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

ALAN HARDY

Interviewed by: Lewis Hoffacker
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INTERVIEW

Q: This is Lew Hoffacker introducing Alan Hardy, who will now speak. This is January 16, 2001 in Austin, Texas.

HARDY: Well, Lew is right. I am Alan Hardy, and I had an approximately 31-year career

in the Foreign Service interrupted early on by two years in the army. I retired in 1987. Before I went in the Foreign Service, I had studied engineering in college. That was in pre-computer days. And partially because of that, I suppose, I found engineering stultifying and it seemed to me it would put too many blinders on me, make me too narrow. So I was looking to the Foreign Service and found something that I think actually satisfied me because it enabled me to go different places and do different things. That was what I wanted when I started into it. I also wanted a profession in which one could perhaps be of service. I believe that's the kind of profession the Foreign Service is.

Q: Are you going to mention the university you went to?

HARDY: Yes, I went to the University of Cincinnati. I started out studying electrical engineering. I switched over to liberal arts. I had a year and a half in liberal arts. I was taking the Foreign Service exam in order to learn how to take the exam. I thought, well, if I took the exam as a junior, I would then find out what to do when I was a senior and took it a second time. Then maybe if I were lucky, I would pass on the second try. Well, I found out. I don't know what happened, but I passed it the first time by mistake.

Q: I passed it the second time.

HARDY: And so I had to sort of cram everything in at the last minute in order to finish and get my credits for a degree. As a matter of fact, I didn't get my degree until three years after I'd been in the Foreign Service, after I'd done my military service.

Q: Will you give us some dates?

HARDY: I joined the Foreign Service in August of '56. Let's see, I was drafted in '57, had two years in the Army, came out in '59. It was peace time but the draft was in effect then. From my point of view, the army was a waste of two years. But I fulfilled what was a legitimate obligation at the time. That's the way it goes.

I don't know how I got into the Foreign Service in some ways. I was a poor writer. Writing wasn't in the Foreign Service exam, although there was a written question-and-answer thing about how to write. But there was no real sample required. I was not a good public speaker. In retrospect, I wasn't very tactful. I didn't have a work ethic. I didn't appreciate the value of networking, either with my college schoolmates or with my first-year Foreign Service Foreign Service colleagues. I lacked polish.

So you may ask, how did I ever get in? Maybe it was because it was a period when the Foreign Service was expanding. In my favor, I was articulate in small groups. I regard myself, rightly or wrongly, fairly intelligent and imaginative. I can be assertive. And I can be very tenacious. As it turned out, in my career I overcame most of those deficiencies that I mentioned - some of them early, some of them late. Never overcame the public speaking deficiency, which may have hurt me. Result a satisfactory, not a brilliant, career. So I hope I don't lose my readers with that, but we'll keep on going.

My first post was Toronto. Now we're in 1959. In those days the idea was that when you started you would do visa work, or consular work, you would do administrative work. Then you would do economics work. Maybe someday if you were lucky, but they didn't put it that way, you would wind up doing political work, the most sought after work of all. Which was different from the cone system, which I think is still in force, isn't it Lou?

Q: As far as I know.

HARDY: So, that's going to be a little bit of a theme in some of the things I have to say. Anyway, I started out in visa work. In terms of my later career and my aspirations, I thought most of the visa work I did in Toronto for a year and a half was wasted. I did some administrative work in Milan as well, including carrying out a local wage survey, that seemed a little bit better. It was helpful as I progressed to some other administrative posts in Milan, Italy and Madagascar. Anyway, I'm not a fan of training in visa mills for anybody.

I had a hard time coming to my own conclusion about whether one should come in to specialize in a cone or whether one should get around to different positions in one's early career. On balance the cone system seems better, where if you come in as political, you come in as economic, you receive assignments in that field. Yet it shouldn't be so rigid that you wouldn't get some out-of-cone experience. I'll have my comments on my very prolific out-of-cone experience in the rest of my career as I go on.

I went to Madagascar as General Services Officer (GSO). For a time, I became Administrative Officer, and simultaneously Consular Officer because there wasn't that much consular work there. Why did I go to Africa? I had chosen Africa as a specialty. I had chosen it because I wanted to be a big fish in a little pond instead of a little fish in a big pond, and also just kind a natural interest in things African. Thought it'd be less humdrum, and it was.

Q: This is approximately what year?

HARDY: Now we're two years later, 1961.

Q: The change that was coming through Africa was exciting.

HARDY: Well, yes.

Q: Maybe not Madagascar.

HARDY: It was the beginning of independence for many African nations, when people thought we were going to do so much with economic aid. I later concluded that most of the aid, it took me 20 years to decide it, not the 30 I was in the Foreign Service, but only 20, that each country's got to do it for themselves. If it's going to take 100 years, or 50

years, or 20 years, by and large they're going to have to do it for themselves. You can contribute on the margin, but you can't do it for them. And to some extent, therefore, I think aid needs to be modest. You have to have some out there. That's the way we had to go anyway, perhaps becoming too tight-pursed thanks to the way the Congress is.

Q: You were, I'm sure, later were dealing with the Communist threat. Communists under every palm tree?

HARDY: Yes, you really had to search under some of the palm trees, but people said they were there. Okay, so here we are in Madagascar. The interesting thing was at that time, you know, this was the nation-building era in Africa. But the French effectively froze out the American Embassy. Didn't freeze me out because I wasn't at a high enough level to be worth freezing, but by and large we didn't have much influence and we didn't accomplish much. The French didn't want us to. Behind the scenes, the French really ran the Malagasy government in 1959. How they did it, that was a great lesson for me, a great thing to observe.

As a matter of fact, when I got into Senegal many years later, it had become a little more subtle, a little less pervasive but the French still managed to do the same thing. I wouldn't be surprised if they're still doing it today in some places like Gabon and Cameroon. Not everybody else could do it the same way. The British to an extent, but not as effectively as the French. Certainly not the Spanish as I observed when I got to Equatorial Guinea many years later. It was odd, even at the consular and administrative level, if you had really something important, you would run up against a Frenchman behind it all. If you didn't cultivate those French advisors you weren't going to get things done.

Q: I think the French have an expression, chasse gardée?

HARDY: Yes, and that was a *chasse gardée*.

Q: Their country.

HARDY: Those were the days of propeller flights. It was 36 hours, a considerable time, from Madagascar back to the States. Madagascar is unique. It has a flora and a fauna that's completely different from the rest of the world, completely different from Africa, because it had been separated from that continent so many millions of years ago. So that was a thing to observe for someone coming in from outside, was one of those extra-curricular things I joined the Foreign Service to do. Malagasy culture also was quite different, because it was about two-thirds Polynesian and one-third African.

Talking about the administrative cone, I came first as GSO and I was running around repairing people's refrigerators and things like that for a long time; seeing that they received their things out of the airport and through customs.

Then I became administrative officer when something happened to the administrative

officer. Then the much larger administrative section of the AID Mission was amalgamated with the Embassy's administrative section and I became CAMO (if memory serves, Consolidated Administrative Management Organization) Director for about four months until a more experienced officer out of Washington was assigned to the post. Well, by that time we had a fairly decent and large aid mission there, and here I was CAMO director in my second post. I had about 50 people working for me, and I'd have to say that was pretty good experience. I probably couldn't have handled it if I hadn't done administrative work in Toronto and other administrative work in Madagascar previously. I wound up in Madagascar two and a half, almost three years. That was good, and exemplified the good part of the generalist, as opposed to the cone system, approach.

So to Milan. There I had a lot of big visa wastage again, because I was in the consular section issuing visas mechanically under criteria which rarely required any exercise of judgment. But the welfare protection, also one of my responsibilities, was much more interesting in Milan There were a lot of substantive problems to deal with. A lot of public relations problems, a lot of problems where tourists would get in trouble, a lot of Americans there on Social Security and you had to verify that the Social Security money wasn't going down the drain or being stolen by a dishonest caretaker. Interesting. Something I learned there which perhaps contributed to later development is how some small matter can blow up and destroy the whole operation. Once in a while somebody makes errors. If it's picked up by a congressman, or if it becomes a controversy at all for the U.S. Government, some of these things can really blow up, and you need to know how to handle them.

I want to take this opportunity to immortalize Mel Sonne and George Kinter. I became commercial officer in part of my tour in Milan and I had to write a lot of commercial reports, some lengthy and some not, to be used by American businesses. And as I told you earlier, I couldn't, I didn't know how to write. Well, fortunately, Mel Sonne and George Kinter taught me how to write. So I want to give them credit here for the extra effort they committed to me far beyond what they might have been reasonably expected to contribute.

Q: They were your Foreign Service superiors?

HARDY: They were. George was an officer in the Economic and Commercial Section and Mel was Deputy Principal Officer. In those days, the Foreign Service did most of the commercial work and supplied five of the officers to the Section while Commerce supplied only two. In Milan, if I'm not mistaken, we had our first overseas trade center, which was new then and a big multi-million-dollar operation. Many of the reports we produced were to support the center, market surveys and things like that. That was very good. Some of the trade center was a numbers game because you'd always have to say, we promoted $300 million dollars in sales and you get into that game and maybe you really only promoted $50 million but it had to be $300 million or it didn't look good. But it was a valuable operation which I am convinced paid off in the long term providing benefits that were not directly measurable but real nonetheless. Some of that game is still

going on today, because my son is in the Department of Commerce in Washington, and he's working on it and I get that feedback from him. It's the same game. But it's a good game, and Milan was at the center of it at the time.

One of the problems always was that the big companies didn't need the help. The little ones didn't know how to capitalize on the help available, or didn't know where to come for help. So you were left there kind of in the middle, not having the little ones come to you so you couldn't help and big ones not coming to you because they thought they could do it themselves. Nevertheless, whether it was with the medium ones, or maybe because every once in a while the big companies would need some political support and really need the U.S. government, for example, to step in and say: "listen, you can't discriminate against us unfairly (or corruptly) and give this to some other company from another country." We had sufficient work to do. For me Milan was a challenging and interesting post. On the personal side, I learned all about the Italian Renaissance, and became quite interested in Roman and Tuscan archeology and art. Milan was a lot of fun.

From Milan to Somalia. I had mentioned earlier I was interested in Africa. After leaving Madagascar for Milan, I put in a bid to go back to Africa. My petition was answered and I was sent to Somalia as Economic Officer. I was thus entering my third functional area having put consular and administrative work behind me.

Some interesting human-interest kind of things about Somalia - I thought it was unique at the time, perhaps it isn't, but the Somalis have a way of greeting. The greeting is *"ma nabad ba,"* which means "Is it peace?" And the proper response is *"wa nabad"* which means "It is peace."

I always thought that came out of a tradition of tribal warfare. Somalis in their history have gone through a lot of internecine warfare. They still have that today; in fact, probably worse today than at any time. But perhaps because of that and in an attempt to overcome it or at least so you'd know whether to draw your sword or shake hands, you had this greeting. '*Ma nabad ba,'* is it peace, '*wa nabad,'* it is peace. I've always wondered if you said it is peace, if that forbade you from pulling a dagger out of your boot.

I liked the Somalis. They're very gregarious. They seemed to me very much like Americans because they're very individualistic.

During off-duty hours, we had built a golf course in Somalia. In fact, it was a 12-hole course and I personally supervised the building of many of the holes sitting on a bulldozer directing the operation. This whole thing, it later became the grounds of an American Embassy that was built out there. At the time, the Embassy was still in downtown Mogadishu

But, this golf course was a great place for the interchange of views, contacts, with the Somalis because a lot of Somalis love to play golf. That includes a fellow by the name of

Mohamed Ibrahim Egal, who, I believe, is currently the Chief of State of northern Somalia, an area of British colonial heritage, which has managed to avoid the turmoil…

Q: They're off on their own. They've avoided all the turmoil which everybody identifies with Somalia, but which is basically in the old Italian area.

HARDY: British and Italian legacies. Here we've got a nice little, tight, functioning place of British heritage in the north, and the south is completely down the drain with everybody fighting with each other.

Q: I don't know if you can blame it on the Europeans or not.

HARDY: I don't know. Colonization didn't occur until the 19th century. Anyway, interesting place, and the golf course was very interesting. The greens were made of coral, with sand poured over them and then oil to give the sand a little bit of consistency.

Q: The green was not green.

HARDY: That's right. One of the lessons I picked up in Somalia was from a man by the name of Abdirazak. He was like a Somali Fidel Castro. He could go on and talk for hours. And he would exhort the people to economic development, he would exhort the people to political unity, and on and on and on.

Q: Was he a Commie?

HARDY: No, actually some said he might have been a paid agent of the U.S. Some said that. Anyway, that kind of approach was as futile with Abdirazak as I think it's been with so many other leaders who've gone that route. Talking that way and trying to get it all done, and exhorting, doesn't really work and it didn't work there. But watching it being tried in Somalia was my first direct encounter with a universal experience.

All Somali politics is basically tribal politics. It's really a quagmire for a political reporter. It's kind of a structured system based on tribal genealogies and it operates on maybe ten different levels of a pyramid. If at the point of a pyramid, you put the category of all Somalis, and the bottom of the pyramid, you put the smallest units, genealogical tribal units, you'd probably have eight or ten different levels. At each level, from clan to subtribe to tribe, to related tribes each, of the units is in conflict with the others at the same level, and they only unite against outside people. That builds up all through the pyramid.

Even if you understand all that, if you try to explain in less than 50 pages, what's really going on, it's a very difficult task. I guess maybe the lesson there, in a place like that, is that all you can do is kind of stand aside, let what rises to the surface rise to the surface. This may also be true of Mexico (in a way), but you've got to concentrate on dealing with surfaces and not trying to invest anything much in any one person. Trying futilely to get

informed enough that whatever comes up, you know in advance.

Sometimes, if it may have been true that we paid off one person or another, or got too close to one person or another, it hurt us in the long run. Because things could go topsy-turvy in an instant, as they did in a coup, perhaps five years or so after Abdirazak. By which time I'd left the country.

I was sitting in INR (Intelligence and Research) in Washington. I had written a report saying that there would be no coup. About two weeks later, here was this coup. I had been deceived by Somali individualism, and by my extensive, yet still superficial, knowledge of Somalia into thinking that they were democratic. Again the important thing for the U.S. is not to rely on being able to predict an eventuality but to know how to deal with it when it occurs which, however, did not make me feel any less chagrined about my report.

Anyway, this a time when we were playing both sides of the street. Really, our big interest in the area was Ethiopia. We had a listening post in Asmara that was very valuable in those days when technology was a little different than it is now. Our interest in Ethiopia greatly outweighed our interest in Somalia, and here we were trying to balance things, trying to achieve stability in the Horn of Africa where boundaries had never been truly accepted as shown on the map. Of course the Somalis knew exactly where our interests lay. Balancing was a tough job.

Q: This was before Eritrea split off.

HARDY: That's right. Because that's where Asmara is, in Eritrea.

Mogadishu was a fine career development post for me . I wound up being political officer for a while in Somalia. I think I was there, I'm not sure, perhaps it was more than two years. I was the second of two economic/commercial officers. We had a trade mission and so forth, trying to gin that country up a little bit economically. But I wound up being political officer, and I could see the feedback between the economic and the political.

Q: You had no problem with the Ambassador?

HARDY: No problem with our Ambassador in Somalia - well, I don't know why I should have. I did have a problem with the Ambassador, actually, or put better: he with me. We were coming up to this crucial election in which Mohammed Ibrahim Egal was running for Prime Minister of the whole country, the north and the south at the time, before they became divided, essentially, by tribal fighting in the last five or ten years.

Mohammed and I were good golf buddies, so I thought I would take advantage and invite him over to dinner and invite my Ambassador as well. Here I was a junior officer. And I had some other fairly important people that I had known from the golf course. So I got them all there, and meanwhile the Ambassador decides that because the vote's going to be in the next two or three days in the assembly, he can't be seen as being too close to

Mohammed Ibrahim Egal, even though, especially because, that's his candidate. So he doesn't come to the dinner, and he calls me up about a half-hour before the dinner to say he isn't going to make it. He doesn't tell me why. Here I am sitting trying to entertain the future Prime Minister, who thought he was going to be sitting there chatting with the Ambassador. Even though we were friends, it was a little dicey. But, it was an amusing evening. I think we would probably have been a little bit better off just standing a little more aloof from things in Somalia, then as now. This incident occurred while I was still functioning as Commercial Officer. I should have known better but didn't partially because the Agency and the Ambassador were playing their cards close to their chest and not informing very many others in the Embassy about what was going on.

Q: Who was the biggest foreign influence there? Not the Italians…

HARDY: Well, the Italians still had a lot of influence because they were putting in more aid. Probably, if you had to say, we had as much influence as anybody, even then. Because, although Italy was probably putting in more money, we were a superpower.

Q: They loved Americans.

HARDY: And the Somalis, even though they knew we had a greater interest in Ethiopia, hoped that if they played ball with us, we'd at least keep the Ethiopians from going too far. There was a bitter border conflict between Ethiopia and Somalia. A large portion of Ethiopia is basically ethnic Somali, had been for centuries. Probably still is, unless somebody's purged it. So they were trying to use us as we were trying to use them. I don't think either of us was successful. Somalia and Ethiopia went to war at least a couple of times after that. Now Somalia is too weak to do anything. Ethiopia may be a little better off.

So, where to next? I went to the Nigerian desk, with the help of my Ambassador, who recommended that I go there. It was a very good posting for someone interested in African affairs. I was the second of two desk officers for Nigeria. I think there still are two, or maybe more, being one of the few African countries in which the U.S. has important interests. Even though I'm an Africanist, I have to say that Africa doesn't, in my opinion, rank high on the list of continents. But there are countries in Africa that do. South Africa, may be one of them, perhaps Zaire. (As I edit this interview in June of 2003, I also reflect how terrorism, events which have raised the former Central Asian Republics of the Soviet Union to prominence, and the spread of global diseases such as AIDS and SARS make clear that all countries are relevant to our interests.)

Q: Depends how you want to define it. But the oil in Nigeria, I imagine, is of primary interest.

HARDY: Absolutely. I'm not sure we knew the extent of the oil at that time, although I think some had been discovered. They were certainly a very big and powerful country. If you look at the African peace-keeping operations, they usually include the Nigerians.

Q: Approximately when were you on the Nigerian desk?

HARDY: It must have been 1967 to ’68. It was a great experience. Also, while working in INR about two years later, during the war in which Biafra had attempted to secede from Nigeria, I was detailed for a month or so to help the task force dealing with the problems raised for us by that conflict.

Nigeria is divided into three big groups: the Hausa and some other Muslim groups in the north; in the southwest, the Yoruba; and in the southeast, who were trying to secede, the Ibos of Biafra. There are 500 plus tribes, ethnic groups, in Nigeria, but these three are preeminent. Great peoples with long histories. Very hard to bring together in one state, and Nigeria has never been able to do that effectively.

At any rate, there was this secession going on, and the interesting thing about that from the professional point of view was the conflict between the White House and the Department of State on what should be the proper policy toward the secession attempt of Biafra. The Biafrans had been blockaded, and they had painted themselves as persecuted. There were people starving there, because of the blockade, and so forth and so on, so they in a way became the darlings of the human rights and charity groups in the U.S. And the Biafrans weren’t necessarily any more right, any more than the South of the United States was right in 1860. They had a lot to say from their side of the argument, and there was a lot to be said for keeping Nigeria one state.

But, because of public opinion and pressure from the charitable organizations and so forth, the White House tended to take the position of favoring secession or at least favoring things which would allow the re-supply of Biafra. Supplying a state with food, like supplying Israel with money today, frees up the recipient’s budget to purchase arms. It often happened too that you finance or facilitate a planeful of food and it sometimes carries a case full of machine guns as well, whether with our knowledge or without. The State Department perhaps without sticking its neck out too far, was more in favor, to simplify it a little bit, was more in favor of preserving the Nigerian state as it was. I think for rational reasons, rational in the sense that that probably made a little more sense for the United States, for Africa and for Nigeria itself over the long run.

Q: The Balkanization of Africa forestalled and the Africans were sort of cooperating, up to a point, as far as preserving existing borders were concerned.

HARDY: The other point that was clear was the Biafrans weren’t going to win. The Department fought sort of a rear-guard action for its policy and won. I was very proud of the Department for doing that. I enjoyed participating in that. I didn’t control the policy or even manage it, but I helped carry it out. In the middle of this experience, while working on the Nigerian desk for the second time, I was selected to go to the University of California at Los Angeles for a year for the African studies program. It was of greatest personal value for me, I think it was probably more of a personal value to me than a value

to the Foreign Service. But it was also a value to the Foreign Service. It gave me a chance to learn about African culture and African history from some very distinguished people.

Q: Do you remember who? Well-known?

HARDY: Yes, at the time. A sociologist, Cooper or something like that. I don't know whether it was Coleman who had written on Nigeria. There was a guy named M.G. Smith, who was an anthropologist. I'd read some of his books, I thought he was really distinguished. He'd written a book on government in 18th century northern Nigeria. For those of you who are interested in political anthropology or political thought, read it. Some good historians - a guy named Obichere, from West Africa, I forget which country. Obichere was into basic research, like getting out the shipping manifests for ships going to Nigeria centuries ago. They had a good historian on East Africa too who stressed some of the political development that occurred in East Africa before colonialism, and some of the resistance to colonialism that was successful for awhile, both of which we tend to overlook today (Albers?).

Q: One of the best African centers.

HARDY: It was one of the three or four best in the country. At the time, there also were Boston University, Indiana University, and UCLA.

Back to INR, that's the Bureau of Research and Intelligence at the Department of State. INR has always been kind of weak. You sit in INR writing these reports and intelligence briefs, grinding them out day after day. The desk officer who is responsible for a country is reading all the source material that you are. Sometimes he won't take the time to read what you have written. Most of the time, he figures he's got a better handle on it than you do. Not only does he have all the resources you have, but he's probably talked directly to a lot of the more of the people from the country he is responsible for and from our Embassy than you have. I have a feeling that most of the desks tend to ignore the output from INR.

Q: Where in INR were you, the African section?

HARDY: Yes, I jumped around a bit there, but at one time or another I had different parts of Africa, not all at once, but Sudan, Kenya, Tanzania, Uganda, Somalia and Ethiopia.

Q: Did you interact with the Central Intelligence Agency?

HARDY: Yes I did, good question. There were two or three places where INR did have some leverage. This was one of them as a counterweight to CIA. This was the place where INR was most effective. The daily INR briefings of the Secretary of State, for example, were read and listened to, because the Secretary regarded it as another source. And he was right, it was another source.

Q: The eight o'clock book.

HARDY: Yes. Then, INR served as a check on CIA. Because CIA would sometimes go off on some tangent.

Q: Airy-fairy.

HARDY: First of all, you'd have a meeting to discuss the report they were doing, and the report you were doing, and the report both of you were doing, say some national security estimate for some country or some area. They would have to give and take a little bit there. Second of all, if it came out and you didn't like it, you could counteract it, and of course, the CIA things are going off to the White House. Well, one way or another, you'd have a chance to get your side of the story off to the White House. And you could keep them in check. I would say at least two out of three times, we were right and they were wrong. I'm sure they would not have the same viewpoint on this. Other times, they were right and we were wrong. So, it was not a bad thing. But, to my way of thinking, it almost in itself justified the existence of INR.

Q: Of course, the national security office in the White House is supposed to bring these two together, the CIA and the State Department. If they're doing their job, both of those things would be available to the president.

HARDY: Well, and another thing in all this, you had all these highly classified intelligence sources to which only few people had access. Desk officers often didn't. If you got into the geographic Bureaus which really run the State Department, only the Assistant Secretary or maybe the Deputy Assistant Secretary would have access to all this classified, highly classified material, different sources - intercepts and all this kind of stuff. Some of the others, at the office director level, in theory had access to it but in practice didn't have time. But in INR the analysts had access and time.

Q: So you in effect had almost everything, as far as you were concerned.

HARDY: Yes, you were a check in that area. So it was important. It was you and the CIA, and maybe the National Security Agency. I will say, another good thing about INR when I was there. It's probably still true today. INR felt always that it was hard to get their stuff read, If it wasn't brief, nobody was going to read it. So all of their reports were one or two pages. I got a writing lesson in brevity that I've never forgotten.

Q: George W. Bush reads executive summaries, I'm told.

HARDY: While I was in INR, and then when I went to the Office of East Africa in the Bureau of African Affairs, I was co-chairman of the American Foreign Service Association Grievance Committee. This was the time of what I might call the first rejuvenation of AFSA. AFSA decided that it was going to supplement the traditional professional organization approach with some of the elements of trade unionism. It began

looking at some of the personal needs of its members which the Department as an employer was overlooking or even opposing. Acting like a labor union was anathema to some, so we always tried to either avoid or soft-pedal that terminology. Anyway, it was necessary. It also involved lobbying more with the Congress, which was a necessary thing and which more often than not was lobbying the same way the Department of State itself was lobbying. In fact AFSA was sometimes more effective with the Congress than "H," the congressional relations section.

I believe this was the first time AFSA really got into this and it is still into it today, happily even more so.

With respect to grievances, I found that the majority of the grievants were what you might call marginal employees. Yet, I think that's the nature of the problem. A high-flying officer, unless he's really been hit over the head with a club, will take this sort of stuff in his stride, if he's been wronged he often has contacts who will help him get around it somehow. But some of the more marginal people, when they're treated unfairly, they don't have the resources to cope with it. When they are being treated unfairly, a grievance committee can help them out. And I will say, even though many, certainly not all, grievants were perhaps below average performers, almost invariably their grievance was real. Then too, it was not as if the average or above average officer never made use of the Committee.

There were four types of cases that I particularly remember which had a subsequent impact in changing the State Department's treatment of its employees. One was sex discrimination. It was really out there. It was blatant, well, maybe not blatant, but it was very real and affected many women Foreign Service officers with respect to assignments perhaps more than anything else. The female officer would have a tougher time getting a good assignment. It would be thought you couldn't send a female Foreign Service officer to the Middle East. Heavens, there are Muslims there! You couldn't send them to many underdeveloped posts. Heavens, the hardships there. Weird things like that. That's gone by the boards, to some extent.

Age discrimination was another thing. I saw some very real age discrimination, and some cases the Department lost there. Some cases of unsubstantiated efficiency reports, well, that's more normal, but it's good to have a check against that. I mean, unsubstantiated things said in an efficiency report by a rating officer, often suggesting a personal bias on the part of the rating officer. That often got picked up in the grievance process, and subsequently made for some tougher guidelines as to how you do these reports and what you could say.

Another one that surprisingly you wouldn't think would crop up, but cropped up several times was irrelevant comments about an employee's spouse. Why didn't the spouse do this, and why didn't the spouse do that, and why wasn't representation better? Which is really, I think, uncalled for. I mean, if you want a spouse to work for the Foreign Service, hire him/her.

Q: In the efficiency reports, doesn't it specify that you don't speak about the spouse?

HARDY: It does now, but it didn't then. The grievances had an effect.

Q: Yes, had some effect. Was there a grievance committee system within the Department? You're talking about AFSA.

HARDY: AFSA negotiated it at that time. Then the Department of State set up its own office that was to receive these and act upon them. I forget just how it worked, but a fellow by the name of John Warner, who was a good officer, a labor officer actually, got that job to start.

It spruced up the Department's side of the thing. If you had a grievance in the past, you were supposed to be able to file it with the Department. It kind of got lost, and it wasn't treated seriously, or it was shoved under the table. Well, when the Department found our grievance committee pushing them on the one side, plus the negotiated agreement and a new executive order from the president that covered the Foreign Service as well as the Civil Service, all these things coming out, then they were constrained to establish their own grievance structure to see that the grievances were properly handled on its side. Because of course they wouldn't go to some kind of mediation or arbitration or whatever until the internal appeals had been processed.

Well, that was very necessary and that's something that AFSA shouldn't have had to have done. If the Department had a good functioning management that was concerned about its employees, this never would have been necessary to wrestle them to the mat on that. It's one of the things that I found deficient in the Foreign Service at the time and I suspect in a different way, perhaps more subtly, perhaps in a less visible way, not necessarily premeditated, the Department is still that way today. Needs AFSA to keep them in check.

Q: Well, as you say, it's like a trade union, keeping an employer on his toes.

HARDY: You know, the old-school Foreign Service officer, I mean, to think that he would be represented by a labor union, heavens to Betsy. You mean a graduate of what, Harvard or Yale or Princeton or even Stanford, represented by a labor union, my goodness. But that's the old days. We're getting away from that.

Q: I think you have to, over the years.

HARDY: So, here we go. Back to the desk in the Office of East African Affairs. First I became a desk officer for Kenya exclusively. There were personnel shortages that you had whenever you had reassignments. Because they never staffed turnovers properly, there was always a couple months' lag. Another deficiency of the personnel system or perhaps more correctly lack of sufficient Congressional funding. I wound up also taking over the Uganda and Tanzania desks.

I got divorced and remarried at the time, which set my career back a bit.

I always felt I should have joined Toastmasters then, and taken some public speaking courses in the Department. Perhaps I would have profited from that and improved my deficient my public speaking skills. I'm really good in small groups here, I'm sitting here with Lewd Hoffacker opposite. There are only three people in this room, there's Lou this little machine, what is his first name? and me. So I do better here. Actually I'm getting better before groups since my current volunteer work with AARP has given me the practice I never really acquired in the Foreign Service.

Q: I think that's a general Foreign Service deficiency.

HARDY: I'm getting better every year now that I have more practice.

Q: I have it.

HARDY: Anyway, I think the desk officer is the heart of the Department's operations. What I liked about it so much is, a desk officer, whether it's Kenya, Nigeria or the Soviet Union, maybe to less an extent there, and I mean, that is a person who knows more about that country, deals with it more thoroughly and more often. Because of that fact, although he may not show up as the person with the most power in the hierarchy that deals with the country, he actually does have quite a bit of responsibility and quite a role in determining policy. So, it's a great job.

I know many people, like myself actually, who've come on as a junior officer or maybe a mid-career officer, and ten years later came back to the same position or almost the same position as a desk officer, maybe instead of being desk officer for Kenya, you come back as desk officer for Nigeria, or instead of desk officer for Belgium, you come back as desk officer for France. I didn't feel bad about that happening.

Q: No, that's where the substance of the Department is.

HARDY: That's right. Most officers agree with that. Dave Newsom was Assistant Secretary of State at the time, and a big lesson I got from him was how to play things close to your vest. I can't recall all the politics of it, but there was a lot of controversy, particularly about our Southern African policy, the conservative versus the liberal. "We have to preserve our relations with this important state, even if it is a white African state. It's important to the economy." Of course the British took that view. On the other hand, you have to condemn these people because of apartheid and everything else. Here he is and he has to walk the line on that. So how did he do that? He just became all things to all people. He was so adept at that.

Q: He was one of my role models. He's one of the best.

HARDY: Lou is saying the same thing. He was a role model for me too. He would say a few things, but by and large he would, within the bounds of truth, tailor to different audiences, never go too far in one direction or another. He had some beautiful ambiguities, some very important sentences that could be interpreted both ways. When I say all things to all people, in this instance I hope it's coming across I mean it as a compliment. There are times when that is the best way to go. It preserves autonomy, independence, sometimes it preserves logic and correctness. It facilitates following the proper foreign policy. The big parallel to this on the world scene was Charles de Gaulle's Algerian policy. Dave Newsom, he was certainly like that on South Africa and on some other controversial African issues.

Q: I knew him for 30 years or more, I still know him. Fortunately, the system has permitted him to have very good assignments. He was ambassador to how many countries? Libya, Indonesia, all over, and then he ended up being Undersecretary for Political Affairs, the senior career position in the department.

HARDY: He was just honored the other day for something. I forget what it was.

Q: It just shows that if you're a good guy at the lower level, they'll take care of you.

HARDY: Good man. In fact, I think he gave me a helping hand once. Next I went to Dakar as political officer. Newsom was Ambassador to Indonesia at the time. I got into a small ruckus with the Embassy. There was a Third World trade conference in Dakar. I had always felt, I still feel, that despite the preponderance of economic power in Europe - at the time it was just Europe and the United States economically speaking but now it's Europe, the United States, Japan and certain portions of Southeast Asia - that this world is not going to settle down until all countries are viable economically and politically.

It's not going to really, it's not going to be a thing we can be proud of as citizens of the world, citizens of our own country, until the Third World is brought into it. Until these less-developed countries are brought into it. Very hard to do, and mostly they have to do it by themselves. Still the United States needs to boost them every now and then. But a lot of people think they can be ignored, and I believe that's a gross mistake. It can result in travesties like in Uganda, or Somalia, Afghanistan or even Bosnia, for that matter. And Albania. So you can't ignore it.

This trade conference for me was a vehicle to speak to that principle with respect to what trade concessions should be made. That was a big issue at the time for countries of the Third World. Before we'd made a lot of the concessions that we'd made since, which probably still haven't been enough because a lot of them are on paper and not in reality. I can't remember if I used the dissent channel at that time. I either used it or threatened to use it. So I got out this message that I had drafted, all based on the trade conference, that in effect was this lowly political officer in Senegal telling the United States what it should do, and I sent it to the Department and every American Embassy that had a representative at this conference, that had a country represented at this conference, which was about 50

or 60 embassies throughout the world. All about what I thought should be trade policy.

The basic thing was, let's not ignore the Third World, let's take them seriously, let's try to give them some concessions. And that was one of the little opportunities that I had that just happened to pop up in Dakar, where my real role was Political Officer and reporting on the political scene. Dave Newsom picked up on the message and endorsed it with one of his own. Hard to tell if, in the final analysis, anything was changed but hopefully it contributed to someone or some policy being influenced in the right direction.

Q: That didn't get you in trouble in Washington, did it? You said dissent. Was it dissent from the Ambassador?

HARDY: Yes. The Ambassador and the Deputy Chief of Mission (DCM) didn't want to send the message out.

Q: I see.

HARDY: I can't remember. I think I threatened to use the dissent channel, or threatened to do something. I said if they wanted to change it, they'd have to sign as drafters themselves. I wasn't going to draft it. It finally went out.

The same sort of thing came up in Budapest, and I think dissent channels are extremely valuable. Actually, it was only twice in my career that I ever could not have reported what I wanted to report without a little assistance from some quarter. There are many cases when I have been able to send out things that my DCM or my ambassador didn't agree with, but they went along with. Sometimes they would add their own comments, sometimes they wouldn't.

In my experience, the Foreign Service has always been good about giving their officers freedom to report. I always found it just as easy to work with my superiors as my peers. I always thought we had great people working in the Foreign Service. If there's a problem in the Foreign Service, the State Department, it's in the management. I think there is, and I might get into it some more a little later. It's probably a problem more of neglect than anything else. But it's a very serious problem. Anyway, back to Dakar. One of the things I learned... There was a fellow named Abdou Diouf. He was about 6 foot 8.

Q: Oh, yes. He was the president.

HARDY: Well, at the time the president was Leopold Senghor, a grand old man of Africa and a distinguished poet. Diouf was his second in command, and somebody that everybody said would never succeed to power. He seemed obsequious, a consummate yes man, and not a contender for succession Well, he became president and a good one after that. I don't know how long he lasted or if he's still there but he was effective for a good period of time.

Q: Went out with the election.

HARDY: Did he really?

Q: He was voted out.

HARDY: Well, that's good that he could accept being ousted after so many years. Many leaders in Africa would either not permit it or provoke a coup d'etat. I'm going to say it happens more often than you'd expect that an apparently weak second in command, who in fact is not weak but lying low, succeeds to power. Anwar Sadat was an example, under Nasser. They said the same thing about Sadat, that he was a nonentity. Well, he was more a politician and statesman than Nasser ever was. Another one is Daniel Arap Moi, who succeeded Jomo Kenyatta as president of Kenya. Another one was vice president in Hungary under Janos Kadar, I can't remember his name unless it was Gyorgy Lazar.

But, so I say, sleeping-dog vice presidents may be found all over the world. They can be potential power sources. Used to be able to say the same thing about the United States, but that's not so true anymore. But it's a different political system. Often vice presidents are written off with justification in the Third World, as in our own, but sometimes they can really come on.

Dakar... French influence, just like Madagascar. Of course, where do they concentrate their interest, their influence? Why, in the central bank, in the Ministry of Finance, in the Ministry of Interior, the military and business. Still a useful lesson today, thirty years later.

Having studied Hungarian for a year I next went to Budapest, Hungary where I was Political Officer, the third-ranking fellow in the embassy, but it was a small embassy. I served as Charge a couple times and acting Deputy Chief of Mission (DCM), one or the other, for about half of my tour. As political officer I pushed the idea that we should use human rights in the various bodies that had been set up in multilateral institutions like the CSCE (Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe?). It was a way of bringing the Soviet Union and all its satellites together with all the western European nations to try to devise ways to reduce tension in Europe, lessen the chance of war, and even find ways of cooperation.

Q: For you in Hungary, that was during the Communist period.

HARDY: Yes, it was. This was in the days when liberalization in Eastern Europe had barely begun. During Hungarian language training in Washington, which lasted a year, one day a week you had speakers on Europe, communism and so forth. So I was pretty well schooled in relations with Communist countries, particularly eastern Europe. That was very helpful for an African specialist like me and that's why I mention it.

Anyway, I thought that we needed to put human rights up front as our ideology in a sense,

and use this within Hungary and within the CSCE to further our foreign policy. Some don't like to say that our foreign policy is based on promoting democracy, or human rights, because that sounds too idealistic and idealism can't be made a real thing in the world. But I never believed that. So I thought that in this context, the ideology of human rights rather than, say, the ideology of democracy itself, or the ideology of capitalism, was the thing to push because it was something you could do, something that many of the Communists themselves, especially those in Hungary, Poland and later Czechoslovakia, had concerns about.

The pioneer in all this, some would contend was Poland, but I believe that Hungary was the first country to really begin a process of liberalization. Not only in the area of human rights, but actually in the area of economics and adjusting towards capitalism. So it was good to be there at that time. The Hungarians greatly resented the Soviet Union. They had often cited the Soviet occupation in terms of the Turkish occupation of Hungary, which lasted much longer and had just about as much permanent effect. It was very interesting.

The Hungarians... You could have a Hungarian sitting opposite you that would spout ideology up and down, support every Soviet position that was out there no matter how blatantly partisan it was or blatantly leftist, and yet he had his way without ever saying it in English or Hungarian, of letting you know that he didn't believe a word of what he was saying. And then, if you knew him well enough and you wanted to pull his leg a little bit. You'd say: "I don't believe a word of what you're saying." Of course this would set him off and he'd go on in even stronger terms, arguing the Soviet position, which of course most of them didn't believe. There were a few that did. So that was interesting. That taught me something about people and the position of a country like Hungary.

Another thing I also learned there in talking to them, one can take any position one wants on an issue and find arguments to support it. No matter how difficult, or untenable, or illogical a position it was, as it often was in dealing with the Communists, they could find words to support it. This was a time when we returned the crown of Saint Stephen to the Hungarians, which is their national symbol, probably more important to them than, say, the Liberty Bell is to us. We returned it to them as part of the earliest stage of recognition of what they were doing in loosening their totalitarian grip on their own people and distancing themselves from the Soviet Union.

The other thing we gave them was most favored nation treatment. In doing this, we asked as a quid pro quo that they move a little bit more towards us and support us a little bit more in some of the things we were trying to achieve in eastern Europe and among the CSCE group of countries. I'll never forget, one time I went to this rather meaningless debate in the Hungarian parliament. I was Charge at the time. The American desk officer in the Hungarian Office of American Affairs said you've got to go and hear this debate. After a Hungarian Government spokesman had been addressing the Deputies for about an hour, I can't remember what the words were but there was an obscure reference made to a concession that we wanted from them, which I didn't even catch. So then we came back and two days later I got a call from the foreign ministry, "Did you hear what so-and-so

said? This is what America has waited for ten years." So I had to report this as a signal, which it really turned out that it was.

Q: They were responding.

HARDY: They were sending us a signal, but they didn't want too many people to catch the signal. I don't know if the Soviets either didn't catch the signal or they thought it was subtle enough that they could ignore it, but we went on to radically improve our relations with Hungary by returning the crown of Saint Stephen and giving them most favored nation treatment.

Of course it was the Hungarians who eventually opened the back door to the people pouring out of eastern Germany, which perhaps was one of principal events leading to the sudden collapse of the East German regime in 1989. I always had a lot of respect for the Hungarians. They managed their relationship with the Soviets well. Their then President Janos Kadar led, in a way, a tragic life having begun his Presidency as a Soviet puppet and ending it as a cautious liberalizer. I don't know how many people appreciated him.

He came in to head the regime after the collapse of the Hungarian revolt in 1956, a revolt which we were, perhaps quite reasonably, afraid to support. The Soviets brought back this very totalitarian, repressive regime to Hungary after the betrayal of Imre Nagy and other figures who led the revolt. Kadar led it. Looked like a despicable character, but he really was the one who brought around this liberalization not only in terms of human rights, but also in terms of a less totalitarian economic system, creating of an opening for participation in the international trade system and, at home, for free enterprise. But it took the full 30-year process that he began and carried out for 20 years. The process accelerated in the later years, after Kadar had died, but would have been a lot more difficult if he hadn't brought things along. The man wasn't as bad as everybody expected in 1956.

A story. I shook Kadar's hand at the airport - I read his biography, he actually had working class in his background. I remember his hand was a thick, callused hand like the hand of a working man. In contrast to that were most Communist officials and most trade officials. I gave a representation dinner at my house one night and invited a group of trade union officials. I pointed out to them that I had been in a trade union. I had worked in a brewery and was in one. Mostly summer jobs, but I had also worked for a factory that manufactured television tubes and was a member of the International Electrical Workers.

So I started to ask the trade union leaders that I'd invited to my house about their trade union experiences, and there were a couple of members of the Hungarian press there as guests as well. Well, one or two of the leaders, and the Hungarian press, just burst out laughing, because of course these union leaders had never seen the inside of a trade union until they were appointed to lead it. They sit on top of it and run them, but don't work in them.

I think that's it for Hungary. Personnel. I went from Budapest back to the Bureau of Personnel, where I was in charge of recruiting and assigning people to Eastern Europe, the Soviet Union and about half of Western Europe. Backing up for the other half. Personnel is a funny place. For some, it's a good career stepping stone. You learn and you get contacts, and you know enough of what's breaking that you can come out of it with a good job of your own. It's an essential function and somebody has to do it. But it doesn't generally get the best people.

The best people go to the Bureaus. They don't go to Personnel. Why? Well, on the one hand you have the personnel bureaucracy which on paper assigns people on the basis of merit. On the other hand, you've got the Bureaus who are going to be receiving the people by and large (in Washington or for posts abroad); who say they know them; who have their own old-boy network or if it's not an old-boy network, it's an old-boy-and-their-protégé network; and they say they know the people better; they have a better sense; and they know the posts where they're going to go better, and they want to control the operation.

In the final analysis, they hold the real power on the thing, and that's why Personnel doesn't get the best people. But sometimes Personnel wins. Sometimes these things wind up in a tug of war and the Bureau only wins it three out of four times and that's a good thing. Still, I won't knock the old-boy network as a totally bad thing. I won't say that. It's not that simple.

By this time I'd learned about networking, too, by the way. So I think you have to have that tension. I'm merely flagging it, I'm not taking a position on either side. I will say that Personnel should have some power and they shouldn't be able to be overruled all the time. Maybe a 50-50 split wouldn't be so bad, but I would never want to see the Bureaus cut out of it either.

With respect to personnel functions, I've only participated in it from Personnel's side. When you're on a desk, you don't really do that so much. There's an Office Director, or Assistant Secretary, and an Executive Director within the bureau - that's where you handle personnel. I didn't do that. Stalin, he was in exclusive charge of the personnel operation of the Communist Party before he became Secretary General, and you know with what result. Better two sources of personnel power and some checks and balances.

So we'll go to the Namibia desk. Having seen what I've just described, I thought that for the sake of my career, I'd do better try to get out of Personnel. I wanted to get on the South African desk. I had a lot of arguments - I had all this university education in African studies and experience in Africa. So I wanted the South African desk, which was a plum in the African bureau. At the time, I'd have to say that I was the best candidate, but there was this younger fellow who had been a staff assistant to the Assistant Secretary. Well, you can imagine who the Bureau's candidate was. And this was one that Personnel lost, I'm sad to inform you that personnel lost this struggle and I did not get the South African desk. If you are crying now, dry your tears. As a compromise, I was given a

combination of the Namibia and Mozambique desks.

Q: They're not even adjacent.

HARDY: No, they aren't. They're adjacent to South Africa.

Q: Right.

HARDY: Well, before we go to Namibia, let's flash back to Hungary for an interesting item I forgot to mention. While I was in Budapest, I was control officer for a visit by Billy Graham, which was his first visit to Eastern Europe. In the Hungarian People's Republic, there was a Bureau of Religious Affairs. The Director of that - the prerequisite of the position, of course, was that, he didn't believe in God. He was about as much of a churchman as the labor leaders were workers. Anyway, Billy Graham came through. We had two eminent Catholic cardinals visit too subsequently, I forget their names now (one of them was Bernardin, or something like that?) from Philadelphia, and the other was from Chicago. This was part of that kind of openings that occurred as Hungary began to liberalize its regime. As it turned out, for Billy Graham this was a warm up for the Soviet Union.

We also had Martin Luther King, Sr. come through, and Coretta King, his wife. They visited some of the Protestant churches in Hungary. I, as political officer, was in charge of all those visits. So when Billy Graham was ready to go back after a week's visit, this fellow that was in charge of the religious office for the Hungarians gave him this message to deliver to the President of the United States. Because, indeed, Graham was going to see the President. It was a highly politically-charged message. It took me two hours, sitting in the back of a Hungarian/Communist limousine, talking to this guy in my very broken, very limited Hungarian, trying to convince him that if he insisted that Graham deliver the message, it was going to destroy the whole operation. I said, you're getting enough good publicity out of the very fact that you're having a visit. Why abuse it by trying to go too far and turn a religious visit into a flagrant political tool. They finally bought that.

Q: Good for you.

HARDY: Talking about religion reminds me of another matter. I thought I had done some good reporting on the Hungarian Catholic church and the Hungarian Protestant church and how they'd managed to survive; whether they had a political role; the character of their leaders; who compromised themselves to some degree, who had not as their clergy tried to steer between meeting the needs of their congregations and those of the Hungarian government.

So I did all this good work. I later found out that about two-thirds of what I did, all except the part that was the update part for the few years that I was Hungary, had been done by my predecessor. But there was no reference to it in the files at the Embassy. I didn't know about it. I think what is needed is immediate access to all prior reporting filed on

computers for officers overseas and in Washington.

I came to the same conclusion in Mexico. The first inklings of the computer age within the Department of State came up when I was posted there about seven years later. You'd go out to an important Mexican province, perhaps where there's some turbulence. You're trying to find out what's happening. Half of it would have been reported by your predecessor years earlier but you could never find the reporting. So I'm all for updating computer systems. It would cut the reporting requirements in half. You would go out and report on the changes, and could spend more time seeking new insights. While I was following events in the Foreign Service, the Department was always way behind on this aspect of technological adaptation. I suspect they still are.

Q: I think it's good when you philosophize.

HARDY: Well then, lets talk about the endless negotiations for Namibian independence. We've got endless negotiations in Ireland. Northern Ireland, Ireland and the U.K. - and that looks like it's going pretty well now. That's the kind of thing Namibia was. The South Africans had it at the time and it didn't look like they were ever going to let go. It didn't look like the white South African regime would collapse as soon as it did. It's like Kashmir, it's like the Middle East, the Arab-Israeli thing, that's how Namibia was and it had gone on for 20 years.

Everybody, like me, who came on the Namibia desk, always thought they were going to be the next Ambassador to Namibia. Because obviously the thing had been going on so long, and there were really no serious obstacles to an agreement, and you were going to get an agreement in the next two years Which the clods preceding you had never been able to get. Having done so, you would then go out as Ambassador. Well, I guess I was about the third "pre-ambassador" to Namibia. I never got confirmed by the Senate, as it turned out. There were a couple "pre-ambassadors" after me. I think about five or six years later, there was a desk officer who, finally, when Namibia became independent, did go out and be Ambassador. Whether he knew that he was the sixth in a long line of "pre-ambassador" designates, I don't know. But, there's a moral in this.

You'd get the South Africans making an objection. You'd meet the objection, and they'd make another objection. Pretty soon it got so that you had all the various objections covered, whether they were economic, or political, or military. Once you had the whole field covered that way, then the objections would have some objections. "Yeah, we agreed to that, but as we look at the details, we see this, and that, and the other thing."

What it all amounts to, is even when there is no apparent disagreement, you can negotiate forever and ever, and the party that doesn't want to come to a final agreement can always find a new thing to hang an objection on. You can do it at any moment, on any subject, in any way. So you never have anything in the bank until it's in the bank, or the fat lady has sung, or whatever.

Q: The Cubans made a big difference in that, didn't they? Or did they?

HARDY: Well, they did, because they provided occasion for a whole set of objections. 'We can't agree to an independent Namibia until the Cubans leave Angola." Then, well, we've got an agreement on the Cubans leaving Angola and that takes care of that issue, except how are you going to verify that they've actually left, and so forth.

Q: As I remember, our negotiator, when an agreement was signed, I wrote him a letter. I was so pleased to see it. Don't remember his name, Assistant Secretary.

HARDY: Oh, yes, Chet Crocker.

Q: He was a great musician, wasn't he?

HARDY: I don't know whether he went to school with Dave Newsom or not, but at least on that particular issue, he played it just straight down the middle to keep everybody content, whether it was South Africans, Angolans, Republicans, Democrats.

Q: He did a wonderful job.

HARDY: He did a good job on that, and he got the agreement. So you can go on forever and ever. But back to a moral or lessons to be drawn. The ease of limitless obstruction is one lesson, but the second lesson is, you can get an agreement when the time is right. When the parties themselves decide that for them the time is right. If that's the case, depending on the issue, in a couple years you can get an agreement. I think that's what we're finding now that people are getting tired of fighting and killing in Northern Ireland. Maybe someday they'll get tired of it in Bosnia and Kashmir, Israel and Palestine.

The South Africans, I think, decided they were putting more resources in and losing more credit than they could afford. Perhaps they saw the writing on the wall in South Africa itself, because it wasn't too long after Namibia became independent that we had the events leading to black rule in South Africa. So the time came right. So the time has to be right, and that was a great lesson. But it also is true that as you go through this, when the time is right, you want to be ready, because if you're not, and you haven't done perhaps five or ten years of homework, you're not going to get an agreement.

So even though there was no agreement until four or five years after I left, I believe I made my yeoman's contribution along the way. I believe the same is true for my predecessors and my successors on the Namibia desk.

Okay, Malabo. President Reagan called me on the telephone one day, and asked me if I wanted to be Ambassador to Equatorial Guinea. I said to him, "Thank you Mr. President, I greatly appreciate it that you would take the trouble to call me..."

Q: You're pulling our leg.

HARDY: I'm not pulling your leg. This is the absolute, God's honest truth. "I greatly appreciate it that you would take the trouble to call me personally" is what I said.

Q: Good for you.

HARDY: And then we chatted a little bit. But I really felt that, and I was glad he did.

Q: He knew where it was?

HARDY: I assume he had his briefing notes. He knew where it was and he also knew that it was a tough post. It wasn't the biggest post in the world which is why I especially appreciated his taking the time to call. But I always regretted I didn't get my photo opportunity. Almost had that but it got scrubbed at the last minute.

Q: I was in Malabo when it was called Saint Isabel. But I didn't get a call from…

HARDY: Did you get photographed?

Q: No. I never met the President.

HARDY: Well, they almost got me a photograph. They were going to have me wait out in the garden with my children as he came down the garden path to go somewhere. We were going to jump him but it all fell through. Anyway, I still treasure that phone call, and I do have a signed autograph. I like that. My wife, Suzanne, got one from Nancy Reagan that says on the bottom, "Have a beer, Lisa." That's what it looks like to me. Some people say it's "congratulations," but it really looks like "have a beer" to me. That was fun.

Q: Off to Malabo.

HARDY: This needs more of an explanation. I know most of you are wondering why the President would call me, and the answer was that I was going to Malabo, wonderful little country out there where there had been a couple of coups and many killings and so forth. And the reason why President Reagan was sending me to Malabo was because I had voted Democrat in the previous election.

Q: Now you're kidding.

HARDY: This is what I told everybody. That's not true. But anyway, not many people know about Equatorial Guinea, which is in the elbow where Africa bends as it heads eastward and then heads southward. It's a little enclave on land and a little part out in the sea. Under the Spanish as a colony, it had been very prosperous. It had an interesting history. Cocoa was one crop, coffee was another.

But it all went down the drain when we had a Patrice Lumumba-type figure who had

taken charge there and became paranoid, destroyed the country's fishing fleet because he didn't want anyone able to leave the island on a boat. Had all the country's currency in the country's banks rounded up and put in his garage. Persecuted the church. (The Catholic church was rather strong there.) Killed a lot of people. Very repressive regime, kind of like Idi Amin in Uganda. And eventually, anybody who would rise up in some way, or become prominent in some way, or look like he had any stature at all, President Macias would either have him killed or exiled, or would attempt to kill him and the guy would flee.

Finally, in about 1980, I guess - I went in '81, so it must have been about a year earlier - he threatened the wrong guy, who then turned the tables and organized a coup. Then the Spanish were brought back. This guy had been educated in Spain in a military academy there. He seemed like a fairly progressive, nice guy. Name of Teodoro Obiang Nguema. Same tribe, and related to Macias.

The Spanish wanted help, so they wanted us there. We decided we would open an embassy there, where we had never had one before although we had had an office there. So we were there at the Spanish request and also because the Soviets and the Chinese and the North Koreans had all been very busy there. There was a rule that no matter how Godforsaken a place was, if the Soviets or North Koreans were there, we had to counter that. I suppose it would have been true for the Kerguelen Islands or anywhere, but it was certainly true. I never subscribed to that general principle. There wasn't much the Soviets could do to us by virtue of being in Equatorial Guinea, for example.

However, it was logical to be there for a time at least because the Spanish asked us and needed us, and they were for humanitarian reasons as well as for reasons of self interest taking on a burden there. Furthermore, it was better to have stability in the region.

So, what did I do when I arrived in Malabo? We had, I don't know, $10 million dollars available for aid, something like that. Enough to do what we needed to do. Couldn't get anything going. If you had trucks to bring in for an economic project, such as getting the coffee crops to market, why then the district commissioner (political guy at the local level) would confiscate the truck because of course he didn't have a truck and he wasn't going to go around on a bicycle or hitchhiking while the economic ministry had a truck. Then maintenance became an impossibility and we tried to get maintenance people in but with limited success as the trucks were not located centrally. So the truck thing went down the drain. Oh, after a few years we got a little something out of the project but not our money's worth.

Then we had an extension project for chickens. Trying to raise chickens in the capital so then the chickens could be taken out and distributed throughout the country and people could raise chickens in their own little farms and haciendas and so forth and so on. Well, the problem with that was that there were no eggs in the capital and the President and his Ministers felt that as president and ministers, they ought to have a boiled egg at a banquet or whatever, and every once in a while, a roast chicken. So, we didn't succeed with that

project. (This could be a metaphor for a lot of things in a lot of places.)

Very, very difficult to get anything done. I'm not sure that we accomplished much in aid while I was there. We did get the Peace Corps in there and I think they had more of a chance. I was instrumental in getting them there, but I left before they arrived and I never found out how that worked out. There was a lot of tribalism there, too. They was only one minister, a Bubi who was not from the ruling tribe.

Q: The Bubi lived on Bioko didn't they?

HARDY: The Bubi tribe, had less power in the country than I did. The island of Bioko, as Lew mentioned here, the island was a Bubi stronghold. The Minister of Agriculture was a Bubi and he knew a little bit about agriculture, but he couldn't help me with the chickens although he wanted to. I was going in to him, telling him, look, we've got to use these chickens to develop the country, not for ministers in the capital. That was a tough sell to the dominant tribe, the Fang, who came from mainland Equatorial Guinea and were the President's tribe, also the tribe who dominated the Government, the military and the police.

The Catholic church had a very good bishop there who'd been educated abroad. Used to watch the Redskins games with me on videotape... of all things.

Q: Was he Spanish?

HARDY: No, he was Equatorial Guinean. Very educated and a confident guy. The Pope came to visit us in Equatorial Guinea. Which goes to show you, I guess there really aren't that many Catholics elsewhere in Africa. You'd think with the French... but this was a real Catholic place and the Pope did come to visit. It was one of the few places he visited in Africa. The church services were all very impressive normally and even more so for the Pope's visit, always with a lot of music and a lot of faith.

Now, we had CIA (Central Intelligence Agency) there. The problem was the Guineans tried to play the CIA off against me and me off against the CIA. They had some legitimate security concerns and that was one of the things the CIA addressed. They're a natural liaison to host country police or national security officials. By the way, President Obiang had a Moroccan bodyguard, because the Spanish had Moroccan ties and they brought people down from Morocco to provide stability because they didn't know whether with the support of the Soviets somebody would launch a coup to throw him out.

I also had problems with Washington, because just like them, perhaps in a different way, but just like the Equatorial Guinean government, Washington saw the Embassy and the CIA station, home-based in another country, as two different entities. I remember one time I supported a CIA project submitted in CIA channels, and State wouldn't believe I was supporting it. They thought that I was either being conned by the CIA guy or the CIA guy was misrepresenting me in his message.

Anyway, it was an interesting experience. You know, I'm talking about the CIA here but you could be talking about the Treasury Department in Mexico. That's a very good example. You might have the same kind of institutional problems, or you might be talking about the DEA (Drug Enforcement Agency) in a place like Mexico or in other big drug-supplying countries throughout the world. When significant things are at stake, it's very important and very difficult to work these relationships out Between State and the Ambassador who are supposed to be in charge of relations and any powerful other U.S. Government agency with a big stake in the host country in question. Even when you're in agreement, it can be difficult because you've got four parties. You've got the two parties in the field and you have the two parties in Washington. You don't need agreement between two people. You need agreement between four. I guess that's the lesson out of what I'm saying. If you've got two in the field and two in Washington, you need all four. Even three is not enough, if you really want to make something work. Of course, if you have three, I suppose, or even two, you can slug it out and the winner can impose something, but that's not the best way to run an operation.

Well, I thought I did a good job of getting the Embassy up and running in Equatorial Guinea, in an almost impossible environment. When I first arrived, I was out there tending all my own generators because there was no electricity.

Q: You were your own GSO.

HARDY: Yes, and it took my admin officer about six months to find a couple good local people who knew enough about it to do it. It was tough for the administrative section to run around and get everything done. Our biggest struggle was getting fuel for the generators. I'd even have to call the President for help (Obiang not Reagan) to get oil for our generators. Fortunately, I played tennis with him on Sunday mornings. That helped. We had been running the embassy out of a little suite of rooms in a hotel. You know, where you get a kitchenette, a living room and a bedroom. First we had one suite like that - an efficiency apartment.

Yes, what is it, you know those temporary apartments when you first get into town. Anyway, eventually we rented four apartments together and turned them into an embassy. But we needed better facilities. When we finally found a site that was vacant but useable, the foreign minister wanted the same site for his residence and we had to go to the President just to get it for our embassy. That's the kind of place Malabo was. We used to have to fly over to Cameroon about every 10 days to get our own food and bring it back by airplane. When I arrived there, there were only two of us there, so I did it myself half the time. Later on, the administrative people could do it.

Q: This was a private plane.

HARDY: Yes, chartered. Fly-by-night outfit. Fortunately, they flew in the daytime.

Q: I've done both. Felt safer than the commercial plane.

HARDY: Actually, to tell you the kind of place this was, this charter airline was very accommodating to me as Ambassador. The airline had one plane. Its pilot, I later found out, had escaped from Germany with a plane that he didn't own. He and his partner were trying to make an agreement with the Guinean Government to set up a small airline. By getting the airline going, they hoped, at a minimum, to get enough money to pay off a lien on the plane and to keep from getting arrested and extradited back to Germany. Here's this guy coming to me saying "would you talk to President Obiang and see if you can help me get this agreement." Fortunately, I told the President while it was a great idea he ought to investigate it with United Nations experts. Which he did eventually, learning that the project's sponsors, who had approached him as well as me, were not trustworthy.

The Spanish and the French were there. When they wanted to get something accomplished, they would often come to me and ask me if I could help them with the President since he was less suspicious of the United States than the old colonizing powers, Spain, or than France still an influential force in West Africa. I believe I was able to help both parties. I tried to be objective, and the President regarded me as another source of advice, and one that perhaps he could trust a little more than the Spanish and the French. So we facilitated getting the country a little bit back on its feet. I think it's more on its feet now relative to the 1970s but still far from what it had once been in colonial times. It's taken a long, long time. I was trying to convince Obiang to have some elections at a local level and we had some projects with some of the non-profit institutions set up by the Republican and Democratic party to assist them planning an election and how to amend their constitution to enable it. I haven't kept up with what happened I know that elections were held in subsequent years but always with questionable results. Furthermore, Obiang's rule has degenerated and his regime has become corrupt and strongly repressive. Which is too bad. He had potential for going the other way.

Q: They have oil.

HARDY: They found oil, and that should help them but as yet according to press reports the money has all been skimmed off at the top and not gone to development. Well, you know, Latin America's been at it for a hundred years and look where they are. So let's give the Africans another fifty. (Perhaps 75 for Equatorial Guinea.) The right leader at the right time could help them come out of it. The Guineans in colonial times were a very educated people, by the way. Many spoke excellent Spanish. On the telephone you couldn't tell if you were speaking to a Spaniard or a Guinean.

We had an inspection. I can't remember whether I concurred or whether I suggested it but we went on to close the post. In this day and age, we don't need an embassy in every African country, and particularly we probably don't need an embassy in this one. I think we did the right thing to go in for that amount of time when we did. The Spanish were grateful that we did. Interesting thing about this is, the Spanish, having been out of the

colonial mishmash in Africa for decades, and having been preoccupied with the transition from Franco's fascist regime, when the time came, had no idea whatever how to help Equatorial Guinea. So they came back to help. Here we are in 1981. They're acting almost like a 1950s colonial power. The upshot of this was that the French eventually took over the role that had seemed to be Spain's. The French had important interests in the whole Gulf of Guinea area, in Gabon which is a very rich country and Cameroon with its own set of resources only 30 miles away across the water from the island capital and adjacent to the mainland. So the French figure the Spanish are really going to bollix this up, we'd better move in. They eventually brought Equatorial Guinea into a French currency zone. (As I edit this transcript, the U.S. apparently acknowledging the vast amounts of oil discovered in recent years in Guinean waters is planning to reopen its Embassy.)

Mexico City. I went from ambassador to Equatorial Guinea to the Deputy Political Counselor in the embassy in Mexico City. I was Deputy Political Counselor because my predecessor was Deputy Political Counselor, and he felt that the title had a nice ring to it even though there was no such thing as a Deputy Political Counselor as far as the Department of State was concerned.

Q: I've never heard of it.

HARDY: ...It would look better on one's calling card when passed out to Mexican officials. Anyway I was the second hand in the political section. For some purposes I took on that title, for others I didn't. People ask me how I could do that after being an ambassador. To which my answer was: once an ambassador, always an ambassador.

Anyway, it turned out to be a fun place. I'd never been to Latin America, so I wanted to do that. Very interesting to watch a lot of things going on, and make some contribution. Mexican-U.S. relations, had their own momentum, often very little affected by the Embassy, the Department of State or the Ambassador. Often times more affected by the U.S. Department of Treasury. There had been already one economic bailout, and since then another, second, bailout. A couple of bailouts of the Mexicans, you're talking billions of dollars here. So Treasury had a great role. They had their Treasury Attaché there. DEA (Drug Enforcement Agency) by the same token, had a great quasi-independent role. I was liaison from the Embassy to DEA at post. An American drug agent was tortured and killed during this period. Quite a time. Some even wondered if the Minister of Interior was in the pay of the drug traffickers.

I wrote all the policy papers. I actually put together the whole policy for the Embassy whether it was political, economic or whatever. I got all the contributions, dovetailed them all together and wrote the overall policy paper sending up the line to the Ambassador for approval and transmission to Washington for its approval. Sometimes desk officers do the same thing in Washington. Sometimes these things originate in Washington, sometimes in the field. But what I have to say about policy documents whether drafted on the desk or in the field, wherever, is... What are some of the names of

these things?

Q: Well, been too long for me to remember.

HARDY: High-flown names, all the policy down on paper. I'll tell you what it is - it's codifying all that's self-evident, it's codifying history. It's of great value in keeping everybody on the same page on events that are not fast-breaking. As a document actually guiding foreign policy, things don't work that way. These policy papers are needed, they perform a useful function in keeping people informed and on the same page but they did not make or determine policy. Sometimes you could slip in a useful idea and get an audience for it.

I'll tell you one of the ideas that I tried to slip in. I saw it crop up a few times after I left, that was 12 years ago so I don't know whether it was ever accepted or not. Northern Mexico is very Americanized. Many of the elite from all over Mexico, political and economic leaders, send their children to the United States for university education. This is truest of all in places like Monterrey, Nuevo Leon and in the other northern states. You've got American television channels, in English, in Mexico City on cable TV. You've got even more of it in the northern areas. Northerners buy American cars and cross the border frequently to shop for other goods. I am over-simplifying but it is nonetheless true that to a significant degree the above and other factors lead to a kind of Americanization of the elite and many others in the north. It is in the north of Mexico where sentiment for democratization of the political system and for laissez-faire economics is the strongest. My idea, my feeling is the best way to handle American-Mexican relations is to encourage this kind of Americanization of Mexico or, put another way of blurring of differences between the two countries.

What can that mean? It can mean a sounder economic system, it can be a sounder political system where you actually have a change in parties in government, as recently happened with the election of Vincente Fox as President of Mexico. When I was there, PRI officials gave me a good tip: next year we're going to allow two of our Senators (out of I forget how many senators, 30 or 40) to be non-PRI people. This was a big step in 1987. The Mexicans have gone far beyond that now with the PRI out of power at the national level. I believe that these things change to some extent in sync with the "Americanization" of Mexico, as Mexicans become exposed to our media and some of the good stuff that's on it. As they become exposed to our education, as trade between our two countries increases… Mexico, of course, is not going to lose its Mexican character but the best road to change there may be a partial Americanizaton as increasing contacts with the U.S. lead to the free adaptation of those things in our culture which are constructive for Mexico.

Q: NAFTA (North American Free Trade Agreement) is part of that package.

HARDY: Oh, absolutely, NAFTA is a big part of it. This was the early years, when, if memory serves, a NAFTA agreement was still just on the horizon. So when I was writing

a policy paper, I was putting all of the foregoing argument in there and tying much of it to NAFTA. Then you have the *maquiladora* industries. These are places where essentially American-or foreign-owned, not Mexican, industries set up along the border, say within 50 or 100 miles of it, employ Mexican labor at lower prices and produced goods to be exported primarily to the United States.

Now in a sense that takes jobs away from Americans, but if they didn't go to Mexico, they'd probably go to Taiwan or China or someplace else. So that's a good deal, that's as another vehicle for Americanization. All of this stress on trade with the U.S. depends on conscious U.S. policy whether it's NAFTA, whether it's customs policy, whether it's regulations on inspection of fruit. We can help make constructive political and economic evolution in Mexico easier for the Mexicans.

Furthermore, Americanizing Mexico the way I'm talking about would probably lessen rather than increase immigration to the United States, which is the great Mexican argument in a different context. They don't want to, officially or even culturally, especially in the south, they don't want to be Americanized, or they wouldn't admit that they were being Americanized. Although they might accept those elements that are Americanizing, they won't characterize them that way. But they say, help us develop, give us money, and then you won't get immigration. Well, I say, "Americanize" them, and then people will want to stay home, they'll have a better economy, they'll have a better political system that people won't be fleeing. All these kind of things. But, of course, in practice we can't call it "Americanizing" as that would be offensive to Mexican sensibilities.

So, at the time, that really wasn't articulated, even indirectly But you could slip that in a policy document and perhaps encourage some good with it.

Let's talk about the succession. In the days of the PRI, you knew that either a governor or one of the cabinet ministers was going to be selected to be the next President. Everybody would sit around, and the political section would spin its, maybe not spin its wheels, that's maybe not the right metaphor, but run all over the place trying to find out who it's going to be. Is it going to be the Minister of Interior? Is it going to be the Governor of the State of Mexico? Who is going to be the next President?

You write endless reports on this. And it's a bit like trying to predict the stock market. It's futile. You might narrow it down to five or six people, three or four people even. It's hit or miss whether you really pick the guy that's selected. It doesn't really mean a thing if you happen to pick the right guy in advance. What does mean something is if there are three or four candidates that have a chance and we know what it would mean for the United States whichever candidate wins. This is entirely different from trying to predict things. I believe our whole system of political reporting is too centered on trying to figure who's going to win the next election or who's going to succeed to power. Don't worry about that. Find out what you can do, whoever wins. We need to orient our focus in that direction. That's one way you can conserve personnel resources and have a leaner,

meaner Foreign Service, which I guess we're going to have to do. (I alluded to another way earlier: automate your political reporting.)

Q: Know as many people as you can. Opposition and incumbent. Just know everybody.

HARDY: Yes, and it doesn't hurt to know the losers. The loser could be next year's winner, or next year's person installed by the army.

Q: Were you there during the Salinas period?

HARDY: Yes, I was.

Q: In retrospect, how do you feel about Salinas? He was a fair-haired boy when he was in there, remember?

HARDY: Yes, a lot of them looked good.

There hasn't been a Mexican president who hasn't gone out with a fistful of money, unless it was Zedillo, the one who went out just before Vincente Fox.

Q: Well, I have a good impression of him.

HARDY: Salinas? You had a good impression of Salinas?

Q: This, and the next guy, too.

HARDY: Yes, well the next guy seems good. I've only known the latest guy through press reports and so on.

Q: Yes, that's all I know.

HARDY: The whole Salinas family... I met the President and his brother and his father, who was a senator at the time. They were all part of the system, a corrupt, undemocratic system. We tend to assign the blame to individuals and I suppose you should, but it's often hard to look for morality in an immoral system. Sometimes even if you want to be moral, it's difficult.

When I was in Equatorial Guinea as Ambassador, I missed a promotion by a whisper. Although I was ambassador, my personal rank order was not the highest. Promotions were very scarce. If State normally promoted 10 percent of political cone people a year, that year they promoted two percent or three percent. So, I didn't get promoted despite an outstanding report. But I got a Meritorious Award. All those people that were the next tier down who might have been promoted in a normal year and didn't got this special Meritorious Award along with several thousand dollars.

Having missed the boat then and as promotions for everyone remained scarce the next two years, I was eventually selected out on "time in grade." There was a sizable group of officers who were also selected out at the time and who contested the Department's action. They contested what they, legitimately, saw as a de facto change in the rules of the game (Promotion was more difficult over an extended period than historically but allowable time in grade was not increased). The Department was gaming the system in order to solve its personnel and funding problems. But I did not want to fight the Department. I felt that if I wasn't wanted, I wasn't going to stay. I would have liked to stay for another two or three years, but I wasn't wanted, so I wasn't going to stay. I was astonished that the Department was happy to pay me $50,000 plus a year for doing nothing. Probably if I had stayed, it would have been hard to get a good assignment so it just wasn't worth it.

Q: It was 30 years?

HARDY: I had credit for 30 years service. I had two years of that in the Army. I was very fortunate because I came in quite young, before I graduated from college actually. So, I had a very good pension. But I've always been opposed to selection out on time in grade, as distinct from poor performance. In retrospect, it hasn't affected me that much. But I feel that, okay, if you don't have enough slots for some one to move up, then find a place where you can put him off to the side, unless he's really incompetent, unless he can't do his job. It didn't affect me because I had been in for 30 years many came in the Foreign Service at an age much older than I had and thus did not have a large pension accrued. I had my pension. But somebody else it could have a serious effect on. It is not easy to find a job in the private sector unless you're a very distinguished ambassador who had occupied an important post or an economic technician with financial experience relevant to private industry. Unless you're coming out of something very highly specialized or highly distinguished, it is very difficult. I confirmed that sitting in the seminar that the Foreign Service arranged to help me and 50 other people find new careers. They were giving seminars every two or three months. You soon got the sense that there isn't much out there. I can tell you that.

The most important things that I've done since I've left the Foreign Service have all been volunteer work. I did a few odd jobs. I taught a little bit at universities. But there is not much out there. Somebody that doesn't have a good pension behind them shouldn't be turned away after a number of years. But I guess the turnover is so great at so many levels that not many people want to make it that long anyway. Maybe one reason they don't is that management doesn't take care of its people. It never devised a system that takes care of its people. You're thrown in there. It's sink or swim from top to bottom. You can get your colleagues to help you. You can build a network to help you. Your colleagues are great. Your network is great. But as an institution, the Department's management, couldn't care less what happens to its people. All Secretaries of State that we've had in the postwar era haven't really cared, in my opinion. (I'll reserve judgment on Secretary Powell, who for as much as I know seems better than most.)

Q: You are loyal to the Secretary of State, but it's not reciprocal. That's what you're saying.

HARDY: Absolutely. You do need leadership from the top, but it's not just the Secretary. It's that whole echelon. I would take 25 or so people up at the top. Why? There must be some officers... Twenty-five is probably a large number. There are probably seven or eight that could make a difference but they need the Secretary to back them up. And they need to be more concerned about the Service or at least as concerned about the Service as their own careers. Many have been but it never seems to come together at the same time with both the Secretary and the rest of upper level management fighting for the Foreign Service and committed to maximizing the potential of, each individual Foreign Service Officer. Until somebody really grabs hold of this, I feel the Foreign Service is going to continue to have serious problems. You can say that now our young people coming in are there for themselves and they don't care about loyalty. I say that attitude is not a good attitude and it's not going to hold over the decades. We had the same sort of system in private industry whether it's IBM, Hewlett Packard or whatever. Some of those companies are finding that a little bit of loyalty both ways is a good thing. I think we ought to get back to that in the private sector. It's actually never been there at State, but it ought to be put there, too.

Anyway, I greatly enjoyed all those desk officer positions. I am very happy I had my career in the Foreign Service. It was great serving as acting DCM in Budapest and Dakar and Ambassador in Equatorial Guinea and Charge every now and then. I never was silenced. I was always able to say pretty much what I wanted to say. Coming back to the cone system versus a generalist system for a final time, I would say operating as part of a generalist system in my early career I believe, I wasted a lot of time, perhaps three years worth but I had twenty-seven years which I regard as productive. Perhaps, in the final analysis either personnel system would work if there were a proper distinction made between jobs classed as professional and those classified as non- professional. But that opens another can of worms and I have gone on too long already. Most importantly we should stick to one system and not change it every five or ten years, which, finally, and again for as much as I know, may be what we are doing.

About the CIA generally. I always had great relationships at every level with CIA officers. I always doubted though how much the intelligence was really worth. More often than not, raw intelligence that got out there - it's not as bad as FBI raw intelligence, I might say, because it's usually got some commentary and editing in it - was misleading. You had to fight it. Someone would send in a raw intelligence report and classify it as "unreliable" or "reliability unknown," but it could still stir everybody up in Washington.

In Africa, the classic argument you got from CIA people was, "Well, maybe we'll recruit some Soviet person in Africa who will someday become Prime Minister or Secretary General of the CPSU."

Q: In the Cold War, that was their business, to recruit the commies.

HARDY: It was about that. It doesn't really sound to me like there was much there. Maybe I'm wrong, but I've always been skeptical. I'm not saying to abolish the CIA. I'm not so sure they need to be as ubiquitous as they were. Certainly now, why have them in Africa at all?

Q: There are no communists left.

HARDY: You can also say, "Well, how are you going to know whether the Nigerians will cut their oil quota?"

Q: And there are other things they're supposed to be looking at: terrorism, drugs, that sort of thing. That's what they're supposed to be doing now.

HARDY: That's true. I think a leaner, more targeted presence would be best on those issues, too. It should be leaner than when I was in. I don't know what it is today.

What have I done in retirement? I've told you what I did before I went in, so I'll tell you what I did after I went out.

I taught for a year part-time at Georgetown University, outside of Austin, Texas. I am living outside of Austin, Texas, in a different direction now, about 25 miles away in a place called Dripping Springs. That's about one of the best named towns in the world. I also taught some at St. Edwards University. I've done some odd jobs. Most of all, my pension and good buys in the stock market have provided me with a comfortable life, more than I thought I might have at retirement when I discovered how hard it was to find employment.

I wanted to say something about women in the Foreign Service. I think that a strong effort should be made to accommodate spouses whether they're men or women. Whether they're both Foreign Service officers or only one is, the Department really needs to lean over backwards on that. Some of my best assignments in terms of overall impact on me as a person and on my wife and I and on our children were when my wife had good employment through the Foreign Service. She had a very good job as liaison to a very large American community in Mexico City, a community, which now is up in the hundreds, if not thousands. She was also a Cultural Affairs Officer and ran the exchange program in Equatorial Guinea, which was a small but effective program. She had a great relationship with USIA. When it came to dividing up the pie, she was stealing exchange slots from much bigger countries.

Q: Good for her.

HARDY: That was very good. She also did the placements of USIA news tapes. We had a news feed. We got our news feed into the radio system mainly because they wanted to get the physical tapes that we gave them. They were so short they didn't even have

cassette tapes. It was even more so for the VCRs.

Q: But they used them.

HARDY: Yes, they used them. We gave them a little extra, you know, to make them happy. The same with the VCR tapes. We gave them VCRs and gave us some spots on TV using American videos that had been prepared by USIA. But then the Spanish became offended. They didn't want to see a drop of American television on their tv network in Equatorial Guinea. Theirs gratitude for you, remember why we went into Equatorial Guinea? So, we eventually lost that one.

But actually, USIA was always very effective. The exchange programs are a great thing. Throughout Africa, that was the case. It was the case in Hungary. In Equatorial Guinea, my wife was building up contacts in a place they had not had contacts for decades with any other country let alone the U.S., like we did in those communist countries in Eastern Europe. USIA can be very effective. I always actually worked a lot with them, too. The Political Section tends to work quite a bit with USIA.

Press. Maybe I will say a little bit about the press. I found the quality of reporters very good in Eastern Europe and in Africa even. I also found you had to be very careful what you said to keep from having your confidence violated or being misquoted or somehow being misused by the press. You had better know your people. If you don't know your people personally or haven't dealt with them for a long time, be very careful! When I was in Equatorial Guinea, I once mistook a very personable person from the *Times of London* who came down and wanted to do a report on Equatorial Guinea... I wanted to boost Equatorial Guinea's image and try to get them a little aid and assistance not just from ourselves, Spain and France but from other countries. Well, there are two *Times's* in London. There is the *Sunday Times* and there is the *Daily Times*. The *Sunday Times* is a rag, a tabloid. They had sent this guy to Equatorial Guinea figuring that this was the worst place on Earth, or at least it could be painted as the worst place on Earth and they were doing an article on what a miserable place this was. I gave them and interview and even had them by for drinks. So, not only did they trash the government and the country as a whole, they trashed me and they trashed the French ambassador. I was accused of having a clean desk and playing with a paperclip. The French ambassador was accused of spending all his time chasing butterflies. I think he had a butterfly collection. The bad publicity probably wouldn't have happened, or he and I wouldn't have abetted it, if we had realized that it was the *Sunday Times* instead of the *Daily Times*.

Q: You learned the hard way.

HARDY: I'm ashamed of this. Here, after 30 years, I still blew that. But the press can be an asset. Sometimes they know something that you don't know if they're good reporters, or they have access to somebody that you don't have access to. But you must get to know who you're dealing with. Or they're a podium for you to deliver a message.

Peace Corps. Fabulous in small countries. Perhaps as good for the volunteers themselves as for the countries in which they're working. Sometimes over the long run, their achievements can be dissipated if they're not continually reinforced. The only thing I would say there is that the Peace Corps should sink their teeth into something and just keep chewing on it for years and years and not shuffle around. If you don't keep at it, it will go away, especially at the grassroots level because you may be the only one doing it. If it's a country that's very well structured and can do that follow-on themselves, that's great. But in the Africa that I knew, there weren't many countries like that.

Was the Foreign Service a good place to work? If you like variety, like I do, and foreign cultures, its good for that. If you also want to toss in on top of that being involved in foreign policy, the Foreign Service may not be the only game in town but it's one of the very few games and it's perhaps the biggest game. So, that's where you are. It's got a great medical program. They'll take care of you. At least they took care of me very well. In many emergencies... I was evacuated once or twice. My children were evacuated from Africa for medical care. My wife was a couple of times. They gave good care to us when we got back in Washington. I am very proud of our medical program.

The Foreign Service needs to pay greater attention to spouses. I mentioned some of the good things about my wife being involved in Mexico and Equatorial Guinea. On the other hand, she was kind of hung out to dry in Hungary when we were there. She had nothing to do. No attempt was made to give her something to do. Our contacts were very limited in Hungary because it was still the communist era. In fact, our car was sabotaged twice and we were without a car. That was very hard on her-another reason why spouses, whether they're Foreign Service officers or not, should be assisted in finding something to do that meets their requirements.

Benefits steadily eroded during my later years in the Foreign Service, to the point where you couldn't stop off someplace at your own expense and still get your travel paid by the government, for example. Housing allowances were being cut. I hope that's changed.

But worst of all was the fact of, as I mentioned once, poor management of the Foreign Service as a career service. Management let the Commercial function be removed from State and given to the Department of Commerce thereby diminishing the responsibilities of the career Foreign Service. Commerce is having a difficult time getting their best people to do this very work that the Foreign Service wanted to do. That was a State management failure. But the deeper management failure is the fact that they have not made a commitment to their own Department of State employees. They do not guide them through a career but just turn them loose. As I said earlier, no loyalty from the top down towards the rank and file or any echelon really. I don't think the Department is any more loyal to its senior officers than it is to the junior officers. I think in many periods of glut, excellent senior officers at the Department (I do not consider myself to have been one), many of them have been disregarded - not only selected out, but just disregarded in other ways with poor assignments or temporary make-work assignments. It should be structured better. It should be structured keeping in mind that the employees' interests do

count.

Competition is great and the best rise to the surface unaided. That's what they're saying. Many of the best officers believe that themselves and that's part of the problem. They don't get involved until they find themselves on the hit list. But I say we can have a better system which would promote the best people and get the best people the best jobs without doing it at the expense of the journeyman officer.

I guess I don't want to end on that note. There is a lot of great stuff in the Foreign Service. It's the place for foreign policy. Certainly all the people that I've worked with at every level have been good people, great colleagues, people you can depend on. They'll treat you fairly and won't shut you up. Somehow it's the system and perhaps the fact that you can't get the Secretary involved at the top. He and other senior officers concentrate on the foreign policy side and neglect the critical management side. Maybe that's where the problem lies. But all in all, it's still a good Service. Thanks very much.

Q: Thank you, Alan.

End of interview