system. Since they couldn't get paid, they wouldn't do it.

Q: That's amazing.

GARVELINK: I don't know if there's any truth to that or not. But I know they had planes on the ready in Kuwait to come get us if needed. So, there were folks watching out for us.

Q: Wow. Well, it's 3:20 now. Would you like to break here or continue? I leave it up to you. I have plenty of time.

GARVELINK: Well, I don't have much more. Let me just mention two or three things and then next time, we can move to my ambassador position at the next session.

A year after the Iran earthquake, the Indian Ocean tsunami hit.

Q: Right.

GARVELINK: I didn't get particularly involved in that, although AID and OFDA were involved big time. Natsios set up a coordinating mechanism in which Mark Ward, my counterpart as Senior DAA for the Asia Bureau, and I co-chaired the tsunami response group. We met almost daily with a large group of folks from throughout USAID. President Bush asked his father and Bill Clinton to work together to raise private funds to

support the response. Mark went with Bush and Clinton when they visited the different sites in Asia.

I helped run the daily meetings and did a lot of the public outreach. One of the radio stations would call at 7:30 every morning to my office, and I would provide a couple minute report on what was being done. That's really all I did.

Interestingly, the Japanese were trying to provide assistance on the tsunami relief, and they didn't do a very good job, frankly. I got a call from the Development Counselor at our embassy in Tokyo who asked if I could go out to do some training for the Japanese Defense Force. So, over the course of the next year, I made four or five trips to different cities in Japan to deal with military and civilian folks who did disaster response. We talked about how to initiate a response and to coordinate efforts. They don't refer to their military as an army, but as a defense force. I remember laughing after visiting their very large offices in Tokyo—it seemed larger than our Pentagon. From outside, it was a three-story building but went down about twelve stories.

Q: Was that because of concerns of an earthquake or was there any particular reason that so much was underground?

GARVELINK: My impression was they just didn't want people to know how big they are. One of their main problems in doing relief work is that they don't have the airlift capacity. The United States and a few European countries are the only ones that really have the capacity with C-130s to respond quickly.

I enjoyed the chances to talk with various groups in Japan. It was also nice to meet former Senator and current Ambassador to Japan, Howard Baker. I had known his wife, former Senator Kassebaum because of her long-time interest in disaster work. I saw her often when I was working in OFDA proper. In fact, when I was in the hospital with my eye issue, she called to ask how I was doing.

Q: Wow.

GARVELINK: That drove the military and the Germans nuts. I worked for this little agency that did disaster stuff, but a senator is calling. What do we do with this guy? But, it was probably beneficial for me.

Q: Right.

GARVELINK: Anyway, two last nice things from my DAA days in the humanitarian response bureau. I traveled with Secretary Powell and Andrew Natsios to Turkey and Sudan when all the problems in Darfur were going on with the Janjaweed. Powell was great. He included me in all of his meetings and asked for my thoughts about issues. I remember about a year later I was coming out of the Ronald Reagan Building and he was going in. The Secret Service stopped me, but he then noticed me and came over to ask how I was. He even remembered my name. I was dumbfounded, with all the people he

meets, and it had been at least a year. He was such a charming and smart guy, and a real privilege to be around him.

And then, just before I left to start language training, I traveled with John Negroponte. We went to Mali, Chad, Libya, and Sudan. I was the token AID guy in case an AID issue came up. But again, in all of his meetings, even with heads of state, I was invited. He also reached out to me on the plane, asking my views. Of course, he knew I was going through my confirmation process, so we talked a lot about that. But again, he was just a super guy. And that's why, when I was sworn in, I asked him to do it, not Condoleezza Rice. I asked Negroponte to swear me in.

Q: Nice.

GARVELINK: It was a nice opportunity to travel with these big wheels for a week or so, away from the limelight, to see what kind of people they are. And we've stayed in touch. He's a nice guy, just like Colin Powell.

That's about it for my several years as a senior DAA in the DCHA bureau.

Q: Okay. Today is November 3, 2023. We're resuming our interview with Bill Garvelink. Bill, talk a little bit about how your next assignment came about.

GARVELINK: I guess the easiest thing to say is that three times the charm. When I got back from Eritrea in 2001, I was working in the DCHA bureau as the senior DAA. About two years into that assignment, I got a call from the deputy administrator, a guy named Fred Schieck, and he asked if I would be interested in going to Chad as the U.S. ambassador. I said yes, but for some reason it fell through. Didn't happen.

And then, a couple of years after that around 2004 or 2005, I got a call from Connie Newman, who at that time was the assistant secretary for Africa in State. I had worked with her a lot when she was the assistant administrator for Africa in AID. We had done a lot together. She asked me to go out as the chargé to Liberia. If I agreed to do that, they would then look for an ambassadorial assignment in Africa. Again, I agreed. But, the person I was to fill in for was apparently very sick, but he recovered more quickly than expected. (Tauber laughs) So, that fell through.

U.S. Ambassador to the Democratic Republic of the Congo, 2007 - 2010

Then, out of the blue in 2006, I got a call from Don Yamamoto, who was one of the DASes in the State Africa bureau. The PDAS was Linda Thomas-Greenfield and the assistant secretary was Jendayi Frazer. He asked if I would be interested in either Angola or the DRC. I again agreed. He told me to follow his lead, that I had the strong support of the full AF front office. So, I did what he told me to do, including getting a letter from

Andrew Natsios. The process went along and the paperwork was enormous. AID had its forms, State has its forms, the White House has its forms, and the Senate has its. They're all just a little bit different so each has to be filled out individually.

Q: Right.

GARVELINK: So, I spent a good part of 2006 filling out forms and I thought I had done it all. Then, the retired FBI guys doing the security checks came to see me, asking about something not on the forms, but now asked after the Clinton administration—interns. That was easy for me to respond to. I had never had any interns in my career and therefore no issues with them. Again, I thought I was done, but a couple weeks later they came back telling me I had forgotten to fill in my draft number and that if I could not verify that I had registered for the draft, the nomination process would stop. It took me about a week to figure out that in the sixties your draft number was your Social Security number. I'm sure those guys knew that, but they didn't tell me.

Q: Yeah.

GARVELINK: So, I got that done with and then, the State Department folks said it would be a while before a hearing would be scheduled. They always hark back to Melissa Wells, who waited something like eleven months to get her hearing before going to Mozambique. To my surprise, about two weeks later they called, said, "Okay, hearing's on. We've got a quick timeline. We'll do some briefings and you've got to write your opening statement."

Q: Wow.

GARVELINK: So, I had a hearing along with Mark Green, who became ambassador to Tanzania and John Simon, who was nominated for the African Union. I did some interviews with Senator Russ Feingold from Wisconsin at that time. He headed the Africa subcommittee. And Michelle Gavin, who herself became ambassador to Botswana and Zambia, later. She was a staff person who I worked with. They only asked me three questions at the hearing. All were about humanitarian assistance. They were easy, so I wondered if the first one was a trick question. So, I stumbled a bit. But, I managed. They were more interested in Mark Green—and they talked more about him being a congressman than anything else. So, nothing was controversial, and our hearing zipped through fairly fast.

Q: Just a very quick question. Is this the same Mark Green who would later become head of AID under Trump?

GARVELINK: Yep. And he was a great guy. Well, the Trump people may have made a mistake with him because he was really good (Tauber laughs). While other agencies were having trouble, AID's staff size increased and budgets increased. I talked to him a lot about that, and he simply said that he spent a lot of time on the phone talking to his friends in the House and Senate. Now he's head of the Wilson Center.

Q: Okay. I didn't know that.

GARVELINK: Because immediately after he left AID, he became head of the McCain Foundation and two or three years ago, he replaced Jane Harman as the head of the Wilson Center.

So, we had an easy hearing and then, it was just a matter of waiting for the Senate to actually vote on it. Interestingly, a week or so after that hearing I got a call from the Belgian ambassador in the U.S., Dominique Struye, and he invited me for lunch. When I met him, he congratulated me on becoming ambassador. So, I found out from the Belgian ambassador to the U.S. that I was going to make it. He had been the national security advisor for Belgium and was well connected in Washington, I guess. During my last year and a half in Congo, he actually became the ambassador there. So, I worked with him a lot in the Congo too. But, I will always remember that he was the first to tell me that I was going to make it as ambassador.

As soon as the hearing happened, Linda Thomas-Greenfield right away got me into one-on-one French training at FSI. My second language was Spanish, not French. I found French much tougher to learn. With Spanish, you pronounce every letter. In French, you don't pronounce any of them, it seems like. It's much harder.

Q: That's right.

GARVELINK: So, I was going through that and waiting. And at one point I was at the Watergate barbershop where I always got my hair cut. I was telling Phillip, who owned the place, that I would be gone for a while because I was about to become the ambassador to Congo. The guy in the next chair suddenly joined our conversation, asking if I had read *The Congo Cables*, the book. I said I had and that I had found it helpful. He chuckled and said he would tell his wife. It was Marvin Kalb from CBS News. His wife wrote that book for a doctoral dissertation.

Q: Incredible.

GARVELINK: About a year later, after I'd been in Congo for a while, I asked Yamamoto why he had offered me the job. We knew each other, but not well. When I went out to Eritrea, he had been the chargé, so I assume he signed off on my coming out as the AID director. But he left before I arrived. He gave me an interesting answer, said he had been driving into work and heard me interviewed on NPR about a disaster response, I don't know which one. He said that I had kind of impressed him and that my name stuck with him. I was really surprised. You never know what happens in this town with things like that.

President Kabila came to Washington before I went out. I had just been sworn in by John Negroponte. Then, we heard of Kabila's visit, and the protocol people in State said that I was the Ambassador even though I had not yet left for post, that I would participate in all

of the meetings, including briefings for President Bush. This was not an official state visit. He was coming for something. My wife Linda and I went out to Andrews Air Force Base to greet him when he arrived and we chatted a little bit—nothing of substance—mostly about motorcycles and Ford Mustangs. He loves motorcycles. And he had a couple of Ford Mustangs he really liked too.

The next day I went to State and then went over with Condoleezza Rice in her Hummer limo, which was an interesting experience. I'd never been in one of those things. They're quite the (laughs) vehicle. Anyway, I went to the White House, and I briefed Bush. Secretary Rice, Steve Hadley, Bobby Pitman and some others were there as well. It was quite a crowd. Kabila was there with his foreign minister, defense minister, and national security advisor. It was a big deal. Throughout my time in the DRC, Kabila and his ministers referred to the meeting. Lots of photos were taken -- and I was able to share many taken by the White House photographer.

Kabila was relatively new and a young guy, so there was a lot of general talk about what's going on in the Congo—the last election and all that sort of stuff. President Bush brought up China, noting that it has to create twenty-five million new jobs every year for its population and that China would try and do it in the DRC if Kabila's team was not careful. He recommended that, if they work with China, make sure Congolese would be hired. Kabila obviously heard the message and, in fact, did insist that China hire more Congolese than most other countries required. It did sink in a bit.

One of the last things that Kabila brought up was to ask for training of his military by the U.S. the Congo. He wanted us to send people here to the DRC to train troops. President Bush agreed to do so, but carrying out that Presidential commitment was long in coming and turned into a two-year problem which we can talk more about later. (Laughs)

Q: Yeah, no surprise. Okay.

GARVELINK: They then exchanged gifts as they always do. Kabila had a big painting of something in the Congo which he gave to Bush. I never really got a good look at it. President Bush gave him a wrapped, what looked like a Christmas present almost, and Kabila really didn't know quite what to do with it. He offered his thanks and said he would open it later, but Bush got excited and told to open it then. So, Kabila opened the present and it was a very nice leather Harley Davidson motorcycle jacket.

Q: Ah-ha.

GARVELINK: And down one sleeve it said, Kabila, on the side and it was really a super fancy thing. A few weeks before I was in the State Department in the Central Africa region office and they were trying to figure out why the White House called and wanted the jacket size of President Kabila. They didn't get any explanation, but they did manage to get his jacket size. Bush made him try it on, and you could tell Kabila got a kick out of it. There were also some special sunglasses, so it was a very personalized gift, not a generic painting or anything like that.

The meeting turned out to be really important for me. Since I was in the meeting at the White House, Kabila and his folks assumed that I was really connected to President Bush. They mentioned the meeting countless times in the course of my three years. There were a lot of photos. I didn't give them to the ministers or to the president at one time. I would dribble them out. Every meeting I'd say, "Oh, they sent me another photograph." And I'd give them another one.

And the other thing that really made a difference is the way President Bush treated him. If you think about the environment that Kabila was in, he was a young, inexperienced guy who got no respect from Museveni and Kagame and dos Santos in Angola. They wouldn't give him the time of day. I mean, they looked down on him, and Bush did not do that at all. He treated him as an equal head of state and in a very nice way. Kabila never said that in so many words, but he made it pretty clear that he was impressed with the way he was treated by President Bush. So, between that and the photographs in the Oval Office, it helped me a whole bunch as ambassador. The government officials thought I could get to Bush or other senior people any time I wanted to. But, that was the only time I met Bush and that was the only time I was in the Oval Office. (Laughs) That was my little secret.

Q: Beautiful. If you're going to get lucky, this is the way to get lucky.

GARVELINK: Yeah. That worked out just right. Linda, our chocolate lab Sydney, and I arrived in Kinshasa on Thanksgiving Day 2007. And that night, the DCM, Sam Brock, and his wife had us over for Thanksgiving dinner, along with the Canadian ambassador and her husband and the British ambassador and his wife. We had a nice Thanksgiving dinner and got to know each other. They ended up becoming some of my closest friends in the Congo as well. The Canadian ambassador was Sigrid or Siggy Johnson and her husband was Don McMaster, who was the Canadian ambassador to the Ivory Coast a few years before. Nick Kay was the British ambassador.

And after the Congo, Sigrid became the Canadian negotiator on Arctic issues. She's retired now. Nick went to Sudan after the Congo and then became the Special Representative of the UN Secretary General in Somalia. He's retired now but is writing in London and involved with some peace keeping efforts. He's a great guy and his wife, Susan, is very nice. We were fortunate to connect with them on that first night.

What I'd like to do now is talk a little bit just about the embassy.

Q: Yes.

GARVELINK: And then, talk about AID and DOD, the other two big players.

Q: Sure.

GARVELINK: And then I'll talk about coordination with other ambassadors and countries. And then, the next session we can talk about Kabila and his government and all of that.

Q: Yes. Go ahead with the embassy. One other background point, if you can address, is the status of Congo at that moment just in terms of its national integrity. In other words, what was going on from a security point of view in the background that you needed to be aware of.

GARVELINK: Oh, yeah. And that will come out more in the later session talking specifically about the Congo.

Q: Okay.

GARVELINK: But beforehand, I would like to mention one point that the foreign minister hit me with as soon as I got there. He said, "We don't have any friends in this neighborhood. There are nine countries bordering the Congo and they all like it the way it is so that they can come and go and do what they want. They're not very helpful to us in resolving our security issues." That was an overriding theme from the foreign ministry from the very beginning.

But in any case, I had a really good embassy. Sam Brock was very experienced as a manager. The AID director was Steve Haykin, who was absolutely terrific. He had been AID director in Madagascar and some other places before. He was a real team player. The political section, economic section, the same, great folks. And the management counselor, Craig Cloud, left recently to become our ambassador to Botswana. The military guys were very good too. We had the defense attaché, Scott Womack, and the office of security cooperation, with another colonel, Tom Crowder. They were also great team players. It was really very easy there, and we never had any interagency conflicts or anything like that. It was a very engaged group. But the Congo did present real problems for families, especially in getting their stuff out of Customs.

I had been there only a few weeks when a couple of these senior people with families came to me to ask for curtailments. They had not been able to get their vehicles, household effects, or even Christmas gifts for their kids out of Customs. I asked them to give it another month or six weeks, that I would then support their requests if they still wanted to depart.

I then went to the GSO (General Services Officer), Bill McClure and Craig Cloud and asked for their help, especially in being flexible and generous in supporting newly arrived families. As an example, I asked them to approve vehicle use for new arrivals. They agreed and made an extra push to get stuff out of Customs. It worked and these same officers extended for a second tour.

GARVELINK: One of the things I was charged with was expanding the American presence of the embassy in Kinshasa and in the Eastern Congo. Also, there had been a

morale problem, and they told me to “Fix it if you can.” And so, during my time we had a doubling or tripling of families coming to post. A little known fact is that it has one of the best American schools in Africa. It started in the early sixties and despite all the chaos in the Congo, the school has thrived. Their most famous student was probably Glenn Close, the actress. Her dad was the doctor for Mobutu.

Q: Interesting.

GARVELINK: He was a surgeon. So, by making living conditions and other things a little bit better all the way around, we had more families willing to come and therefore got the number of officers up to what we wanted. So, when we got those folks their stuff everything got a little bit better.

A few months after I arrived, there was a plane crash in Goma, killing many of the passengers and injuring some American missionaries. The plane was an American manufactured plane, an old Eastern Airline shuttle that used to go back and forth from Washington to New York. As a result, the NTSB (National Transportation Safety Board) representative in Pretoria had to do an investigation of the air crash. After he finished his work in Goma, he came to see me and advised that I not let any of our people fly on a Congolese airline. He said that the pilots were not well-trained and the planes were not well-maintained. He added that the planes were often overloaded and not in compliance with rules and regulations.

After he left, I issued an instruction that said no official Americans can fly on local airlines. And that really complicated things. If you wanted to go to Goma, you couldn't get a daily flight. You had to wait for the United Nations aircraft, which were piloted by Canadians, or you had to wait for Kenya Airways or South African Airways and go through either Nairobi or a South African city before flying on to Katanga Province. And if you were waiting for the UN Airlines, it could involve very long waits, as they were moving peacekeeping troops around. Several folks came up to me a couple of weeks later to thank me for thinking of their safety. I don't know if they still have that in force or not, but I hope so. The local planes are not up to snuff by any standards. There's still no Congolese airline that can fly to Europe or anyplace outside of Africa. They don't meet the standards.

We also tried other ways to make life a little easier. The residence had a lighted tennis court, big swimming pool, gazebos and grills and big yards, so as soon as we got there my wife and I opened them up to others. We even said folks could bring their dogs, especially since our lab Sydney liked to play. It gave all the dogs a chance to run in the large yard area. It was so large, we could have a thousand people over for 4th of July.

Q: Yeah.

GARVELINK: The embassy would close at noon on Friday. That was sort of standard operating procedure long before my time. And so, every other Friday we would have a different section of the embassy over for barbecues. This included the national staff as

well as the Foreign Service officer families. We opened it up for tennis, croquet, swimming, whatever the kids might want to do. So, we got to know everybody. And to our surprise, there were a lot of Foreign Service Nationals, Congolese staff, who had never been on the grounds of the residence and never been in the residence. So, Linda—if they were interested—would take them on a tour of the residence so they could see the place. It was a very nice residence. We were just trying to do everything we could to get to know everybody a bit and make everybody feel comfortable. The national staff and their kids got a kick out of the dog because she would jump in the pool at any time. And if you threw something in the pool, she'd go after it. She'd then bring it back and I would warn them that they were about to get wet. (Tauber laughs) They got a real charge out of Sydney. In retrospect, we did the right thing because everybody started to feel very comfortable with each other, especially since there were a lot of new people.

Q: Right. And speaking of new people, let me ask you a background question. This is 2007.

GARVELINK: Yep.

Q: Condoleezza Rice is the secretary of state. She has developed her own approach, called transitional diplomacy, and it's the year of George W. Bush, the surge in Iraq. And there were always problems of adequate staffing in the embassy in Iraq. There was something called the Iraq Tax, where embassies with larger and more comfortable staff were expected to provide to the State Department staff that could go to Iraq for a year, however long the short tours were, but you mentioned that they were increasing the staff in your embassy in Congo and so, with that context of grabbing a lot of people to go to Iraq, what drove them to want to increase the staff in Congo?

GARVELINK: Well, my sense from talking to her [the Secretary] and to Nick Burns was that it was because of the 2006 election in the DRC. It was the first free election in the country since 1960. Kabila was thirty-five, thirty-six years old, a young guy, and they thought we could make some headway with this guy if we put our best foot forward. That's why I actually got to know him well, and in the first year or so we were starting to make some progress. But he surrounded himself with a lot of folks that were around his father, some of whom were rotten to the core. I'll get more into that later. We thought we maybe had a crack at it.

We had four or five positions in our political section, three or four in the economic section, but a lot of vacancies. We had two young couriers who wanted to do a detail into State and we took them both. They turned out to be great political officers, and both are now FSOs. So, we were creative in finding other options when there were vacancies. We ended up picking up a fair amount of staff in unorthodox means.

Q: Interesting.

GARVELINK: I don't think my predecessors had summer interns. We had a couple of summer interns (laughs), one was an accomplished pianist. She liked to play the piano

and, since every ambassador's residence has a baby grand piano, I told her to come over any time she wanted to play. She would come to the residence for five and six hours and just play. (Tauber laughs) I have to confess that we didn't expect her to spend the whole afternoon on Saturday and Sunday over there playing the piano.

And we had another young woman from somewhere in the South and she went up to the northern part of the country with the political officer. She managed to get a live, not full-grown, crocodile into her suitcase. She was from Louisiana and wanted to bring it back, take it to a butcher and eat it. (Laughs) I found out when the RSO came over to tell me that she had put the crocodile in the tub in the apartment she was sharing with two other women, interns. She went off somewhere and one of the other young women went in to take a bath and there was this crocodile in the tub. She went nuts and called the RSO. So, Chris Gu had to go over and deal with the crocodile that was running around in the bathroom by that time. (Laughs)

Q: Incredible.

GARVELINK: The interns were very good, but sometimes a little quirky.

Q: Yeah. (Laughs)

GARVELINK: So, we took advantage of all different ways to get people out there and it worked. It helped that Phil Nelson was the political officer and Elizabeth Jaffee was the economic officer. They were very good with these folks and made everything work. It was a great set up.

One of my instructions was to increase our presence and so, I proposed to Washington that we open an office in Goma. It's not a consulate.

Q: Right. Goma is near the mouth of the Congo?

GARVELINK: No. Goma is right on the border with Rwanda and Lake Kivu. It's right across from Gisenyi in Rwanda. Near Lake Kivu. It is right on the lake. It's the second or third largest city in the Congo. It's huge. The commerce there is primarily with Rwanda, both legal and illegal.

That's where all the fighting has been. Today there's 100-plus rebel movements, many of which are simply gangs of crooks. The M23 is there and Kony's people. We had to cover what was happening there, but it's about a three-hour flight from Kinshasa.

Q: Right.

GARVELINK: So, if you went down on a UN plane, you'd have maybe two hours then you had to catch the same plane to come back or stay in the hotels in Goma. It was just very difficult, so I proposed opening an office. It would be much easier, much better to have somebody stationed there. We'd then actually know what's going on better and build

contacts. The first reaction to that was absolutely not, but I argued that I was not proposing a consulate. I just wanted to rent a house and have a person or two there. It would also be a place for meetings and provide space for TDYers to stay. Washington then agreed.

State established a political officer position there, and we had an AID disaster person. And on occasion we had a military person or two that were coordinating with MONUC (United Nations Organization Mission in Democratic Republic of the Congo). The UN peacekeepers had a couple of bases there. If you were going from the Congo to Rwanda, the last stop before it hit the border was the house we rented.

Q: Ah. Interesting.

GARVELINK: It was a large house, right on Lake Kivu. We had a boat there, so if something happened, literally in three minutes they could be in Gisenyi in Rwanda. There were almost always two or three people there, local staff, and a couple taking care of the house. It enabled us to gather better information on what was going on in the eastern side of the country.

Q: Just a quick question about the house. Were there any security concerns at that time because it's small, it's far from the embassy and so on?

GARVELINK: At that point there wasn't. M23 was operating a couple of hours north. But, now, of course, they've attacked and taken over part of Goma. But, then it was okay.

Q: Okay.

GARVELINK: I would be willing to bet, given what happened in Benghazi, that the office is not open anymore, but I don't know for sure. I didn't check.

One of the other tasks I was assigned was to find property for a new embassy. The embassy in Kinshasa was built in the 1960s, and the embassy was really old and a bit of a mess. The AID mission, which was a few blocks away, was not great either. So, Washington asked me to find property for the new embassy. Every time we found something, either the lawyer said no or the security people said no. So, my last year there I finally went to Kabila and asked for his help. A week or so later he came back and proposed a perfect spot—almost across the street from the foreign ministry in a big area. When we looked into it, he had also offered it to the Chinese (Tauber laughs). We didn't want to get into a contest with the Chinese over this property, so we said, "never mind." So, I never did find any property; nor did my two or three successors. But, I just saw that a month ago they broke ground for a new embassy.

Q: Ah. Okay.

GARVELINK: Lucy Tamlyn is the ambassador now. Either she found the property or Mike Hammer just before her. Good for them because the new embassy is really needed.

I suspect it might be quite a way out of town. I didn't want to move out of town if we could help it because of the traffic congestion and long commutes. So, I probably could have found property if we looked out by the airport, but that's an hour plus away from the center of town because of all the traffic. Anyway, they broke ground somewhere.

Again, we were very focused on building community and getting people comfortable working together. My wife was great in helping with all of this. It helped a lot for morale.

Q: Speaking of morale, one of the issues for anyone in the better part of Africa is health. Were you, I mean, and of course Zaire or Republic of Congo there were a lot of endemic diseases. Did you have a medical officer or nurse practitioner or anything at the embassy? How were you handling that?

GARVELINK: Yes, we had two nurse practitioners in the embassy. And at times, we had three or four because there were spouses as well on contract. There were also two or three American medical doctors working in Kinshasa that we had agreements with, so they would respond instantly if needed. We invited them to everything that was going on there, so they got to know folks. There was also a good group of Belgian doctors. Probably the biggest and one of the most important Belgian embassies is in the Congo. So, we were not short on medical care.

Q: Okay.

GARVELINK: We also had military teams there all the time. I forget the name of the unit but they're military and university professors at the Africa Center in Cairo. They were doing research on various diseases in case the U.S. military ever had to go into the area. The researchers would rotate into the jungle areas every two to three months. On the way out, they would brief me on what they'd been up to. I can remember talking to them about Ebola and they'd said, it was peanuts compared to other things out there.

Q: Wow.

GARVELINK: Ebola is named after the Ebola River in the Congo, that's where they found it. But, thanks to the research, they know how to handle it. One of the doctors from the Eastern Congo was a Nobel Prize winner a couple of years ago for his work on infectious diseases. He's a great guy and is running for president at the next election. We were fortunate not to have any major health issues while I was there.

Q: Okay.

GARVELINK: Everything in the embassy worked fairly smoothly without a lot of disputes. Before I went out, I remember Johnnie Carson telling me to think of myself as a mayor of a small town. (Laughs) And that's pretty much true. You always have a few family issues and other problems to deal with, but it seemed less than in other places I had visited or spent significant time. It had nothing to do with me—just a great mix of people.

And at the very end, just before I left, we had an inspection which went very well. I may have mentioned my old buddy Joe Sullivan, who I worked with in Angola and on Hurricane Katrina, he led the inspection.

Q: Ah ha. Interesting.

GARVELINK: We also tried to work on the American community as well which is scattered all over the country. Congo is a huge country, larger than Europe. After the split of Sudan, it's the largest country in sub-Saharan Africa. We worked at getting people together. One way was through the American School which is one of the best. It gets rave reviews from everybody. It's big and offers lots of activities, so my wife and I spent a lot of time there. We went to their events, including lots of plays. We also had the teachers over to the house.

Another place that was very important to the embassy and the Congolese community is called CALI, the Congo American Language Institute. It offered English language instruction and was run by the public affairs section of the embassy. They had like eight or ten different level courses people could take and they were always full. I felt like I spent half my life signing certificates for the graduates. The most famous graduate of CALI was Dikembe Mutombo, the basketball player, the All-Star. And the reason. His parents were teachers in Kinshasa, and his brother was a medical doctor in Ohio. He got to Georgetown University on a language scholarship.

Q: Interesting.

GARVELINK: And a big part of it was going to CALI and learning English. He spoke about five languages. He spoke German, French, local dialects, and English. When he got to Georgetown, the basketball coach, John Thompson, asked who that "big guy" was. Mutombo is seven foot one. They talked him into playing basketball. He didn't want to initially but obviously made a career out of it. He is one of the most famous Congolese. After his mother died, he built a state-of-the-art hospital in Kinshasa just by the airport, near the worst slum in the city. The operating rooms and other sections all have names of basketball players. He got people to pony up money to build one room of the hospital. . My first time there with him was a shocker because the doors are about an extra foot high.

Q: Of course.

GARVELINK: Anyway, we had these graduation ceremonies at CALI, once or twice a year, and he always came.

Q: Wow.

GARVELINK: We'd have the graduation at the residence, and it was always interesting to see these kids hanging around, not really knowing what to do, waiting to eat. Then, he

would walk in and they'd go nuts. He was probably the most famous Congolese. He'd talk to everyone. He had been doing this for years. Apparently, once years earlier, a young woman asked him in English if he was married. He said "no," and they struck up a conversation. Eventually they got married. (Tauber laughs). This woman ended up getting a nursing degree, that's his wife, and they have about eight kids. They have two or three of their own and the rest are adopted.

Q: Beautiful.

GARVELINK: And they live in Atlanta. But he met his wife at CALI as well. That was a few years after he'd been playing basketball. So, he was very partial toward the U.S. embassy and particularly to CALI. When Secretary Clinton came, she wanted to visit the hospital, so I tracked him down with help from the NBA. He was in China when I reached him. He had become friends with the Chinese basketball star, Yao Ming—apparently there are statues of both of them in China. Anyway, when I reached him, I told him that Clinton wanted to visit his hospital and hoped he could be there. He agreed and was there. A funny story from that same time. Linda's sister and brother-in-law and their kids were visiting us from Colorado. They were staying in the house when Hillary Clinton came to the residence. She sat down and chatted with each of them and their kids and had pictures taken. Then, a few hours later Dikembe Mutombo came in. He had played for the Denver Nuggets, so they were dumbfounded to meet him, as well. They wondered if ambassadors were always with such famous people. They were wowed and thought I had a pretty neat job. I did confess that it wasn't always like that. They were quite taken with Dikembe. He's a great guy and we stayed in touch with him. [Dikembe died in September 2024.]

Q: Sweet.

GARVELINK: We did seem to have almost constant events. Ashley Judd was out there a couple of times. Ben Affleck had a foundation that was funding projects in the Eastern Congo, and he would come in from Rwanda; he would call and offer to meet President Kabila if Kabila wanted him to. Kabila asked to meet with him about half the time, so the three of us had a number of discussions. Affleck was playing nice so he could keep his foundation out there. His organization did a lot of gender-based violence work. Jane Goodall also came through quite often in line with her work in the other Congo and the region. We had a steady stream of folks coming in and almost weekly concerts or other entertainment at the residence to show off U.S. culture. The thirty-fifth anniversary of the Rumble in the Jungle was in 2009. That was the fight with Muhammad Ali and who was it? Frazier?

Q: Yeah.

GARVELINK: Or was it George Foreman? The movie *When We Were Kings* was based on that. Muhammad Ali was too sick to come out to Kinshasha, but his daughter came. It was interesting that he went to the Congo about six months before the fight to train. He had a translator who turned out to be the head of security at the embassy, Olela Shungu, a

great guy. Ali's daughter brought autographed copies of his biography for Olela. He had been in the military at the time. Because he spoke English, he was assigned to be Ali's translator. He got a real kick out of seeing Ali's daughter and appreciated the autographed stuff she had brought. It was a very nice thing for Muhammad Ali to have done.

We got a lot of publicity out of these events. My predecessors hadn't been able to do much of this because of the violence. I was there during a lull, so everyone saw it as an opportunity to strengthen the relationship and to push a bit toward an accountable democracy and greater respect for human rights. Kabila gave hints early on that he could go either way. Unfortunately, it didn't work out. But, we were working on that. We also had lots of businesses, such as General Electric and other big companies, come to look at the situation. They weren't planning immediate openings but wanted to do all the background work so they could start up quickly if warranted.

Q: Now, while you're talking about commerce you mentioned the Chinese and of course, they're always interested in extractable materials—whether wood or rare earth or rare metals and so on. What were they into while you were there?

GARVELINK: Well, I get into this a lot later but initially, what they were very much interested in is lumber. And that used to drive us and the British in particular nuts. They wanted to cut down the forests. Next to the Amazon, the Congo Basin is the biggest rainforest in the world and affects the climate here.

Q: Sure.

GARVELINK: So, we spoke a lot to the Chinese, urging them to be more conscious of the environment. They were also very interested in minerals, as was Israel. But in Katanga, the biggest mining operation was Freeport-McMoRan in copper and cobalt, the biggest mine in Africa. I made seven or eight trips out there with the president of Freeport-McMoRan because they could never get a firm commitment on their concession. Nonetheless, they spent I don't know how many billion dollars there.

Q: Katanga, the principal city is Lubumbashi or is—?

GARVELINK: Yeah. And a lot of the stuff goes in and out to Zambia from there.

The other thing (laughs) regarding U.S. businesses was a California telecommunications company that was very close to Ed Royce, who was chairman of the Africa sub-committee and then the full foreign affairs committee for a long time before he retired. The company wanted to expand its business in the DRC. The problem was that the big telecommunications company in the Congo was owned by Kabila's twin sister, and she was less than honest on a lot of things, and you knew Kabila was not going to do squat about his sister. Royce called and asked if we could help the company in any way. I was not encouraging and even suggested they should sell what they have and get out. The company did send out a lawyer to look at the situation. It turned out to be Donald Segretti from the Watergate days.

Q: Whoa. Okay.

GARVELINK: It was interesting, as he worked his way up to my office all the older folks were standing in their doorways (laughs), they wanted to see Segretti, who was pretty old at the time. (Laughs) But the younger folks didn't know who he was. He was the dirty tricks college student, as I recall, but turned out to be a nice enough guy. I told him the same thing I told Royce. I don't know quite what they ended up doing, but they did get out as they realized they were not going to get a fair deal.

So, we did have potential investors visiting the country; lots of folks looking around and getting ready. Everybody was hopeful after the election that maybe things were finally going to change in the Congo.

I would also like to talk about one goofy consular issue. At one point I got a call from General Numbi, who's a very bad guy. He was in the air force, close to Kabila, and a nasty fellow. But I got to know him. I'll get to this a bit later, but there were a number of folks that I was told my predecessors would not speak with. I didn't agree with that approach and thought I should talk to them, as terrible as they were. I wanted to know what they're doing. And Numbi was one of these. I would not have him go to the embassy, but to the house periodically in the afternoon for a cup of coffee or a glass of wine. There were three or four of these guys, and I really wanted to know what they were doing and keep an eye on them.

Q: A quick question here. You have not mentioned very much yet about a defense attaché at your embassy or any of these mil-to-mil contacts. I don't want to get ahead of you but since you're now mentioning the air force in your discussions, was there any significant mil-to-mil while you were there?

GARVELINK: Oh, yes.

Q: Okay. Well, get to it when you're ready—

GARVELINK: I'll talk quite a bit about that, now and a bit later.

Numbi called me and asked what we were doing in the Eastern Congo? He said, "You've got something surreptitious going on here?" I denied it, but he then spoke of two young guys who came in from Rwanda and rented a taxi and asked it to take them into the war zone. Within hours, the Congolese picked these guys up and they beat them up, not terribly but they roughed them up. They claimed to be press and had a website which the Congolese looked at. It seemed bogus.

After Numbi called me, we looked at the website, and it was half-baked. It turns out these were two guys who had just graduated from college. They formed a little company and thought they'd become real journalists, and their parents thought this was a good experience for them. Their plan was to film the war in Eastern Congo. They didn't have

visas. I don't know how they got into Rwanda, although they probably had visas for there and then bribed their way across the border at Goma. They asked the taxi to take them and their big cameras to the war zone. I'm glad Numbi called. We never would have heard of these guys. They were thrown into heaven knows what kind of a prison out in Eastern Congo for several days. And then, it got under Numbi's skin and he called me to complain.

I called their parents and asked what on earth they were thinking. They thought it would be a good experience for budding journalists. I couldn't believe it and told them they were lucky their sons were alive, that they had been beaten while in jail. I was dumbfounded how stupid people can be. But they're lucky those kids—they were black and blue but that was it. But if Numbi hadn't called, they never would have been heard of again, I'm sure.

Q: Good God.

GARVELINK: And of all places. It's tough, it's wrong anyplace but boy, the Congo is the worst place to start that sort of nonsense.

Q: Oh, yeah.

GARVELINK: Anyway, that's a snapshot of things going on around the embassy, including some goofier things as well.

One of the substantive things I wanted to do when I got there was to sit down with President Kabila and his chief-of-staff, Raymond Tshibanda to go over what we're doing in the country.

Q: Right.

GARVELINK: I had AID, DOD and embassy folks put together a presentation of everything we were doing in the Congo. It turns out we were spending between \$700-\$800 million a year, if you add in peacekeeping, development, military, and humanitarian assistance. Sam Brock, the DCM, went with me to brief Kabila. I did this because in my earliest conversations with him, I had reviewed generally what we were doing and he said that we weren't really doing very much. Kabila's chief-of-staff, Raymond Tshibanda, who got his PhD at Penn State and worked earlier for UNHCR, quickly agreed with Kabila. So, it was nice to provide substantial financial figures to show the magnitude of our support. During the meeting, I asked if they knew USAID or OFDA. They said, yes, those are NGOs. I was surprised and quickly told them that they were the U.S. government.

Q: Wow.

GARVELINK: When we laid this all out, they were dumbfounded at the number of health, education, agriculture projects that were going on. They had no inkling of this. I

did that very early on because I was getting these weird vibes from Raymond, in particular, and Kabila in the first couple of meetings. They kept suggesting that the U.S. is a big country, but not that involved in the Congo. I'm like, wait a minute. We are.

So, after that I was very focused on making sure everybody worked together. The big actors were the State Department, AID, DOD, and Centers for Disease Control. So, whenever we did our mission strategic plan I would start with a lunch at the house and a brainstorming session with the country team plus the senior FSNs for each section and each agency. I harped on wanting everyone to participate—that I never wanted to hear anyone say, "no one asked me." I urged folks to volunteer and not wait to be asked, that I wanted the planning to be a joint effort. I also wanted each section to be able to talk about what others were doing. Everyone needed to have the full picture and be able to talk about what other sections were doing.

I've been to a number of embassies over my career where nobody had a clue what the other organizations were doing. They all just went their own way. I didn't want that and told folks that if they wanted to get under my skin, that would be the way to do it. I wanted everybody engaged and talking about all of this stuff at the appropriate time. Again, this came from the early meetings with Kabila when I got the strong impression that no one was talking much about what the U.S. mission was doing in the Congo. Some might have been because he just wasn't paying attention, but much was because they didn't meet much with the U.S. government. Thanks to my early meeting with Kabila in Washington, I had a real in and could get in to see these guys.

I'll get into another story. It was very embarrassing, with all the European ambassadors. I had been there a month or two and was at a dinner at the British ambassador's house. Everyone was complaining that they could never see Kabila. I just listened and finally, they asked about me. I told them that I had Kabila's private office number and could call him any time I needed to talk to him. I would call, tell them what I want, and the next day I would see him. The place went quiet. I had assumed everybody had that private number and apparently nobody did. I thought, oops.

Q: Right. Right. (Both laugh) Oh, boy.

GARVELINK: But I never had any trouble getting to see him. Quite often he'd escape to his place out by the airport, and he'd invite me out there. He never invited anybody else out there to his little hideout. I attribute all of this to that first meeting in the White House. So, I had access to him all the time. I'll get more into that later

Anyway, I really harped on working together within the embassy community. Oh, I wanted to mention the letter that every ambassador gets from the president, which is very general. You then get more specific guidance and marching orders from the Secretary of State. In my first country team meeting, I gave those letters to everybody. They weren't classified.

Q: Right.

GARVELINK: Folks said they had never been given those letters before. I told them that I wanted them to understand why I might be harping on certain subjects. So, my priorities were to support a stable and accountable government, focus on human rights, expand the presence, support public and private businesses, protect Americans always, promote sustainable and broad-based economic development and human rights, support MONUC, facilitate humanitarian assistance, and find a property. Most of all, I wanted everyone to see how the multiple efforts were part of the democracy and human rights priorities. USAID was supporting some direct programs on human rights, gender-based violence and training for politicians and staff. The DOD folks were at the same time training the military to pay attention to human rights and not to be abusive to the local population. We trained their lawyers; we trained their officers. We rehabilitated their equivalent of West Point in Kinshasa. All of these activities were related to one another, so it was important for USAID to understand what the military was doing and vice versa. They also needed to be able to talk about it with government officials at all levels.

They all bought into the idea and worked at it. When it came time to write the annual plan for the mission, I asked the AID director and the defense attaché to take the lead. That's not normal (laughs), but I thought the political officer will weigh in and get what needs to be in there. I really wanted AID and defense to understand each other's work, so I asked them to do the first draft. I don't think they were particularly happy about that, but they did it. (Laughs)

I would like now to talk a bit about both the AID and military programs. I'll do AID first. The program had been going on since the 1960's in the Congo, but there was no bilateral assistance agreement providing duty free access for the organizations working with us. This is normally one of the things you do when you start a development program, but they never had one in the Congo.

Q: Oh, dear.

GARVELINK: And that's part of the broader customs problem. So, to everyone's surprise, I got the Minister of Foreign Affairs to sign the first bilateral AID agreement in 2008 or 2009.

Q: Whoa.

GARVELINK: At one point, we did get the AID administrator out. Her name was Henrietta Fore. She had been the Undersecretary for Management at the State Department immediately before going to AID. She was an interesting woman. She also had a lot to do with CSIS (Center for Strategic and International Studies) so I dealt with her a lot over the years.

She came out to the Congo with her husband. They stayed with us. Her husband is an art dealer, so he and my wife were running around Kinshasa to art galleries. He was buying all kinds of art. We went out to the Eastern Congo and a bit of South Sudan to see a large

USAID regional project to protect the environment. It covers five or six countries, including the Congo. One of the things we saw were okapi. They are sort of a cross between a zebra and a llama. The only place in the world they are is in northeast DRC.

So, we flew to Goma and then a couple more hours north. Then we drove to an area that is primarily occupied by pygmies. We spent time talking with them, as they have historically been discriminated against and abused. Human rights programs were trying to provide some support to them. We went on to a ranger station that oversees mountain gorillas among other things. The "we" was Henrietta, her husband, the ambassador and me. We had been told that we would be trekking through the jungle for about an hour, so we were dressed in jeans and boots. There were about eight or nine rangers with us, all of whom had advanced degrees from European universities. After walking almost an hour through the jungle and over trees, I finally noticed that Henrietta was wearing a dress and high heels.

Q: Oh, no.

GARVELINK: We were falling and stumbling, but she wasn't—and she was wearing heels (laughs). There were about 100 different kinds of orchids growing up there and you can't even see the okapis. They blend in, so you can get about six feet from them until you notice. They're gorgeous, very shy animals. In all my years running around Africa, it's the first time I was really in a jungle where you couldn't see the sky, vines were dripping down, and it was very dark. I was much more used to rolling savannah Africa. It was hard-core jungle.

Q: Just a very quick question about that area. It looks like there's a national park all the way up to the border.

GARVELINK: Yes.

Q: Was Zaire going to be able to sustain the national parks over time? Was that ever a consideration for the embassy?

GARVELINK: Oh, yes. That was part of the regional project. Virunga National Park covers the forest there, including where the pygmy population lives. They work with these populations to continue their farming, while also being sensitive to the wildlife and the environment. It borders Uganda and Rwanda and the rangers in all three countries are extremely dedicated. They're more honest than the police.

Q: Interesting.

GARVELINK: And they're very committed to this stuff. I'll get into something later from the Rwanda side. We went to see the mountain gorillas that everybody talks about, and all the rangers are former poachers.

When they're with you, they won't get you within three or four feet of the gorillas. You could be standing there and not noticing any problems, but the rangers would say it is time to walk away, that the gorillas are getting nervous. The rangers are well-trained and committed to what they do. They're heavily armed. They don't fool around. The area we went to also had an orphanage for okapis, so we could actually see them well. Among the orchids, it was almost impossible.

I don't know what they were doing with all these different kinds of orchids, but they had four or five botanists working with them as part of the multi-donor funded project.

Q: Fascinating. Was that true in the other national parks or preserves in Zaire?

GARVELINK: Yes. Because if you go to South Kivu there's smaller gorillas. I forget what the actual names are. And they're protected too by the rangers in the forests.

If the DRC could get its act together, they would dwarf others in Africa with their economy, especially agriculture. They farm about 10 percent of the land that they could farm. And the Congo River is massive, as are the forests. There are also minerals in the south and central provinces and diamonds all over the place. You name it, it's there. If they could settle down, they could be the wealthiest country in Africa. They've got all the resources there. There's real potential.

Q: Yeah.

GARVELINK: The other embassy organization that was big in the Congo, of course, was the Defense Department. There were the Defense Attaché and the Office of Security Cooperation that worked with the equipment and supplies. Colonel Womack and Colonel Crowder ran them. And like I said earlier, DILS, the Defense Institute for International Legal Studies, in collaboration with the UN, was training their investigators and their lawyers to prosecute sex offenders. We also supported improvements in their military academy, including leadership training through a company, Camber which was made up of retired military officers. We were also doing a lot of disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration work to support futures for the demobilized soldiers. There was a lot going on with the military. One of the things that was most important to me came up in the Bush meeting, that was the program to train and equip a light infantry battalion and the rehabilitation of a Kisangani military base for the training.

Q: Okay.

GARVELINK: That's what we agreed we would do. Unfortunately, nobody wrote a memo of what was said at the meeting with Bush. I don't know who was supposed to do it. But about six months or so later after nothing began, I called General Kip Ward at AFRICOM. He said he knew nothing about it and couldn't imagine they would want to do it. I told him that the President had agreed to it, but he was unable to get any verification of it because no memo had been written. I ended up talking with Secretary

Rice and offered to use my notes to write the memo and to send it to her. She agreed, so that's what I did.

Q: Just a very quick remark. That is a major lapse on the part of the National Security Council.

GARVELINK: Yeah.

Q: That should never, ever happen. If the president starts talking to another president, wow, there can be a lot of trouble on miscommunication. But go ahead.

GARVELINK: Well, we finally got through to Gates, and he agreed to live up to the commitment. The agreement was that we would provide some very basic training to an infantry battalion. In addition, we would rehabilitate an old base, nothing fancy, and drill some wells. This would be in Kisangani, on the Congo River. If you've ever read the book by V.S. Naipaul, *A River Runs Through It*?

GARVELINK: Yeah. That's about Kisangani.

We agreed with the Congolese, Kabila, that we, not him, would select 4,000 from their military for training because we didn't want one ethnic group to be singled out and nobody else. So, we came up with a test they had to take, and the defense attaché administered that. We then made the selections, telling the government that it would have to give them uniforms, pay them regularly, and transport them.

Finally—this started in 2009, so it was two years because of all the nonsense. Part of the work at the Kisangani military base required well drillers. AFRICOM turned that task over to the U.S. Navy in the UK to do the contracting. They hired a drilling company from Uganda and they sent them in. I shortly thereafter got a call from the Minister of Defense who was livid that the Ugandans were there. He asked for them to be sent out immediately. He still remembered when Ugandans had gone into Kisangani in 2000 and sacked the city. He lit into me with a vengeance. They hate the Ugandans.

So, I got Johnnie Carson and General Ward on a secure phone line to discuss. I explained the situation and asked them to get the Ugandan drillers out within two days, that they should have known better than to contract with a Ugandan firm. Some general with Ward started to argue with me, that they couldn't do it in two days and why should they be so sensitive, blah, blah. I got angry and told them it was not a discussion, but an instruction. Ward put his hand up and the screen with him suddenly went blank. About a minute later, the screen popped up, the other general was gone, and Ward said the Ugandans would be gone in 24 hours. So, we got those folks out and I really got to know the Minister of Defense, Chike. He used to be an English teacher, and I had never seen him so mad.

Once we got that straightened out, we got the base rehabilitated. During the Christmas holidays in 2009, Kabila quickly made a trip out to see for himself the progress on

rehabilitating the Kisangani base. He kept his side of the MOU to arm, house, equip, feed, transport, and regularly pay this battalion.

Then, another problem came up before we sent our guys in. You need a Status of Forces Agreement.

Q: Of course.

GARVELINK: Among other things, it assures that anyone in the U.S. military would be tried by U.S. military court if in legal trouble. There was no SOFA with the Congolese. And so, this goofy general I didn't get along with called, smirking and suggesting that they had wasted a lot of time and resources. Well, I got the Minister of Defense to sign a SOFA and they were kind of dumbfounded. They never thought it was going to happen. The Status of Forces Agreement with the Congolese was signed in 2009.

Then the Minister of Defense became a very good friend. His wife (laughs) had him on some sort of diet for health, but he loved bacon, eggs and bacon. And his wife wouldn't give it to him. So, I'd invite him over for breakfast. He never turned down a request for breakfast, and I'd feed him eggs and bacon, and we'd talk for a couple hours. He would unload everything.

Q: Just one quick background question. AFRICOM as a separate command was established in 2007, if I remember correctly.

GARVELINK: Yeah.

Q: Were the problems you were having, did you think it was simply the roll-out of a new command and they just were still feeling their way?

GARVELINK: Could very well be. I don't know. I never had to deal with a command at that level on these sorts of things before. I saw Kip Ward not too long ago. He has his own consulting firm here in town. He was a great guy. He came out two or three times to visit and he, my wife, and I would always have dinner at our house. He has a great sense of humor; I always kind of looked forward to working with him. He was extremely cooperative on everything and very helpful.

Q: Now, speaking of cooperation, particularly with the military in all these different ways, earlier in your discussion of the problems and the difficulties of running an embassy there, you said that there was no good plane, no good aircraft that you could use to fly around the country and what I immediately thought was well, where's the U.S. military? Can't they supply you with a plane or even periodically fly around?

GARVELINK: What I understood to be available to me is if I wanted a C-12 a couple of times a year it would come out of Nairobi. We had nobody on the ground, no aircraft, no helicopters, nothing anywhere in the country. So, I'd have to make a request and I'm sure if I made the request to Ward he'd get something, but it would have to be arranged a

month or so ahead of time. So, I flew around all over the country in the United Nations aircraft.

Q: Okay, okay.

GARVELINK: Because MONUC had about seventeen thousand troops when I was there. The UN must have had fifty or sixty aircraft and helicopters. They were also providing air traffic control. The flights were not scheduled in advance or regular, because they were busy moving troops around. The planes would then be diverted from regular routes. But it always turned out, for me, being that the U.S. was their largest donor, whenever I wanted an aircraft, something was available.

It was all Canadian charter, so they met every standard and then some. I'll get into a huge problem with when Hillary Clinton came in, and her Secret Service wanted to fly armed and the Canadian pilots said, "No." I had to work that out. (Laughs) And we finally did at the last minute, thanks to the Canadian ambassador. But no, I and our staff had no problem getting around on the UN planes.

If you were going to, like, around Katanga Province, if you were going to Lubumbashi there was always South African Airways, which was in and out. Because South African Airways, Kenya Airways, Ethiopian Airways, Lufthansa, Air France flew into Kinshasa.

Q: Interesting. Okay.

GARVELINK: And they would—the ones going south would stop in Lubumbashi so you could get them as well.

So, the rebuilt base was completed and the SOFA signed in 2009 and they started training troops in 2010. The training took about eight months, so I had left by the time it finished. The last thing I did with this was to go out and give the dedication speech to Kisangani to start the program. The deputy from AFRICOM and the head of the Defense Department for the Congo also made speeches to launch the program.

And then just, a final comment, in 2015 or 2016, after I had retired from the Foreign Service, I was at a meeting at Texas A&M University. I stopped at the Borlaug Center at the university and met someone who said they were still doing our project in the Congo. I wasn't sure what she meant. Apparently, they had expanded the training program to add a component on training the soldiers how to farm.

Q: Ooh.

GARVELINK: Because the trainees weren't always regularly paid, they had to steal food.

Q: Wow.

GARVELINK: So, they taught them how to grow their own food. They brought in tractors and all this stuff. They were working with the local populations around Kisangani, teaching them how to farm too. And this was the first time the villagers said that we would trust the military. We always ran from them. Now, they're showing us how to grow food. We're working together and we're friends as opposed to opponents. This was after my time, but something good did come from this. I've seen videos of the military group on tractors and working in communities and showing women and others the best way to do things. That's probably the first time people weren't terrified of the military in the Congo.

Q: Interesting.

GARVELINK: Mobutu's approach had been to live off the land. His troops had guns, but no food, and Mobutu just told them to take what they wanted. Unfortunately, that tradition had continued. So, it made me feel kind of good to hear that something was still going on as a result of that military training in Kisangani—something that broke the old pattern of abuse.

Oh, just one other issue. This SOFA agreement was signed, and I did work very closely with General Ward. He came down two or three times and stayed for a week or so when he'd visit the military academy that was being rehabbed and go out to Kisangani. He'd always meet with the Minister of Defense and usually met with Kabila. As I mentioned earlier, Kabila was obsessed with Ford Mustangs. So was Kip Ward. He had a couple of Mustangs. So, they would talk Ford Mustangs and hit it off personally.

I made several trips as well to AFRICOM in Germany. This is not really related to this, but one of the most interesting dinners I ever had was with General Ward. I happened to be there at the same time as a marine general, Charlie Bolden. He was the head of NASA and had been captain of the space shuttle two or three times, as well as a test pilot earlier in his career. It was one of the most fascinating dinners I ever attended. All of the other guests were European astronauts. Just having the chance to listen to those guys talk about their times in space was incredible. And Bolden was the most fascinating of all. Interestingly, when traveling, he always visited schools to talk with the elementary school kids. It's a whole different world when you hear what these astronauts and test pilots did and their interests in science. I didn't have anything to add but just listened.

Now, back to what I should be talking about. One of the other concerns I had as ambassador was the need to consult with neighboring ambassadors, not just Washington.

Q: Right.

GARVELINK: I got a hold of the ambassador to Rwanda, Stuart Symington. His grandfather was a senator from Missouri, and his daughter and my nephew are married.

Anyway, he was in Rwanda, and he had been ambassador to Djibouti before that. I called Stu and suggested that we talk more, that there was so much going on between our two

countries. So, starting in 2009, twice a year we would get together with the ambassadors from Uganda and Burundi as well. We would meet over a long weekend at Stuart's place in Kigali because it's the easiest place to get to for everybody. We would talk about all the issues that would be of interest to us. I found it to be very helpful. There was so much illicit stuff going on between Rwanda, Uganda, the Congo, and Burundi, of course, and the fighting with guerrillas and rebel groups in Eastern Congo. We had a lot to talk about. And you can't really do that through cable traffic and emails.

Every time I went over to Rwanda, Stuart and I would meet with Kagame. I had of course met him a number of times before, right after the genocide when I was doing humanitarian work. When Stuart would come to Kinshasha, I would arrange similar sessions with Kabila.

Now, what I found most depressing is my last trip to Kigali, that's when Stuart arranged for us to see the gorillas. Visiting the gorillas was fun, although Jim Yellin, the ambassador to Burundi, got between a couple of gorillas and one of them threw him off the trail. He fortunately just got a few scratches. But, it was interesting how the gorilla tossed him—it was like tossing a twig.

Q: Wow.

GARVELINK: But, the visit to the gorillas was not the depressing part of the trip. At the end, Stuart and I went to see Kagame. I raised conflict minerals with him and he got a little annoyed with me. He said that we Americans blame him for everything that's going on in Eastern Congo. He claimed that they were not taking any minerals from Eastern Congo, that he could take us to his mines and show us their records. Everything they export, he claimed, came from Rwanda. I obviously didn't want to call him a liar, but none of those minerals are in Rwanda. He was lying through his teeth. I also asked why his better trained troops weren't at the border crossings helping to train the Congolese to stop the illicit transit of minerals. I told him that Rwanda could impose some law and order at the border. He said they could never do that, it would be interfering in their domestic affairs. I was so disappointed and could not help thinking back to the long ago allegations of him as a war criminal himself. That was the last meeting I had with Kagame and Stuart while he was ambassador.

Stuart's wife and my wife became good friends. My nephew was working in an advertising agency in St. Louis, and Symingtons' daughter was getting her medical degree and a PhD at Washington University. They introduced them to each other and now they've been married and have two kids. So Stuart and I are now family. (Laughs)

Q: Wow.

GARVELINK: Eric Bost, the ambassador to South Africa, twice a year would invite all the U.S. ambassadors to SADCC countries to Cape Town. So, we would meet there on a Thursday and Friday and then have the weekend to enjoy Cape Town. We each would make presentations about what's going on in our countries and that sort of thing. It was a

great learning opportunity. When Eric left, we suggested that his successor, a political appointee, do the same thing, but he did not.

I hope these kinds of regional meetings are still taking place in some way, because they are very valuable. The countries of the region are so tied to one another, and it's important to understand the regional perspectives and issues.

I would propose we stop here today and then I will get into more detail on Kabila himself and the SRS (Special Representative of the Secretary-General).

Q: Today is November 17, 2023. We are resuming our interview with Ambassador Bill Garvelink, who is ambassador in—at this point, is it Zaire or Democratic Republic of Congo?

GARVELINK: It's Democratic Republic of Congo.

Q: You're on.

GARVELINK: Okay. Well, as I mentioned, I talked before about the embassy and our programs. Now I'd like to talk about President Kabila and some of his ministers and some of the issues that were floating around.

Initially, it was very interesting to meet with President Kabila in 2007 shortly after I arrived in Kinshasha. He had been the head of state since 2001 after his father was assassinated. My understanding is he was put in place because he didn't have any enemies. He was a very quiet guy, rather shy, and I guess everybody felt they could manipulate him or at least feel comfortable with him. His father had been a rebel leader and he had not. He'd been working for his father. He was young in his thirties and put in charge of the DRC in 2001. Then, there was an election in 2006 that he won.

Q: Okay.

GARVELINK: I got there after the election and he was settling in. But it was very interesting to meet with him in large groups or one-on-one. He seemed very tentative. You'd go into a meeting with him in his office, and he sort of hesitated and didn't quite know how to get things going—particularly if he had several people in the room. He looked around and almost seemed to wonder who was in charge. But you could see that change over time, over the three years that I worked with him. He built up his confidence and felt better in leading meetings.

I remember one of the first one-on-one meetings I had with him. We talked about his early years as president from 2001 to 2006. He surprised me a little bit by going into a fair amount of detail about what was on his mind. He said there were diplomats,

particularly European ones, as well as South Africa and some others, who were giving him advice every day. He politely told me that they were telling him what to do. At the same time, the neighborhood, countries, Rwanda, Uganda and Angola in particular, treated him like an inexperienced, second rung player. He said particularly Kagame, who was very condescending to him. As we talked it became clear that he would never let that happen again. He resented it then but didn't know how to manage it. He said the French, the Belgians and the U.S. were in his face every day and that he didn't like it.

Q: One quick question here about sort of the regional issues, the neighborhood. The leaders of those northeastern countries that border on DRC, Uganda, Burundi, and Rwanda—that whole area has been in conflict for a long time.

GARVELINK: Oh, yeah.

Q: And those players support or don't support or engage or don't engage in all kinds of cross-border issues—and on top of that, there are endemic diseases, including Ebola. Did you go into any depth about those issues?

GARVELINK: Yes. I will get into it at different times, but simply said, yes. He was very focused on that. And if you remember one of the first things I said, when I met the foreign minister, Mbusa was his name, he said, "We don't have any friends in this neighborhood. Everybody likes to keep it just like it is so they can come and go and take what they want." My sense is it's still true today.

Q: Right.

GARVELINK: Anyway, it was interesting talking to him one-on-one early on about his earlier experiences. It taught me a bit of how to deal with him. He did not like confrontations. Being blunt, direct, and forceful didn't work with him. He would tune you out at that point. When there were very tough issues he had to deal with that involved the UN and the Brits and French, he quite often would go to his farm. It was an orchard out by the airport, and it was heavily guarded so that no one could get in there. It was also in a valley so that phones didn't work.

Q: Interesting.

GARVELINK: Nobody could get to him. And he would go there for three or four days and basically ride his motorcycle around in the orchard. There were rumors of what a spectacular place it was. I got invited out there half a dozen times or so to meet with him and it was a couple of Quonset huts and an outhouse and meeting room. It was nothing fancy. It was three or four buildings, relatively small. The military slept in tents. He'd go in and out by helicopter. On one of the driving trips out there, I asked why I couldn't fly out with him in his helicopter. He said I could not, so I dropped it. He avoided confrontation which I'll get into a little with Hillary Clinton. She would say to be tough on him, and I would try to explain that was not the way to deal with him. She never

bought it, but I continued doing what I was doing. And if rumors were correct, I was one of the last U.S. ambassadors that had any regular, almost free contact with him.

Q: Interesting.

GARVELINK: I don't know about other countries, but I thought Jim Swan and James Entwistle—the fellow who immediately succeeded me—had a very difficult time getting in to see Kabila and I didn't have that problem. And it was always interesting meeting him with larger groups.

He would have his own staff members in there, his chief-of-staff and others and he would always get lots of phone calls which he would take. He'd look around the room at who was there and sometimes he'd answer in French, sometimes English and sometimes Swahili. It was interesting because most of the Congolese advisors were from the central, east or western part of the country. They didn't speak Swahili, they spoke Lingala.

Q: Yeah, interesting.

GARVELINK: So, when he didn't want those folks to know what was going on he'd switch to Swahili. So, it was interesting to watch his interaction with his own people when he got a phone call that he thought he had to take.

I'll conclude with one of my final meetings with him and then I'll get back to him later about other things when I was meeting with him in 2010. That's when I was going to leave a few months later and we were talking about democracy and governance. It was just the two of us, and he started to chuckle, saying he knew what I was doing, that I wanted to know if he was planning to hold elections in 2011. Was that what I wanted to know? (Tauber laughs) I confessed that it would be nice to know if that was his plan or not.

He then made some very interesting comments about Americans liking to talk a lot about elections, but when he looks across the border at Kagame, who's been in power for a very long time, he sees that he sort of holds elections. And then, he looks a little further down the border and there's Museveni, who's been in power since 1986, and he kind of holds funny elections too. And then, the U.S.'s new friend in Angola, dos Santos, has been around a long time and he's sort of held elections too. His comment was "You like countries that hold the elections. I'm not so sure you like democracy." (Tauber laughs) And I didn't really know what to say to that.

Q: Oh, I'll give you just one quick experience in my much lower capacity. When I was in Armenia I was the head of the pol-econ section and it was my responsibility to talk to the Armenians about human rights periodically and they had a little human rights commission in their government and I'd meet with the head of the government, and I'd say—although, they weren't massive human rights violators there were abuses and we wanted to call them on it. But it wasn't horrendous. And so I would say, oh free press and women's rights and so on. And the guy would say, "Well, look at Azerbaijan. They don't

have rights. Look at Georgia. It's a disaster there. Look at Turkey under Recep Tayyip Erdoğan. I mean, in comparison we're like a beacon of human rights." And I said, "We don't compare Armenia to your region. We compare it internationally because you are an international player concerned about your international reputation."

GARVELINK: Oh.

Q: And that shut him up. (Laughs)

GARVELINK: Ah, that's interesting. Yeah. Because I didn't know how to really respond to Kabila. He was just making a true statement, unfortunately. (Laughs) But he knew it because he was smiling the whole time. He looked forward to making that point. (Laughs)

Q: Yeah, I'm sure.

GARVELINK: So, I could get to see him. My main go-to person in the government was a guy named Raymond Tshibanda. Raymond was the chief-of-staff early on for the first couple of years I was there, and then he was minister of international cooperation. After I left he became the foreign minister. But Raymond was from Kasāi, one of the central provinces in the Congo. He got his PhD at Penn State. He had worked for UNHCR and he was on the faculty at Penn State for a while.

Of all the guys around Kabila—and he was close to Kabila—he had a better sense of how the international community operated and how various governments interacted with each other because he had spent a lot of time in the U.S. and a lot of time in Europe with UNHCR. So, unless it was really urgent and I needed to call Kabila directly, I always went to Raymond. He always got me in to see whoever I needed to see, and he was a very thoughtful, bright guy. So, he was my secret weapon to getting in touch with folks and getting to meet folks in the Congolese government.

But in the very early days, the first couple of months I was there, I ended up meeting a lot of critical people. There was Léon Kengo wa Dondo. He was the president of the senate. And he had been in the Mobutu government. (Laughs) His heritage was Polish and—

Q: Hah.

GARVELINK: His wife and my wife got along quite well together, and I would see him quite regularly. Vital Kamerhe was the president of the national assembly, who actually just lived a few houses down from the residence, so I saw him quite regularly. He was a mixed character. I forget his senior position with Tshisekedi, the president now, but he ended up thrown in jail for bribery. He was in the slammer for a couple of years and he's out again and around. I don't know how he pulled that off. But he was a key player from South Kivu so he was very much aware and involved in the stuff that happened with Rwanda. I mentioned the foreign minister my first year, Mbusa, earlier. He is the one who

told me about the lack of friends in the neighborhood. Then, there was Thambwe, who was the foreign minister the last two years I was there.

These guys all reached out to me within about six weeks of when I arrived. I had dinner with them and saw them quite regularly, either at their request or at mine. (Laughs) I had one interaction with one other prominent guy at that time. (Laughs) I got a phone call from Jean-Pierre Bemba, who had been one of the four vice presidents during the transition period from 2001 to 2006. There were four vice presidents, and Kabila was the top dog, the president. I had been in-country for only a few weeks and he called me up to say he was in Belgium and needed to go to the United States for meetings but was having trouble getting his visa. He asked me to call the embassy in Belgium, tell them who he was to get on with issuing the visa. (Laughs) I told him I could not do it, that I couldn't tell another embassy what to do and that it would backfire on him.

Q: Right.

GARVELINK: I also had heard in my prep for going out there that he was being investigated by the ICC (International Criminal Court).

Q: Oh, boy.

GARVELINK: Apparently, he ran a rebel movement and a political party in the Congo. The day or two after he called me, he was arrested by the ICC, and he spent the next decade in jail in the Hague. He got out a couple of years ago and is now back in politics. We never spoke after that. He was not happy with me for not agreeing to weigh in—I knew why he wanted a U.S. visa. We don't have an extradition treaty with the ICC. He had to get to the States because he knew things were getting close.

I didn't know that at the time, but he did. So, I don't think I was on his most favored list ever. (Laughs) I never spoke to him again. But it was an interesting interaction.

At one point in 2008, Kabila asked that I meet with him. It turned out to be a one-on-one meeting. Even Raymond Tshibanda was not in the room. No one else.

Q: Interesting.

GARVELINK: He said he wanted to talk about corruption, that it was very bad and that he needed to do something, but didn't know what or how. He asked for advice. I told him we could bring one of the world's experts on dealing with corruption to talk with him if he wanted. I had in mind Michael Hershman that I worked with on Capitol Hill. He was with a German guy, founder of Transparency International and by this time, was teaching at the Vienna academy that they set up. Kabila agreed, so I called Mike up and he agreed to come.

Mike came to Kinshasa and he, Kabila, and I met for about three hours one afternoon. Kabila was very much engaged and asking questions. Mike suggested that you can't

change the rules of the game and make corruption an issue instantly. You need to give everyone notice, for example, in saying that x, y, or z will be unacceptable in three months or six months. It gives people time to get their acts together. If you suddenly make changes and say something is against the law the next day, it won't work. You need to ease into it a bit. They talked about that and lots of other things and then, at the end of the meeting Kamila said he would be back in touch. He said he needed to think it through, that he had more questions, and would need a lot more help. I thought this was all a positive step. We never had another meeting

Q: Yeah.

GARVELINK: I heard through the grapevine that after this session with Hershman, he spoke to some of his advisors. I don't know which ones, but it didn't go well.

Q: Yeah. Right.

GARVELINK: You could tell after that that things were trending towards the dark side and getting worse. He was listening to his twin sister, Jaynet Kabila, who was bad news. Also, there was Augustin Katumba Mwanke and John Numbi, a general, and Dan Gertler from Israel, the horrible diamond and oil person. Unfortunately, these were the folks that he was listening to more. There was a real opportunity early on and we didn't get a chance to pursue it. We kept at it during my time there, but this had been the best chance, in my view, and it didn't work out because his folks were not happy.

Q: And the connection you had on this topic, was Kabila, do you think he was concerned about his personal security because not infrequently when an African leader does try to reduce corruption, he's ousted.

GARVELINK: My sense is that he was not worried about that.

Q: Okay.

GARVELINK: That changed over time.

Q: Ah, I see.

GARVELINK: He was maybe just being a little naïve. I don't think he was up to his eyeballs in this stuff like his father was. So, maybe a little naïve with the folks he was dealing with and what he was going to do. It all changed after he talked to some of his people. It was an interesting start but didn't go very far.

Q: Yeah.

GARVELINK: Another big issue that was floating around at this time was that his Minister of Mines in 2008 concluded a \$9 billion agreement with China.

Q: Ah, yeah.

GARVELINK: The DRC would get needed infrastructure built and China would get billions of dollars' worth of copper and cobalt, as well as access to lumber in the rain forests. At the same time, the government of the DRC was negotiating with the IMF (International Monetary Fund) and the World Bank on some other loans.

The loan from China would completely undermine all of that. So, when the diplomatic community heard about it, the local ambassadors decided we'd go individually to talk to Kabila. So, I went and told him that it would not be a wise move, that the loan was very large. I reminded him of his meeting with President Bush and his advice to be very careful, that the Chinese need your natural resources and minerals and that you need to make sure the Chinese hire lots of Congolese to do the construction. The head of the IMF, Dominique Strauss-Kahn, also came. Ultimately, Kabila decided to reduce the \$9 billion loan by about half, which was not nearly as bad. At that amount, it didn't interfere with the IMF loan. I found out later that Kabila never spoke to his ministers about the issue.

When we spoke with the ministers, you could tell that they were trying to guess what Kabila would want. They really didn't know. I don't know under what circumstances he would talk to his ministers, but the general sense was he very rarely did. He did what he wanted to do and ignored what those folks did. But, this was one time, early on, that he did intervene and changed the agreement negotiated by the Minister of Mines. He reduced it significantly. I didn't understand that until I had been around another year or so, but the ministers were guessing about Kabila's preferences. Nine times out of ten they did not know because they didn't talk to him about anything substantive. The relationship between Kabila and his ministers was very strange.

Q: Just one question here. Since this is an agreement about extraction of copper and cobalt, was Washington ever telling you, "Oh, we're concerned about this because of future electrical vehicle batteries," or other key strategic industries that might be impacted by the reduction of availability there of these sorts of metals?

GARVELINK: Oh, yeah. In very general terms. At that point, the biggest U.S. business activity in the Congo was Freeport-McMoRan in Katanga Province, and they had this massive copper/cobalt mine. I visited it a couple of times. And, the CEO from Arizona, during my time came out to the Congo at least ten times. He'd always end up at my house for dinner. They were very paranoid and ended up selling that mine. The Chinese bought it after I left at some point. And this was the best mine setup in the Congo.

I remember visiting the mine at one point and driving along an all-weather road with the CEO and seeing someone sitting on the road with a speed gun. I asked if I was seeing things. He laughed and told me that they had a rule—no one could drive over forty-five miles an hour. If they did, they were fired. The company wanted to make sure there were no traffic injuries.

Q: Interesting.

GARVELINK: All the hospitals and schools there were built by Freeport-McMoRan. They had a really bad reputation in the Philippines years before of doing damage to everything, but they seemed to have learned a great deal by this time and were very conscious of not doing that kind of thing again. They were very involved in the community. They had two or three NGOs, U.S. NGOs that worked with them, dealing with the local populations, meeting health and education needs. It was pretty impressive..

One of the other issues we dealt with but failed at was trying to convince the DRC to allow the U.S. to dispose of the University of Kinshasa's two nuclear reactors and the enriched uranium they contain. Those things came online in the fifties and ran until early two-thousands. The facility by the time I was there was in disrepair and there was international concern about the safety and security of the reactors and the enriched uranium. Several rods of enriched uranium had in fact disappeared. We tried to convince the Congolese to allow us to help them get rid of the stuff. The U.S. representative to the IEA (International Energy Agency) and U.S. Secretary of Energy came out at different times to try and convince them. They offered at one point to build a nuclear hospital, but the government would not agree. In part, it was because they were so proud that uranium for the Manhattan Project and the first atomic bomb came from the Congo. We tried to help them take care of the issue, but they wouldn't do it. They had this unusual pride in fact that the first atomic bombs had uranium from there.

Q: Interesting..

GARVELINK: And so, to the folks at the university, that was an important thing. We tried periodically during my time there but could not convince them. It was something we worried a lot about, and I am not sure where it now stands.

Q: Yeah.

GARVELINK: I've got one more little incident like this to talk about and then I was going to get into government officials. I could stop there and then we could continue.

Q: Okay.

GARVELINK: The other little incident Washington had bugged me about was the Congolese embassy, ambassador's residence ,and defense attaché residence in Washington. No one had lived in them for a long time, and people were selling drugs out of them. They asked me to talk with the Foreign Ministry, asking them to fix the problem before the DC government condemned them and took over the property. The properties were on Massachusetts Avenue in a great location. I went in to see all different sorts of people and recommended they sell the properties.

Q: Right, right.

GARVELINK: Their ambassador during this whole period was Faida Mitifu, who had a PhD from the University of Georgia. She was a professor there. And she would come to Washington when something was important, but she lived in Georgia.

The embassy operated out of the Mayflower Hotel or something like that. They didn't use any of their old buildings. They assured me that they would send people out to fix it. (Laughs) I harped on this throughout my three years, but don't know whatever happened. Mitifu was ambassador for seventeen years, something like that, and she'd be in Washington a couple of days every other month or so for something. But she was a French language and francophone culture professor at the University of Georgia.

Q: Wow.

GARVELINK: So, she didn't care. She lived a long way away. But that was a niggling thing that was around all the time. Washington continually asked me about it, and I would ask the government again. (Laughs)

Those are the kinds of odd discussions that Raymond Tshibanda helped me with. He would always get me in to see the right people, but sometimes little resulted.

Q: Yeah.

GARVELINK: I spent a lot of time with other government officials too. A guy named Masangu was the head of the Central Bank, and he had spent a lot of time in the U.S. and in South Africa. He was the only guy in the country with a Jaguar. If you saw a Jaguar tearing around Kinshasa, you knew who was driving it. And then, another guy who was very interesting was Azarias Ruberwa, another one of the vice presidents during the transition period. He was the head of the Tutsi Party.

Q: Oh, interesting.

GARVELINK: And the acronym is RCD-GOMA (Congolese Rally for Democracy-Goma). He's a lawyer and my predecessors didn't deal with him very much. But I made an effort to get to know him. He has a law firm in Kinshasa, but his family lived in Springfield, Virginia. He therefore wanted to speak English in our meetings. Apparently his son spoke only English, and he wanted to improve his so he could communicate better when he went to the U.S. to see him. He ended up being quite helpful on different issues. By 2007 and 2008 his party from Goma was not quite what it was before when it was more of a rebel movement than a party. Now it's a political party and he was (laughs) focused on making money in his law firm. An interesting fellow.

The other minister I spent a lot of time with was the Minister of Defense, Chikez. He's the guy who signed the SOFA, the Status of Forces Agreement. He was also the guy who escaped from his wife to have bacon and eggs at the residence. He was very open. He was an English teacher before this and did not have a military background. He got booted out for some reason a few months before I left. But again, he was very willing to talk

about things. He was very big on military training, perhaps even more so than the military. That's why he was quick to sign the SOFA agreement so we could actually bring troops in and do the training and that sort of thing. So, Chikez was an interesting guy and helpful in what we wanted to do.

I found out from folks at the embassy that my predecessors would not meet with some of the people I would meet with, such as Augustin Katumba Mwanke. They stayed away from him. He was the governor of Katanga for a brief period of time and then removed by Kabila. Then he went to South Africa. He was a banker. And then, he moved back to Kinshasa where he had his own consulting business that was pretty shady. He was very close to Dan Gertler, the Israeli, who built him a house in Israel.

Q: Interesting.

GARVELINK: Whenever there was a formal state event, like the equivalent of the State of the Union or when Sarkozy came a couple of times, there'd be big dinners. Augustin was always seated next to me, and we would talk.

Q: Interesting.

GARVELINK: He would come to the house for dinner and would call if he was going to be even fifteen minutes late. That was very un-Congolese, as they could often be a couple hours late. I guess he must have picked those habits up in the U.S. and South Africa. But every official event that went on he was always sitting next to me. I wanted to know what he was up to because he was a very close advisor to both Kabilas, the old man and Joseph Kabila. In 2012 he was killed in an airplane accident. The plane landed in Bukavu with two ministers on it and him. There was a storm and it should never have been flying. The plane crashed while trying to land and he was killed. The two ministers were severely injured.

Then, there was General John Numbi, an air force general but also head of the police for a while and a bad, bad guy. Some little kid grabbed his cellphone at one point, so he killed him. I would have him over for drinks in the afternoon (laughs) and occasionally for tea. I'd also get together with Jaynet Kabila, the president's twin sister. She had all kinds of telecommunications businesses and ran the old Kabila's foundation. She was kind of bad news too. Apparently, other folks ahead of me just thought, I'd rather stay away from those people. But I'd rather know what they're up to.

Q: Interesting.

GARVELINK: So, I had a lot of meetings at my house as opposed to at the embassy because those folks would never have gone through embassy security. It was much simpler to just invite them to the house and sit on the patio and chat for an hour. So, I did that quite often. These were the tough ones that I got started with and then once I had a meeting or two with them, that was easy. I could call them up and say, "Hey, we haven't

talked for a while and let's catch up." And they'd say, "Okay." But particularly with the minister of defense. I said, "Breakfast is on," and he'd say, "Okay. When?"

Q: Beautiful.

GARVELINK: That's how I kept in touch with different ministers and folks who were not officially in the government but were big players. Most folks played a significant role and were very close to Kabila.

There's another interesting character who died not too long ago. He was an American pilot, originally in the Air Force, but they went out on his own and got an airplane. Rumors were that during the old Kabila's time he would fly anything into the Congo and out without asking any questions.

At one point, Linda and I were over at his house for dinner with a bunch of folks. We were talking when he got a phone call. It was Kabila who wanted to know how to fix an engine part in his Mustang. That's what he was calling about. (Laughs) So, there was this elaborate discussion on how to repair the Mustang. (Tauber laughs) He died a few years ago. But he was the personal pilot for the old Kabila.

Q: Interesting.

GARVELINK: And then for the young guy for the first couple of years too. But anyway, he was an American. He was from New Jersey and an interesting character. That's an aside, but a little entertaining.

Q: Sure.

GARVELINK: Now I'm going to switch to the diplomatic community that I interacted with. One of the most important things that would happen is every Saturday morning there would be a meeting with the Special Representative of the Secretary General (SRSG). When I first arrived, it was Bill Swing. When Swing left, it was Alan Doss, a Brit. The SRSG was head of the MONUC and all UN activities in the country.

The meetings would include the SRSG, the U.S. ambassador, the British ambassador, the French ambassador, the Belgian ambassador, and the South African ambassador. We would meet at a different house every Saturday morning. It was ambassadors only, no replacements if you couldn't make it. We would meet every Saturday morning and go over various issues and how each of us was going to deal with it. Sometimes we dealt with issues as a full group; sometimes, just a couple; and sometimes just one.

One funny story. I had a farewell dinner for Bill Swing when he was leaving to become the head of IOM (International Organization for Migration). The dinner went until about 10:30, 11:00 at night, just a few good friends, and he left. About twenty minutes later there was banging on the gate. He came back. I couldn't help but chuckle. The guy who managed our house, Bruno, had been at the residence when Swing was ambassador. He

wanted to say goodbye to Bruno. They chatted for about a half an hour before Bill finally left. But I thought that was very nice. And Bruno is still there.[Bruno died of natural causes in 2024.]

Q: Interesting. Hmm.

Q: Okay. This is January 26, 2024. We're resuming our interview with Bill Garvelink.

Bill, just remind us of what year this is. You're in Democratic Republic of the Congo but now you're relating what period of time?

GARVELINK: Well, I was there from 2007 to 2010. So, it would span that period, kind of the latter part of—mostly 2008 and 2009.

Q: Just a general question. In our last session, you spoke a lot about the extent of your contacts and your ability to draw judgements about what is really going on in Zaire, you're reporting this to Washington and it's, I'm sure it's getting wide distribution because there's concerns about development, there's concerns about democracy, there's concerns about stability and all of that. What were you hearing from Washington in terms of their concerns as you detailed all of this that you were seeing?

GARVELINK: Well, the concerns were corruption issues. I mentioned earlier with the nuclear power plant they had at the University of Kinshasa, gender-based violence, the fighting going on in the east. I'll get to more of that a little bit and a little bit later. But those were the main issues. On the democracy front, after the 2006 election of Kabila, there was hope things would start to change and that he might do the right thing, unlike his father.

Q: Yeah.

And he seemed to start that way. Augustin Katumba and Kabila's twin sister and these other folks, most of whom I mentioned earlier, were pushing in a very different direction. The 2006 election had been viewed as free and fair, maybe the first one since 1960. There were hopes that there would be changes, that democracy was taking hold. It was interesting to talk to him and to members of the parliament about the election. In talking to members of parliament, we would talk about representing the interests of the people in their state, province, district. And we'd get a very puzzled look. They never really got the idea of representing their constituents; they thought that once elected, they could do whatever they wanted. To try to address this, AID had an ongoing program that brought Hill staffers and similar folks to the Congo for meetings with elected officials and to talk about democracy and good legislative processes. Our people worked hard to help them understand what a democratic government means. You could talk to Kabila and he'd say, "Yeah, I take care of my constituents. I understand that." What he meant was the wealthy folks who kept him in power. He took care of them. He made sure that the government

looked after their interests. But the general public, no. His view of democracy was to take care of the folks who got you elected.

Q: Mm-hm.

GARVELINK: The AID folks did a really great job of bringing people in to meet with their political leaders to talk about the various elements of democracy and how they worked. We got good support from Washington on all this. That's a long-winded answer to your question.

Q: No, no. That's great because it helps to put in context the directions that you're going and in Washington what the concerns were because obviously, Democratic Republic of the Congo is a huge country, it's got lots of issues.

GARVELINK: Oh, yes indeed

I spoke earlier about some of the ambassadors with whom I worked. I should add one more, the Tanzanian ambassador, Gordon Ngilangwa. He had been there for a long time and was very impressive, albeit a very quiet, shy guy. He was not part of that Saturday morning group, but once a week Bill Swing and Alan Doss held another meeting for diplomats. That included ambassadors, DCMs, or political officers, and they would talk about everything that MONUC or MONUSCO (United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, an acronym based on its French name Mission de l'Organisation des Nations Unies pour la stabilisation en République démocratique du Congo) was doing. Gordon was always at those. Most importantly, he had enormous influence with Kabila because Kabila grew up in Tanzania and went to the military academy there. When you looked at Kabila's security, the closest people to him were Tanzanians.

Q: Interesting.

GARVELINK: The really close ones, in his house with him, were Tanzanians. So, Gordon, like I said, very low-key, had an awful lot of influence. And I know he saw Kabila a lot, just the two of them.

Q: Just a quick context question. Were there border concerns between those two countries?

GARVELINK: Well, there was a border concern all right, and that was refugees. And it was more Rwanda and particularly Burundi and the instability there. The Burundians would go to Tanzania. But between the Congo and Tanzania, not really.

Q: Okay.

GARVELINK: I also saw the Dutch ambassador quite a bit, although she had been thrown while horseback riding and spent a lot of time at a hospital in South Africa. She is

now in Austria for the Dutch. She was a bit of a character. At one point, she had the UN high commissioner for human rights—Louise Arbour—over for dinner and there were a bunch of us ambassadors invited. I don't even remember the details anymore, but I got into a very heated argument with her. Nick Kay joined my side, and it was a bit heavy.

Q: Wow.

GARVELINK: (Laughs) I don't even remember what it was about. So, the next day I thought I'd better call the Dutch ambassador and apologize. I called her up to apologize for causing a ruckus, but she laughed and said it was so Dutch and that she enjoyed every bit of it. (Tauber laughs) All my Dutch heritage, I guess, came out.

Q: The only thing I'll say about that is for four years in Vienna, at the OSCE (Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe) I had a colleague there from Holland, from the Netherlands, who was very bright, very capable and loved getting into arguments, relished arguments. (Laughs)

GARVELINK: I also saw the German ambassador a lot, but he unfortunately died while there. He was my next-door neighbor on the other side of the residence. And the Swedish ambassador, I still hear from. He's now in Greece as the Swedish ambassador.

The Spanish were very active too. I got to know in very funny ways the Japanese ambassador who, as a junior officer in the Congo years earlier, helped design the golf course in the middle of Kinshasa. He was an avid golfer, so I played golf with him a little bit. My wife or I mentioned at a dinner for the new South Korean ambassador that we liked kimchi. The ambassador then delivered a large container to the house. When I saw him about a week later, he asked if we needed more.

Q: Oh, God.

GARVELINK: I said, "No, no, no. (laughs). We were supplied for a couple of years with really good kimchi from the South Korean ambassador. .

I tried to get to know the Chinese ambassador, who was very big there, but he either was uninformed or just very quiet. But, every couple of months, the special envoy from China would come out. He had been ambassador to the U.S. and the UN, and was gregarious, so I could find out more from him in an hour than from his colleague. His kids were in the States in college.

We were obviously not supposed to deal with Iran, but I did try a bit. He had been the number two in the United Nations for a long time and then he went to the Congo, which I thought was rather interesting. At official meetings and formal speeches by Kabila, the ambassadors all had assigned seats. I was usually seated between the Cuban ambassador and the Iranian ambassador. I, of course, was not supposed to deal with either one of them.

Q: Right.

GARVELINK: I never did get much out of the Iranian guy, but the Cuban was a medical doctor and seemed to be a very nice guy. We chatted a bit. (Laughs) But it was always kind of weird that I was placed between two of the three countries we didn't recognize. I had one on each side of me. I know the Europeans got a kick out of it. (Laughs).

Q: One funny thing related to that. Once again at the OSCE there were debates over which language should be used for the alphabetical order of seating countries.

GARVELINK: Ah.

Q: Should it be English, should it be French, should it be something else.

GARVELINK: Sure.

Q: We settled on French because then we could be États-Unis d'Amérique because we didn't want to be seated where the "U"s were. That would have made us very close to Uzbekistan and other less-than-savory characters, and we didn't want to end up there.

GARVELINK: (Laughs) Yeah,. I can appreciate that. But it was not nice to be the butt of a joke. (Laughs) Every time we had one of those official events, somebody would point at me and smile. (Laughs) So, they all knew, they all noticed.

Q: Right.

GARVELINK: It was a very interesting corps of ambassadors that in general were very open and easy to arrange meetings with and to discuss local issues. It was helpful to be able to talk with all of them.

Q: So, yes, a quick question then. It's great to have that broad base of contacts. Will you be talking about how valuable they were in various of your activities?

GARVELINK: Not too much other than that meeting on Saturday mornings. When issues popped up like the Chinese loan, I went with Richard Zink of the EU to talk to Kabila about that. Others went either individually or collectively. We would often figure out as a group how we wanted to handle large issues that affected everyone. Bill Swing and Alan Doss were also instrumental in helping develop the best approach on issues coming out of the UN operations. It also helped that the residences were in the Gombe area of Kinshasha. The Brits were on one side of the U.S. residence; the Germans on the other side of the road; the Swedes and Swiss were in the back; the Tanzanians about three houses down; and the Canadians a block away. I could walk easily to their homes to meet informally to discuss issues. We also opened up the lighted tennis court and the pool at our residence to them. That provided further chances for dialogue.

Q: Interesting.

GARVELINK: Anyway, that provides a sense of the diplomatic community and how it worked well together.

We also did a lot of outreach to visiting multilateral teams, like the IMF which was negotiating a new agreement with the Congolese government. The IMF had a team of four or five folks that would come for a week or so, negotiate and then they'd go back to Washington. They would then return in a couple months. We had an arrangement to meet with them the day they were catching their flight to leave. I would have a breakfast for them. The DCM, the political and economic counselors, and the AID Director would also participate. The IMF team would go over their findings and what had happened during their visit. These were always very useful sessions.

I also was very close to the UNDP (United Nations Development Programme) representative, as well as the UNICEF representative and the World Food Program representative. I was interested in those issues from my background so we would see the UN quite often, either in my office or in Steve Haykin's office at AID. I'd go over there. We also spoke a lot with the International Committee of the Red Cross, which is probably the best organization around and was very active in the Eastern Congo. If you wanted to get a second opinion on what's going on in a country, ICRC is probably the best group anywhere in the world to talk to.

I learned that when I worked in the State Refugee Bureau for a couple of years and then OFDA. Even rebel groups trust the ICRC because they don't talk. Their country directors get to know military commanders and rebel leaders and therefore have a pretty good idea of what's going on. They just don't say it publicly. When they do say something, it's always interesting and governments pay attention. The U.S. really pays attention to ICRC public statements. They're not like MSF (Médecins Sans Frontières) France that complains so much that they get thrown out of countries. The ICRC is very low-key and handles issues sensitively. I don't think there's been a person or hostage exchange in the last twenty years without the ICRC being a main player. They're just very quiet and don't talk about it. So, I have always gravitated toward those folks. At that point, IOM (International Organization for Migration) was still an international organization, but not part of the UN. Bill Swing brought them into the United Nations as a UN agency. That was not the case when I was in the Congo. There were three international organizations: ICRC, IOM and the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Society. They all operated with governments as governing boards as opposed to NGOs. They all operate somewhat differently from everyone else but are really important players. So, I focused on them a lot.

We also went out of our way to stay in touch with the NGO community. Again, coming from my background I was very focused on that. These are the folks who get out into remote areas that embassies do not. I always looked for ways to have the main players of the NGO community come around to talk. Often, I also joined Steve Haykin of AID at his meetings with them.

As an example of our support for the NGO community, the country director for PSI Teri Gruber, Population Services International asked if I would host a reception for their visiting international ambassadors. I agreed to do so and asked them to prepare the guest list for several hundred NGOs and government guests. I should add that PSI globally is headed by Karl Hoffman, a former U.S. ambassador who is married to Marcia Wong, now one of the senior people in USAID in Washington. Anyway, it turned out that the international ambassadors were Ashley Judd, the actress, and a couple other folks. Just before the reception began, I was given some talking points to introduce the PSI ambassadors. So, I introduced Ashley Judd and mispronounced the name of her husband at that point, Dario Franchitti, an Indianapolis 500 winner. I also mispronounced the name of her best friend, Selma Hayek.

About a year later, Linda and I were in Washington on leave, and PSI had its big annual gala, hosted by Ashley Judd. She sent us an invitation to go. We agreed to do so, in part because we had gotten to know her a bit on her visit to Kinshasa. The day after the reception, she and I played tennis and she beat me badly. She was a really good tennis player. When I asked her about it, she said that her financial advisor was the sparring partner of Bjorn Borg and she had learned a lot from him.

Q: Wow.

GARVELINK: Anyway, at the gala, Ashley Judd introduced me as the hardest working U.S. ambassador in the United States. He's the only man alive who's never heard of Salma Hayek. She recounted that reception (laughs) in the Congo.

Q: Okay.

GARVELINK: We did a lot of those sorts of things for NGOs, we'd hold receptions at the house and invite government officials and UN folks. We wanted to facilitate the work of the NGOs, especially the ones working in the Eastern Congo, which was a very difficult place to work. They would not be in Kinshasa that much so when they were, we'd hold events so they could meet government officials. That was another part of what we were doing.

There were a couple of regional issues that affected us the whole time we were there. One was the LRA (Lord's Resistance Army) which had begun in Uganda and then moved into the Eastern Congo. It was started by Joseph Cony. They were terrorizing, displacing, and killing Congolese in North Kivu. The DRC, Uganda, and South Sudan were attacking the LRA with some success, but the LRA remained active in the DRC. We wanted to provide better information to the militaries confronting the LRA. I negotiated with the Kabila government to allow U.S. military overflights of Congo territory so they could watch what's going on and provide information to the Ugandans and Congolese military. It didn't really work, but they did agree to the overflight clearance for the U.S. planes out of Uganda.

Q: Now, the LRA, aside from being brutal, also practices child recruitment of children to be child soldiers.

GARVELINK: Absolutely. They're bad news from beginning to end. Cony is a horrible person, as is his leadership team.

Then, there were the problems from Rwanda. Since the early 1990s, Rwanda has periodically sent its troops or proxies into eastern Congo. Rwanda, of course, denies supporting the various rebel groups. When I was there, it was the CNDP (National Congress for the Defence of the People, French: Congrès national pour la défense du peuple) and then that evolved into the M23 after I left. The head of the CNDP was Bosco Ntaganda, who is now in The Hague. I saw him twice at the main hotel in Goma. I had sat down for breakfast, and he plopped down next to me at my table. He finally moved back into Rwanda and turned himself in the embassy in Rwanda to be turned over to the ICC in the Hague. He was apparently told by the Rwandan government to do that or else.

He operated in North Kivu, kind of where the LRA did. If you flew into Goma on a UN plane, at the airport there were always people selling really good round rolls of cheese. Quite often I would buy some. (Laughs) That came from, I found out later, Bosco's farm. It was really good.

Q: Interesting. Huh.

GARVELINK: That was an ongoing problem and of course, still is with M23. The CNDP had reached an agreement and agreed to be merged into the Congolese military. That was something I talked to Kabila and the minister of defense about, the fact these guys hate each other. I suggested that they couldn't keep bringing them into the military, that it would not solve their problem and would instead create a different one.

They did, however, bring in the CNDP troops, but on March 23, 2012, these guys said that the military had not honored their agreement, so they went back to the field and created M23. That's the group that's creating chaos now in the eastern Congo with the support of Rwanda. It will be almost impossible for the Congolese military to stop those guys. The only way it can be ended is by Rwanda, and they don't seem to be inclined to do anything.

In my day it was the CNDP as a constant complication in the region. Every time I went to Goma, I had a lot of security. They would go out before and tell me where I could and couldn't go. I never needed any security in the rest of the country. I drove around Kinshasa with just my Congolese driver. No security. Most other ambassadors were the same.

Then, the election happened in late 2008, and Obama came in. As instructed, I sent in my resignation. It wasn't until three or four months later that I got a cable saying I could remain as ambassador. I laughed to myself that I guess no political wants to come to the

Congo. But it was two or three months before they dropped me a line (laughs) and told me I was going to stay.

Q: Beautiful.

GARVELINK: I thought it would be more formal than that, but it was just an unclassified cable that came out and said—I don't even know what it said anymore.

Q: During that short interim period, were you restricted from doing anything as ambassador because you were not officially ambassador?

GARVELINK: (Laughs) Well, I can answer that one honestly. I never knew that there could be restrictions. Nobody gave me any instructions. I did wonder at times but kept doing what I was doing. I didn't know.

Q: Okay.

GARVELINK: That's when it was probably good that I was an AID guy as ambassador. I simply didn't know otherwise. A big deal was made of the need to resign by such and such a date, so I sent my cable in and resigned. But, I never heard boo until March or April (laughs)—I thought, well, if they're not going to tell me, I'm not going to ask. (Laughs) I'm just going to keep doing what I'm doing.

It was all a bit easier because I had good relationships with both State Assistant Secretaries for Africa, Jendayi Frazer under Bush and then Johnnie Carson under Bush. They were both very supportive and I spoke to both of them quite often. Jendayi never made a trip to the Congo; Johnnie came out two or three times.

One issue that came up a bit was the special envoy for the Great Lakes. Under Jendayi, it was Tim Shortley, who I'd worked with in AID. And Tim visited frequently, and everything he did, we did together. And then, when Johnnie Carson came in, it switched to Howard Wolpe, a former congressman who was a former chairman of the Africa subcommittee. Johnnie had been his staff director on the Hill years earlier. Unfortunately, that did not work out so well, as Howard was not in good health and couldn't manage the taxing travel and work.

Q: Yeah. Take a moment to describe the mission of the special envoy for Great Lakes.

GARVELINK: Well, they were basically focused on the CNDP and the conflict, the support of Rwanda for rebel movements in the Eastern Congo and how to deal with that. I have mixed views about special envoys. My view, you've got an ambassador out there, use the ambassador.

Q: Right.

GARVELINK: And to go on a whole different track, I was out in the Balkans when Holbrooke was there as special envoy, and he would not even allow the sitting ambassador in the meetings, so no one knew what in the world went on. And then, government officials would call, and the poor ambassador would have to say he knew nothing about it because he had not been in the meeting. Then, there is an exception, of course. After I left, Russ Feingold came out and he was terrific. He knew what he needed to do, so I don't know what to think about them generally. But watching one that was really good, and then, a sick person, I'm not sure. I think they should rely more on the ambassador. If more is needed, the assistant secretary should appear. But special envoys, I don't know. I'm not a fan, for what it's worth.

The last thing I really want to talk about today is that Hillary Clinton came out in August of 2009.

Q: Just one last question about Great Lakes. So, it was entirely about the whole rebel situation and not about ecological degradation.

GARVELINK: No. That was a passing issue, but not a main focus of mine. Congo Basin Initiatives involved all the Central African countries. Also, it was run by AID. I didn't get that involved in the environmental issues. I was up to my eyeballs in military and regional security issues.

Q: Right.

GARVELINK: Hillary Clinton came out in August as part of a seven-country tour, and we were about the fifth country. She was really tired when she got to the Congo. You could see that.

We had a number of issues to deal with before she even got there. One was that Bob Zoellick, who was head of the World Bank, was coming at the same time.

Q: Ahh.

GARVELINK: Exactly. Colleagues in Washington and from our side went round and round with the World Bank, asking if they could change the dates of his trip, that she could not because it was part of a larger trip. He wouldn't do it and was there the same time Hillary Clinton was there. We made the best of it, but that was not what we wanted.

Q: Yeah.

GARVELINK: One of the things Hillary Clinton wanted was a session with college students that would include some back-and-forth exchange. With the advance team we hunted around and decided on the Presbyterian University. That required a lot of work on the conference center and air conditioning, so that kept a lot of folks busy before she got there. (Both laugh)

Q: Okay. I'm sorry, one question about that. It's rare that you can use U.S. funds to build something that is not a U.S. institution. How did you manage that?

GARVELINK: I have no idea. The advance team did that. I didn't ask. But we didn't pay. I think I'd rather not know.

Q: Yes, I understand.

GARVELINK: And then, the third problem was Dikembe Mutombo, the basketball player. He had built a hospital, and the Clinton Foundation gave them some money. So, she wanted to see his hospital. I think I spoke about this earlier, but it's worth repeating that he was so great to hop on a plane from China to come to Kinshasa. He came in the day before she did.

We had an even bigger issue because Kabila was not going to be in Kinshasa. He was scheduled to be in Goma. I tried to get him to come to Kinshasa, but he was not able to change his plans to leave Goma. That meant she would need a smaller plane to fly to Goma.

Q: She was willing to do that?

GARVELINK: I spoke to the UN, and they were willing to let us use one or two of their Canadian plans that hold thirty or forty people. They were the same kinds of planes used on the DC—New York shuttle. I am sure their agreement was easy since the U.S. was the biggest donor to their operation. The Congolese went out separately from Kinshasha on a military plane. As the final plans were discussed, the UN said that the Secretary's security officers would have to lock up their guns in the well when they boarded the plan. The Secret Service said that they would not give up their guns.

Q: Whew.

GARVELINK: When they told me that, I went to Alan Doss and he suggested that it would be okay for them to have their guns if the pilots agreed. The pilots were okay with it, but said that it was not their decision to make. It was an airplane company decision. At that point, Alan went to the Canadian ambassador asking her to call the company. She did, and the company agreed. By this time Hillary Clinton was in South Africa and due to arrive in Kinshasa the next day. Then, the company called back to say that they could not make the decision about the guns, that only the Canadian (Federal Aviation Administration) could do so. The Canadian ambassador got back on the phone, finally reaching the FAA. The FAA then called her back to say that it was not their decision, that it had to be made by the Foreign Ministry. So, poor Siggie was up all night on the phone. She kept telling them that Canada did not want to be responsible for blowing a meeting between Clinton and the president of the Congo. Approval finally came. I was fortunately able to set up a private meeting between Clinton and Ambassador Sigrid Johnson, so that Clinton could thank Siggie for making it work.”

I had never been involved in preparing a trip for a secretary of state before, so was surprised at how rude the advance team folks can be—you do it our way or... So, I spent about a month apologizing to people after they left and smoothing over bruised egos. They offended a lot of people.

Q: Yeah. And just to give you quick support for that. Hillary Clinton came to Costa Rica for two days for various things when I was there. Same thing with her advance team. Really just no consideration of anything, a band width, difficulty in moving people, nothing. It was rough. In advance of her arrival, just for me as the PAO (Public Affairs Officer), I had a twenty-five-page instruction manual on how to manage the local media.

GARVELINK: Yes; some of them were nasty folks. So, I spent a lot of time making the rounds, apologizing to people, as did the DCM and AID folks. But, it all worked out. On the other hand, it is really hard to arrange these kinds of trips and if the organizers aren't tough, nothing will get done. But, they should have been a little nicer.

Q: Yeah. Okay.

GARVELINK: I met the plane and when she came down the steps, I forget who it was, somebody whispered to me, "Watch the woman with the shawl. She runs everything." And that was Cheryl Mills. (Laughs)

Q: Oh, yeah. Okay.

GARVELINK: We went directly from the airport to my house, to the residence. I'd assembled the whole embassy, Americans and national staff. She gave a pep talk and was very nice. A number of folks had a book she had written not too long before. I forget what it was.

Q: It Takes a Village?

GARVELINK: It could be, but I am not sure. It was mostly the Congolese folks who had the book. She was a real sport., meeting and talking to everyone. She signed every copy of every book that was put in front of her. She about an hour, hour and a half greeting everybody after the talk. Then, she came inside to do one-on-one press interviews.

We had a huge spread in the dining room for the staff. When Clinton finished her press interviews, she walked into the dining room and asked for "a pop." I hadn't heard that term used since I grew up in Michigan. I started to laugh and she looked at me, so I had to explain my Michigan roots.

Q: Yeah.

GARVELINK: As I may have mentioned earlier, Linda's sister and brother-in-law and their three kids were visiting. It's the one time they came out to the Congo in three years,

and it happened to be at a busy time. Clinton spent some nice time with all of them, chatting and having pictures taken. She was really nice.

Q: Wow.

GARVELINK: Then, the next day, they got to spend time with Dikembe Mutombo, a big deal for them since they were from Colorado and he played for the Denver Nuggets. Hard to tell which one they were more impressed with.

Q: Of course.

GARVELINK: Then we went off to the hotel and got down to business. I was still on edge, hoping the Canadian ambassador had worked out the plane issue so that we could actually go. She got it done, and we took off in the morning on the Canadian plane. Alan Doss went with us. When we landed, they had to review the peacekeeper troops. It was always interesting because there were two groups in eastern Congo: Pakistanis and Indians. The two generals had in years past actually fought one another over Kashmir, but they were now good friends.

And then we met with Kabila. It was supposed to be an hour-long meeting or something like that and it went two or three hours. She really impressed me. She had some issues—and hard to remember exactly what they were now—that she wanted to go over and I had mine, which we talked about the night before. From my experience with CODELS in earlier times working on humanitarian issues, the senators would focus only on their own issues and not bother to cover the ones I wanted them to raise. She brought up every issue I asked her to bring up. She talked about military training, telling them that they needed better training for their troops, needed medical care for them, and they needed to be paid. On the economic front, she spoke about the need for investments to benefit the entire country, and, while agreeing with the value of road infrastructure, she did caution about debt burdens, including with the loan from China. She also spoke about illegal mining, rebel action in eastern Congo, gender-based violence, and anti-corruption. She even mentioned land for a new embassy (Tauber laughs). I asked her to bring it up and she added it to her list. I was really impressed. And she was not confrontational at all. She spoke in terms of helping, of setting up joint working groups, and working together. It was a very good meeting.

Q: I just want to ask a quick question about the meeting. Often when you're expecting an official like the secretary of state you let the president know or the top official, she's meeting that she's going to be raising some issues, that we don't want them to be surprised. We'd like you to be prepared and here are the topics. Obviously, you can raise your own but you might want to be ready to talk to her about this.

GARVELINK: Yeah, we did that, but I didn't really expect her to go down the list and raise every point. She never did it in an off-hand way, like "by the way, we need land for an embassy." She was serious about all of them and treated them equally, so the meeting went on way longer than expected. I was just impressed with the way she handled Kabila

After the meeting, we went to Heal Africa, which is a hospital in Goma that focuses on sexual violence. Jo Lusi, a Congolese doctor, and his wife Lyn started the hospital years ago. It's a teaching hospital that handles the medical aspects of sexual violence but also provides psychosocial support and skills training for the women, many of whom stay for a long time. The American Bar Association was also helping them. Lyn Lusi, from Minnesota, was a nurse, and she unfortunately died last year, I heard. We went through the whole hospital and then Clinton had kind of a town hall meeting with the patients, doctors, nurses, and city officials to talk about the violence and other things going on in the Eastern Congo. It was an interesting session. Johnnie Carson was there and all the folks traveling with her attended as well.

Then we went out to Mugunga, which is an internally displaced persons camp about three or four miles north of Goma with around 20,000 residents. It was a tough place. She went through everything, visiting the health clinic and other facilities. She tramped through the muddy mess that was the camp and was a real sport about all of it. She talked to people; she went in their little tukols. She went the extra mile again.

Then we flew back to Kinshasa and that was it for the day. We sat next to each other on the plane because the plane has two seats on each side, and we got into a bit of an argument. She was telling me that I had to be tough with this guy, that I had to lay it on the line, etc. I told her I didn't think that was the way to deal with Kabila. He avoids conflict. You start that, he'll go out to his ranch or his farm and ride his motorcycle through the vineyard and through the orchard and he won't talk to you. I argued that you need a different approach, focusing on team and working together. What struck me is she was not at all like that in the meeting with Kabila.

Q: Right.

GARVELINK: With Kabila she said, "we can help with this, we can set up some joint working groups and all of that," and here she was saying "Toe the line. Be hard, be direct. Let him know there's a cost to this." That doesn't work with him. And so, I argued with her a good portion of the way back and then we dropped it. She went to sleep. You could tell, she was really tired. I moved to another seat, and she dozed the last hour and a half of the flight. That was pretty much it for the day. There was another long meeting in her suite at the hotel to talk over the next day's schedule.

And then the next day, the first stop was to Dikembe's hospital. He was in town by then. She reacted the same way I did the first time I was there. The doorways are about seven and a half feet tall, so he doesn't hit his head when he goes through. She kept looking up at all of this. She also got a kick out of the fact that all the rooms had the names of different basketball players. We were all also impressed by their personnel practices. When the hospital was built, people were encouraging him to hire their daughter or cousin to be a nurse. He hired only on the basis of skill. They also instituted an appointment process which was not common; people were used to just showing up at the hospital. It's run like a U.S. or European hospital. You get an appointment to go there,

you only have so many places where you can wait, and the staff, nurses and doctors are hired on the basis of their accomplishments and their training, their skills.

So, we had a nice time at the hospital. Then, we went to the Presbyterian University. I forgot to mention that I called General Numbi, the head of police, a few days earlier to ask him to ensure that the police had a low-key presence. We did not want any problems between the police and the students while she was there. He said that he understood.

So, we, including Dikembe, went into the university auditorium. There were two panelists and the people could ask questions. It was going well and then a guy sitting a couple of rows down from me made a mistake. He asked what President Clinton thought about the Chinese loan. She blew a gasket, asking if he thought she channeled her husband's views? She said she didn't know what he thinks about it, but if he wanted her views, she would tell him. The guy had meant to say President Obama, and it was a slip of the tongue. But, she exploded. So, that night, her entire staff was up doing talking points to deal with the press reaction. Nobody in the Congo cared at all. It was irrelevant to them. But their folks were up all night long faxing and sending press statements. A few hours later, I was back at the embassy, and I got a call from General Numbi. I thanked him for toning down the police presence. He was laughing, telling me that he had told me to "stay away from the damn college kids. All they do is cause problems." He couldn't resist rubbing it in a little bit.

Q: Right.

GARVELINK: The Prime Minister hosted a dinner for Clinton and Zoellick. The Foreign Minister, other cabinet members, and all the other ambassadors were there. She made some comments, but I don't even remember what they were about. After the dinner, that is when she met with Siggie Johnson, the Canadian ambassador, in a side room. They had a great conversation, and Clinton thanked her for handling the weapons issue on the plane.

And then, the next morning she left for Nigeria. That night I had a big dinner at my house for Dikembe Mutombo, and we invited a bunch of folks over. That included Linda's sister and brother-in-law and their kids. Her brother-in-law and nephew are big basketball fans, so they had a great time.

After the trip, Steve Haykin and I met with Kabila and his folks to set up joint senior-level working groups on various topics. They were at the vice minister level and at the office director level of AID and the embassy. We had working groups on anti-corruption. That's when Mike Hershman came out. We also set up joint groups on private sector development, gender-based violence, health, military reform, and the environment. Because of our staffing constraints, I asked the State Department's Office for Conflict, Reconstruction, and Stabilization (CRS) to send two or three people out to help staff up so that we could continue our regular activity and make these working groups amount to something. Initially there was excitement about the working groups, but in a couple of months, the DRC interest waned. I got the feeling that the vice

ministers didn't see much use in them. But they did attend meetings, papers were prepared, and people at lower levels probably benefited in some ways.

Now, just one last thing about a complicating factor in all of this. In late June I got really sick with what we thought was pancreatitis again. I was in a French clinic in Kinshasa for two days and then an air ambulance flew me to South Africa to the Unitas Hospital in Pretoria where I was in intensive care for two weeks. I had lots of tests; the doctors finally concluded that it was a blocked "tube" that runs from gall bladder, through liver, and through pancreas. They said it was "gall sludge" instead of a gall stone. So I've had pancreatitis twice, once by bugs and once by gall sludge. They performed surgery and I was moved to the hospital for recovery. The doctors required more follow up so Linda and I went to a guesthouse that the embassy arranged. For another couple days, I would go to the hospital for more follow up. Then, the Clinton trip came up. I was starting to feel better and told folks I had to be back when she visited.

Q: Yeah.

GARVELINK: So, I talked to the doctor and the regional medical doc in the embassy in South Africa. They allowed me to return to Kinshasa but wanted me to return to Pretoria for another follow up evaluation after Clinton departed. I agreed to do so. Linda & I returned to Kinshasa on the morning of the fifth of July. The DCM presided over the big Fourth of July reception the day before. On July 5th, we had the party for all Americans with burgers and hot dogs. I made it to that. Then, I got back to work as we planned for the Secretary's visit. About three or four days after the visit, I flew back by myself to South Africa for the required tests and follow up.

Interestingly, I felt fine the whole time with Clinton. But the doctors weren't quite sure and wanted to do more tests. So, the Clinton visit had two medical trips by me to South Africa as bookends.

One last thing and then I'm done with Congo. About three or four months later, Johnnie Carson came out. He was going to be there for three or four days for meetings with the foreign ministry and military. When he first arrived, it was a big deal. So, the main paper for Kinshasa had a picture of Johnny Carson.

Q: Mm-hm. Oh.

GARVELINK: Except the wrong Johnny Carson.

Q: Right. Oh, man. Of course. (Laughs)

GARVELINK: They went a little too far back in the archives and got *the* Johnny Carson sitting behind a desk. I called the publisher and he said, "I know, I know." He said he was as surprised as we were when he saw it. He apologized profusely.

Q: But that's a wonderful little piece of memorabilia if the real Johnnie Carson has a sense of humor.

GARVELINK: Oh, he does. (Tauber laughs) He just laughed.

Anyway, we went to look at the military training that had gotten started in Kisangani. We also went to see the Minister of Defense, walking through a big open area, this young soldier came running at me and dropped to his knees and stopped about two inches from my leg. My shoestring was loose. At full tilt he ran, then slid and stopped just in front of me and said, "Your shoestring."

Q: Holy cow.

GARVELINK: I just stopped dead. I didn't know what was happening—and the people behind him, the minister, his eyes were about that big. (Tauber laughs) And it was just (laughs) the shoestring. And the guy went right back to where he was supposed to be standing.

Johnnie's visit went well and was his first chance to meet the minister of defense, the head of the military, and the foreign minister. I can't recall whether we saw Kabila, but we did see the head of the Central Bank and many of the folks I mentioned earlier. He ended up staying on a few extra days because of the huge volcano that erupted in Iceland, stopping air traffic between Europe and the U.S. It was nice to have him those few extra days.

We flew back to Washington together, but instead of going to Europe, we went to Casablanca, Morocco and then across to New York. I went to the spring World Bank meetings and that's where I was approached about becoming the deputy coordinator for Obama's Feed the Future initiative. I'd had a call from Cheryl Mills, and she told me to find a reason to go to Washington. So, I arranged to attend the World Bank meetings, but I was primarily there to talk about my next job.

Q: Very good. All right. Then this sounds like a good place to break.

Q: Okay. Today is February 2, Groundhog Day, 2024. And the groundhog either did or didn't see his shadow, whatever is required for early spring.

GARVELINK: That's right. I have to watch the groundhog movie again to get that clear.

Q: (Laughs) Okay. Go right ahead.

GARVELINK: Okay. So, I was coming to the end of my tour in the Congo, and I may have mentioned that I got a call from Raj Shaw and a guy named Jim Beaver, who's an

old buddy of mine who was working in Washington. They offered me the job as mission director to Afghanistan.

Q: Ah-ha.

GARVELINK: I said no, and about a week later, they called again and asked if I would be interested in becoming a deputy coordinator for Obama's new presidential initiative, Feed the Future. There were going to be two deputies: one for development and one for policy from State, and then eventually a coordinator.

Q: Yeah.

GARVELINK: I told them that I didn't know a whole lot about food generally, that most of my experience was with Food for Peace's emergency assistance. They said that my main responsibility would be to coordinate with the interagency and make sure everybody's onboard and doing what they're supposed to do. I confirmed that it was just a coordinator role, and Shah asked how many people I would need for a coordination office. I told him I would need about six people and that I would like to pick them. He agreed.

Q: Yeah, that's interesting. Obviously, you've had a long career and how many people it takes to do various jobs but what was going through your mind in terms of choosing six?"

GARVELINK: (Laughs) I have no idea.

Q: Okay. (Laughs)

GARVELINK: I really was just guessing, but six seemed reasonable as a starting point for a coordination role. They then asked me to find a reason to come to Washington, so we could talk in more detail. That's when I went to the spring World Bank meetings in April 2010—and traveled back to Washington with Johnnie Carson as I mentioned last time.

Once in Washington, I did go to some of the Bank meetings, but also met with Shah and Cheryl Mills from State to talk more about the position. I remember, about 7:30 at night I got a call from State asking me to clear a press release announcing me as the deputy coordinator. I guess that was my job offer. I cleared the (laughs) press release. That annoyed AID a bit and so, (Tauber laughs) they issued another one the next day immediately.

Q: (Laughs) Oh, dear. Already a lack of coordination.

GARVELINK: (Laughs) Yeah. Cheryl Mills just went ahead and did it. Anyway, I went back to the Congo after the World Bank meetings and went through all my farewell meetings with the diplomatic community, government officials, and the embassy. The

embassy staff gave us a very nice painting of Kinshasa scenes with my wife and myself and our dog in it. It's about four feet by four feet and is in our house. I had a farewell meeting with Kabila. Then we came back to Washington.

And I showed up my first day at work—

Q: Oh, wait. Let me just ask one last question. Departure meetings with heads of state, sometimes you give them sort of parting advice. Was there anything like that in your final meeting?

GARVELINK: Well, we talked about the importance of elections and democratic institutions, as well as reinforcing some of the points Secretary Clinton had made about the importance of development for everyone in the country. He apparently had read the press release so he knew I was going into this Feed the Future job, and asked that I not forget the DRC, that they needed assistance on food security. I assured him we wouldn't forget, and they did end up being one of the twenty countries that we started with. That was basically it.

Deputy Coordinator (Development) for Feed the Future Initiative and Assistant to the Administrator, Bureau for Food Security, 2010-2011

Q: Can you say a bit more about the position you were going into?

GARVELINK: Well, I'm going to get to that—because it changed a bit.

On the first morning, I had my meeting with Raj to tell him I had arrived. He then started talking and it was obvious the job had changed rather dramatically. He spoke about me being responsible for about \$1 billion a year, designing the projects, and ensuring that they're done right in close coordination with AID missions. I quickly jumped in, saying this was not a job for a little office of six people. (Tauber laughs) I told him he was talking about a full-fledged USAID bureau. As a presidential initiative, we needed to make sure we did things right. I also argued that if I was going to sign off on the design of projects, spend the money, and allocate the resources to twenty different AID missions around the world, that was a very different and much more elaborate job than what we had talked about earlier. He was skeptical about the need for a bureau, but I told him I would return the next day with a plan for one. He agreed.

Q: Okay.

GARVELINK: Meanwhile, I met with Cheryl Mills and she also made clear that the job had changed. All the money, this \$3.5 billion, would go to AID and I would be responsible for it. The deputy coordinator for policy would deal with the diplomatic stuff, although I was never quite sure what that was. So, the next day I went to Shah with a plan for a bureau, although it had pretty much been done off the top of my head. It was to include program officers, project officers, desk officers, a senior leadership group, etc. It would be about 100 people. Again, he was a bit skeptical but supported my request,

asking me to keep him informed of what we were doing. The first person I identified was Greg Gottlieb to become the senior DAA for the bureau. He was currently mission director in Namibia, and we had worked together off and on for twenty-five years or so. He fortunately agreed. I then put together a team of three retired USAID officers to design and staff the bureau. Each had long experience with USAID, and each was familiar with the HR side of USAID. One was Fred Fisher whom I knew well. He was the mission director in Kenya when I was going in and out of Somalia years earlier. And there was Janice Weber, who had been in multiple senior management positions in AID, including some work with OFDA. The third was David Rhoad who had spent much of his career working on food aid. I asked these folks to design and set up the bureau, including job descriptions and everything else needed to create a new bureau. I met with them often, particularly when potential conflicts with others arose.

They were absolutely terrific. I got a kick out of Fred Fisher, who must have been eighty years old by then. He said he had been on the team that set up AID in 1961 and now he was back again doing the same kind of thing 50 years later. These folks designed the structure of the new bureau, did the job descriptions, and met with the staff that would be transferred into the new bureau. The only new position was mine, so the rest of the positions had to come from other parts of AID. It was a mammoth job—and no grievances were ever filed.

The process was done in less than a year. Shah didn't have a lot of government experience and didn't realize that this was pretty fast. He was always concerned that it was taking too long.

Q: Right. Sorry, I've got to go back a moment about the strategic planning. First of all, the \$3.5 billion. That was the estimate based on what State and USAID were imagining—had it already gone through Congress?

GARVELINK: No, I will get to that in a little bit, but the \$3.5 billion was a pledge that Obama made at the G-7.

Q: I see. Okay.

GARVELINK: And I'll get to that shortly. But we had to deal first with the organizational question of how USAID would manage its role. We had to deal with the question of whether it was an office or a bureau real fast.

Q: Okay.

GARVELINK: My task was to help sell the idea of the initiative and of the new bureau to AID, State, the rest of the inter-agency, and, most importantly, the Congress. So, I spent a lot of time giving speeches and talking to people. One of the biggest challenges was within AID itself, especially to the EGAT Bureau (Economic Growth, Agriculture and Trade). I was taking the agriculture section of EGAT or about three-quarters of their budget and half of their staff.

In addition, I was asked to introduce the initiative to the UN and other donor governments. I was seconded one person when this all started, Tracy Thoman, a PhD economist working for AID who was absolutely terrific and played a central role in the process. Other key folks were Beth Dunford, who ended up being the head of the bureau after I left. She was initially head of programs. Kimberly Flowers, a speech writer that I hired who, after a few years in Feed the Future, went to CSIS (Center for Strategic and International Studies) as an office director. Now she runs an institute in Maine on foreign policy. And then, who else? Laura Birx, a nutrition specialist, was also very important. And Greg Gottlieb was central to everything.

So, we had these unresolved issues to deal with early on. Once the decision was made to establish a bureau, it was decided fairly quickly that the agriculture work from EGAT would move to us. Some people also wanted to move Food for Peace and emergency food relief into the new bureau, but I argued that it would be better remaining with the humanitarian bureau. Fortunately, that prevailed.

Q: Okay.

GARVELINK: Another issue arose with the Congress. They had to approve creation of the bureau; they also would have to approve the position for a new Assistant Administrator. These were all issues I was dealing with at a broader level while the team I had brought in focused on the structure of the bureau.

And like I said, the bureau was created and those hundred positions moved in in less than a year. I thought it was pretty remarkable, although Raj Shah did grouse that it took too long.

Q: Okay.

GARVELINK: But perhaps I should have started with the rationale for the Feed the Future initiative. Government investments in agriculture had been declining since the early 1990s, and global food insecurity and women and child malnutrition rates had been increasing, especially in Sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia. I'm not sure of the reason for the decline in investment, but it may be that they thought the Green Revolution had taken care of everything.

Global food production declined significantly in 2005-2006 due to droughts and rising production costs. Then, in 2007-2008, there was an economic downturn worldwide that saw food prices spike, even while unemployment increased and wages declined. The increasing food insecurity and malnutrition led to food riots, particularly in sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia. Given these conditions, food insecurity figured prominently in the discussions at the 2009 G-8 summit in L'Aquila, Italy. The leaders agreed to take actions to reverse the decades-long decline in agriculture investment and to take a comprehensive approach to ensuring global food security and to reduce malnutrition.

President Obama pledged \$3.5 billion over three years, which set the stage and the other members pledged another \$18 billion over three years. The U.S. portion of the global effort was the Feed the Future initiative.

The U.S. initiative had basically eight components to it. First, it focused on smallholder farmers who comprise about 75% of the world's poorest in Sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia. That was also tied to the second component which was focused on women and girls since they make up a vast majority, and as much as 80% in some areas, of the smallholder population. Regarding women smallholders, one of the key issues was access to land—and land titles. These large smallholder populations also focused primarily on growing staple crops like rice, wheat, maize, and sorghum—crops that would fill people up but provided little nutritional value. Also, because they were primarily subsistence farmers and not able to sell their crops, they couldn't buy vegetables, meat, or other more nutritious foods. That obviously then led to the third component, increasing nutritional status. One thing I had not known until I went into this position was that if a child is severely malnourished from pregnancy to two years, it can't recover from that.

Q: Wow.

GARVELINK: They cannot develop their physical or mental potential. If it's really bad, they are in trouble for the rest of their lives, even if they have perfect nutritional input after those first two years.

The fourth component supported research and training, including things like biofortification of food, especially of staple crops like rice, wheat, and maize. This is not to be confused with genetically modified food. I don't understand all of the technical aspects, but they can add nutritional benefits. One of the things we supported was a big conference at Georgetown University on biofortification. I gave the keynote speech at that conference. It also led into the fifth component, private sector development. The private sector played a key role in fortification and other aspects of the initiative. The sixth component to strengthen value chains was also closely related to the private sector. This involved the entire value chain, from seed production, to inputs, to transport, to storage, to sales.

The seventh and eighth components were focused more on how we would work. The seventh was the new catchphrase "whole of government." USDA, AID, State, Peace Corps, Treasury, and other agencies were all involved. Treasury was key in working with the UN agencies to set up multi-donor funds. Almost every government agency had a role to play in this one way or another.

The eighth component was to ensure host country ownership. This was a showstopper. If the host government didn't take this seriously, put up some resources and expertise, we weren't going to work with them. We would move on to other countries where there was stronger commitment.

Q: Right, right.

GARVELINK: So, we had meetings with the various governments, the twenty that we picked. They were mostly in Africa. In South Asia, Pakistan, I believe, and Nepal were picked. In Latin America, it was Guatemala and Honduras. The rest were in Africa. We focused on development countries, like Ghana and Tanzania, not ones embroiled in conflict. I remember one discussion with Cheryl Mills when I argued that success breeds further success and that one of the early countries has to be so successful that everyone, particularly the Congress, can see it. I hated to suggest it, but I knew that one country which would be sure to make it work would be Rwanda. Because if Kagame wants to do something it will happen there and it did. But, I had to bite my tongue when I suggested it.

Q: Okay.

GARVELINK: (Laughs) But I was not happy when I made that suggestion. So, that, in a nutshell, describes the basic elements of Feed the Future. We would work with AID missions and their ag folks to design projects focused on these elements.

Q: Now, a question about the project process. Up until now State Department had the F bureau that basically oversaw foreign assistance funding. Did you end up having to do something with F?

GARVELINK: No. This came from Obama through the NSC down to us.

Q: Okay.

GARVELINK: And Cheryl Mills was very involved in the process. But no, we did not have to work with F.

Q: And the other question in terms of setting this up, you convinced Congress, but did Congress put requirements that gave you money only in tranches as you demonstrated the success of the program?

GARVELINK: No. It was an annual allocation, just like the larger budget process.

Establishing the bureau turned out to be a piece of cake. The politically appointed assistant administrator position was never approved (Tauber laughs) So, it was instead the assistant *to* the administrator, which is not a Senate-confirmed position.

Q: Right..

GARVELINK: Now, half of the assistant administrators in AID are assistant *to* the administrator, as if there's a hard sell. They go that way now. Certainly, for the Feed the Future bureau, Dina Esposito, who used to work for me, who's now the head of it is the assistant *to* the administrator.

But I was one of the first ones in AID (laughs) to get that rather peculiar title. I don't recall, but I may even have been the one to come up with the name. And it was easy for me because I had been confirmed by the Senate before, so nobody objected to it on the Hill.

Q: And at the birth of this bureau was it foreseen it would be permanent or was there a sunset for it?

GARVELINK: Well, technically there was, because it was a three-year initiative. But in my mind, and as I said that to Cheryl, once something is created, "it ain't going away." So, I was able to argue that we create it in the right way. I'll mention a little bit later, but legislation, even last year, made the focus on food security permanent. And so, now it is a regular part of AID with one of the larger budgets. And they've got somewhere around 300 or 400 people in the bureau now. It's much bigger than when I started.

Q: Interesting. Okay.

GARVELINK: At the same time we were getting Feed the Future off the ground, a large international Scaling Up Nutrition (SUN) effort was started by the UN. It was led by David Nabarro, a Brit, who had been a friend for many years. Early on in the Feed the Future initiative, there was a reluctance to include nutrition, but we ultimately did. Laura Birx, who worked as a nutrition expert in USAID's Global Health Bureau, was key to making it happen. She believed strongly that the US should be a major actor in the SUN initiative. She ended up writing the American "1,000 Days" companion initiative on nutrition which Hillary Clinton presented in a speech at the UN. Given the initial reluctance from parts of USAID, it remained officially outside of Feed the Future for some time, but I took Laura with me to many meetings and ultimately it became fully integrated into Feed the Future. But, nutrition was one of the nagging issues in the early days.

Q: So, once again a question about the establishment of the bureau. You mentioned that you wanted to be sure it was distinct from humanitarian assistance because it was a different kind of animal but the only thing about that is it strikes me that humanitarian food assistance always chooses the types of food that are not just the rice, that have nutrition added into it because when you're doing humanitarian you don't know when they're going to get food again.

GARVELINK: Yep. But the dilemma, of course, is that humanitarian work is usually in war or disaster zones. Of course, development and humanitarian activities are related, but they require different kinds of people, and it would have been very difficult to mesh the humanitarian into Feed the Future.

Having spent my career in the disaster business, I know that it's a different way of doing things. I thought we needed to organize ourselves first. It could be reconsidered in later years, but it would be biting off too much to do it at the start. We would not have been able to handle it all.

Q: Okay.

GARVELINK: No one argued about it, and, of course, the humanitarian folks (laughs) didn't want this to happen either. The Food for Peace stuff would have been particularly complicated because the Food for Peace budget comes from the Department of Agriculture, not AID. We wanted to stay away from that further complication.

Q: Okay.

GARVELINK: Raj Shah and I met almost every day. He was very clear to everyone that his highest priority was Feed the Future, that he had instructions from the White House. I had good relationships with him, Cheryl Mills, and Gayle Smith, who was the NSC person at the time. She later became head of AID, but Gayle and I knew each other for thirty years. When she was a consultant, she worked for OFDA and did a lot of analytic work and wrote papers for us. The interesting dynamic was between Cheryl and Gayle, as they really did not like working with one another. It made it interesting for me (laughs). Also, a coordinator was never named. I don't think State and the NSC could agree on anyone, so it remained vacant.

Q: Wow. Interesting.

GARVELINK: So, I really ran my own thing, working alongside the State deputy coordinator. Initially it was Kristie Kenney, but she went off to become ambassador to the Philippines after only a month or two. Then Pat Haslach became the deputy coordinator for policy. She and I co-chaired all the interagency food security country strategy meetings. We also went to many international meetings together. It was always a bit odd, because we had the money. It was basically an AID activity, but they have always retained the deputy coordinator for policy from State. Another little quirky thing. Pat stayed in the position for some time—I left before she did.

Again, I worked very closely with Raj Shah, and we would meet every week with Cheryl Mills, at least for the first year or so. We would always go to her office and for reasons I don't know, she always wore a shawl even though it must have been ninety-five degrees in her office. You'd go in there and you'd start to sweat in about five minutes. Finally, I suggested to Raj that we suggest a weekly call instead of in-person meeting. Fortunately, she agreed, so I escaped the heat.

Q: Did she end up being sort of the coordinator in fact? In essence, somebody who kind of oversaw everything.

GARVELINK: I guess you could say that, but as time went on, other things took her attention away. I don't know who would be the equivalent of her in the Biden Administration. But it's really an AID activity now, run by the Bureau for Food Security, Nutrition and Environment. They just added Environment now to it as well. So, the bureau is getting bigger and expanding the kinds of activities it's involved in.

But it was a really interesting opportunity for me. We spent a lot of time meeting with other donors, including their legislative committees. Ambassador Haslach and I were invited to a food security conference in the UK sponsored by the Ditchley Foundation which promotes Anglo-American relations. The meeting was in Ditchley Park, which is a big estate north of Oxford that was given to the government. One of its functions is to promote U.S.-UK relations so they have two or three conferences a year. The estate was built in 1722, I believe, and it's where Churchill went during World War II to get out of London. That's where he signed Lend-Lease. They put me in Churchill's suite. (Tauber laughs) And they haven't changed it at all. It's comfortable and very nice but still has the old furniture from when Churchill was there. The conference went on for four days with a heavy science agenda. A good part of the discussion was about genetically modified commodities. The scientists were throwing up their hands, frustrated that the European populations were so against genetically modified commodities and not recognizing that it is protecting their farmers. They said that many experts from the UK had moved to the U.S. because they could no longer do research. It was an eye opener for me.

Q: Right.

GARVELINK: It's primarily a political ploy to cut imports. But anyway, these guys said all that. It was fascinating to be invited to and to listen to the experts. Pat and I didn't have a whole lot to add. We were just listening to what all these scientists were saying. It was a fascinating few days.

Once the twenty countries were picked, we started visiting them. I tried to emphasize to the AID folks that they needed to get their ambassadors involved, that they needed to buy into the whole-of-government concept. To reinforce this, I always insisted on meetings with the ambassador first when I got there, either before or with the AID director at the same time so that they'd get the point.

As an aside, there was also a big meeting on food security at the German Marshall Fund in Brussels. I arrived late because of another meeting and got directed to a table for dinner. Suddenly, I had Gordon Brown, the former prime minister of the UK, on one side; on the other was Tom Stoppard, the playwright. (Tauber laughs) It was one of the most interesting dinners I have ever had. We actually ended up talking a lot about refugees, in great part because Stoppard had been a refugee from somewhere in Eastern Europe to London. I've always enjoyed his plays, so to spend an hour with him and with Brown, who has been very active since he left the government, was one of the side benefits of this assignment.

And one of the other things I did, which was a hassle, to put it mildly, was preparation for President Obama's trip to India in late 2010. The U.S. and India wanted to work jointly on food initiatives in Africa. In the three weeks before his visit I made four trips to India. That's a long flight.

Q: Yeah, sure.

GARVELINK: And go there for two days then back and then back again, arranging deliverables to be announced during the president's visit. I got to appreciate India and their foreign ministry. Those are tough folks . When we first tried to identify African countries, the Indians first suggested Libya. I had to say that wouldn't be possible. They then proposed a couple other countries with which the U.S. had issues. I don't know if they were testing me, but they were not easy on me. After we got past that, we worked it all out.

I also went multiple times to London. There was a member of parliament, Laura Sandys, who was very interested in food security. I spent a lot of time with her and her committee, formally testifying before them once. It was interesting working with the British committee because they were looking at food safety as well as food security. We were not focused on the safety issues.

Beyond these foreign trips with donors and to the selected countries, I spent a lot of time talking to U.S. universities, including the University of Minnesota, Oklahoma State, Alabama, and Texas A&M, which has the Borlaug Institute. I also spent a lot of time with the Department of Agriculture. The Peace Corps was very involved in the initiative, as well. After about a year, this process started to work and everything started to click.

Then, in 2011 Shah asked to meet with me. He said he thought that I especially liked starting things and enjoyed that more than running things on a day-to-day basis, that the latter was a little less interesting. (Tauber laughs) I had to say that it was true. So, he proposed a change for me. He wanted me to become the AID representative in the policy office at the Pentagon. To be our representative there and to work with the undersecretary for policy, Michèle Flournoy at the time.

Q: Hmm, interesting.

GARVELINK: Because I knew Michèle from way back, I agreed. Then Michèle quit DOD. She wanted to spend more time with her kids or something like that. Anyway, it no longer seemed to make sense for me to take the position in DOD, so Linda and I decided that I would retire. We took a little vacation, went for a couple of weeks and toured Civil War battlefields in Virginia. Then we got back home and I got a call from the deputy administrator. Don Steinberg.

Don had another suggestion, that I go to a think tank, that AID needed to have better relations with them. I could pick whichever one I wanted, and AID would second me to the organization. Because I knew some of the key people at CSIS, we worked it out with them. I was technically a senior advisor to the Administrator but seconded to CSIS and their office at Eighteenth and K in those days.

Q: Yeah, I thought they had moved by then but okay.

Senior Advisor to the USAID Administrator, 2011-2012

GARVELINK: No, no. They were still in the old place. I had an office over there. My overall assignment was to improve USAID's relationship with CSIS. I would focus on development issues, humanitarian issues, food security and be part of the CSIS VP Johanna Nesseth's office. I wrote a lot of opinion pieces there, published on the website at CSIS. I moderated a lot of sessions there, people who would come in on different topics. We had a great mix of speakers, including Rory Stewart, who was the development minister of the UK; Jan Egeland, who was a former Norwegian diplomat and humanitarian leader in the UN; Tony Blair; Tom Daschle; Linda Thomas-Greenfield; Don Yamamoto; and Andrew Natsios. One of the guys I got to know there on my first day was Zbigniew Brzezinski, who had an office there. That first day I went out at noon to get a salad, and I was going back to my office. He got on the elevator and asked what I was doing. When I told him I was taking my salad back to the office to eat, he said "bad habit. You don't want to eat at your desk." (Tauber laughs) I thought, is this really Brzezinski?

Q: Right.

GARVELINK: And so, then he had an office there and it's where he wrote his last few books. And so, I would see him periodically. I really enjoyed having the chance to spend time with him. So, I got to know some very interesting folks and did quite a bit of writing, just short pieces. I also helped in some of their long studies. I also ran a monthly series called "Careers in Global Development." I would have a different speaker come in over lunch. We would often have fifty or sixty people there and another hundred or 200 online. I started it when seconded from USAID but continued the sessions after I left CSIS. I was then a non-resident advisor. I also made several presentations at Chatham House in London which is closely affiliated with CSIS.

Q: Interesting. Now, just quickly, some of the topics you addressed? Because I understand very broad but were they principally all development or did you get into other topics as well?

GARVELINK: Principally on development, food security, food aid, and nutrition. So, I kind of stuck to my Feed the Future and disaster experience. Now, CSIS has a unit that focuses on humanitarian assistance. They didn't at that point. So, I did a lot of their humanitarian stuff. And in fact, my speechwriter, Kimberly Flowers, became the head of that unit at CSIS. I'm not formally affiliated with CSIS anymore, but I talk to them all the time. They're all friends.

One of the things that struck me is that when I worked for AID and at State too, there's not really a good understanding about what think tanks do and the role they have in government.

Q: Interesting.

GARVELINK: When I was working at OFDA and at Feed the Future, I had spoken at CSIS: I was on panels. People would show up and you would do our thing. But when I

was over there all the time it was very different. I developed a very different impression. For example, I saw this with regard to G-8 meeting preparation. I remember being in AID when the planning sherpas for the U.S. would come over to AID for an hour or so to discuss issues. At CSIS, they were there for five or six hours, going over issues in great detail. They spent a lot more time at CSIS than they did at AID.

And CSIS isn't unique. It's the way they operate. And we did a lot of sessions off the record, for example a session I arranged with the International Committee of the Red Cross. I invited them to come in and talk about something in Syria. It would not be public; everything was low key. We would have dinner at night, have members of Congress, State Department over dinner at CSIS to talk. There could then be very open discussion with no press and no reports written. It was simply a good way for people to learn and to pass on information informally. I had not realized that they did that kind of stuff.

Q: Interesting.

GARVELINK: So, they're very much involved with the U.S. government and with the United Nations and policy makers more generally. You just don't hear much about it. You'd read what they publish, but there's other things they do as well. So, I was really, really impressed with CSIS and the way they operated. From there, I did a lot with the Atlantic Council and other such organizations. I'm not sure folks in AID or even State really appreciate how involved they are in studying U.S. government policy. I found it very interesting and a very stimulating place to spend time. I was a resident advisor from the end of 2011 to the end of 2012, so a full year, a little more. Then, I did decide to retire.

Q: Okay.

GARVELINK: So, I retired from the U.S. government in 2012.

Retire from USAID, 2012 — International Medical Corps, Senior Advisor, 2013 - 2024

And in 2013 I started working for the International Medical Corps. I had known IMC for many years and even gave them their first grant in the 1980's. At that point, they were a little bitty organization in California doing some work in Honduras and El Salvador. Now, they've got about 7,000 employees and they're in thirty countries around the world. They have their headquarters in California and offices in Washington, London, Croatia, and Tokyo. They're one of the bigger U.S. NGOs, primarily in humanitarian situations, warzones. In fact, they just opened their field hospital in Gaza. It's the only one. It's a 400-bed hospital they brought in near Rafah.

Q: Wow.

GARVELINK: They've been struggling for the past month and a half to get through Egypt and they finally did. It's now open. They've been one of the largest U.S. NGOs in Gaza for the last decade or so. I haven't traveled that much for them in the past couple of years but did go to Gaza. When I worked for AID, we couldn't go there. But when I worked for IMC I went there three or four times. It's all health-related work, with doctors and nurses and nutritionists.

In any case, they have become a big organization over the years. They got bigger when I was working in OFDA and the humanitarian assistance bureau, and I learned to really rely on them. They would go places other organizations wouldn't and they'd go faster. They were in Eastern Congo before most others. So, everywhere I went I would bump into these folks. They came into existence in 1984 and have had only one CEO, Nancy Aossey. She's still there. So, when I finally retired, they asked me to become a senior advisor. They had a vice president's group that met weekly, and I was part of that group to make decisions about what they do and where they go. I did a lot of training of country directors and how they should interact with AID, the Ambassador, and, more generally, the U.S. government.

Again, I did a lot of traveling. I spent a lot of time in Japan and started a program for them in Burma a few years ago. I was usually the person who went to General Assembly meetings in New York. So, I spent a lot of time with ICRC, the UN, PRM, and the AID humanitarian relief folks. Even though IMC is a prominent organization that programs three or four hundred million dollars a year, a lot of which is from the U.S. government, I was always surprised at how little they knew about how the U.S. government works inside. Their other funding is from the UK, EU, and other donors, as well as private contributions.

Q: Interesting.

GARVELINK: And so, I did a lot of (laughs) explaining about the bureaucracy and networking. For example, I was in Dubai at a conference at one point and one of the senior IMC people mentioned that they had been unable to figure out a way to work with IOM (International Organization for Migration). I suggested they talk with Bill Swing who was at this point the head of IOM. They apparently couldn't get hold of him. As they were telling me this, he walked by. (Tauber laughs) So, I asked Bill if we could talk with him, and we worked it all out in about fifteen minutes. My IMC colleagues were flabbergasted that we could do that standing in the hallway at a conference. (Laughs) So, I had worked with those organizations a lot and we have people who—at IMC who know UNHCR very well and came from there, so I've been focused on them. But all the others, UNICEF, and I went to a lot of Tony Lake's meetings when he was head of UNICEF in New York and that sort of thing.

At one point I was in Kyoto at a UN meeting when I got a call from Nancy Aossey asking me to become the chief compliance officer for IMC. I had no specific background in compliance work, but IMC was having some issues with USAID's compliance office and Inspector General's office, so I agreed. The problems were related to our programs in

Turkey, Syria, Lebanon, and Jordan. When I returned from Japan, I went almost immediately to Turkey with our attorneys and terminated several employees. I also hired a couple of specialists: Mike Hershman, my old boss and founder of Transparency International, as a consultant monitor who prepared quarterly reports for me and the Chief Compliance Officer in AID; and a former DA from New Jersey as an impartial investigator. We sorted out everything in about a year or eighteen months. Once I finished this, I told Nancy that I wanted to work only part-time. She fortunately agreed. (Laughs)

Q: Right.

GARVELINK: As I said earlier, I did a lot of traveling, including to places that I could never visit as a U.S. government officer. For example, when I went to Lebanon with Deputy Secretary Armitage while with USAID, we met with folks at the airport; we never really got into Lebanon. But, I did when I worked with IMC. It has a big office in Lebanon, so I visited many parts of the country. NGOs can do a lot more on-the-ground than the government can.

I also had a very interesting experience in London with the C. Hoare Company, the oldest bank in London. It was founded in 1622 by a goldsmith. It's a private and very elite bank on Fleet Street. You have to deposit at least a million pounds to have an account. Anyway, the director of IMC-UK knew the fellow who was running the bank. I was asked to meet with the bank director about what we were doing in the Middle East with refugees. A couple weeks later he called back and asked me to brief their investors, so I did so for about thirty folks with accounts there. The bank and some of their investors ended up donating some significant funds to IMC. I never heard what the final count was.

Samuel Pepys, Lord Byron, and other well-known literary and political people had all been clients of the bank. An incredible list.

Q: Interesting.

GARVELINK: So, winding this up, I did the compliance work and was pleased to have resolved the issues and built a very strong compliance system. I have now told them that I am retiring completely at the end of February. (Tauber laughs) I'm done.

Q: Right. Okay.

GARVELINK: I may join their board or play some other unofficial role. It's a first-rate outfit, and I very much enjoyed working with them. And so, that's sort of my career from beginning to end.

Q: Okay. Usually at the end of an interview, I ask a couple of wrap-up questions. Do you want to consider what you might say to USAID if you could advise them on any changes or improvements or anything at all, really, based on the time you've been there and the other organizations you've worked for?

GARVELINK: That's a tough one. I haven't thought about that. (Laughs)

Well, let me think about that. I remember, as I believe I mentioned before, when I went to OFDA early in my career, some folks said that I had ruined my career, that development people don't do the humanitarian stuff. That was wrong. The key is to figure out how they relate to some another. Some people say that "you do humanitarian assistance and then a country gets to a certain point and then you start development assistance." No, that's not the case. They have to be linked together in a productive way. If the humanitarian work goes awry, the development stuff isn't going to work either.

Q: Right.

GARVELINK: They're learning that over time. AID people are smart and they're seeing the two come together. Also, the humanitarian side of the house was really the first to work with the military in a big way. At times, my experience was that the military was easier to work with than the State Department. That's because both the military and AID are operational; they do projects. State has a very different mindset and approaches. So, the military often understood the humanitarian work more quickly.

Q: Right.

GARVELINK: During the Bush and Obama years, diplomacy, development and defense were linked much more closely. Those linkages are now much more of a reality than in the eighties and nineties when everybody sort of did their own thing. They cooperated if they had to but didn't really see the value in it. It's different now. U.S. foreign policy is a much more integrated activity than it was in the past.

Q: Hm. Yeah. And since you ran some discussions on opportunities in international development, are there recommendations you would give to somebody considering that field today?

GARVELINK: Well, the one thing I tend to tell folks is don't plan too much. Be flexible. When I came into AID, I came in as an auditor. I didn't know anything about that, but it got me into the system. When working as an auditor, folks told me I was in the wrong kind of position and suggested different options. They set me off on a career that I wouldn't want to change in any way. So, it's important to get into the system. Don't hold out for that perfect job because it may never appear.

Once you're in, you can move around, you can move between agencies and you can move between bureaus and organizations. I don't think that's unique to the U.S. government. If you want to work in the private sector, you still need to be flexible. The trick is to get into the system and not be rigid about what you want to do. I always tell folks my career was absolutely a mistake. I wanted to be a history professor, teach at a university. That's all I wanted to do.

Q: Right, right.

GARVELINK: I never thought of the government, coming from western Michigan and then on to the University of Minnesota then to Chapel Hill, North Carolina. I ended up working for a congressman —and (laughs) I hunted for a long time to get that job on Capitol Hill. I've got a folder back here with several hundred rejection notices. Then I got my job, and that was the first and last job I ever applied for.

Q: Wow.

GARVELINK: I was working for Don Fraser. He lost his election; I lost my job.

Q: Right.

GARVELINK: Then a guy I worked with, Mike Hershman, who was in AID, called me and suggested I go to AID. I didn't care much for the audit job, but colleagues helped me move to another part of AID. Then, I went to Bolivia, enjoyed myself, and then, because of a guy named Bob Gersony and DAS Gene Dewey, I got a call asking me to go to work in the State Refugee Bureau. I did that for some years, and a couple years later I got a call from Julia Taft, who was running OFDA, telling me to "Get your butt back here, work for me."

Q: Right.

GARVELINK: I did that for a decade or so, in part because of my eye issue I couldn't go on an overseas assignment. Then, Keith Brown, the senior DAA of Africa's bureau, asking me to become mission director in Eritrea?" I enjoyed that position and then got a call from Andrew Natsios, when the George W. Bush administration began, telling me he wanted me to return to a senior job in his new humanitarian bureau. Then, I got a call from Don Yamamoto, asking me about becoming an ambassador. I enjoyed my time in Kinshasa and then got a call from Hillary Clinton about the Feed the Future position. So, I've been lucky. I've had a charmed life and enjoyed every minute of it.

Q: Yeah. Obviously, great variety and your willingness to be adaptable to opportunities when they come your way.

GARVELINK: And Raj Shah was right. I really liked starting things. I have jotted down a few of those things. I created the humanitarian assistance manual, the field operations guide (FOG), and helped start a master's degree program at Tufts University. I set up the humanitarian information unit in INR and the Civil-Military unit in the AID Bureau for Humanitarian Assistance. In the Congo, I was able to set up a regional office in Goma that made a huge difference to our work in the eastern Congo. I had the opportunity to be the first AID head of the Feed the Future initiative and to help craft the initiative and a new bureau in AID. At IMC, I had the opportunity to create a compliance and investigation office that eliminated some significant issues. I was given the kind of free run and worked for supportive folks who allowed me to try different things. Even at CSIS, I ran a global development career program that had on-line training courses and

monthly discussions about careers in global development. I was fortunate to have bosses who gave me free run. And if I was stepping out of line they'd say so. But I can't think of a better career. I've been very lucky.

Q: Well, as this ends your interview, I want to thank you on behalf of ADST and our USAID colleagues who are conducting these interviews with USAID officers to help highlight the vital work you all do and hopefully provide lessons learned as USAID moves forward.

End of interview