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

MICHAEL HAUBEN

Interviewed by: Charles Stuart Kennedy
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INTERVIEW

Q: This is Charles Stuart Kennedy interviewing Michael Hauben.

Alright, well, let's start out the usual way when and where were you born?

HAUBEN: March 1, 1944. I was born in Palestine.

Q: Good heavens. What were you doing there?

HAUBEN: Well, my dad spent ten years in the Palestine Police. Yeah, he was an NCO [non-commissioned officer] in Palestine Police.

Q: Oh, yeah.

HAUBEN: Let me offer some background. My parents are from Vienna, Austria, and one step ahead of the Holocaust, they succeeded in obtaining permission to go to Palestine legally in 1938. Go ahead, sir.

Q: So what happened to your extended family in Austria?

HAUBEN: Well, some are in the U.S. Some are in what is now Israel, and some were, how shall I put it? GOA [gassed on arrival].

Q: Yeah.

HAUBEN: So it was a mixed bag. Of those who came to the U.S., some came directly. Some of them were admitted first, believe it or not, to Cuba. Then to the U.S. Yeah. President Grau's Cuba let some people in.

Q: I recall, seeing that happen.

HAUBEN: Yeah.

Q: All right. Well, let's talk about what your father was doing.

HAUBEN: So what was my father doing? Nineteen thirty-six to 1939, there was an Islamic Arab revolt against British rule in Palestine. The main reason was, they were angry about British policy's being pro-Zionist and allowing the country to be swamped by Jews. So there was a revolt, and that necessitated having a great number of people under arms under the British mandatory regime. So when my father wound up in Palestine, my mom's brother, Adolf [now, has nothing to do with Hitler; Adolf was a very common name in Germany and Austria at the time] was already a Palestine Police NCO. I guess through that connection, my dad got his job with Palestine Police. Started off as an ordinary constable and then worked his way up to be a sergeant, which was the most you could be if you were hired under the circumstances that he was. Which was the need for a great number of armed policemen and soldiers. Now, the British actually had a couple of divisions in-country to put down the Arab revolt. So what were hired were called Supernumerary Palestine Police. In other words, they were above the regular budget and therefore didn't get some of the benefits, and the highest you could be was a sergeant, which is the rank he attained. At that time, Britain knew that it had to prepare for war against Germany. Right? Because you're talking about 1938 already.

Q: Oh yeah.

HAUBEN: So, there were limits to the number of people that could serve as military police that they could station in Palestine. So they hired people like my dad under the mechanism of Palestine Police. And so, in the Arab Revolt, my dad was engaged in providing static defense. Since trains were being ambushed, my dad and his colleagues were trained and armed and put on trains, so that if a train were ambushed, they could shoot at the ambushers. But ultimately, he wound up being assigned for the rest of his time [the next ten years] to the British military, in fact, assigned under the operational command of the Royal Air Force. What they did was guard, in his specific case, RAF [Royal Air Force] bases. He was referred to by the CO [commanding officer] as "sergeant of the guard." He said that he had far greater trouble with the Jewish terrorists of the 1940s than with the Arab ones who had preceded them, as you know.

Q: Yes.

HAUBEN: So you might say that the task of counterinsurgency/counterterrorism was what I kind of grew up with. It was, so to speak, "in the family," because of my dad's work.

Common tactics and procedures were what against the Jewish terrorists?

Q: Well—

HAUBEN: We're now in the 1940s and they included twenty-four hour curfews and

house to house searches. Whenever the British soldiers came to our apartment, they were so elated because here were some folks that felt kinship with them and gave them a cup of tea and treated them nicely. The Jewish terrorists had, of course, taken some of these young British soldiers and hung them from lampposts or whatever and booby trapped the bodies; a particularly insulting affront given the recent role of these soldiers in fighting the Nazis, liberating concentration camps, and so forth.

Q: Remember, it was the King David Hotel that blew up wasn't it?

HAUBEN: The King David Hotel blew up, yeah, that was 1946 as I definitely recall from reading. Yeah, that was a hell of a mess. I mean they wound up killing more Jews than anyone else. Right? Because those were the employees, the secretaries, and so forth. The King David Hotel was blown up because that wing of the hotel housed the Palestine Secretariat, which meant the administrative body that governed Palestine. As well, as I dimly recall, the Palestine Police headquarters.

Q: How old were you, when were you born?

HAUBEN: So I was born in 1944. So, when the King David Hotel in Jerusalem blew up, I was only two. I would not have known anything about that at the time. I do remember most things from the time I was two on. So, in my toddler years, I remember soldiers of all the different nations in Palestine and was able to tell one from the other by their uniforms. I knew how to do that by the time I was three for sure.

Q: Oh, it's amazing what children learn very quickly.

HAUBEN: Oh, yeah. I remember recognizing the Aussies by their hats, and the Gurkhas, who had similar hats as the Aussies at the time, and I certainly remember the odd Sikh in his turban. The Americans were easily recognizable in those rather stupid-looking caps referred to by the GIs themselves, as I later learned, as "piss cutter caps." I clearly recall the jeeps and the tanks. And the camels and the Arabs. I always thought the Arabs were cool in their robes and their *keffiyeh* head cloths.

I went to a nursery school in which German was the medium of instruction. We didn't speak Hebrew. Right? We spoke German at home. German is my native language. So, in nursery school, I'm three years old. One kid, one little boy says, "Let's pretend this is a bus." And I said in German, "No, it's not a bus, it's a tank!" Because, I loved those things on account of my dad. One day, when my dad was taking a nap or whatever, I put on one of his uniforms, including the putties. I mean he had a uniform for every occasion and every kind of weather: long pants, short pants, beret, regular, you know, peaked cap; you name it. He also had a rifle, which he allowed me to play with, unloaded of course, which I imagine would have been a Lee Enfield 303, but I'm not sure. Anyway, the point is, I put on his uniform and marched around, but I was only three years old. What happened was, I wound up taking a leak in my dad's uniform, and I was so scared. When he came down, all he did was have a good laugh and patted me on the head.

Q: How long were you in Palestine?

HAUBEN: We came to the U.S. in March of 1948. I was four years old. We arrived in the U.S. three weeks after my [1 March] fourth birthday.

Q: Well, how did you get to the States?

HAUBEN: We were sponsored by my dad's siblings, his brother and his sister who had been in Cuba and had been admitted to the U.S. a few years earlier. The then extant refugee legislation allowed that to happen. It is an interesting story, because it would have happened earlier, but what happened was that at the consulate in Jerusalem, one of the local employees, a Jewish employee, a lady [I use the term advisedly], sold our number. You got a number which determined the order in which you'd be admitted to the U.S. She sold our number to someone else, and they got it. So we had to wait an extra long time because our original number had been sold. Anyway, the employee was found out and got fired. By that time, we had got our number.

I remember going to Jerusalem to the U.S. consulate. This was in the winter, shortly before our trip. Our trip was in March, so it must have been, like, December. It was snowing in Jerusalem on account of the altitude. Because fighting had already erupted between Jews and Arabs, you're talking about December '47, or January '48. Right? To get to Jerusalem, you had to travel in a convoy of buses and the buses were armored. Our bus only had little slits in the armor through which Jewish teenage guys and gals would be shooting with Tommy guns. Right? The trip seemed to take forever because we were forever stopping and they were shooting out or whatever. It might have been a sniper or something or maybe it was an ambush. We didn't know. What got me was nothing seemed to perturb the passengers. The only way you could tell they were kind of nervous was everybody was chain smoking. For a little three year old kid, having to breathe in that smoke was just hell. But the adults seemed to be behaving in quite adult fashion; nobody was crying. Nobody broke down or got scared or whatever. Or at least they hid it well.

Q: I mean how aware were you that the situation obviously was happening?

HAUBEN: I was aware. There is one thing I actually don't remember. My mind must have fortuitously locked it out. My dad much later told me I spoke to him in the middle of that bus trip in good German. I said, "*Papa, ich will night sterben*" (Daddy, I don't want to die). So I must have been painfully aware of what was going on. The adults of course comforted me and then nobody was crying or upset, but I must have been terrified.

Q: Oh, of course.

HAUBEN: Yeah. The souvenir my dad picked up was one of the spent cartridge shells. Dad was wearing his uniform and there were some other Palestine Police guys wearing

their uniforms amongst the passengers. It was winter, and the winter uniform included a Circassian *kalpak*, you know, the Persian lamb cap the Circassians of the Caucasus wear.

Q: Oh yeah.

HAUBEN: To this day that is the uniform worn by the palace guard at the gates of the palace of the King of Jordan. The cap was a relic of the uniform worn by the Ottoman military, from the day Palestine had been part of the Ottoman Empire. The cap remained as an identifying feature of the Palestine Police uniform.

Q: Well, how long are you in Palestine?

HAUBEN: So four years, from the day of my birth until the age of four. Then we wound up in the U.S.

Q: Did you go on a ship, or did you fly?

HAUBEN: No one flew in those days. I mean, unless you were a privileged character on official government orders or whatever. Yeah, we went on a ship, an American Export Line vessel called the *Marine Carp*. These vessels like the Marine Tiger, Marine blah, blah [they all started with Marine], were better known for transporting Puerto Ricans to New York at the time. At the same time from the same shipping line. Right? Well, there we were on the *Marine Carp*. We had to stop in the Azores and in Alexandria, Egypt. It was all quite fascinating. Two week trip.

Q: Oh, where did you land? I mean—

HAUBEN: New York. I mean, that's where my dad's siblings were to pick us up. Downtown Manhattan, since that is where some of the port facilities are, others being in New Jersey and Brooklyn, of course. Anyway, we stayed with my father's sister and her husband and family, in Jamaica, Queens, where they lived at the time. For a while, I mean, until my parents found an apartment, which took a while because apartments were scarce. I remember walking with them, trudging through Washington Heights, which was where you wanted to go. Washington Heights in Upper Manhattan was where all these Jewish refugees from Germany had settled—the German speaking refugees. That's where Kissinger's parents lived. Right? It was fondly known by these people, after Hitler's Third Reich, as "the Fourth Reich" (*Das vierte Reich*).

Q: Yeah. Well—

HAUBEN: So those are the roots from which I sprung.

Q: More about these roots. Were you settled in Queens?

HAUBEN: Well, we stayed in Queens with my dad's sister and her family. But, not for

long. Then we found an apartment. We found it only because a cousin of my grandmother, who had actually come from Austria at the turn of the century, lived in Brooklyn, and her daughter and husband had an apartment and they were about to move out to a better one somewhere else. So they told us it was becoming vacant. The apartment was in the Bay Ridge section of Brooklyn.

Q: How long did you live in Brooklyn?

HAUBEN: Well, I lived in Brooklyn until I left New York. My mom continued to live there and my father died there. My mom continued to live in that apartment until just a couple of years shy of her death—until 1987 when she moved into one of those senior care facilities where they provide meals for you and like that—

Q: Yeah.

HAUBEN: She lived in that apartment until then. Well I, of course, lived at home because I attended a commuter college. I attended Brooklyn College, which was part of the City University of New York. When I graduated from there I went to graduate school down in Austin, Texas. Anyway, I never did live in New York after that, except for a very brief period of time.

Q: Well, let's talk a bit about living in New York as a kid. Well, what was your apartment like?

HAUBEN: Ah well, it was a small apartment. Then it wound up being rent controlled. So there was a motive for staying there. My parents thought about moving out, but I guess they never did. Anyway, I didn't even have my own room. I slept in the living room, which became my bedroom as we converted the couch into a bed at night. It folded out. My grandma, my dad's mom, stayed with us and she had a cot that we opened up at night in the kitchen. My parents had the bedroom. It was really a crowded little apartment. But, it was in a flamingo neighborhood. I'll explain. So these houses had been single family homes, built, like, around the First World War. They were brick homes and well insulated against the cold. In the depression, landlords converted these homes into two family homes so they could make a couple extra bucks by renting them out. The landlord usually lived upstairs, the tenant downstairs. So in this case, we rented and we were the tenant. Right? It was a "flamingo" neighborhood because most of the people who lived there were Italians. They usually had very, very neatly manicured front lawns. These lawns sometimes had a shrine to the Holy Mother, but more often than not, and almost in every case, in the middle of the lawn, there would be a pink plastic Flamingo a la Florida. Right? Which gave rise to the riddle, "What do flamingos have in their front lawn?" The answer was, of course, "Plastic Italians." Anyway, I went to a local public school, two blocks from my house. Most of the kids were Italian. So I mean, I guess I acquired the mentality of my peers. Who were all you know, South Italian Americans, Neapolitan or Sicilian or Calabrian. So, I guess in my mind, I thought I was one, even though I wasn't, but I was definitely accepted by them, for sure. So that was the peer group I grew up with

and is reflected, I guess, in my New York street dialect, which I sometimes speak even now.

Q: Well, you didn't find yourself an outsider?

HAUBEN: No, actually, it was amazing. The acceptance was quite nice, quite wonderful. Of course, I mean, I wasn't known as "the Jew." I was a German kid. I mean, that was my heritage. So what happened was my parents continued to speak German to me at home. My dad taught me how to read in German, including in the old script, like the script of the title of the *New York Times* and so forth. In German, it's called *Kurrent*. I learned that and we spoke German at home, and I, after a while, thought my parents were nuts in their fanatical attachment to German culture. But now I'm glad they passed their heritage on to me.

Q: Where did you go to school?

HAUBEN: So I went to Public School 131, which, as I said, was two blocks from my home. It was kind of a nice place. The teachers in the public school system at that time were top notch. That's because there were no other jobs for women in those days. Right? So really, really bright women had no option but to become teachers. Because in New York, you couldn't easily get a county or a state job unless you were Irish, most of these teachers were Irish. They were old spinsters and they would regale us with tales of pre-World War One New York. Because I paid attention, I learned quite a lot from these ladies. Most of the kids didn't pay attention. By the time I got to junior high, that was, like, a "Blackboard Jungle" school, that one was, but anyway, the teachers were wonderful. They were well read, and I remember all the things they taught us. Wonderful ladies.

Q: Were you aware of the rule that if a teacher was married she had to quit?

HAUBEN: I'm sorry, I didn't catch that. Could you say again, please?

Q: There was a feeling in certain places that there were so few jobs, that if a woman was a teacher, and she got married, the idea was well she'll live off her husband's salary and we will save this for somebody else.

HAUBEN: Well yeah, I mean, that may have been the case because these ladies were all nearing retirement age, which at the time was sixty-five. They were all elderly, and they were all spinsters. Yeah, they never married. Yes. So that may well have been what happened. They were wonderfully well educated and well read.

Q: What was it like growing up there as a kid? I mean, did you get out on the street a lot?

HAUBEN: Well yeah. I mean you could at that time; it was a lot safer than now. We played on the street all the time. There was a game called Ringolevio, where you learn

how to struggle and wrestle with your colleagues. I mean, people have likened that to a forerunner of the street gang "rumble," but I don't think that was necessarily the case. We played Ringolevio, played stickball and so on. At that time, elementary school was grades one through six, and seven, eight, and nine were junior high.

I went to General John Joseph Pershing Junior High School, which in fact, was Public School 220. This really was a blackboard jungle. Fights would break out in the schoolyard. One of my colleagues, another school kid, suddenly felt that his shirt was wet. What had happened was, he was in the crowd watching a schoolyard fight and some other kid, for no reason whatsoever and without this kid even realizing it, had stabbed him in the abdomen. Another time, I walked home, as I used to go home for lunch because it wasn't that far from junior high to lunch at our apartment. I was in the schoolyard having just come back from lunch and there was some girl crying her eyes out surrounded by other girls, junior high school kids. She had just been raped in the school yard. Just horrible. Another time I'm walking home and there is some poor kid, I don't know what he did to deserve this, he must have done something; but there he is in the gutter with his head being banged into the curb by a much bigger and more mature kid sitting on him and pounding his left fist right fist into his head as his head was being pounded into the curb. He was screaming his guts out but nobody did anything. There were adults looking out the windows out of their small apartment houses but nobody gave a damn. Anyway that's the New York I grew up in, and it was a violent place.

Q: Oh my God.

HUABEN: That was junior high and of course high school was a little better, but not much.

Q: Are you saying the teachers were good? I mean, did you feel you've got a good education despite all this?

HAUBEN: Yeah, you could get a good education if you paid attention to what the teachers were trying to teach you. Most of the kids didn't, but I did. Yeah, I definitely got a good education. There's absolutely no question about it.

Q: How long were you there and what grades did you go through in this system?

HAUBEN: So, right through grade twelve. In high school, I went to New Utrecht High School. We were the city champs in football. In new Utrecht High School the career path was generally you did graduate, you didn't drop out, you graduated. Then you did service as an enlisted person in the Marine Corps, and then came out and joined the New York cops, NYPD [New York City Police Department]. So that was the career path that most of my classmates sought to follow. A good number of kids went to college and if you went to college, a lot of the kids went on to law school, a lot of the kids did pre-med [pre-medical] and became doctors, some became engineers, you know, professional types, but most wound up as school teachers.

Q: Oh, oh.

HAUBEN: Where did I go to college? So I went to a commuter college, I went, as I said, to Brooklyn College of the City University of New York. That was where I got a Bachelor of Science in—of all things—geology. I recently read Colin Powell's autobiography. It appears that Colin Powell had the same ambition that I did. He wanted to be an engineer, and so did I. He found out that he was no good at math, and neither was I. So he switched to something similar, which was geology. He graduated from one of our sister colleges, he graduated from City College, with a BS [Bachelor of Science] in geology, and I graduated from Brooklyn College with a BS in geology several years later, as he was quite a bit older than me. Anyway, I found the coincidence curious.

Q: Well, how did you find your geology?

HAUBEN: You mean, why did I choose it?

Q: No, I know why you chose it. But how did you find it? Was it useful for you?

HAUBEN: Well, I didn't find it hard, I found it enjoyable, because I like the outdoors. I like hiking. My ambition had always been to spend a life trekking around the rainforests of the world or whatever, and figured this was a way to do it. Which it would have been, I guess. But anyway, I wound up doing something else, because I never did practice geology.

Q: What was life like as a kid in elementary school in New York? What do you do for amusement?

HAUBEN: Well, for amusement, I mean after school, we played on the street with the neighborhood kids, and then did homework. We ate a little bit late and basically, my grandma, my dad's mom, raised me because both parents worked. It was a little bit embarrassing, because in elementary school, I was usually the only kid in the class whose mom had to work also. Right? My dad had a job, but it was not a great job. He was a guy who by then was in his late forties, and here he was, working as a stock boy in Namm's Department Store, which was a big department store in Downtown Brooklyn. But my mom had been a dressmaker in Vienna. I mean, she went through the apprenticeship and all of that, so she was a master dressmaker. In Palestine, she had her own business at home. She hired a refugee girl, a German speaker, as her assistant and then custom tailored ladies' dresses. So in New York, she got a job as a sample maker in a ladies' dress designing room with a dress designer. The designer would draw the patterns and the sample makers, about three or four of them, would make the samples. These samples, the models would then show at the fashion show. Then the orders would be placed and the manufacturer would make however many were ordered. My mom was making quite a bit more money than my dad, but she had a skill. Anyway, they both worked, so grandma raised me at home, watched over me at home.

Q: Well, how did you find elementary school? I mean, were you a good student?

HAUBEN: I was always at the top of the class, but a little bit weak in math sometimes. But, generally speaking at the top of the class. I loved to read and my parents always read to me, whether in English or German, and I wound up an avid reader myself. That didn't hurt me.

Q: What sort of books would you read?

HAUBEN: Adventure stories. About cowboys and Indians, about explorers and explorations in the far corners of the world. I knew that's where I wanted to head. I mean, I knew that even then. Of course, having come from Palestine must have had something to do with that. My early memories all have to do with the palm trees in the backyard and so forth. You know, here I was in gray New York. I guess I yearned to get back to someplace at least subtropical. Right? And the exotic atmosphere: soldiers from all over the world, and the Arabs in their traditional attire. It was obvious that I was going to be headed for a career in the third world. I mean, I don't think there was much doubt even then in my own mind.

Q: Well, you had what sort of family life? I mean, did you sit around and talk about the world at the dinner table?

HAUBEN: Well, not necessarily. Of course, there were so many meals when I ate by myself since the parents were late getting back from work. Then we got a TV but that wasn't until 1953. I was nine years old. We spent one hour each evening, from seven to eight, watching nothing but the news, because that's what the networks carried: CBS, ABC, NBC. John Cameron Swayze was on NBC. I remember watching with great interest the siege of Dien Bien Phu in Vietnam. John Cameron Swayze talked about that each and every night, and I remember my cousin and I used to refer to him as Dien Bien Swayze, because that's all he seemed to be reporting on. I found it fascinating. Also, Dad was really well read. He read all of the John Gunther series—*Inside Europe*, inside this, inside that, you know. He was very knowledgeable. I guess you could tell he was not run of the mill, because unlike most immigrants, at a rather early stage in their being U.S. citizens, my parents made the switch from Democrat to Republican once they invested a *de minimis* amount of money in a couple of shares of stock and therefore decided that a business-favorable regime was best for the country's economy.

Q: Well—

HAUBEN: To answer your question we definitely talked about world affairs a lot, because it was one of my dad's main interests, and he would read the *New York Times*, which at the time was a fairly conservative newspaper, "cover to cover" I mean, it was a fat newspaper.

Q: What about playing in the streets at all? Oh, yeah. What did you do?

HAUBEN: Well, we had various games that we played, including stickball, which is, you know, baseball adapted to a city street. You have a stick as a baseball bat. You hit it for a distance instead of knocking it out of the ballpark. If you hit it several manhole covers away, you know that that meant you scored. You got a base hit, or you scored a home run, you know, depending on how far [how many manhole covers away] you could hit the ball. I played basketball also, but by that time, I was already in junior high school.

Q: What subjects interested you most in junior high?

HAUBEN: Absolutely no question about it. It was at that time called social studies, which simply meant a combination of geography and history. That's what I loved.

Q: Any particular areas intrigued you?

HAUBEN: What intrigued me, of course, was the Middle East, because I'd come from there. Also, Africa, Latin America, Southeast Asia, and China. I was really interested in China. Chinese history. So I found all of these fascinating. I would turn on the radio when I was in junior high school, and you'd have the Spanish language broadcast. So they're playing this wonderful mambo music, because that was the dance craze at the time, Cuban music. Right? I'm saying, "Gee, I really wish I could understand the lyrics." That's one reason why I chose Spanish as my foreign language. At that time, foreign language training started in the eighth grade. In Spanish, I was generally at the very top of my class.

Q: We were still speaking German at home?

HAUBEN: Yes, of course; that had something to do with my language aptitude. Right?

Q: So you really, you had three languages in which you were fluent?

HAUBEN: Yeah, and I still do.

Q: By the time you're in junior high, what are we looking towards being? In other words, what do you think you wanted to do?

HAUBEN: Oh well, what did I want to be? Well, I actually thought from my reading, and since my parents had a subscription to the New York Museum of Natural History's monthly magazine, I read really avidly about explorations into the territory of the tribes of the upper Amazon. So, at that time, when asked, what do I want to be, I always answered, "I'd like to be an anthropologist." I imagined myself going on these expeditions, perhaps discovering a lost tribe, and so forth.

Q: So where did you go to high school?

HAUBEN: So then I went to our local high school, New Utrecht High School, which was located in a neighborhood called Bensonhurst. A very Italian neighborhood; a nice, cozy mafia neighborhood. It was interesting. It was not a bad school. That's where I graduated from.

Q: You know I gather your school system, the city's, had a remarkably fine reputation, despite having all the immigrants and the problems at all that. How did you find the various groups. Did they get along together?

HAUBEN: Yeah, actually pretty well. Yeah, amazingly. Look at the ethnic groups in my high school. It was not particularly diverse. Blacks were not yet integrated to the point when you had busing. So what you had were basically two kinds of people in my high school: 60 percent Italian, 40 percent "Jewish," with Jewish defined as Jews who came from the Russian Empire at the turn of the century, or beginning in the 1880s. These Jews came from either the Baltic states, which meant mainly Lithuania, or [most of them] from the Carpathian Mountains in what was then the Russian part of what became Poland. This region is now in Ukraine. That's where most of these people came from, from little villages where they lived in wooden cabins. That accounts for some of the characteristics of that population. Now, probably at least 95 percent of the Jews in the United States come from that particular background. They were Yiddish speakers, their religion was Hasidic Judaism, which was a local cult that started in the year 1700, roughly, give or take, in those Carpathian Mountains. I didn't realize what all that meant until a few years ago, when I was watching National Geographic on TV. They had a show on the Carpathian Mountains, and I learned that that area is to this day the most unspoiled wilderness in Europe. That's where the Jews lived, the ones who came to the U.S. So basically, it was the lair of wolves, bears, and Jews. Perhaps this accounts for the fact that in many ways some of these Jewish folks were singularly lacking in sophistication. As someone once famously remarked, "The Jews earn like Episcopalians, but they vote like Puerto Ricans."

Q: Well, did you find that you were picked on or anything like that, because you were German?

HAUBEN: No, I'll tell you only one episode and I wasn't really hurt in any way. First of all, the Jews and the Italians seemed to get along quite well. I mean, though, generally, the career paths were different. The Jews wound up going to college, the Italians wound up as cops, but that was their choice. There were some very, very bright Italians, who did go quite far. Anyway, the point is the only episode I remember was in the sixth grade in elementary school, where we talked about our particular background, sort of a "show and tell" in class, if you will, and I mentioned my German background; and immediately after school, the Jewish kids in the class surrounded me and said, You killed my grandma! I said, "What are you talking about? I didn't kill anybody. Are you nuts?" Anyway, that was the only episode where I was singled out. Normally I wouldn't have been. In high school, my Italian friends admired me because of my German heritage. To this day my

oldest friend, David, is an Italian guy who still lives in New York. He retired as a judge recently. Which is not bad for a kid from the neighborhood.

Q: Very, very good.

HAUBEN: So, the Italian guys were some of my best friends. Another buddy's mom, Mrs. Gerace, sort of took care of me. Remember, both my parents' worked during my high school and even my college years. I remember Christmas dinner at Mrs. Gerace's—Those wonderful, multi course Italian Christmas dinners; one of the entrees was usually absolutely delicious clams on linguini.

Q: What was the dating pattern in I guess junior high or high school? Was there a dating pattern?

HAUBEN: Well, we had our friends and the gals that they knew, so we had, like, a crowd, our crowd. You would usually wind up with somebody's former girlfriend whose relationship had recently broken up for whatever reason. So, the girls I dated were drawn from our crowd, generally. Actually, most of these girls happen to have been of the Jewish persuasion.

Q: Were you a heavy reader at the time?

HAUBEN: What I didn't like about school, especially college, was that it interfered with my reading, because I liked to read two books a week. They might have been just Zane Grey novels or whatever, but I liked to read two books a week, at least. Of course, you have to do schoolwork, which interferes with your reading. Right? But anyway, I still read as much as I could. I was a great reader. Absolutely.

Q: In high school, what courses were you taking that you liked?

HAUBEN: Well, again, I loved history. Whether it was world history or American, I did well at both, but I loved world history more. I did well in English. At that time, you didn't get a B, C or D, you got numerical grades in high school. I liked Spanish a lot. In Spanish, English, and History, I usually would get a ninety-six or ninety-seven, even a ninety-eight. Which is definitely very good. In math, less. In science I actually did okay. I didn't realize my weakness in math fully at the time. I did okay in physics, and I didn't like chemistry. Maybe that was because I didn't like to fool around with test tubes and so forth; I was a little awkward in the lab. To this day I'm a lousy cook. So I mean, I think it's that same syndrome.

Q: Yeah. It's interesting how many people in the Foreign Service of all the courses they took as kids, math was pretty far down the line.

HAUBEN: Yeah. Well, I took it but I didn't do that well. The older I got, the harder the math course was, the worse I did. Let me put it that way. I still got a grade like

ninety-five in high school geometry, which you took as a sophomore. By the time I did advanced algebra as a senior in high school, I think I was down to only a seventy, which is not good. In college, I only took one math course. Geology majors in my college could get away with taking "math for non science majors," believe it or not. So that's what I did. It was basically advanced algebra, and what I got in it was a D. I was ecstatic, because if you got a D, you didn't have to repeat the course. Had I got an F, I would have had to repeat the course. The same thing in chemistry. As a college freshman, I had to take chemistry because I was a geology major. I did great in my geology courses, got As, but in chemistry, I got a D. In chemistry lab, I got a D, but only by the skin of my teeth. I came very close to getting an F.

Q: Where did you go to high school?

HAUBEN: The name of the high school was New Utrecht High School, Utrecht being in Holland. That was the name given to the part of Brooklyn in which I lived by the original Dutch settlers, you know, in the sixteen hundreds. Anyway, the high school was called New Utrecht High School and was on New Utrecht Avenue, in Bensonhurst, a nice Italian neighborhood. It was a public high school. Oh, a number of interesting people came from my neighborhood. Dr. Fauci who is now the COVID guy, he's from the neighborhood. He didn't go to that high school, though. His parents sent him to a Jesuit High School in Manhattan. Every time you see an Italian name, and it's a person of some prominence, if they came from New York, they probably came from Brooklyn. If they came from Brooklyn, they probably came from that neighborhood.

A distinguished graduate of my high school and a neighborhood guy is someone whom you perhaps knew: Philip Habib.

Q: Oh my God. Yes.

HAUBEN: Well, Phil went to my high school, although I didn't know him, since he was a few years older than me.

Q: I always think of him—I mean, he had an obviously very distinguished career. But as a young boy in high school, he was what is known as a Shabbos goy.

HAUBEN: Well, I know what that means. I didn't know that about Phil.

Q: Explain what that is for people who are reading this.

HAUBEN: Literally, it means "Sabbath gentile" in Yiddish. Because of the Biblical admonition not to do anything that might be construed as work on the Sabbath, devout East European Jews would find a Christian, usually a young fella, who would go to their homes and turn on the lights, and so forth—-the small, mundane tasks seen from the fundamentalist point of view as prohibited on the Sabbath. Now, I don't know the extent to which that would have applied in my neighborhood at the time, as most of the local

Jews were not particularly religious. But he certainly could have performed *Shabbos goy* duties for some people.

Q: How did Jews fit in in those days?

HAUBEN: Well they fitted in well. I mean, in high school, students had their own clubs, little fraternities and so forth. High school level. Right? Actually, fraternities and sororities as such were more of a Jewish thing. I mean, the Jews did that with an eye toward a future of belonging to a college fraternity. The Italians had "clubs." So we had a club in high school. We rented a basement in a frame house in a strictly Italian neighborhood, and the house was owned by a guy named Sal Messina. Rent was fifty bucks a month, and that was our club. So we named the club "The Fire Trap." The president of the club was my buddy Mike, who's mom served those great Italian dinners I mentioned. Most of the kids in our club were Italian. There were some Jews, which didn't really matter, because what mattered then was what neighborhood you came from. The guys in our club had first had a club in the basement of one of the tenement houses in which they lived, on 65th Street. I lived on 45th Street, twenty blocks away, but they kept urging me, sixteen years old, a junior in high school, to come and hang around with them. So I was hugely honored because normally kids will, you know, exclude someone who isn't from their "turf."

So here I was, an outsider, and they asked me to join them. Then later, when we were seniors in high school, we started renting from Sal Messina, and we had The Fire Trap. What did we do in the club? Well, we would have parties with our dates, which we called cocktail parties. Yeah, you'd bring a date and there would be dancing. Social dancing was what you did in those days, and you'd be having a cup of scotch or whatever. We did drink quite a bit, I have to admit, even at that young age. The older guys were eighteen, which was the legal drinking age in New York State. So the older ones would buy booze for the rest of us. Another thing we did in junior high and high school was sing. Now, this was a fad in New York and in many other big cities in the U.S. at the time. So there was a kind of music that was enjoyed by black folks. It's called R&B [Rhythm and Blues]. One of its permutations was vocal group rhythm and blues, a genre nowadays known as "doo-wop," but never, ever called that in those days. I sang in vocal groups—mostly ballads.

Now look, my voice changed earlier than most of the other kids my age. This type of music always required a bass singer to sing some of the background. Right? The lead singer would be a tenor. The group was usually a quartet. But one voice had to be the bass. Because my voice changed early, I did the bass, "Do-do-do-do-doo," while the lead singer would be singing, "Goodnight, Sweetheart, well it's time to go—" or whatever— It was the easiest part in the song, but I was the only one who could do it. I became suddenly in demand for all these little vocal groups that we had. That was actually an important part of our life, that music. There was a disc jockey named Alan Freed who gave that music the name "Rock and Roll." He started off with a show in Cleveland. That's the reason the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame is located in Cleveland. Solely for that

reason. He always said it was not a new kind of music. He was a disc jockey playing rhythm and blues and he decided to call it rock and roll, because the term rock and roll appeared so often in these songs. However, one must note that in these songs, the term rock and roll meant one thing only, it meant the sex act. So anyway there was a song by a black blues singer named Wynonie Harris, "All She Wants to Do is Rock [Rock and Roll All Night Long]." Anyway, I think that particular song more than any other inspired him to name the music rock and roll music. But we mostly sang the slow ones—blues-based ballads, you know, the nice love songs and they were actually hard to sing. Yeah, so it was challenging. There was a dance one would do to the slowies, called "the fish"—a variant of the fox trot. In New York, its popularity extended even to the white kids. Yet nowadays, one can hardly find anyone who's even heard of it— It's as if it never existed—

We didn't sing to entertain other people. In the summer, we would sing on street corners; in the winter, we would sing in the boys' bathroom at school, which was hard because it was always smoke-filled. However, we didn't sing so that people could hear us. We sang for that recording session which would never happen. So we kind of all pretended that someday we were going to record this and we will rehearse for that. That was what drove us to sing, and there were vocal groups singing all over New York, a lot more of them in Harlem and the other black neighborhoods, because this was their music. But the Italians did a good imitation, including me, even though I'm not Italian.

Q: Well I take it all of you smoked?

HAUBEN: You know, I never did; I'm one of the few that never did. Not until later when I started smoking cigars. Although in all honesty, even cigars, I didn't inhale. But to this day, you know, seventy-six years old, I would really like, before I cash in my chips, to have just one more Romeo y Julieta Corona from Cuba. But no, I did not smoke, but everybody else did. They didn't laugh at me for it or anything like that. You didn't have to, but most people did.

Q: Are you already speaking Spanish at this time?

HAUBEN: Yeah, but not well. I mean because what they taught you wasn't to speak. Right? They taught you Spanish literature. Actually, it started off as instruction in Spanish grammar. I mastered the grammar, and then went on to do some reading. In college, you see, at that time, the requirement was that if you majored in a science, you could not have Spanish as your foreign language. You had to have either German or Russian. I had no interest whatsoever in things Russian. So I picked German as my foreign language. I was living at home and my mom was helping me. I got honors in German. I had to write a paper on Hermann Hesse's *Steppenwolf*. So I passed my German courses with flying colors. I only had to take two semesters of German. But I loved Spanish.

So what I did was I kept up on my own. By the time I was in college, I was an avid fan of

Cuban music—mambo, salsa, as it's now called. So I love that stuff. So I read everything I could. I bought Spanish books and a dictionary. Then there were even a couple of books that had Spanish short stories, one column Spanish, one column in the English translation. I did everything I could to improve my Spanish on my own simply because I loved it. Because the drinking age was eighteen, by the time I was a college sophomore, I hung around the Spanish language bars. To this day, my Spanish really has surpassed my German in fluency, and I speak with a highly detectable Puerto Rican accent, of which I am proud. And then I discovered the Palladium. The Palladium Ballroom in New York was a beautifully decorated dancehall that was billed, quite justifiably, as "The home of Latin Music" worldwide. I first went there in 1963. So that became our hangout every Friday night. I guess I was somewhat of a leader by then, because my friends all followed me there. "Mike wants to go to the Palladium. Okay, we'll all go." So we went there every Friday night. The top bands of that genre, the top bands in the world, were performing live. It was just fantastic. I did that until I left New York. By then, I guess, I was grooming myself for a career that would, one way or another, take me to Latin America.

Q: What were you taking in college?

HAUBEN: Well, I majored in geology, but there were a lot of required courses you had to take at the time. They rolled into one course anthropology, sociology, and psychology, and they'd call it social science. I had to take that as a freshman and did very well at that. Of course, English meant English literature. I did really well at that. History, we definitely had to take that. World history was very interesting. Yeah, I had loved that even in high school. I remember doing an honors history course when I was still in high school. You had to pick a country and you wrote a paper on that country, but you had to submit installments every week. So I picked Spain, understandably enough. Many evenings, I'd be working on that paper, late. I had become, by my high school years, a really avid jazz fan—modern jazz. There was a disc jockey who became a legend, named Symphony Sid. I found him on the radio. And so, while working on my history paper that Spring of 1959, I'm listening to Symphony Sid playing jazz on the radio. His show was midnight to five am, and he played all the greats of modern jazz, Dizzy Gillespie, Charlie Parker, and the singers like Sarah Vaughn and King Pleasure, and those were all just magnificent. Anyway, that was a great interest of mine. Music was always very important to me.

Q: You mentioned sort of going together as a gang, does that continue to occur in high school?

HAUBEN: Yeah, it did. Well, we had our club and then we had one in college. I gave that one the name Windsor House. It was in a rented basement. We had dances and parties. I was the president. It was the same old crowd, but this time, they figured that I deserved to be president because I found the place and it had been my brainchild. Now, that was after I had applied to a college club and got blackballed. This one was mainly Jewish, not surprising considering that the student body of Brooklyn College was overwhelmingly

Jewish. So I'm a freshman in college, and I applied to join this club. The members interviewed me and asked me a question, "If a black guy wants to join, how would you vote? Would you vote for him or not?" I told the truth, "Look, in my opinion, it's the individual that counts. If it's a black guy, I don't give a damn; if he's good, I'm voting for him." Apparently, they didn't like that, because I didn't pass muster. I'm sure it's because of that question, and so I wasn't allowed to join that particular organization. So, I got my friends together, and we formed our own club. We called it Windsor House, and we had great fun.

Q: Was there prejudice then?

HAUBEN: Yeah, but less than later. I mean, I would go up to the Apollo Theater to listen to jazz, you know, before I was old enough to be admitted to a place that served drinks—The Apollo Theater was a movie house. They'd have Miles Davis and Thelonious Monk and other wonderful jazz stars and it was in Harlem and I never had any problem at all. It was later on, once the civil rights agitation took hold, that a lot of the problems manifested themselves. I used to patronize the Pleasant Lounge in Coney Island and the Fat Man's Bar in downtown Brooklyn—black joints—I had absolutely no problem whatsoever.

Q: It's amazing how we've gone through these stages where it was acceptable or not. I mean, the whole thing, of course, sounds silly.

HAUBEN: Well, you're absolutely right.

Q: I must say as a man who's in his early '90s. Now, I look upon— I mean, what the hell are these prejudices about skin?

HAUBEN: I couldn't agree more, Stu. You're absolutely correct. I'm sure that probably motivated me to some degree because what happened was, after college, I went to graduate school down in Texas, because University of Texas Austin is a great geology school. I decided I didn't like it, luckily in my first week there. So I switched majors; one could do that with great ease. I switched to their Institute of Latin American Studies and took a couple of courses, an anthropology and archaeology course, on Meso-America, and I knew that after that semester, I wouldn't continue. I didn't like the academic life anymore and wanted to do something. While there, I applied for the Peace Corps. I was so enamored of this Cuban music, the drumming, and so forth, that I decided I really wanted to see how that music manifested itself in its homeland, which was West Africa. I really wanted to go to Nigeria as a Peace Corps volunteer. So I filled out all those papers there in graduate school in Austin—by now it's 1966, and I got accepted. I actually had to lie to them, because one of the questions asked, "Do you speak a foreign language?'' Had I said Spanish, I would have wound up in an Indian village in the high Andes at thirteen thousand feet, and I really didn't want to freeze my ass off. I wanted to go and see the origins of Cuban drumming in Africa. An unforeseen stroke of luck: to my amazement, and I didn't know this until I got there, but at that time, to Nigerian women and Nigerians

in general, white was beautiful. And there I was, a white guy.

Q: What was social life like at school?

HAUBEN: Well, again, I was still living at home. I mean, it was a commuter college. My social life centered on that little club that we had. Otherwise, it was going to our hangout, the New York Palladium Ballroom every Friday night. Friday night, by the way, was African American night, which is to say, an overwhelming number of the customers there were black folks. Not Hispanic blacks, but what we at that time used to simply call "good folks from down home." In other words, real American black folks, but they were the world's best Latin dancers. Everybody dressed nicely, guys would come in their tuxedos. It was really a fantastic place. So I thought that music was very important. The ladies were mostly all African American. They would never turn you down if you asked them to dance, very graciously, and they basically taught me how to dance.

Q: Oh, I used to go to those dances. I'm such a terrible dancer. I really never had much guts as far as getting to ask a lady to dance with me, but I've watched.

HAUBEN: Well, I found it's always a good idea, if lessons are offered, it's foolish not to take them and actually lessons were offered there. I didn't take them but had I done so, I would have been better at it.

Q: When you got to college, what were you pointed towards?

HAUBEN: Well, again, I majored in geology. I really think at that point, I was looking to wind up in a career somewhere in Latin America, but one that maybe would involve some outdoor work. That's why I majored in geology. Maybe working for an oil company in Peru or wherever. I'm sure it would have been doable had I stayed in graduate school in geology, but at that point, I switched and went to Africa instead.

Q: So did you have the Peace Corps get you to Africa?

HAUBEN: Yes. Exactly. Then when I came back from Africa, and I was looking for a job, the Peace Corps would alert you to job opportunities. They would send out info to the Peace Corps members about future job opportunities, particularly if these were government jobs. One of the opportunities offered was working in Vietnam. Now I have to tell you, actually, when I joined the Peace Corps, at the back of my mind was something I had seen in 1964 back in New York. In the *New York Times*, it was either '64 or '65, there was a full page ad for jobs in Vietnam for young guys. It was the counterinsurgency program, and it really looked fascinating to me. I thought, this is what I want to do! When I joined the Peace Corps, in the back of my mind, I thought this might be one avenue of approach that I might take that might get me into that type of a job. Little did I know that that was exactly what they were looking for, returned Peace Corps volunteers. Anyway, I had this information on possible jobs. I was going to go to the U.S. Agency for International Development [USAID] after Africa to explore this

further.

So when I got back from Africa, I jumped on a Trailways bus and went down to Washington from New York, and walked into personnel at USAID, and said, "Well, I'm a Spanish speaker, and I'd like to do development work in Latin America." And they said, Well, to tell you the truth, for Latin America, we'd like you to have a master's degree, preferably in agricultural economics, and I didn't have anything like that. And then they said, However, we do have another possibility, which is a job in the counterinsurgency program in Vietnam. Of course, as soon as he said that, since that had been one of my original motivating factors to joining Peace Corps, I was overjoyed. So they said, Okay then you have to go to a different office. We'll arrange for you right now to be interviewed by the personnel officer, and I went up there. That lady told me, "This is a dangerous job." Naturally, I said, "Well, good." I was looking for a life of adventure. I didn't say that. What I said was, "That doesn't bother me." Then she gave me a bunch of forms to fill out, and she told me, "The most you can count on is two tours; a tour is two years, followed by home leave. It's not a permanent job," and so forth, and so on. That's fine, this is what I wanted. I went home, filled out the papers, and sent them in. Three months later, after my security clearance had been completed, I got a telephone call from USAID saying, "Mr. Hauben, my name is Queenie Johnson from personnel at USAID. Welcome aboard."

Q: I want to take you back before because we've skipped over your time as a Peace Corps. I'd like to cover that. Where'd you go and what were you doing?

HAUBEN: For Peace Corps Nigeria, we started off in training, where we learned the Igbo language, a tribal language of the old Eastern Region—actually, southeastern Nigeria. I also picked up a lot of Pidgin English. The Nigerians have their own West African Pidgin, which was a language originally spread by British sailors. One can learn it rather easily. That's what people mostly spoke, as it was the *lingua franca* that allowed people of the different tribal groups to communicate. The training was three months in California, at the University of California, San Diego, at the Scripps Beach Campus. So that was not bad at all. And then off I went to Nigeria.

We worked in what was called the Oil Palm Rehabilitation Scheme, a World Bank funded program. Oil Palm was the cash crop in southern Nigeria, because of the tropical climate. It was a native plant, and the oil of the palm was a staple for cooking. The tree could also be tapped. The sap would then be drunk as palm wine. The Rehabilitation Scheme involved replanting significant acreage according to the latest scientific, agronomical research findings. The objective was to get a good variety of tree that would be high yielding and could bring in a lot of foreign exchange. These "rehabilitated" plantations would be managed on a cooperative basis, and each village was to have one. So my job was to organize the villagers into doing that. Preliminarily, my job was to survey the land and divide it up into plots. Each family would be allocated a plot and each family head would be a member of the co-op. Having been a geology major was most helpful because I had learned surveying.

I was stationed in a village called Unwana in Afikpo District. One of the fathers of modern Nigeria lived there. He was an impressive old gentleman, Sir Francis Ibiam. I had the honor of being introduced to him shortly after my arrival, at the annual village meeting, which the whole village would attend. The elders would give speeches. Sir Francis welcomed me. Unlike the other men who were all wearing woolen suits despite the ninety-five degree heat, Sir Francis was wearing sandals, white socks, khaki trousers, and a short sleeve, white shirt, open collar, no tie. Unpretentious. He was a little guy, a thin guy. Most of the other prominent men were heavy, I mean, obese. Southern Nigerians are not tall, but they did tend to get heavy. Anyway, there was Sir Francis, saying how grateful he was that the United States had sent me to the village, and so forth. I was humbled; I gave my speech, but I was really almost tongue tied. Ultimately, we were pulled out of there because the Nigerian Civil War ensued—the so-called Biafra-Nigerian Civil War.

So therefore, in 1967 I found myself transferred to another African country, Malawi, which had been the former Nyasaland Protectorate. A British protectorate. That was in southern Africa. In Malawi, there were also World Bank projects being planned to provide foreign exchange. Malawi was desperately poor, it was a hell of a lot poorer than Nigeria. People were dressed in rags. It was shockingly poor. Anyway, the projects in question were irrigation projects. Because I had majored in geology and knew how to survey, I was assigned to the Republic of Malawi's Irrigation Branch. As precursors to the large investment that the World Bank would make, it wanted some smaller farms established to test the acceptability of new techniques. Before they embarked on the massive infrastructure development that would be required for a major irrigation scheme. Right? So, these small "model farms" would be irrigated as well. One of these projects was, lo and behold, to be the rice farm of the president of Malawi, Dr. H. Kamuzu Banda. The H stood for Hastings and he was also known as Dr. Hastings Banda. He was an MD who got his doctorate in a college in the United States at the turn of the century. He was very old already by 1967. So I became the establisher and first manager of the president of Malawi's rice farm, among other things. That was a bit nerve wracking, but actually I did well.

Q: Did you know much about rice farming before you got the job?

HAUBEN: What I did know was about irrigation. I knew hydrology, you know, how to calculate the discharge in a stream and so forth. But because I didn't know anything about rice, I had several weeks of training right there in country. I actually got quite good. I was certainly able, after a while, to look at a rice field and tell you, right offhand, how many tons yield they were going to get, just by looking at the plants way before harvest. They taught me what fertilizer to apply, how to do it, what were the techniques. I mean, there was a standard technique that we were applying. It was much improved, in terms of the yield, over the traditional method.

They gave me some members of the Malawi Young Pioneers, which were political thugs,

to be my assistants. We did a lot of surveying work on some other potential sites. I was quite busy and it was a high profile job. The airstrip for that district was across the street from my house. People would arrive in the Air Malawi Beechcraft, cabinet ministers from Dr. Banda's cabinet coming on his behalf to check the status of the farm. I would drive them out there and give them a tour and a little talk. That happened very frequently, and we did well. We also had Taiwanese demonstration farms provided under Taiwanese assistance to the Malawi Ministry of Agriculture. I was in charge of taking care of those folks, seeing that they got whatever they needed. I think mine was probably the most high profile position of any Peace Corps volunteer in the country at that time. So naturally, I liked it. Yeah, so that was interesting. After Malawi, I came home, took the bus down to Washington, and applied for Vietnam.

Q: What was your Vietnam training like?

HAUBEN: We were at the Vietnam Training Center [VTC]. The VTC was in Arlington, across the river from Washington. Right? My training lasted ten months, eight months of which was language. They cut it short because I achieved the rank of desired proficiency early. I had a high language aptitude score of seventy-six out of eighty, and did well. My language class consisted of only one other Foreign Service officer [FSO] and myself. So it was one teacher to two of us. The only thing that would have been better is one on one, but this was almost as good. I proceeded well with the language part. The first six weeks of training were an introduction to Vietnamese area studies and counterinsurgency. We had lots of literature and we had with us for a couple of months the guy who basically invented British counterinsurgency, which was the basis for what we were trying to do in Vietnam, or thought we were.

Q: He was a general wasn't he?

HAUBEN: No. So the person best known in British counterinsurgency was Sir Robert Thompson. Right? Well, this guy was a colleague of Sir Robert's in Malaya, and the people at the training center, though they may have been wrong, all thought that this fellow was Sir Robert's ghost writer. His name was Dennis Duncanson. Duncanson had an OBE [Order of the British Empire]. A Scotsman, a short, sort of roly-poly guy, elderly, always wore a double breasted suit. If I were to recommend only one book about Vietnam to someone who was going there in my capacity, I would say, read Duncanson's *Government and Revolution in Vietnam*, which was, of course, required reading for us. Duncanson was our annual visiting professor and he lectured and led seminar discussions so that we could interact with him.

Basically what we were taught was: WHAM [winning hearts and minds]— Put a scratch through that. Rather, counterinsurgency, like insurgency, we were taught, is all about control. If you control the populace, and you control commodities, then you will have licked the insurgents at their game, which was Maoist insurgency. So what we were taught was that the flow of commodities had to be closely monitored and restricted. Commodities, meaning mainly rice, food, medicines, ammunition, and oil. You're talking

mainly about rice, because that was a commodity acquired locally. You could not allow the insurgents to get their hands on that. So, strict controls had to be instituted. A second, crucial aspect of a control regime was controlling the people to the extent that you placed them in a position in which they would be unable to be recruited by the enemy and unable to provide for the enemy logistically, even had they decided to do so. So that meant population control and commodity control.

Now, in fact, in Vietnam, commodity control was a cruel joke. Not only did it not exist, but you had the Shadow Supply System. Its systemization meant that ARVN [Army of the Republic of Vietnam] was one of the top suppliers of the North Vietnamese Army divisions. What did they supply them with? Everything: medicines, POL uniforms, munitions—well, this to a lesser extent because they were getting their munitions from China and Russia and other bloc countries. So you had the Shadow Supply System with kickbacks going all the way up to the president's palace. Commodity controls were not instituted to any appreciable extent in Region Three where I worked. However, population control actually worked pretty well, as people were placed in settlements that were under government control, and where they could not, even if they wanted to, be recruited by the enemy recruiters.

North Vietnamese literature which has since become available confirms that this basically worked. We are taught that we were to be advisers to the Vietnamese and they would do population control. They did quite a bit of that. The commodity control they did not. Then of course, high on Duncanson's list was neutralizing the enemy infrastructure. So you had Operation Phoenix, but that was kind of a joke for a couple of reasons: one was fear of reprisal; two, money—because Republic of Vietnam officials were being heavily bribed. And those members of the enemy's political apparatus who were actually adjudicated wound up with ridiculously light sentences. The infrastructure was not rolled up. Those members of the infrastructure who were killed were usually killed as collateral damage in fighting between either ARVN or territorial forces on the one hand and the enemy on the other. This is because in most cases, the party cadre resided with the enemy combatant units, not within the civilian population.

Q: Operation Phoenix was essentially to kill the leaders of the insurgency?

HAUBEN: That's right, it was to "neutralize the infrastructure" either by capturing, convincing to defect, or killing the Communist Party cadre. Much had been said about how this was carried out to excess, because the Vietnamese were responding to U.S. pressure. I must point out that this is something that never happened in Vietnam: no Vietnamese ever did anything in response to U.S. pressure. They would do two things if U.S. pressure were exerted. One, they would simply ignore the U.S. advisers absolutely if they were advised to do something they themselves did not want to do. Or they would cook the books. So the idea that pressure from American advisers caused them to kill innocents in Operation Phoenix, I am convinced, is a total calumny. Anyone who had been on the ground where I had would have laughed at the accusation, since such a notion is risible.

Q: Okay, well, now we'd like to get some dates. When did you go to Vietnam? Well, first place where, how long were you trained? You said about eleven months?

HAUBEN: Well, my training lasted nine months.

Q: What years were you in training?

HAUBEN: So I started in October of 1970 and left on 10 July 1971 to go to Vietnam.

Q: How effective do you think the training was?

HAUBEN: Well, I think the training was actually very good. The language training was fine although the standard fluency, I think, had been considerably lowered as compared to other languages. Vietnamese is a hard language, and I really didn't complain. We were taught the southern dialect which is fine for speaking to villagers. But because of the preponderance of northerners in both the civil service and the officer corps, maybe the northern dialect might have been more appropriate. It is what is taught in the U.S. military schools, but the southern dialect was pleasing to the southern people and was therefore helpful in getting some important insights that reflected the often overlooked southern points of view.

Anyway I think the training center was actually highly effective. The reading we did on counterinsurgency and on the nature of the communist insurgency was all very good. We had weapons training as well, and I actually became quite proficient at handgun shooting, which was not necessarily what you needed most. I also became quite good at knowing how to speak on a radio. Our introduction to Vietnamese culture and exposure to Vietnam's history were all necessary, I think.

On counterinsurgency, we were taught not necessarily what was being done, but what ought to be done in an ideal counterinsurgency program, which, as I say, was modeled on the British control method—it having been realized through years of experience that hearts and minds is largely an irrelevancy. But where it failed was in recognizing that the enemy would adapt as we won the insurgency aspect thereby denying the enemy a recruiting base. What the enemy would simply do, would be to replace all of that with a conventional invasion. You can hardly blame the school for that, I think. Given conditions extant in 1969–1970, I think the school was quite effective. What they taught, I think, was probably indispensable to all of us. Sure as hell helped me. Our trainers gave me a frame of reference with which to look at what was going on then and what would happen in the future.

Q: Well, could you speak passable Vietnamese by then?

HAUBEN: Yeah, I actually could. Again, it would probably have been more effective had the emphasis perhaps been on the Vietnamese used in government circles rather than that

which a rice farmer would speak. In other words, the intellectual level of the vocabulary and the grammar we were taught could have been elevated somewhat. I think we would then have then been more effective. But by and large, we came out of the school able to converse. So I shouldn't really complain.

Q: So you were in Vietnam from when to when?

HAUBEN: So I was in Vietnam from 4 August 1971 until my evacuation on 21 April 1975, one week before the very end. So I had almost four years.

Q: Where did you serve?

HAUBEN: I served all my time in Military Region Three, earlier known as Third Corps Tactical Zone, or simply III Corps. My first assignment was on the Province Advisory Team in Tây Ninh. That was a hugely interesting place and I learned a lot. Security had been a lot worse in Tây Ninh than it was by the time I got there. The question always in my mind was why, and I asked anyone I could, Vietnamese and American team members, Vietnamese counterparts, Vietnamese military officers, Territorial Forces, ARVN. The answer was always the same: no, it had nothing to do with the pacification projects. The reason was the decimation of the main force enemy units in the kinetic phase of the war 1967–1970. Three enemy divisions were our nemesis in Tây Ninh. The Cambodian incision of May 1970 drove those three divisions or their remnants off their perch on the Cambodia-Tây Ninh border, and drove them well into Cambodia. Thereafter security improved immediately. What were those divisions? The Fifth, Seventh, and Ninth NVA. They were the enemy main force units that we faced. They were the source of the problem.

Q: Will you just kind of walk through this project, because I think it's extremely important and people forget about, you know, what we're up to at all?

HAUBEN: Yes.

Q: Where did you go and how do you operate?

HAUBEN: Okay so the idea was, we had our own reports to write and we had to write our contributions to each monthly Province Report. The monthly Province Reports were merely classified confidential. Nevertheless they would have interesting material in them. I found throughout my tenure in Vietnam, that the higher the classification of a document, the more worthwhile it was to read it.

We had our counterparts, and we worked with the counterparts, providing "oversight." I was what was called the social welfare adviser. That meant serving as adviser to the Vietnamese Social Welfare Department. I would oversee, report on and suggest improvements, if necessary in writing. This government of Vietnam [GVN] department dealt with internally displaced people, whom we erroneously referred to as refugees.

They weren't refugees from a foreign country, they were people who had been internally displaced because their village was either destroyed by fighting or they had been physically moved by the authorities. Such relocation would have been implemented because we didn't want these villagers to provide the enemy with people or goods. Or, their houses had been burned down in fighting or destroyed by bombing or artillery strikes. They were war victims of one kind or another. Such people received payments from the government, a modest stipend, and roofing sheets to rebuild their homes, or modest funds for little projects that they could do.

To become eligible for such small Village Self Development projects, they had to organize themselves in a way that would get several families involved. We would give them a sustainable project, like some breeding stock pigs. By the way, this didn't really work as planned. Almost invariably, the breeding stock would get slaughtered every time there was a festival, such as the New Year's festival. They would eat the livestock we provided, the pigs, chickens or whatever. But anyway, they liked that. To the provincial authorities, such activities were vehicles for the time-honored tradition of bestowing patronage. There was also a rural credit program. But by then, we had wisely realized that these were not the linchpins to counterinsurgency success. That success had to do with wiping out your enemy main force units. Therefore, the task of overseeing these activities was given to a contractor, and the contractor was Eastern Construction Company, Incorporated [ECCOI], which was a Philippine company—a direct lineal descendant of Freedom Company of the Philippines, which had been formed under the aegis of Ed Lansdale years earlier in the Philippines. Ownership involved a Philippine politician named "Frisco" Johnny San Juan. So, ECCOI did the hearts and minds projects. ECCOI contractors attached to each CORDS Province Advisory Team kept track of these and did some training for the Rural Development Cadre who would organize and guide the villagers in implementing these projects.

A step up in importance was land reform, but that was outside the chain of command of our province team organizational set-up. Provision of advice and assistance to the land reform program remained under USAID, which was most reluctant to relinquish control. On the other hand, the MACV Pacification Advisory Teams—and therefore yours truly—were part of MACCORDS—CORDS for short [Civil Operations, Rural, Development Support], which was a part of the Military Assistance Command. It was directly in the military chain of command. So its head was General Abrams when I first arrived in Vietnam. In my region, the senior military guy had become General Hollingsworth by 1972, while I was still in Tây Ninh. Hollingsworth was a great fighter, and he had a civilian deputy who headed CORDS in Region Three. When I arrived that was Ambassador Funkhouser, and later, Bob Walkinshaw, and then the program was phased out pursuant to the January 1973 ceasefire.

So anyway, to back up, I was part of CORDS, serving on a military advisory team. The head of the team was a Foreign Service officer, a senior guy named Parker Wyman. The deputy was a lieutenant colonel named Jiménez. He was later replaced by a full colonel, Alfred Ring, who was a prince of a man. Ring then became the senior guy when Parker

Wyman transferred to Ethiopia.

So I was on a team of roughly fifty U.S. Army. There was Lieutenant Colonel Jimenez, a bunch of majors, some captains, a couple of lieutenants, and enlisted men. The team strength was approximately fifty. The civilians were the police advisor, the senior development advisor, who was my immediate boss, and me as his assistant. Of course, Mr.Wyman, the province senior adviser [PSA] was the fourth civilian. When I arrived there, we also had an admin officer, but he got phased out within weeks after my arrival. That position was plainly not needed. There was a guy from USDA [United States Department of Agriculture], and he was phased out. All these folks were actually superfluous. There was also a U.S. Public Health Service nurse whose job it was to advise and assist the GVN Health Department in-province. These patently superfluous slots were eliminated within weeks of my arrival. So what I handled was: social welfare projects, I mean the projects for internally displaced people, war victims of all kinds; also war veterans' projects; youth and sports. This last activity aimed to engage the youth so that they would find it less attractive to join the enemy. Okay, fair enough.

I also handled the ethnic minorities program—advising the GVN's provincial Ethnic Minorities Department. The main ethnic minority in Tay Ninh Province were the Cham people. These were Muslim Cham and they were very similar to the Malay people. I was also the Cambodian affairs advisor. The pertinent GVN department had a branch in Tay Ninh because there were a lot of ethnic Cambodians in our province. They were eligible to receive subsidies of one kind or another to help them sustain themselves. So I advised our Cambodian counterparts in assisting these Vietnamese with Cambodian extraction.

So what did I do physically? I would visit all the sites where we had any projects underway. Also, I would try to visit as many villages as possible to get to know the areas in Tây Ninh— Just to know what was going on, because I was also responsible for political reporting. Right?

Q: Could you sort of describe where Tây Ninh was?

HAUBEN: Okay. Tây Ninh is northwest of Saigon, a ninety-minute drive. As I dimly recall, it was around sixty miles. The province included the "Parrot's Beak" and the "Fishhook," Cambodian border salients. The northern half of Tay Ninh was a long standing communist base area dating back to French days called War Zone C, which was mostly unpopulated. There were a couple of settlements here and there, but they existed at the sufferance of the enemy. Lots of rain forest and some drier forest as well in the northern part. In Tay Ninh's east, you had rubber as you approached the Michelin Rubber Plantation, which was in the adjacent province.

One of the things I did right at the beginning was get in my vehicle for a drive down to villages right above the Parrot's Beak. These villages on the Cambodian border were prosperous. Stucco houses, power tillers used instead of buffaloes, and I was impressed. Only a one lane road—asphalted, but just one lane in and out. You had to go out the same

way you came in. There was no other way. One could easily be ambushed by the enemy. But anyway, there we were, and we noted PF [South Vietnamese Popular Force] guarding the culverts and little bridges. It was all flat terrain; rice land was all you could see, and then there was the Cambodian border—right there. When I came back to Tay Ninh City, Colonel Jimenez said, "Okay, Hauben, what have you been doing?" Not realizing what I had got myself into, I told him where I'd been, and he warned me never to go there again. His words were, "Hauben I don't want to have to bury you." Apparently, that was a really bad area in which the communist infrastructure ran the place, because it was immediately across the border—literally a stone's throw—from an enemy base area. The reason for the prosperity of these people was that they were selling rice to the enemy, and the enemy was paying above the market rate. That's why those people were so well off, with pickup trucks, power tillers, real stucco houses—not the reed huts you'd expect on the Plain of Reeds.

Another village I'd like to go to was Suoi Da. It had been the site of a special forces outpost, one of those star shaped forts, which had been overrun in the 1968 Tet Offensive. Here we were, in 1971, and I liked to go to Suoi Da, which is northeast of Tây Ninh City, not far, but on a dirt road. You never knew on that particular road. I would do my best to drive in the ruts of whatever vehicle had been there before me, and drive fast because there was always a fear of driving over a mine and getting blown up. But anyway, shortly after I arrived in Tây Ninh, we got a message that the VC [Vietcong] had been in Suoi Da, right in that little hamlet, that night. And this was the next morning. We were to go there and see if there had been any damage, if anybody needed any relief funds or roofing sheets or whatever. There were also some ethnic minorities living there. So I went there with my Department of Ethnic Minorities counterpart and the provincial social welfare chief. We had several vehicles and I took along my M-16, which I had been issued with a pouch filled with magazines, because you never know. Right? The ethnic minorities chief—himself a Cham—had a handgun stuck in his belt. The social welfare chief didn't have any weapons. As we alighted from our vehicles, the village chief walked up to him and immediately thrust a rifle into his hands. Well, we walked through the village knowing the enemy was here last night. The possibility existed that they'd left somebody behind. So the village chief was slinking around his own village, sticking his head gingerly around buildings to peek around the corner into the alleyways off the muddy path that we were on. Slinking cautiously—almost sneaking—around his own village. But anyway, based on what the villagers disclosed to us, yeah, the VC came in, did this and did that, probably spent the night with their girlfriends. I came to the conclusion that the visit had obviously been unopposed.

But anyway, I got the feel of the place. The locals pointed to the tree line saying, The VC frequently appear at that tree line. They'd be waving at us or jeering. This village was at the base of Tây Ninh Mountain, properly known as Nui Ba Den (Black Lady's Mountain). It was a rhyolite intrusive, a cone several thousand feet high sticking above the flat plane. The top of the mountain was a U.S. communications station governing our communications for Southeast Asia. The inside of the mountain was a maze of caves, natural caves. These were filled with the North Vietnam Army. So that was where we

were at. It was all hugely interesting. I would talk to people and try to get a feel for the situation and write it all up, and classify the reports. So that comprised a heavy part of my duties.

Then there was the case of the Cambodian villagers in Cambodia immediately to the north of the Tây Ninh border, not far from where COSVN Headquarters had been before the Cambodian incursion. [COSVN governed communist operations in the southern portion of the RVN [Republic of Vietnam].] One day these villagers were rounded up by ARVN, who didn't want them to be recruited by the Khmer Rouge, and they were moved inside Vietnam. They were at a place called Katum. We had some Ranger advisers up there, advising an ARVN Ranger unit, who told us that a large mass of civilians, maybe a couple of thousand, had been moved from Cambodia into that area, and they probably needed some assistance. So I sort of strong armed my social welfare counterpart to come with me and we went up there to look at it. I said, "Yeah, we should do something for these people," whether or not they really needed it or not. I mean, they were rural folk who could fish and hunt and whatever. But this would be a great opportunity for the Social Welfare Service to demonstrate that they could actually do their job. It was what we were interested in: getting them to do their job. That was the second part of the advisory message. The main part of the advisory message, obviously, was simply, "Kill Communists." At the same time, you wanted the government officials to actually do what they knew was their job. "To function," in other words.

So we got these Cambodians roofing sheets. Meanwhile, they had built their own huts, and fed themselves by fishing. We got the Social Welfare Service to provide them food that was from their stock, Canadian canned fish. A great many cans were distributed. Those were all confiscated by the enemy, who really needed easily cached canned food. PAVN [People's Army of Vietnam—North Vietnamese Army] units were ensconced in the area in force—this was, after all, War Zone C. The Cambodians didn't go hungry as a result of that, because they were catching plenty of fish in the local stream. They preferred that, anyway, to the Canadian canned fish. I really learned a lot. I did a lot of reporting, and that was all very well received.

Q: I wonder how you felt about your report. Did you feel that back in Saigon, were you given good support or not?

HAUBEN: Well, it depended on what I was reporting on. If it was a report on the political situation or the military security situation, there's absolutely no question that those reports were valued and well appreciated. If the reports highlighted poor implementation of a particular program, they were not necessarily well received. I'll give you an example. Let's take the Food for Peace Program, which was generally filling a non-need. I would report on that and on how the recipient figures were inflated, and so on. These reports were routinely ignored in Saigon. In fact, when I went there, I was told, "Well, look, Mike, it doesn't matter. As long as we're distributing the food. So they're inflating the figures, big deal." Well, I thought to myself, What am I reporting that for? So there was that. But that concerned a USAID group with which we had tangential

relations, because we were under the Military Assistance Command. But my reports that went up through our channel that had to do with politics or security, I think, were well received. I got a better idea about that later on, when that was a more important part of my job.

What happened, you see, was that a ceasefire went into effect. Even before the ceasefire, positions were being eliminated because our numbers were shrinking everywhere. So my slot was eliminated and I was transferred from Tay Ninh to Gia Dinh Province, which surrounds Saigon, to do essentially the same thing. There, you know, the hot area was the Plain of Reeds, which had been enemy turf since the French days and was a major infiltration route from Cambodia. There was a village near the terminus of the Saigon River Corridor, another infiltration route, near where the Saigon and Dong Nai Rivers joined. It was in Thu-Duc District, in overgrown swamp, though if you were to sit on the roof of my vehicle, you could see the skyline of Saigon not terribly far off. Talking to the village chief there and the police chief was fascinating. First thing that happened was the cops [by that time every village had a police station]—the cops would surround my vehicle and beg me to get them transferred out of there.

As they put it, Please Mr. Adviser, get me transferred out of here before I get killed. Of course, I couldn't do that, but anyway, that gives you an idea of the type of place I'd like to visit, because that's where you learn the most. Right? The village chief eschewed convention by referring to the VC by an honorific instead of using a pejorative—in Vietnamese that would have been something in the order of "those brats." But he would refer to them as "those gentlemen" (*cac ong*), which was unheard of, of course. You did get the feeling that this place was under shared sovereignty. I mean, the enemy obviously had to have a say in what was going on. Then we spoke to a farmer. I had a good assistant who managed to buttonhole a local peasant. He was walking toward his field, and we talked to him. "Yes, I have a son. He is in the ARVN Airborne. You see the tree line three hundred meters off the road? VC will come out of the tree line, and they'll talk to us. They told me that if I had any field that I wanted to clear or work in, if it was more than three hundred meters off the road, I would be killed. They were doing this to punish me because my son is a member of the ARVN Airborne." So this does tell you something about this village. This village happened to have been an RTV [return to village], which meant that the people had been forcibly removed from that village because the area was under enemy control.

Now, security having ostensibly improved greatly everywhere, the original inhabitants were relocated back to that village. But in fact, as this was in such an important enemy infiltration route so close to Saigon, one could bet that any remaining insecurity would be found in a place like this. There was an enemy unit right there, outside the settlement, but in close proximity, and they were calling the shots. Later, at some point, a school was built as a project. The PF [Popular Force] would spend the night sleeping in that school. The enemy objected to the PF's use of the school, so they blew up the school. That act didn't injure or kill anyone, but was intended to show that they had a say in what went on in that little community. They obviously had quite a bit of say, but it was interesting that

the PF, who were, after all, local villagers, chose to defy the enemy by sleeping in the school. So it doesn't mean that shared sovereignty means no violence, plainly, but perhaps it does mean that there's a bit more attention to targeting rather than killing indiscriminately. I loved writing about that village. Such reports were extremely well received by my bosses, and I reported anecdotal information about that and other sites of questionable security as frequently as I possibly could, and covered as many such locations as I possibly could.

Q: Well, where did you sleep?

HAUBEN: Where did I live?

Q: Yeah.

HAUBEN: I was a member of the Province Advisory Team. The Province Advisory Team rented something like half a block in the outskirts of Tây Ninh City. There was the house of the owner, and then there were a bunch of prefabs that we put up for the enlisted military—and for the civilians. A fence separated the civilian section with our prefabs from the military section. The PSA [province senior advisor] and his deputy lived in the preexisting owner's house. There was another good-sized pre-existing building which had been turned into the Officers' Club. Then, in 1972, Colonel Ring integrated it so that it became the Officers'/NCO Club, in which we could all happily guzzle our Happy Hour beer. Separated from our compound by a sturdier fence was the CIA [Central Intelligence Agency] compound. This basically was one villa with a swimming pool, but they were kind and allowed all of us to use their swimming pool. I would often go over there because they had some office equipment—mainly photocopy machines, that we didn't have in our compound, and they were right next door to us. Every province had several teams. If they were significant enough, they would have a CIA team in addition to the CORDS team. So we had our CORD team, which included civilians and military, and the CIA had their team. The third group was a military intelligence detachment of the 525th Military Intelligence Group. They had their own villa, which was a couple of blocks around the corner from where we lived. Just about every province had these three U.S. teams. That's how it was until the ceasefire.

So I lived there in one of the four suites into which a little prefab house had been divided. So I had my quarters, and the other three sharing that prefab were the police adviser and two majors who worked on the Province Team as well. So that was home until I was transferred to Gia Dinh. Now, in Gia Dinh, housing was a bit more complicated. There, if you were a civilian member of the CORDS team, you moved into USAID housing in Saigon—which was a fifteen minute drive from our offices in the Gia Dinh Province Headquarters—which USAID, of course, deeply resented. USAID had no control over us. We were not doing USAID work; yet they had to provide logistical support. So they were not pleased. But anyway, I got a USAID apartment in a nice neighborhood in Saigon when I was working in Gia Dinh. That carried me until the ceasefire. Shall I proceed?

Q: Yes, please.

HAUBEN: The cease fire occurred at the end of January of 1973. The military left; the following month CORDS was phased out, literally. I mean, it was gone. Complete pull-out of the military took the next two months, but by some point in March, they were all gone. Except for the defense attaché, whose office staff remained. What happened then was a decision—I would have lost my job, but I must have had what in New York street parlance was called "a rabbi." In other words, some mentor, some well-placed guardian angel who thought well enough of me so that it was decided that maybe Mike should not be gotten rid of. So a decision was made: yes it was a good idea to keep a U.S. presence in Gia Dinh Province. This was decided even though we didn't have a full fledged CIA team there for whom we ex-CORDS civilians would normally provide rather transparent cover. So Gia Dinh would remain on the books and I was to be in charge of our residual reporting effort there. I was to be left with a couple of local nationals and an ARVN interpreter—an NCO directly under my command and control. I took over one large room of what had been the old CORDS office; the rest was given to the Gia Dinh Sector Command to do with as they pleased. I continued living in the USAID housing that I had in Saigon.

Now I was "the man" instead of the PSA. George Jacobson was the national head of CORDS, having replaced Bill Colby whose deputy he had been. "Jake" stayed on as special assistant to the ambassador for field operations. Those of us who remained—all of us former CORDS civilians—became part of his organization, special assistant to the ambassador for field operations [SAFO]; so I was under Jake. He was our boss but he didn't run us on a day to day basis; that was all done by the State Department folks. We found ourselves no longer under MACV, because there wasn't a MACV. We were no longer under the Department of Defense. What had been the office of the Regional DEPCORDS [deputy for CORDS] became a consulate general [CONGEN], headed by the guy who had been the last DEPCORDS for Region Three, Bob Walkinshaw, who now became consul general, CONGEN Three. So he and his people, whoever he designated, were my bosses. We had a regional guy—Jake's regional chief, who wrote our efficiency reports; but the CONGEN and his deputy principal officer would tell me what to do on a day to day basis. A little bit muddled, but we figured it out after a while. What were they mostly interested in? Political and military reporting, and that's what we did for the remainder of my stay in Vietnam. My reports were definitely appreciated. There's absolutely no question about that.

Q: I mean, what would you do to make your report?

HAUBEN: What I liked to do was to travel to those places that were the least secure, so that I could talk to whatever officials were there. If I could, I talked to some other people like I did in that village that I just described to you. In addition, of course, I would obtain appointments to see officers I wanted to talk to; these were "liaison meetings." So I would talk to the province chiefs. So there I was, the guy in Gia Dinh. But we were short

handed in Region Three. So to start off, they gave me three provinces instead of one. I had Gia Dinh, Bien Hoa, and Phước Long. You couldn't drive to Phuoc Long because the road went through War Zone D and was definitely not secure. You had to go there by helicopter—it was way up on the Cambodian border. I would go to each province to try to assess the situation and talk to the province chiefs. Invariably the province chief said that on a day-to-day basis, "Your liaison is my S2 [the intelligence officer of the sector staff]." This would be an RF guy, usually a captain. So that's who I would meet with on a day-to-day basis. If there was any burning issue, I would ask to speak to the province chief himself, and they were always very gracious in accommodating me. In addition, Gia Dinh is part of the Capital Military District, which was a mini-military region. The head of the Capital Military District was a Vietnamese admiral, Admiral Cang. This admiral was also the concurrent head of the Vietnamese Navy. So because Gia Dinh was under his command and control, he was one of my counterparts. So I went to see him, and it was the same thing. He said, "Just speak to my S2." But every time I wanted to talk to him, he was always available and most gracious.

When I wanted to talk to political figures, I had my staff make appointments for me to see members of the National Assembly who represented my districts. I'd frequently talk to the head of the Province Council. Also, there were military units headquartered in my area, such as General Le Minh Dao's 18th ARVN Division, which was headquartered in Bien Hoa Province. General Dao was one of the most impressive people I met in Vietnam, an incredible man. I interviewed him.

In 1974, a communist agitation propaganda effort was undertaken. It centered on Gia Dinh Province, in the urban areas and slums surrounding Saigon, which were demographically Roman Catholic North Vietnamese. Most of the North Vietnamese refugees were not the cream of the crop. They'd been impoverished peasants in North Vietnam, and were brought down because their priests said we're moving south. They were transported by our U.S. Sealift, as you know, in 1954. Anyway, they were inhabiting these slums around Saigon. The propaganda operation had to do with a Roman Catholic priest, a Father Thanh, of North Vietnamese origin, preaching against the Thieu government. The issue fastened upon was corruption, and his movement was dubbed, "The People's Anti-Corruption Movement." The embassy erroneously reported that as opposition from the right. Well it wasn't from the right. Father Thanh's political adviser was a member of the National Assembly named Duong Minh Kinh. He was someone we wanted to talk to. The movement staged demonstrations and near riots, you know, youngsters burning tires in the streets, and the government did absolutely nothing, didn't lift a finger against this for some reason. But anyway, when things of that nature started happening in Gia Dinh the deputy principal officer at the consulate said to me, "I don't want to read about this stuff going on in the paper. I want to hear about it from you before it happens." Well, I went to see the head of Special Branch, but he would only talk to the CIA guy, he wouldn't talk to me. I talked to the deputy province chief for administration, because he handled stuff like that, but he either didn't know anything or refused to say anything. So I said, "Well, we'll just go to the source. We'll go to the assemblyman who is the political adviser to the movement, and we'll make an appointment to see him.

My assistant was able to make an appointment. I went to this guy's house, there in the slums. This guy lived a Spartan existence. His English was nearly impeccable, though not accent free. This guy actually told me that he was a communist. It was incredible, and that report really ensured my career. I was the only American he would talk to. I don't know why. it was as if he thought that whatever he told me would wind up in the ear of the director of National Intelligence, which was, of course, nonsense. But anyway, I never pretended anything. But for some reason, he thought I was worth talking to—and only me. Perhaps this was a clumsy attempt to recruit me. So we'd go to his house and drink tea. There in the slum, next to his Vesper motor scooter which he kept parked in his living room, because if it was outside, it would be stolen; it was that kind of neighborhood. Of his neighbors, all fellow North Vietnamese Catholics, he would say, "Look, Mr. Hauben, this is chaos. This is anarchy. I'm sure you'll agree with me that these people need someone to tell them what to do. Who is better equipped to do that than we." And what he meant was the party. The discussion then turned to Hue—the City of Hue—then in danger of being overrun by the North Vietnamese, and to the aging Queen Mother [last Emperor Bao Dai's ancient mother], who was about to flee Hue in fear. Kinh urged calm, insisting that neither she nor anyone had anything to fear should the North Vietnamese take over.

The guy was a communist who was a member of the National Assembly. This was incredible. What he was telling me was absolute dynamite and naturally got put in a report and the report was even sent to Washington. It actually did much to ensure that, at least in Vietnam, I could count on keeping my job. Anyway, I started getting invited to CIA parties, met the chief of station, and so forth. They would ask me about the movement because Kinh wouldn't speak to any other U.S.

But anyway, that's just one episode of the things I used to do. Then there was something else that gave me great *entrée.* JCRC [Joint Casualty Resolution Center] was active at that time. This joint U.S. military unit existed in order to resolve the cases of the MIAs [Missing in Action Americans], Americans either missing in action or known to be dead, but body not recovered. Their mission was to resolve these cases, so naturally, they needed to operate in Vietnam. My association with JCRC operations started with me being designated as the Region Three liaison to these guys. Then later, when the liaison officer from the defense attaché's office finally got stationed in Bien Hoa, he assumed that responsibility. But I handled everything that had to do with those operations if they were in one of my provinces. By that time, Phước Long had passed on to someone else, but I still had Bien Hoa and Gia Dinh and then intermittently covered Long An and Hau Nghia when that guy was on vacation. So whenever there was a JCRC operation planned, there's a lot of footwork that has to be done first. For example, a U.S. aircraft had been shot down several years earlier. The pilot of this fighter plane had probably died in the crash, so it was viewed as "body not recovered." We had to find the wreckage of the plane to be able to bring in people who would then dig for the remains. So I would provide my Air America helicopter, which was at my disposal half a day, two days a week. I would go with the desk officer of the JCRC—he was a retired U.S. Army officer

who had served in Army Special Forces—and we would fly over the area where we had the coordinates of last known location. Finally, after I don't know how many hours of flying, we found the wreckage—only because the sun was glinting off a piece of metal. A couple of shards of metal on the surface there in the Plain of Reeds caught the sun just right for a glint to be visible, and we went down and confirmed the location.

This was in the Plain of Reeds in an area filled with anti-personnel mines. We jumped off the runners on a helicopter into the water. There was a canoe with two Vietnamese teenagers right there, a boy and a girl, and they thought we were gonna kill them. So I spoke to them in Vietnamese, telling them, "I'm looking for a plane that crashed here, I'm looking for remains of the pilot to return to his family." They couldn't believe their ears; they were in shock. They didn't know anything. Anyway, there was enough of a basis to dig for the remains. Ultimately, some teeth were found that actually confirmed the pilot's identity—and his fate.

While we were searching for that wreckage earlier, we found a settlement, houses not on any map. At that point, villagers had the South Vietnamese flag painted on their roofs so that they wouldn't get bombed. [The bombing was done by South Vietnamese, no longer by Americans.] And, the flags were meant to show that a settlement was in an area in which Republic of Vietnam [RVN—South Vietnam] sovereignty was obtained. Anyway, there was a settlement consisting of a bunch of reed huts. So I had the helicopter put me down. I got out and began talking in Vietnamese to a number of women who were congregated around an operating rice milling machine. They were threshing rice. I was trying to tell them that we were looking for any Americans whose aircraft had got shot down. In a highly unusual display of insolence if not hostility, they refused to speak to me. They just shook their heads, and looked both angry and petrified. I figured this was a VC village. I assumed there was a 50-caliber or communist equivalent weapon pointed at my back as I slowly walked back to the helicopter. We took off. This occurred close enough after the ceasefire for nothing to have happened to us. We went back and reported our encounter to the district chief of Binh Chanh District, there in the Plain of Reeds. His response was, "It's a good thing you're American. Signing of the cease fire agreement is still fairly recent, and you had an Air America helicopter. If it would have been me, I would have got killed right then and there." So, Joint Casualty Resolution Center operations gave me a great excuse to go into really horrible areas. The Vietnamese officials just let me roam all over the province and talk to whoever the hell I wanted. It was amazing, the freedom we had. Anyway, I did that kind of stuff on a day-to-day basis, and spent the rest of my time writing reports.

Q: Well, were you married?

HAUBEN: Yes. So I married one of my instructors at the Vietnam Training Center. This young lady was from the Vietnamese oligarchy. I mean, you had three social strata in South Vietnam—in the south proper, meaning the delta and Three Corps. You had the people who worked the land, but didn't own it. They were tenant farmers. You had the people who didn't work the land, but who owned it, and that was my wife's family. Then

you had the Chinese, and they were the merchants—a third class. That was it, it was a feudal society. Her dad parlayed his wealth into a construction company, one of the top firms in the country. They built roads and bridges in certain provinces that were allocated to him. So he would always get the contract. Naturally you had to prepare a bid and all of that, but still, that contract would be his. Then a certain portion of the money he received got kicked back, as expected. He was a buddy of the vice president, who was an old guy like him and a fellow southerner, Vice President Huong. So my wife's family was from the Mekong Delta. They owned at least one district, Hoa Dong District, of Go Cong Province. Arguably, they owned the whole province, between the maternal and paternal grandparents.

So you own a province? That's pretty cool, I thought. Anyway, that was my wife, a Vietnamese society girl, living with her aunt in Chevy Chase, Washington, DC. Her aunt came to the U.S. in 1951, brought to the U.S. by the Voice of America, which was then establishing a Vietnamese language program; and that's what she did. For our engagement party in Chevy Chase, I had to buy cases of Moët Chandon champagne, nothing less would do. One of the guests was a lady from CIA. Obviously a fairly senior person, attractive, well dressed, and well bejeweled. She took me aside and said "Now, Michael." I said, "Yes, ma'am?" She said "I hope you realize that what you're getting is the equivalent of a princess." So that was my wife, who, unfortunately, and this is really the most horrible thing that ever happened to me, succumbed to cancer in July 2019.

Q: My wife died of pancreatic.

HAUBEN: Well, she had non-small cell lung cancer, which I understand is the most common kind, but it hits people who don't smoke. I tried to keep her alive. I cared for her for several years, but I guess I failed in my mission because she left anyway. Although she had brain metastasis at the end, just a couple of days before she died she was still cogent. She asked me three days before her death "Michael, please let me go." And I said, "I couldn't possibly do that. That would be irresponsible of me. I won't let you go." And then she said, "Michael, you think that by the strength of your personality, you can keep me here? But you're wrong." She had the last word; what can I say?

Q: Oh, yeah.

HAUBEN: We had a child and his name was Richard. He would have been born in Bangkok, because when I was in Tay Ninh and even for my first few months in Gia Dinh, we didn't have permission to have our spouses in country with us. Bangkok was the authorized "safe haven" for families of U.S. government employees serving in Vietnam. Then, in January 1973, I got permission to bring her to Saigon, which is where Rich was born. Rich managed to wind up in a military career ending up as a lieutenant colonel. He went to VMI [Virginia Military Institute] and was in the air force. Then wound up in Special Operations working with General McChrystal on the task forces in Iraq and Afghanistan. He was a pilot. He flew the Delta Force guys on capture and kill missions. Richard unfortunately is no longer with us [may he rest in peace], the result of domestic

problems. He was awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross with Valor for helping in the escape and evasion, and ultimately the rescue of a Navy Seal named Marcus Luttrell, who wrote a book about the incident called Lone Survivor, which was made into a movie. My younger son, Frank, went to West Point and stayed longer than he had to in the military, because it took a long time for him to obtain approval to transfer out of his assignment in Germany to get to Iraq, which he was determined to do, and which he finally did. He is now running a software company in the Bay Area, and has a wife and two kids.

Q: Well, what years were you in Vietnam?

HAUBEN: I started in Vietnam in the Summer of 1971. I was there until 21 April 1975 which was the day that President Nguyễn Văn Thiệu resigned and left Vietnam. I was flown out on a State Department charter flight from Saigon to Hong Kong. A plane which was about two-thirds empty. So, from 1971 to 1975. I was there for three years and nine months, almost four years.

Q: All right. My timing is a little off. When was the Tet Offensive?

HAUBEN: Nineteen sixty-eight. That was before my time, I was in Africa at that time.

Q: So when you left Vietnam, they had this sort of ceasefire?

HAUBEN: Yes.

Q: What did you feel? What were your feelings about? Do you feel this was a big sort of shakeout one way or another or what?

HAUBEN: Well, I felt very strongly that it was a fight worth fighting. I also felt it was one that could have been won by our side, but that we did pull the rug out from under our Vietnamese allies. I think that, as opposed to the decision that we had made in Korea, to hold the line there against communism, patently we made the opposite decision in Vietnam; we were not going to stay there no matter what. Right? Because domestic politics being what it is, there was no way that the people that ran the country would have left us there. That would have benefited the other party, the other party at the time being the Democrats who were the peace party. Anyway, Republicans were viewed as the war party. My feeling was there was no question, the war could have been won. But the Vietnamese could not do it without U.S. air support. You would have needed strategic bombing, and you probably would have needed tactical air support as well. By that time, by the summer of 1973, Congress had forbidden that. You couldn't do air operations or any kind of operations anywhere over or in Indochina, or offshore—couldn't do it. So having lived through the 1972 offensive, when a crucial role was played by U.S. air support, I could say, yes, with that support the Vietnamese held on the ground. They held on the ground. They didn't, by the way, hold everywhere. There are certain areas that they abandoned and relinquished to the enemy in 1972—a strip along the Laotian and Cambodian borders. The country was not overrun. Our Vietnamese kept them from

pushing on from An Loc through Region Three to the center of gravity, Saigon. They could not have held without U.S. air support, and B-52s were used to provide tactical air support. You would have needed that later on for the country to have survived. Our Congress, in its infinite wisdom, eliminated that possibility.

So there was always this question mark: will they fight? Well, that wasn't really resolved until 1975. There were areas that were abandoned in 1972. Let's face it—although that abandonment was not a retreat under fire, but a rational pulling back to defend the more thickly populated areas as an overextended ARVN just didn't have the troop strength to be everywhere. However, later on, in the 1975 offensive, those units that were well led, fought well. They fought until they were ground down by attrition. General Lê Minh Đảo, that remarkable general, led the 18th ARVN division and some associated units, including ARVN Airborne, and they actually held the communists off at Xuân Loc, which is east of Bien Hoa and Saigon. They held them there until so many communist troops were committed to the battle that they just ground the South Vietnamese down. They literally ground them down through attrition, and then proceeded on toward Saigon.

Those troops held their ground, for God's sake. Yes, they were willing to fight. And you had RF battalions sometimes coalesced into regiments, which was, you know, haphazardly done at the last minute—but anyway, you did have examples of well led RF battalions in various provinces that held off North Vietnamese Army regiments in that 1975 offensive. So they fought, even though no one in their right mind would have thought that there was a chance that they would win. They still held on, amazingly. I was surprised.

In fact, the effort to upgrade and advise RF/PF had unquestionably been the main task of our CORDS advisory teams. And in this we succeeded admirably, as was amply demonstrated. This alone—the dogged holding of RF units against all odds at the very end—made the CORDS enterprise, in my estimation, worthwhile. So that's the lesson I drew out of that.

"Our" Vietnamese, the southern people—the speakers of the southern dialect—were repelled by the prospect of reunification with the north. Historically, southern sentiment was separatist, with reunification viewed as an expression of northern irredentism. Even those southerners who had been attracted by the societal reordering promoted by the revolution swallowed the pill of reunification only after robust indoctrination by communist cadres. I am convinced that the combination of separatism and ethnic animosity toward North and Central Vietnamese, so little comprehended by Americans, played a role in stiffening southern resistance to the North Vietnamese onslaught. Anyway, by the end, most of the population was in areas controlled by the government—people living in remote areas adjacent to badland [jungle or swamp] enemy base areas were controlled by the enemy irrespective of their sympathies simply because they were proximate to enemy main force units who had demonstrated staying power over time as well as a ruthless willingness to enforce through violence—units which acted as muscle for the remaining communist cadre within the populace. I found that the

cadres were often relatives of combat VC—all in the family, so to speak—

Yes, the Vietnamese behaved in a shockingly corrupt manner those last couple of years. I mean, it was just horrible. They took their cue from their perceived master given their colonial mentality, which was the U.S. They figured, well, the U.S. is giving up, we might as well. Let's just fill our pockets so that in exile, we can live well in Paris or Virginia. That's what they did. You could see the thing rattle, but it still held.

Jake Jacobson was our big boss, the special assistant to the ambassador for field operations. In that capacity he had been seconded to the CIA—USAID having fought tooth and nail to avoid having to pay his salary. Anyway, he went on a field trip in January of '75. That seminal last year. Right? Mainly, the trip took him through the delta. He had his talking points and questions that he asked each province chief. Roughly what he asked was, "Has the society in Vietnam already unraveled past the breaking point?" His Vietnamese interlocutors looked at him incredulously as if to say, "What the hell is he talking about?" The society hadn't unraveled. Suppose a stand would have been made in the delta, they probably could have held out for some time, but that wasn't in the cards. The center of gravity was in Saigon, and that was overrun by the enemy. The point is, their society didn't unravel. Given time it would have, but not yet. The breaking point hadn't been reached.

Despite the woes of the military families, the impoverishment that they suddenly found themselves in, whether RF/PF or ARVN, they hadn't given up those ties that bind, that made even former VC families feel a part of the nation because they'd been made part of the military, which was a privileged class. [I've written about how the highly kinetic 1967–69 phase of the war decimated enemy units to the extent that mass conscription by the government shifted loyalty away from the revolution as rural families became, wholesale, ARVN or RF/PF dependents: hence, "The Ties That Bind," one of my contributions in smallwarsjournal.com]. However, they did need U.S. air support, absolutely no question. One of my counterparts back then, the deputy province chief for security of Gia Dinh Province asked me a question in January 1975 when Phước Long Province was overrun by the enemy. That was a test case of what would be the U.S. reaction, which was zero. But anyway, he asked me in English, because he wanted to make sure that there was no misunderstanding. When I told him, "I have been authorized by the ambassador to tell you that regarding the aid package of logistical support that we're supposed to provide you which Congress has been refusing to do, there is still hope. We think we can get that turned around and we can get the aid to you." He said, "Mr. Hauben, we don't need that aid. We need your tactical air support. Will you provide that?" And I said, "I'm sorry to say, that is out of the question." That was a horrible conversation, but I told him the truth and the results were plain to see as you had a conventional invasion.

Yes, there was still a VC infrastructure. Absolutely. Yes. [The insurgency had, by the end, degenerated into blood feud, with family—and therefore locality—loyalties ossified as original grievances were long forgotten. The multi-generational nature of the vestigial

insurgency often had ethno-geographic basis. An overlay of a map of Region Three showing settlements of rubber plantation workers would have indicated areas of communist support among the populace—as in notorious Hau Nghia Province—simply because the rubber tappers, ethnic northerners who had been forcibly brought to the south to work in the plantations under the French regime, had been the earliest cannon fodder Viet Minh combatant recruits organized by northerner Nguyen Binh in 1946 pursuant to his appointment by Ho Chi Minh as head of the Communist Party's Committee of the South. These rubber worker families had for a couple of generations been combatants for the Revolution.]

Yes, There were VC local units [often reconstituted with North Vietnamese fillers to replace the fallen VC]. Yes, there were, but they were not the vanguard. They provided diversionary operations. That was the best they could do. The killing blow had to come from the People's Army of Vietnam [PAVN] divisions. Those were the ones that got the victory for them. Yes, U.S. strategic bombing could have stopped them, there's absolutely no question. By that time, even Chairman Mao had told Nixon that he ought to treat Vietnam like a mosquito on his arm, slap it, crush it. U.S. domestic politics did interfere and kept that from happening. That was the end of that. So there you go, that's my view, sir.

Q: Well, have you been back to Vietnam?

HAUBEN: I never have, I'm sorry to say. My younger son, Frank, the one who was at West Point and now runs a software company has. He's been back a number of times as a tourist; he enjoyed himself.

Q: How about your wife?

HAUBEN: My wife never went back. Now, her sister went back a number of times, but not to see the family. She went on tours from the U.S. as a bona fide tourist and she had a good time. I'm told it's a nice place to visit. One of these days, I will get around to it.

Q: Yeah. You left there when again?

HAUBEN: When did I leave Vietnam?

Q: Yeah.

HAUBEN: Twenty-one April 1975.

Q: Okay, well, this is probably a good place to stop. We'll pick this up in April 1975. Where'd you go?

HAUBEN: Yeah, well, I went back and they didn't have anything for us to do. So we were assigned to the refugee camps in the U.S. I wound up at Eglin Air Force Base and

was later transferred to Fort Chaffee, Arkansas. We took care of the Vietnamese and tried to get them sponsored, or get them visas to third countries if that's what they wanted, and so forth. Then I went on a reimbursable detail to the Department of State Office of Refugee and Migration Affairs [ORM], which was a part of Humanitarian Affairs at the department. From there, I went back to my parent agency, USAID as an intern, and as such went to Guatemala.

Q: Okay, well, let's pick this up when you're dealing with refugees, and then we'll go into Guatemala next time.

HAUBEN: Okay, sir. My thanks to you.

Q: All right. Thank you. All right. Fascinating, you know, Vietnam has, you know, sort of gone from the Americans psyche. I mean, there's—

HAUBEN: It may as well be the history of Mars. You're absolutely right. But it informed my entire worldview, Stu.

Q: Yeah.

HAUBEN: The impact that the Vietnam experience had on me was absolutely incredible. Of course, I did wind up with a Vietnamese wife—

Q: Where did we leave off?

HAUBEN: Well, we left off in 1975. I had been evacuated out of Vietnam. I had my family. They put us in these Vietnamese refugee camps in the U.S. I worked first at Eglin Air Force Base until that got phased out, and then was transferred to Fort Chaffee, which happens to be at a town called Fort Smith in Arkansas, which is actually rather close to Tulsa, Oklahoma. Anyway, I worked there with the Vietnamese refugees. My capacity was doing consular work in the sense of trying to reunite families who were stranded in third countries by getting them into the U.S. because the breadwinner was in one of our refugee camps. Alternatively, we also found people in our refugee camps who wanted to go to third countries. Usually, those countries would be either Canada or France, especially the latter. The embassies of those countries had given me their official stamp, so that I could stamp the travel documents of these refugees, giving them a visa, if you will, to allow them to enter France or to enter Canada, if they so desired. Plus, we had to meet every refugee flight, and if there were any Americans on the flight, accompanied by, say, Vietnamese girlfriends, spouses, or whatever, we would show great deference, and I would carry their bags for them and so forth. They were impressed. Anyway, that's what I did then at the Vietnamese refugee camps until the end of 1975—

Q: I have a couple of questions about that.

HAUBEN: Go ahead, sir. Sure.

Q: What was the status of the people coming into your camp?

HAUBEN: Well, they were considered Indochina refugees by the department [U.S. State Department]. These were Vietnamese folks—the largest portion of them were simple fishermen from fishing villages in the southern part of Vietnam, in other words, the proper south, where people spoke the southern dialect. But these people did not speak the southern dialect, because they had been resettled in 1954 from North Vietnam. So, they were of North Vietnamese extraction and Roman Catholic by religion. And why did they come out? Well, because they had the boats that could easily reach, from shore, the U.S. fleet which was anchored offshore when the country fell to the communists. They are the ones who got picked up, so the vast majority of the original refugees were these people.

Q: Where did they end up?

HAUBEN: Well, I'll tell you. There was also a smaller group, the military officers or government officials who managed to get out, oftentimes on Vietnamese military helicopters, which landed on our aircraft carriers, and then had to be pushed off the deck into the water to make room for others to land. They included my principal counterpart, the province chief cum sector commander of Gia Dinh Province. Also, Admiral Cang, the head of the Vietnamese Navy and of the Capital Special Zone. But anyway, this smaller group of refugees were the Vietnamese elite, military, and civilian, mainly military; the senior officers. However, most of the refugees were these North Vietnamese fishermen. This could be seen from the computer readouts where it didn't say, "North Vietnamese, blah, blah, blah," but where, for religion, it said, "Roman Catholic." So you knew that's who they were.

Anyway, where did they end up? So out of Eglin Air Force Base, a lot of them wound up on the Gulf Coast. You know, because Eglin Air Force base is in the Florida Panhandle, and a lot of these folks wound up in New Orleans or the suburbs thereof. They included the shrimp fishermen who subsequently got into conflict with local folks in Texas because of the unfair practices the refugees engaged in. They didn't know the etiquette that American shrimp fishermen followed and got into a bit of trouble by being overly aggressive in their fishing habits. Anyway, a lot of the refugees wound up on the Gulf Coast where a lot of them became shrimp fishermen, and a lot of them wound up in New Orleans doing I don't know what. They were generally in Louisiana and Texas, and some in the Florida Panhandle. Now, out of Fort Chaffee, which was in Arkansas, a lot of those wound up in, well, various groups. There were a lot of group sponsorships. So, a large number of those wound up in Minneapolis, St. Paul, where the Lutheran Church sponsored them. Various church groups were often the sponsors and a lot of them wound up right there in Arkansas, Oklahoma, and Texas. Houston got some of the refugees from Fort Chaffee, Arkansas, and it also took a lot of the refugees from Eglin Air Force Base. So, Houston now has the second largest Vietnamese community in the U.S. after L.A., I should say Orange County, California.

Q: Yeah. And, the Hmong went to Minnesota, didn't they?

HAUBEN: The Hmong went to Minnesota as well. That's correct. Although I didn't have any personal experience with them.

Q: Did you run across— Were native born Americans looking for their girlfriends or wives? Were they part of these united families or couples?

HAUBEN: Yeah. So, a number of our State Department officers actually went over there in the last days, and clandestinely smuggled out their families. That was an operation well done. Some of these folks that I later got to know, all of them, I think, had prior service in Vietnam as more junior officers. But, mainly, what I saw on the flights were native born Americans, usually people who had retired in Vietnam, so former, say military NCOs and such who lived in Vietnam with either their girlfriends or their spouses and now wound up on a refugee flight, having to accompany their spouses, girlfriends, and family out of Vietnam. Those are the people that we had to approach as they went off the airplane onto the jetway or whatever. Those of us assigned to the refugee camps would meet every flight when it would come in. They would come in every few hours, so we worked around the clock. Whenever we saw an American face, we would actually walk up to them and help them carry their bags, because we wanted to show that the U.S. government was concerned about them and their fate. They were impressed, as they should have been, I think.

Q: How does the system— What were your experiences in doing this?

HAUBEN: Well, that's what I did. Also, the most interesting part of my job was getting people together. Well, we did family reunification where families were stranded in third countries, but the breadwinner was in the refugee camp. We did what we could to initiate proceedings. We were always in cable connection with the department in Washington and the office that was in charge of doing background checks, getting—what was the code term—a "visa falcon," which was a term for the clearance required if they were in third countries. In fact, even the refugees themselves before getting sponsored would have to get the necessary document that then said, "You are a refugee bah, bah, bah, and you've been admitted to the United States." They could then, you know, go get their green cards and so forth. But to do all that, in other words to leave the refugee camp, they first had to get a security clearance called a visa falcon. We were in touch constantly. I was always in touch with my liaison in that office either by phone and or by cable to give him the names and the date of birth of the refugee in question, and his staff would do a background check. If there was derogatory information about a person, then he or she couldn't get out of the refugee camp.

I was wondering whether the cause was that they were communists. There was, for example, a businessman and his family who—someone had at some point, years earlier, in 1966, denounced the guy for having been involved in the narcotics business, in the heroin trade. Well, that denunciation was enough to prohibit the guy from being allowed

entry into the U.S. Because while you were still in the camp, you were not an official entrant into the United States. So that guy had no choice. He had to go to relatives in Paris, which he did. It would have been nice to have him in the U.S. because he happened to have been a millionaire, but I guess France got his investment instead of us. But anyway, that is what I did in my day-to-day work. Of course, when a guy wanted to go to a third country, I would, you know, submit all his particulars to their embassy. They would generally say, Yeah, let them come. I would stamp his passport or refugee document.

Q: Did you get any feel for how well these people were settled in?

HAUBEN: Afterward? Yeah. Well, you had to have a sponsor, right? A lot of these people were sponsored by church groups and so forth. The U.S. Catholic Conference, for example, gave each refugee five hundred bucks. I mean that's a nice stipend to start off. But the U.S. Catholic Conference refugees generally had to wait because there was a long waiting list. If you wanted to go quickly, you went out through some of the other sponsorship groups. You went out with the Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society, which over the decades helped Jewish refugees. If you went to them, you could get out, like, the next day or something. I mean if you got past the security clearance, you got out the next day, But you weren't given any money. So anyway, we tried to hook these guys up with the agency that they wanted in order to get them out, because sponsorship had to be done through these NGOs [nongovernmental organizations] which were usually tied to some religious group.

Q: Yeah, of course, the Vietnamese refugees have done relatively well here in the States.

HAUBEN: They did reasonably well. Some of these groups were settled in communities with lots of other Vietnamese. Others wound up where they were the only Vietnamese in a small town. Those people probably did even better. But, in reality, what happened ultimately often depended on what stratum of society in Vietnam they came from. All have generally done quite well as immigrants. I mean after even the impoverished fishermen wound up supporting themselves and their families. Their kids did well. There's one guy from a family resettled in Texas who became a professional football player. But I mean the ones who did really well were the ones who came from the Vietnamese upper crust. There were, for example, a couple of young ladies who finished at the top of their class and were among the first women at West Point. As it turns out, their dad or dads [I don't recall whether they were sisters or not] happen to have been Vietnamese general(s). So, I would say, no surprise.

Q: Yeah.

HAUBEN: Well, that's how it generally went.

Q: So then, what did you do?

HAUBEN: After the refugee camps, I was transferred—because I was officially a USAID employee, although I'd never done USAID work. I still didn't because then I went on an official reimbursable detail to State. In other words, I went from AID to State's Office of Refugee and Migration Affairs, which was under HA [Humanitarian Affairs], which ultimately was under Ingersoll, who was the deputy secretary. At the time, Kissinger was still secretary of state, and this was still the Ford administration. In that capacity, I worked in Washington at Foggy Bottom, and the job was family reunification, trying to get refugees stranded in third countries into the U.S. The criteria were similar to the immigration criteria. In other words, it was easiest to get into the U.S. for those who had close relatives in the U.S., especially if they were dependents, and the breadwinner had already been admitted to the U.S. Even if he'd just been admitted as a refugee, since that would be enough of a link to get those people in. So, there were guidelines we followed. We followed those but they hadn't been formalized.

One day, the boss, Shep Lowman, who had been the head of political internal at the embassy in Saigon—Shep was a prince of a man really. Now, because I was his employee in this capacity, one day Shep told me, "Mike, why don't you write the guidelines, and we'll send it out as a cable to every U.S. mission in the world." So, I wrote the guidelines we had been following which are based on the immigration law, and I wrote the cable and nobody changed it. It went from me and then Shep initialed it, and then it went up to John Wilson, I guess, who was head of HA, then it went up to Ingersoll. He sent it out, and that was that. In one day, I wrote the guidelines and by the next day the cable was out—or even that afternoon—to every U.S. diplomatic post in the world. Those were the guidelines if you had a Vietnamese or a presumed Indochina refugee—what to do with them, how to get them into the U.S., or to determine whether they're eligible, including all the procedures about the security clearance, et cetera. So, I wrote everything, having been doing it for a while, but it just hadn't been formalized as doctrine. I just wrote it all down and the cable went out. I feel pretty good about that because I mean, basically, I drafted the guidelines that were then followed for a number of years.

Did we have any sort of unusual cases? Not really. I'm trying to think back. It was pretty straightforward stuff. We would get the caseload and then Shep would go down to INS there in Washington and get a blanket clearance for a bunch of these. Every case written up, you know, in a case study and a little cable with the background and all of that. He would march these off to INS, and they'd look at them. Sometimes they said nay but that would be rare. They usually said, yeah, okay, that's fine, then these guys would come in.

Afterwards, we liaised with an NGO that handled the transportation and so forth to get these guys to the U.S. I dealt with a fellow named Jack Bratton at that NGO, Intergovernmental Committee for European Migration [ICEM], which had achieved renown for working with European refugees decades earlier. Jack Bratton was a good bloke. When I asked him, "What's going on with such and such?" His standard answer was, "As fouled up as Hogan's goat." It was fairly smooth sailing. We didn't get many unusual requests. They were usually accepted, but it was a lot of work because there were a lot of cases. As I say, Shep did a masterful job. There was another connection: Shep's

wife, who was Vietnamese from Chau Doc down in the delta, had a brother who was deputy province chief of Gia Dinh, the main province to which I was a province representative in Vietnam. I was sad to hear of Shep's passing not long ago.

Q: Oh, yes. I remember him coming around when I was in Yugoslavia. I can't remember what, but he was dealing with refugees.

HAUBEN: Yeah. He knew the refugee situation worldwide, really. But I think Indochina refugees would have particularly struck home with him since his wife was Vietnamese. He also served in those last Vietnam years as head of political internal at the embassy in Saigon, which is where I first got to know him.

Q: Yeah. What did you do after this job? What did you do?

HAUBEN: So then, I went back to my parent agency. How did that transpire? Well, USAID was doing interviews for an intern program, where you would have several months of group training. Then, you would be farmed out to an office in Washington or to a USAID mission somewhere in the world. You would get on the job training for a couple of years, and then you would graduate from intern status and become a career employee. So, I was interviewed and was admitted to that program, as were many of us. Well, there weren't too many of us left at the time. So, I got admitted into that.

I went right from Department of State ORM [Office of Refugee and Migration Affairs] to USAID's Latin America Bureau in Washington. I worked on the Central America desk because the position I was slated for was actually physically located in Guatemala, as one of the program officers, which are the people who basically oversee the whole program and do the congressional presentation and so forth. We first had our group training in Washington. Then, I finally wound up there in the Latin America Bureau of USAID, in Foggy Bottom, and I was supposed to go to Guatemala, but they wanted to hang on to me in Washington because everybody's short staff. Right? Then in Guatemala, they're screaming, Let him come down to Guatemala because we want him down there. I'm yelling, "Let me out. I want to go to Guatemala." They finally let me out.

The reason that the position was created in Guatemala was that they had recently had a huge and devastating earthquake in which twenty-five thousand people lost their lives. That was massive. It was like 7.7 on the Richter scale, or 7.8. This is ridiculously high; it's bad. These were mainly in the Indian villages. Houses, even flimsy huts, did not have thatched roofs. They traditionally had tile roofs. When the earthquake hit at two o'clock in the morning, the tiles fell in and crushed the people sleeping. It was a horrible thing. Of course, as you can imagine, the damage was extensive, so the embassy needed an extra person. Finally, they did send me down there. So, my family and I went to Guatemala. That was in October of 1976.

Q: Well, how long were you in Guatemala?

HAUBEN: Four years. Anyway, before going to Guatemala, they needed to determine my language capability, because Spanish was a requirement. They tested me at FSI [Foreign Service Institute] and I scored a 3/3 [three in speaking; three in comprehension], where three is considered fluent. They said, That's the most we can teach you here anyway. You can't get higher than a 3/3, unless you live in the country. I always had good language learning aptitude, and always liked Spanish. But the last time I had any instruction was in high school. However, I built on that mainly through reading Spanish books, and hanging around Spanish bars in New York, and so forth. I got quite fluent in the language; a couple of trips to Mexico during vacation from college didn't hurt either. So, I went to Guatemala as Spanish language capable, albeit with a Puerto Rican accent.

Q: Okay. What was the situation in Guatemala when you were there?

HAUBEN: Well, because of the earthquake, there seemed to have been a hiatus in the violence, believe it or not, so it was a relatively peaceful place in the midst of reconstruction and recovery. But then toward the latter part of my stay, the insurgency resuscitated itself. Originally, the Guatemalan communist insurgency had been focused mainly among Spanish speaking rural people. But now it switched to the Mayan Indians. They were the targets of the revolutionary agitation, and they were the new recruitment base for the revolution, so things got a little bit tough as things heated up into a mini civil war. When I arrived there, General Laugerud was the president. Laugerud was an interesting guy. Laugerud is a Norwegian name, as his dad was an American of Norwegian extraction, who would be seen in his favorite coffee house at breakfast time, reading his daily issue of the *Miami Herald*. I met the president, but only briefly. He was then replaced by a general named Lucas, who was known to be particularly brutal. It was, I guess, partly Lucas's brutality that helped, at least in the initial stages, to blunt and then turn around the insurgency. But the insurgency was crushed by Lucas's successor and that was after I had left. That was President Rios Montt. Montt is a German name. But anyway, I mention Rios Montt because we knew him. We worked closely with him because he had been head of the Commission for National Reconstruction after the earthquake, and he was a good partner to work with. What stood out about General Rios Montt was the fact that he was a scrupulously honest man, which, after all, was not all that easy to find.

Q: Oh.

HAUBEN: He was a religious guy, a born again Christian in a Roman Catholic country, which was unusual. But Rios Montt ultimately crushed the insurgency. It probably would have been crushed anyway, but he was in charge when that happened, for which the left damn him and the right praise him. I think he is still around, if I'm not mistaken.

Q: Well, anyway, was the insurgency a straight line communist or what was the insurgency about?

HAUBEN: Yeah, the insurgency was a communist insurgency that was targeting, as a population base, the rural Maya. They started in what you would expect—in a rather remote area where there was abundant land. There was, of course, in the Mayan Highlands, some land hunger, mainly, as a result, not of alienation of land, but of overpopulation, because they all had large families. Then, they would migrate to the coast to pick coffee or cotton on a seasonal basis. But, anyway, the insurgency aimed to reduce whatever grievances these people had, but a lot of the grievances were, you know, created by the insurgents themselves, which they do have a knack of doing, following the Comintern playbook. So, they would preach, We'll give you land, we'll do this, and we'll do that; a lot of promises were made to the people. It was interesting.

It started in the Franja Transversal*,* which is that strip of land stretching across Guatemala from east to west, immediately south of the Peten, which is the vast northern jungle. The Franja Transversal was being settled by people not necessarily under government auspices. Most of the settlement that was going on was by individuals, or even entire villages, who went down there and staked their claim and there they would farm. So, you cannot actually say that land hunger and was what drove these people to the insurgency, but what really did was that the villagers found themselves in these remote areas, and in these areas, the students who were the hardcore of the insurgency, were able to recruit.

They did this because not only were they handy with their promises, but these were students who were generally of Indian background. They could claim identity with the Maya. And importantly, they were armed. Again, the message generally reposes in the arms more than in the cogency of the argument. People got conscripted to join the *Ejercito Guerrillero de los Pobres* (the Guerrilla Army of the Poor). Right? When the Guatemalan army came after them, they would say, We are the army of the poor, and that is the army of the rich. So, that was the usual argument, You are poor, and they are rich. You are poor because they are rich, and they are rich because you are poor. But, whether or not you believed their line, they were the guys with the guns, and they came and said, You will now volunteer your young men to join our *Ejercito Guerrillero*. What parent is going to say no when a guy is pointing a gun at them— And the guerrillas lived with them. Right? These were in the remote areas which would have been hard for government forces to approach, and there were no government forces nearby anyway.

And it took a long time before word filtered out about what the hell was going on, you see. From there, they went southward to the more populated areas, the Indian highlands of Guatemala. You got to the point where whole villages in the highlands were being overrun, if not for a long time, then for twenty-four to forty-eight hours. They usually managed to skip and jump ahead of the police and military, so that they wouldn't get killed or hurt.

Q: Yeah.

HAUBEN: It seemed like a foolproof way of dealing with things until the generals decided that what you have to do is organize the villagers—force the villagers into a

militia under government auspices and force them to kill a guerrilla, so that once they did that, their hands were sullied. In that case, they would perforce be recognized as tied to the government, which is exactly what happened. By then, things got kind of really hot. There were a lot of kidnappings, and the Spanish embassy in Guatemala City was burnt down. The guerrillas had a bunch of hostages inside—Guatemalan employees of the Spanish embassy. Some of them were close relatives of our own Foreign Service national employees. Sadly, they couldn't get out, and they were all burned to a crisp. The insurgents naturally blamed the Guatemalan government.

Then there was the case of a guy named Newman, who was the Guatemala representative of the Pan American Health Organization [PAHO], which is part of the World Health Organization [WHO], I guess. Their office got raided by the Guerilla Army of the Poor. Newman had himself been a Jewish refugee out of Austria. He still had a bit of an accent and had a Chinese American wife. But anyway, the guerrillas called him out by name and he got kidnapped and was held for a long period of time before they let them out. I would have to assume that there was some clandestine ransom paid, but I speculate. Anyway, his office was around the corner from where we lived, so there was a bit of an awakening there.

Q: How were conditions in Guatemala?

HAUBEN: Well, I'll give you an example. So, we were at work, but as things heated up, we were told we could only go out of the embassy with a vehicle from the embassy motor pool. Each of these vehicles had a Guatemalan plainclothes policeman armed with an Uzi submachine gun sitting next to the driver, and we were ordered to use those vehicles as home to office transportation. At times there was a "high point," in other words, some sort of enemy offensive, and we got word of that— Because I was engaged in bona fide USAID work, I never saw any of the original raw data, which I would have seen in Vietnam, but here, no. So, all you were told was, "There's a high point."

So our offices were in the embassy, and diagonally across the street on another of the four corners of that intersection was ROCAP, the USAID mission to the Central American Common Market, economic assistance to help Central American economic integration. But the USAID/Guatemala admin financial offices were also located in that building. So if you had any logistical business or anything like that to take care of, you had to go there. But we couldn't cross the street on foot when there was a high point. You had to go downstairs to the embassy basement, hop into an embassy car with the bodyguard, and they would drive you across the street to the basement of the ROCAP Building, where you would get out of the car and go and do your business. Then, you had to go back down to the motor pool, get in one of those cars, and drive back across the street to the embassy. You also had to be driven that way from home to office. But, of course, we never worked bankers' hours. So, I would always be working till 7:30 or 8:30 at night, because that's what we did. We were very busy because with budget cutbacks, you were expected to do "more with less" throughout the Civil Service and Foreign Service. So, we were working long hours—nobody did an eight hour day. We're all working more, and

you worked weekends as well. However, the motor pool would only be available for, like, an hour after close of business to take you home. As I'd finish work considerably later, I wound up regularly making a call to the wife, who would get in my little Volkswagen Beetle and drive from home to the embassy to pick me up and take me home. No bodyguard or no nothing because anything else would not have been practical.

Q: Yeah. I was just thinking. Could you go out?

HAUBEN: We actually could travel, however, depending on where. There were some places that we were not advised to go. I went there on official business up to Nebaj in northern Quiche Province, which was way off the Pan American Highway, and way off any main road. You were on dirt roads over a mountain range. That was generally considered to be a dangerous place. I went there on official business to look at some Food for Work projects, where the food was provided by USAID. But that was pretty early on. Later, we could no longer go there. But to go to the normal tourist attractions, say, Lake Atitlan, we had no problem. It wasn't until after I had left Guatemala that the situation had so deteriorated that even those places were being overrun by the guerrillas. But when I was there, any place where you would want to go with the family for a weekend would pose no problem.

Q: Well, you were working with the Food for Peace. What does this mean?

HAUBEN: Okay. So, that was under public law 480 [PL 480]. The U.S. government would buy surplus commodities from farmers. Our farming sector was so efficient that there were always surplus commodities, such as surplus wheat, cooking oil, et cetera. The government would subsidize agriculture by buying up these surplus commodities from the farmers and farm cooperatives in the U.S. Right? The Department of Agriculture would give the food to USAID to disseminate to poor people throughout the world. The actual dissemination was done by NGOs, generally in Guatemala, two religious organizations: the U.S. Catholic Conference and the Protestant Council of Churches. They had their own organizations. We had to visit the sites to see if this was being done correctly in accordance with guidelines, which it generally was. The U.S. Catholic Conference subcontracted dissemination to the local Catholic outfit, which of course was Caritas International. So, Caritas, through their network, was disseminating this food to needy people in various remote villages in Guatemala.

We, from time to time, visited these villages to do an end use check, and that's one of the things I did. I also handled the NGO program as such, which meant we were writing a lot of grant agreements with nongovernmental organizations, U.S., and Guatemalan, for them to do small projects with high beneficiary impact in rural areas, targeting the poorest of the poor. I wrote a number of such grant agreements. You had to get legal clearance on such documents, but our legal adviser was regional, working throughout Central America, so he frequently wasn't in Guatemala. So, I guess I was proud of the degree of trust that he placed in me when he said, "Mike, you know what you're doing.

Whenever you have one of those documents, I don't need to see it. Just put me down as having cleared in draft." Naturally, I thought that was a nice pat on the head.

Q: Yeah.

HAUBEN: So, I did that. And no, I never did anything wrong or anything. I mean, if there really had been a question, I would have asked him via cable or telephone, whichever country he would have been in at the moment, say if he was, for example, in Honduras at the time. Anyway, we had a lot of NGO projects, and I did the grant agreements for those, negotiated with the NGOs, checked the end use, and visited the sites. That was kind of the fun part of the work.

Q: How was the Guatemalan government? Was it corrupt? How was dealing with it?

HAUBEN: Well, the main thing that hit you was that the government really barely functioned because, while one was supposed to pay income tax, if one was a Guatemalan one normally never did. They just didn't do it. So, the government never had money. As such, government wages were ridiculously low. This didn't actually necessarily mean at the time that they were excessively corrupt. Actually, they were more honest than so many other countries in which I worked. I understand things got worse later in Guatemala, as it became a funnel for cocaine bound for the U.S., but when I was there was before all of that, you see. It was actually quite honest. The civil servants were not well paid, so they weren't the cream of the crop, generally speaking. If you were, you know, cream of the crop Guatemalan, then you'd maybe send your kid to the London School of Economics or whatever. Then, they would come back and become the CEO [chief executive officer] of a company or the head of some huge agriculture business active in Guatemala. The private sector got all the best, brainiest Guatemalans, so the government did not get the best personnel, and they weren't really very good. But they generally were not corrupt. After all, there wasn't that much money around to feed corruption.

Our aid program was quite small actually. It was fifteen million a year, which was peanuts. What did we do? Well, let me say again, the Guatemalan officials, because they were not the cream of the crop, weren't the lily white Anglo Guatemalans or Americo Guatemalans or whatever. Usually, they were Mestizos or Indians who had been Hispanicized, who had gone to the local college, and had not had the best education. But because of their background, they had a little bit of a chip on their shoulder in the sense that they were fiercely nationalistic. They usually knew English, but felt that their position absolutely required them to speak Spanish only. So, they did, but that didn't bother me because my Spanish was good. Those are the people we dealt with. But they were generally nice folks. They were hospitable and courteous, always. We would go out to visit projects in the field with our Guatemalan counterparts. I would always be required to make a speech which I always did, in Spanish, of course. They were nice hosts and that was my social life also. But your best parties were given by Guatemalans

in the private sector, understandably. We would go to their events. We were always invited. Guatemalans are like most Latinos, innately courteous.

Q: Well, you were there with your family?

HAUBEN: Yes. At that time, we only had one child, my elder son, and my wife, of course.

Q: How was family life there?

HAUBEN: Well, it was good. My wife loved it. She learned Spanish. Lessons were given free to the spouses at the embassy, and she took them and paid attention. And, of course, knowing French was helpful, because she had gone to the *lycée* as a little girl in Vietnam. So, knowing French was helpful in learning Spanish, and she loved the Guatemalan people and had a great time there. And our kid, when he became three years old, we sent our son, Richard, to a Guatemalan, Spanish language medium of instruction Montessori school. The Montessori schools all had Spanish as the medium of instruction. That was fine. He did well, and actually wound up thinking like a Guatemalan.

I remember, we went to a neighboring country, we went to Mexico or Honduras— We would cross the border to come back into Guatemala— At every border crossing they sprayed your car against the Mediterranean fruit fly, and they wanted to spray our car and my wife said to the sprayer in Spanish, "I have children here, you can't spray this car." They would say, *Muy bien, Senora* (very well, madam). Then, they didn't spray the car. We shouldn't have done that, but anyway, you could see how the family got along well. So, there we are at customs, coming back from Honduras or Mexico— We're in official status. They were nice to us. But anyway, there was a Guatemalan flag, and my little boy saw the Guatemalan flag and started singing in Spanish a song from his nursery school. *Mi banderita blanco y azul*—my little flag blue and white, you are the soul of my heart. The Guatemalan immigration official started to cry. This little half oriental kid, you know, he's three years old, a cute little *chinito*, a little Chinaman they would have said, who thought he was a Guatemalan singing in Spanish, a little nursery rhyme about the Guatemalan flag, which he loved. Anyway, that was family.

Of course, we had a nanny for the kid who spoke to him only in Spanish and they would watch TV, which was only in Spanish. By the time we put Rich into real kindergarten at the school for American kids in Guatemala City, he actually had some difficulty because he spoke Spanish better than English. Rich had his little friends. We enrolled him when he was a little child in Taekwondo for youngsters, and he did well at that. He had a little friend whose parents were German aid contractors, and me being a native German speaker, they became our close friends. They had a little boy, my little boy's age, and the kids played together. Our son'd go to their house, and their kid would come over to our house, so it was nice for the family.

Q: Where did you go after your time?

HAUBEN: After four years, I'd wanted to go back to Asia. My wife would have been quite happy to stay in Latin America, even though she was Asian, but I wanted to go back. I was able to secure a transfer after four years, which was the most you were supposed to be in a country with USAID. A tour was two years then home leave, and then another tour of two years. I was ready to transfer, and we went to Indonesia, because the head of the USAID's Asia Bureau was the guy who had been my USAID director, my boss, at the beginning of my tour in Guatemala. So, he got me over to Indonesia. I stayed in Washington for a couple of months to learn the Indonesian language, which is Malay. It's the same language. It was a very easy language to learn.

Q: Where do you live? Did you live in Jakarta or?

HAUBEN: Yes. By that time, all USAID officials lived in Jakarta. There had been a position out in Surabaya, which I was slated for, but that position was transferred to Jakarta. So, there I was in Jakarta. But, because we had projects all over that large country, at least during the first couple of years, I would work in the office in Jakarta, which was in the embassy, one week out of the month. The other three weeks would be spent in the field, at the various projects with which I was associated, coming back to Jakarta over the weekends. Indonesia was a Muslim country, so Friday, the Muslim holiday, was the holiday—and the weekend was Friday and Saturday. Sunday was a workday.

Q: What kind of projects were you involved in?

HAUBEN: So, the first project that I was assigned was a project called Provincial Development Program, where money was given to the Provincial Council of selected provinces. The Provincial Council would give that to coops or other organized groups, or groups organized for this purpose with the help of the district and provincial government. They would do small projects, such as handicraft development, or some money to help in agriculture. For example, credit would be made available for a market woman who would borrow several dollars, and then wound up paying it back gradually. You know, microcredit. So this program did a lot of that. The money usually got stuck with the civil servants at the provincial level. Although it was called the Provincial Development Program [PDP], the Indonesians cynically, I mean, the provincial officials themselves, laughingly called it the *Pegawai* Development Program. *Pegawai* is the Indonesian term for civil servant—because they were the ones who wound up with the money. It was, I thought, a misconceived program, yet we did run it.

Later an extension was sought from Washington, but properly denied. By that time, I was no longer involved in the project. I started off as the assistant to the project manager for that project, so he actually ran it. But then they decided after I was there for one year that I should have my own project, and they gave me a different project. So, I no longer had anything to do with that one after one year in country. I wound up with a program that I handled for the rest of my stay, which was the Citanduy River Development Program and

that had all kinds of stuff. There was a model that had been tried of intercropping the food crop, which was cassava, which was injurious to the soil, but doing it on terraces, so it would not be injurious, and then doing cash crops intermingled with the cassava, usually coffee, or possibly oil palm.

Q: What was cassava?

HAUBEN: Well, cassava is manioc. Tapioca. The root is a staple food crop. It's the poor man's staple throughout Southeast Asia. Though ostensibly of New World origin, it's really ingrained in the cultures of these countries, even Vietnam. If you can't even afford rice, you eat that.

Q: What was the situation in Indonesia?

HAUBEN: Those provinces that were selected for assistance were provinces which had been politically rebellious to the Indonesian government—and usually the nature of the rebelliousness was radical Islamism. The rebellion had started back when the firebrand, Sukarno, ran the country; the socialist firebrand, who loved communism. As he stated, driving the country into communism was his aim. So Sukarno drew the opposition of the religious Muslims, as you might imagine, who actually got some covert help from the U.S. in several remote parts of the country. There were rebellious pockets even on the Island of Java, places where the Islamic revolt might still be said to be simmering. That's where my first project, the Provincial Development Program, spent its money. Even my new project in West Java was in an area that had been somewhat rebellious because it was a very religious area. So, that was the situation at the time. But physically, the rebels had been crushed.

Now that they had been crushed, the government's idea was to give the local people some crumbs. Plus, I might add that aside from the sites of Islamist rebellion, that first project, the Provincial Development Program, also targeted the provinces of the east, which were rebellious because those people were not Malay speakers, but were actually Pacific Islanders—more closely related to the natives of New Guinea. There you had the Timor situation where the western part of Timor was being infected by the Timorese revolution in the eastern part of Timor—a little complicated—where a counterinsurgency was being waged. So, those people were rebellious because Indonesia was resettling in their provinces people from the Islamic part of Indonesian, in a process of Indonesianization. The native peoples felt that land was being alienated and their culture threatened. They correctly believed they were being oppressed. So that was Indonesia when I was there.

Q: How did you find the government?

HAUBEN: Well, I'll tell you this. When I lived in Vietnam, corruption was rampant, as you know. But one could make the excuse that, well, it was wartime, and they were being inundated with American dollars, et cetera. Well, I will say this. There's absolutely no doubt in my mind that the Indonesian government, and at that time it was no longer

Sukarno. Right? It was Suharto, the "Father of Development." Anyway, Suharto was the president, and I can say that country and that government were far more corrupt than anything I had witnessed in Vietnam. It was amazing. A job was desirable, a civil servant job, if it came with a lot of kickbacks, and was then called a "wet job." Everybody wanted a wet job because then they could get rich, right? There was money because after all, Indonesia was an oil country and a timber producer. Corruption was the name of the game. It was incredible.

But the government did have a hold on the people, because the government was determined to hold on to power, and your vehicle for power was ABRI [Angkatan Bersenjata Republik Indonesia], the Indonesian armed forces. They had a presence in every village in the sense that a former military person, an old retiree or whatever, was found in every village, no matter how small. It would be a guy who had served in uniform, and still reported back; therefore, acting as the official eyes and ears of the government. I'm sure they had many, you know, clandestine networks that would report back as well, but I mean, the government knew what was going on in the villages. They knew because they had representatives in the villages. It was a statist and socialist regime. If the government wanted a certain crop to be planted because it would be a cash crop that would bring in foreign exchange, the villages were obligated to plant it. If they planted something else, then the military would come in, and they would burn down the fields. That's what they did, and people were sufficiently scared, so they stayed in line. That was the government of General Suharto.

Q: Or how effective—

HAUBEN: The other thing that you noticed was the insane degree of bias against Chinese people. Now, regarding business proficiency, it was sometimes questionable as to whether the indigenous people of Indonesia even had the profit motive. With the Chinese, there was no doubt, and they were generally hard working. Although a lot of them became, you know, somewhat Indonesianized, they were still a lot harder working than the other Indonesians. They were generally smart, quick, and better educated. Hence, they were an easy source of jealousy and envy for those who weren't Chinese. Cultural genocide was also practiced. I'll give you an example. I subscribed to the *Far East Economic Review* at the time, and one of the advertisers was Cathay Hotels, a well known hotel chain in the Far East, you know, five-star hotels. The full page ad had a picture of a room in one of their hotels, and on the wall in the picture, there was a painting, a Chinese brush painting on the wall, to show that their rooms were luxurious. Right? The brush painting happened to have on it the signature of the painter because that's what Chinese brush painters did. And in every issue that I received of the *Far East Economic Review*, that Chinese character signature was inked out by the sensors. So that shows you the extreme to which that all went.

Q: Yeah. I think one of the terms from Indonesia is "amok." When the mob was going up against the Chinese.

HAUBEN: Well, they did. So, what happened was when they went amok, they usually wound up burning down the Catholic Church, hopefully with the parishioners inside, because oftentimes, the Catholic parishioners in a particular village were Chinese. Everybody else was Muslim. Also, in one of our provinces, Aceh, which had been the focal point of an Islamist rebellion earlier, a number of years ago there had been some anti-Chinese violence. One of the members of the Provincial Council was bragging about when he was a young man he and his buddies grabbed some poor Chinese shopkeeper and they cut his throat. They thought that was pretty wonderful. So that was Indonesia for you. I have to admit to you that the anti-Chinese thing turned my stomach.

Q: Well, where did you go after that?

HAUBEN: So, after Indonesia, I wound up in Manila. The guy who had been my boss in Guatemala and then headed the USAID Asia Bureau when I was in Indonesia, had become the USAID director in Manila. I was then ready for transfer because I was in Indonesia for four years. I got my transfer to Manila, so there we were in Manila. I was working and managing projects again, and I was there for five years. I got an extension. It was, after all, a nice place to live. The family loved it. It was good for the kids.

Q: What were you doing?

HAUBEN: I started off as a project manager in a small business development activity. By that time, Reagan was president in the U.S., and the emphasis was to help the private sector to the extent you would be allowed to do. So, we did some projects with an entity of the Philippine government that worked with the Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry and helped small entrepreneurs. Generally, "small business" was sort of similar to the U.S. definition. In other words, it could be a decent sized little firm. We couldn't really directly subsidize them, but we helped them in various ways, like with training or with technical assistance, as needed.

We also embarked on assisting privatization. We had a contract firm that provided advice to the Manila and the Makati stock exchanges to try to get them to streamline things and to stimulate small investors to invest "buy and hold" rather than to simply try to get rich quick, which may not have been good advice. But anyway, that was the advice we offered. Also, in drawing up privatization plans for state owned enterprises, of which there were many. The idea was to try to get them off of the government books, because a lot of these firms were losing money. So, you wanted to privatize them. The contract firm that we engaged sent a representative, and we would loosely supervise because he was the expert, not us. The guy happened to have been an investment banker, because the firm was Credit Suisse First Boston, and the guy who was our man on the ground there on his trips to Manila was Pedro Pablo Kuczynski, who recently served—he was a Peruvian despite his Polish name—who only months ago served as president of Peru. He had in the past, I mean prior to his working with us, been minister of mines in Peru, which is a good job to have since it was a mineral rich country. So, Kuczynski was a smart guy.

Q: Did you— I think of the Philippines as being one of the great sources of nurses in the United States.

HAUBEN: That's exactly right. Here's what happened there. Nurses were recruited, and they had to undergo a test before coming to the U.S. to determine their eligibility. There was always a big waiting list for that, and the tests were administered by the embassy. My wife was one of the proctors. That test was given at least once a year, maybe quarterly, I don't remember. She made some extra money doing that, and she was one of the regular proctors in the nursing exam. Naturally, the embassy tried to provide opportunities for our spouses to work, and this was just one of the things that made my wife happy to be there.

Q: Yeah, well, did you get out into the field at all? I would think—

HAUBEN: I did, actually. We were dealing with chambers of commerce in the different provinces, provincial level chambers of commerce and industry, or particularly, the ones aimed at small enterprises. So, I went up to the Cagayan Valley, which is way up in the northeast, which was actually, at that time, infested with the Communist New People's Army, but that was okay. We couldn't travel much, but stayed in the provincial capital. I went down to Cotabato where the Islamic rebellion in Mindanao was in full swing, but then I actually did travel out into the field there. But, we had to be careful where we went when we were told where not to go. Otherwise, in Luzon, I went all over the place. We went down to Cebu. Actually, we were always encouraged to go into the field, and I absolutely did. There's a lot of paperwork, of course, because, invariably, in a USAID program at that time, you had a team of contractors that you had to supervise, and also make sure were doing a good job and were well taken care of by their Philippine counterparts, because the government had to provide certain things for them, and so forth. That was always something that we had to do. Plus, you know, you wanted to see how the stuff was being implemented in the field. We got to know the people in the provinces, different chambers of commerce and their membership. You also heard speeches, so we went down to Cebu. Marcos was down there at the same time at the same event giving a speech. And of course, when Cory became president, we were all over the place.

Q: All right. Did you run across Madam Marcos?

HAUBEN: I didn't get to know her. I got to attend functions with some of the other members of the family. I actually attended a function in which Marcos's niece presided over a ceremony celebrating some grant to one of the chambers of commerce with which we worked. I got invited and went there to find out the next day that our official position was to be cold to the Marcos family itself. However, I was not reprimanded because I'd been in country only one week, or whatever, and didn't know any better. But anyway, Mrs. Marcos used to regularly go to the U.S. Marine Corps Birthday Ball, which is, of course, the social highlight of every year. She would attend, and she would dance with our marine security guards. I think conditions might have been so cold by then that she did not attend the first Marine Ball that I attended in Manila. But we certainly got to

know cabinet officials, under Marcos and after Marcos. We dealt with the Ongpins, and the various oligarchs and so forth, because, after all, they were there.

Q: They are, the Filipinos, quite astute businesspeople, aren't they?

HAUBEN: Yeah, they are. But there again, scratching beneath the surface, you'll find that the astute business people would generally be of Chinese extraction or at least were half Chinese. So that was one thing you learned and that included even the large landowners. If they weren't, they were the other kind of Mestizo, so not "Chinese Mestizo," but "Spanish Mestizo," families who are part Spanish by descent and then, of course, people who were half American or whatever. I mean as an island nation, they had a large degree of diversity, particularly among the entrepreneurial class, and we did get to know them. I entertained lavishly in my house, and we had the influential bankers and the heads of the stock exchanges and so forth come to our parties. To do that, I went to Subic Bay and at the BX [base exchange], I bought a full dining room set, rosewood furniture, marvelous stuff made in Hong Kong, a China cabinet, a huge one, and Hutch made in Taiwan; wonderful stuff that I still have. I then bought artifacts and antiques on trips like to Singapore or wherever, all kinds of stuff, so that I could properly entertain these people. All of that was out of pocket. I mean nobody was paying me for any of that. But, I could pretend to keep up with the wealthy Filipinos who were my guests. Anyway, we played the game.

Q: Well, your social life was pretty busy.

HAUBEN: Well, you are always getting invited, and we always entertained lavishly. The wife liked to do that, and so we did. One of our friends, a doctor, who was the head of the U.S. Naval Medical Research Unit in that country, a naval captain, told my wife, "Why don't you do catering? You entertain so marvelously." So, she started to do that, and she was quite successful at it. The wife was kept busy. It was a great place to take courses, so she took courses. Because when we got married, she didn't know how to cook. I mean she had servants at home, and her stepmom wouldn't teach her a damn thing. So, she taught herself. I mean she was a very outgoing person and even in Guatemala, in our favorite Chinese restaurant, she'd approach the owner,—and my wife was not Chinese, but was oriental, obviously—and would say, "Look, can I go into your kitchen and see how you make that wonton soup?" How could they refuse? But in Manila, you could learn all that stuff, so she took the course, and learned how to do crepe Suzettes, you know, after initially almost setting fire to our tabletop while learning how to do that. She did a great job. She learned how to do presentations, how to make flowers with orange peels, and so forth. Ultimately, she did wind up with a catering business, but by that time, we were about ready to leave the country. She did that the next place we lived.

Q: Well, I was thinking in Indonesia, I mean, that's a huge territory. You have to fly a lot, don't you?

HAUBEN: Yes, we had to fly a lot. In both places, we flew a lot to go out into the field. In Indonesia, of course, we flew with Garuda Airlines. I flew with them all over the place.

Q: Were you nervous about flying?

HAUBEN: Yes, in Indonesia because every once in a while, a plane would go down. But that was my job, so we definitely flew. When I had my second project in Indonesia, on the south coast of Java, we would drive actually. We would be driven by an embassy motor pool driver. But that drive would take all day. I mean, it was, like, eight hours or so. Sometimes I would drive down and then fly back, but the flight would be in a small aircraft called a *Caza,* which means the hunt in Spanish, as the plane was of Spanish manufacture. I would fly that to go back to Jakarta rather than to do the eight hours on the road. I remember one time that one didn't start, and the mechanics were working frantically with their monkey wrenches for hours. Finally, they got it started. I was a little nervous on that plane. I have to admit, but I didn't cancel my flight. After years in the Far East, you do become a bit of a fatalist.

Q: Yeah. Well, how did you find that—I mean, was money well spent in projects, you feel?

HAUBEN: Well, sometimes it was. I thought that our project in Indonesia, to cite one example, to introduce profitable, small farmer terracing and to get them to do a little bit of conservation, but at the same time, plant some cash crops intermingled with whatever else they were doing there was a fine concept. A farmer could make money, and it didn't require that much extra work and it would preserve their hillsides for them. That was a worthwhile project, I thought. The better projects, I thought, were the infrastructure projects. For example, also in my area I oversaw another project I didn't mention, because it didn't take that much of my time. It was easy to run, as we had a contract team of engineers whose job it was to do that. This was an irrigation project that actually involved, given the nature of the terrain, more drainage and irrigation, but made a lot of land available to farmers. It was a good project. I really loved our infrastructure projects. I wasn't involved in such projects in the Philippines. I thought our program there to encourage privatization was worthwhile. As for our Philippines small enterprise project, I thought, our money could probably have been better spent doing other things. The idea of what we should be doing really came home to me in my next job, which was in Pakistan.

Q: You're in Pakistan from when to when?

HAUBEN: I arrived in Pakistan in 1989 and was there for five years—until 1994. We did a five year extended stay in Pakistan. I'm not sure why, but the wife liked it. I was less than enamored with our stay by the end of the job. Anyway, we had a lot of infrastructure projects in Pakistan. I read case studies on two countries that had graduated from our USAID program: South Korea and Taiwan. In retrospect, many years *post hoc*, it came out that the biggest bang for the buck had been our training program. In other words, education, where we took the civil servants with which we worked and gave them a

college education in the United States. I guess earlier on it would have been bachelor's level, but mostly it was graduate school, whether for masters or PhDs, and that's how we had the biggest impact. I think that was an excellent idea.

By the time I started becoming involved in USAID work, everyone had already been educated at the taxpayers' expense, and we were doing short courses or trips that would be given as rewards for services rendered and so forth. I didn't think that was a good way of spending money, but what was always a good idea was infrastructure. We would do wonderful irrigation projects. In Pakistan, we did roads, and one of our contractors said, obviously somewhat self-servingly, "If you have some aid money, you build some roads. Now, you get more aid money, you build more roads, now you get still more aid money. What you should do is build even more roads." Now, that was in a country where the road network was horrible, and they needed roads. All too often, even in countries where that is needed, we abdicated that role and gave it to the World Bank or the Asian Development Bank, and so forth. Now, we would have leverage because you could veto projects going to countries who we didn't want to get any aid, and so on. But I think it would have been far better to keep the money within a U.S. government agency, so that the United States got the credit for building the road. Then, we could insist on our standards, and so forth.

I always thought infrastructure projects would give us the biggest bang for the buck. I mean, once our counterparts would have been educated through all necessary levels, then infrastructure would have been the way to go. But in a country like Pakistan, all too often, we fooled around with, for example, concentrating on reaching only the poorest of the poor. They may be unreachable and not developable at that point if they are that impoverished. But I would say that any infrastructure project is going to develop everybody; it's going to help everybody; it's going to help all your beneficiaries; opening access to areas that were closed and improving security; and it was just a good thing to do: a "good."

If the road that we wanted to do for fifty million bucks or a hundred million, which would traverse a tribal area of Pakistan to connect the Northwest Frontier Province to a little town way the hell out at the tip of a Pakistani salient into Afghanistan, called Parachinar, and the real rationale was to enable supplies to be ferried to the insurgents against Russia, who we were funding in Afghanistan, well, that didn't bother me. It was a badly needed road, anyway, and that area needed to be tied to the nation of Pakistan. I always thought that road was a wonderful project. I actually went on a field trip to Parachinar and wrote the justification for that road, which our director thought was a wonderful piece of writing, and it went to Washington and got the project approved. Later, of course, we had to cancel the project because the Pakistan program was put on hold, as our president could no longer certify that Pakistan was not developing a nuclear bomb, because they were.

I thought roads were a good thing or any big infrastructure project, depending on the needs of the country. In Pakistan, of course, we were providing mainly security support

assistance, which is basically money to get them to stay to some degree aligned with the United States. In the conflict in Afghanistan, Pakistan was, of course, the base for the *mujahideen*, for the Islamic warriors who finally drove the Russians out. I mean, in addition to the economic pressure that was breaking the Russian economy.

Q: Well, how did you find work in Pakistan?

HAUBEN: Well, work was fine. The Pakistanis were interesting people. There was a lot more of the backbone that you didn't see in the Philippines or Indonesia. I mean—they were of course very corrupt, but it all seemed manageable. Their own ethical values were Islamic after all and they believed, you know, in helping the poor folks and doing the right thing, and not stealing. Although, they usually wound up doing that anyway. But they were interesting people. I kind of liked it. You did have problems getting people to change their ways. There was a huge gulf between the haves and the have nots in Pakistan. While they would follow Islamic Socialism to a degree, in reality, the social fabric of the country was feudal. You had the feudal lords who owned the land. The peasants were sharecroppers; an all too familiar pattern. The feudal lords were the political class, and they ran members of their family for public office and won. But the Pakistan Army ultimately called all the shots. They did have that perennial problem with India. Yet civilian Pakistanis seemed less seized with that.

They were less seized with international Islamic issues, less seized with Palestine, and less seized even with Kashmir or India—I mean, the general populace. At one very worrying point, Ambassador Oakley actually talked India and Pakistan down from engaging in a nuclear exchange against one another. One would see the people covering their ears, glued to the radio in our embassy even to the humblest employees. I figured, Oh, they're all worried about the situation. No, no, no! It was the cricket finals they were listening to. That was an obsession with the people. But there was one religious bias that all local folks seem to have been seized with. That was the extreme passion against the Shia. The Shia were 15 percent of the Pakistani population, but the degree to which these people were despised is hard to even state. But they were. So, you had up north in Hunza, one of those wonderful places made popular in National Geographic, a population of Shiites. But they were not the Iranian version. They were the Ismaili Shiites who believed in the Aga Khan. He was their leader, their pope, so to speak. I dimly recall one Aga Khan back in the 1950s married U.S. actress Ava Gardner. So, anyway, the Ismaili Shiites were the populace up there, and they were a peaceful people, drinking apricot wine and so forth.

The harsher Sunnis naturally looked down upon them. Every year, on the anniversary of the Battle of Karbala in Iraq, which resulted in the murder of the person the Shiites thought should have been the Khalif, in the year 700 something, you know, when Ali was killed, and his little son Hussein was martyred, that's the most important Shia holiday. They have torchlight parades, and maybe they'll flagellate themselves somewhat, but mainly, torchlight parades. Sunnis from all over Pakistan would head up to Hunza, abetted by political actors who sought destabilization—usually for some sort of personal

monetary gain that they would get out of the situation—who would help these people get up there. So, Sunni miscreants from all over Pakistan, with their AK-47s, which everyone seemed to own, would assemble up there. When these poor Shiites would be having their torchlight parades, the Sunnis from all over Pakistan would open up and just mow them down. It was just horrid. That would happen year after year—they would be massacred. They would be considered subhuman trash. That was one socio-religious conflict which did capture the imagination of the masses.

There was a Shiite in Rawalpindi, Islamabad's twin city, who had made a lot of money as a businessman, owned a hotel, and was a great philanthropist. In one of these bouts of anti Shiite venom, a mob burnt down his hotel, and torched every car parked on the street in the vicinity of the hotel, as well, whether they were Shiite owned or not. So that kind of stuff was always happening. There were demonstrations all over Pakistan for everything, but demonstrations never existed unless they were organized by somebody and paid for. There were going rates for being a demonstrator, and carrying, you know, the equivalent of a board of wood or something with which to smash cars or whatever. The more dangerous it was believed it would be to participate in a particular demonstration, the higher the cost of renting demonstrators. But all demonstrations were, in one way or another, government organized or organized by some governmentally connected party or group.

Q: Did you have to tailor your programs around demonstrations?

HAUBEN: Ultimately, I'd have to say so. Well, ultimately what happened was, our presence in country was governed by demonstrations. Benazir Bhutto, a hugely popular figure in the U.S., was prime minister of Pakistan. She was the daughter of a landowning feudal family, although her party was a member of the Socialist International. She ran the country with the connivance, if not leadership, of the general in charge of the army, the army chief of staff. They publicly claimed to be in an alliance they called "the Islamabad-Beijing-Tehran Axis." Now, who would such an entity be aimed against? I mean the obvious answer would have been the U.S. But anyway—even though Iran was a member of that axis, this didn't matter in 1990 when we started amassing troops against the possible showdown with Saddam Hussein. Benazir Bhutto grew ever more hostile toward the U.S. So, when demonstrations started being executed against the U.S. or favoring Saddam Hussein, everybody got nervous, but not so much in the embassy as in Washington.

What finally happened was shortly before the beginning of the first Gulf War, in January 1991, it was decided that nonessential personnel would get evacuated to the U.S. The decision was driven by DOD [United States Department of Defense] because DOD said, Look, when the shit hits the fan, as it were, we won't have the C-130s available to evacuate anybody. Get them out of here now, because when the time comes, all our military aircraft are going to be busy fighting in Iraq and Kuwait, expelling them from Kuwait. So, if you think you might need an evacuation, evacuate your people now. So contrary to embassy remonstrations, Washington said, "Get nonessential personnel out of

there and do it now." And what do you know, "now" was the day that the war started. "Skies over Baghdad are illuminated" was the line as we were listening to the radio [Voice of America] in the morning, getting ready to go to the airport for the scheduled evacuation. I had been declared essential by my own request, and they were only too happy. But then the wife didn't want to have to go back alone and take care of the kids and all of that, so I went back and said, "Look, my wife is crying. Please can I be nonessential?" They said, Yeah. Okay. Mike, whatever you want. So off I went to Washington with the family on evacuation. But it was demonstrations such as that which triggered that, yes. We left our home in the hands of our staff. They took great care of it.

We came back a couple of months later when the evacuation was over. All of a sudden as we won, or it became apparent that the U.S. and our allies would win in Kuwait and Iraq, public opinion instantly turned, and everyone loved the Americans. It was just amazing. We'd watched the spigot turn on and off. It was an interesting lesson for those who think that public opinion is really public opinion. Right? Anyway, so back we came, and they had taken good care of the house. My wife liked to burn incense, and she had told our bearer there, who was, of course, a good Sunni Muslim, "Look, this has nothing to do with prayer. We're not asking you to pray. But I want you to please light the incense right here every day when we're gone." And he did. So they took good care of our place. Needless to say, that guy got a great recommendation from me when we left. Anyway, there we were back in Pakistan.

Q: So, what were you particularly involved in?

HAUBEN: In Pakistan, I wound up working in the program office for the latter part of my tenure. This office really manages the whole USAID country portfolio; all the different projects. We didn't manage the projects. We sort of supervised the project managers, I say sort of because we weren't in their chain of command, and I didn't write their efficiency report, but they had to send stuff to me. If they wanted a new project, they had to give me the write up. I would have to send it back to them saying, "Correct it this way, it is unacceptable, or this is great but I need more information et cetera," and then we would send the stuff to Washington with the official request for a project which accompanied our congressional presentation. I wrote sections of that. Of course, by then, we were no longer doing new projects, so we justified what we were doing under the old projects.

We couldn't do new projects because of the nuclear program that Pakistan had embarked upon. By then, our tiny Afghanistan program, which was all NGO activity, was merged with our winding down, vestigial Pakistan program. So the new director for Afghanistan and Pakistan became my boss. He had until then been the Afghanistan director. Earlier, he'd been our deputy director in Manila during my tour there. He was a guy that I got along with very well, and he made me the head program officer for both countries, Afghanistan and Pakistan. I had a program officer, a guy like me, for each country. So they would do the congressional presentations. They would all come to me, and I would have to, you know, correct, and send back and whatever. All the project managers, in a

sense, had to get my blessing for whatever they wanted. At that time, we didn't really have a deputy director covering the program side of our work—the deputy was a career admin officer, so essentially my function was acting as the deputy director for our portfolio for the two countries. I did get a cash award, three thousand dollars for what I did there. But I think that was a consolation prize: I was put in for a promotion. But I was number thirteen on the list. For budgetary reasons, twelve promotions in that category were given that year, so I missed out on that by one even though I was listed as eligible for promotion. They gave me a cash award instead. I was, nevertheless, highly honored.

Q: What kind of projects were you doing?

HAUBEN: Well, we were actually in the process of designing a couple of new projects. One would be in the realm of education, involving the training of teachers and such. The other was a maternal child health program, which would establish health clinics throughout Afghanistan, run by various private entities, but we were to finance training of the nurses. Midwives figured heavily. Basically, I wrote the project request. I mean with our technical expert telling me all this stuff, but I had to make it sound like the great American novel. Right? So, that got approved by Washington, but then the whole program was scrapped because civil war broke out amongst the winners in Afghanistan. With Hekmatyar, one of our guys at the time of the struggle against the Soviet occupation now trying his best to turn Kabul into a parking lot with a barrage of rocket fire. I mean a never ending barrage. It was impossible to do any projects there anywhere, so the Afghanistan program ended because it had to, not because we wanted it to. This was before the Taliban, back when I was still there in 1994. That was after Najibullah, the communist Afghan leader had got killed, and the Soviets were gone.

But anyway, maternal child health, little education projects— It was all NGO projects; implemented by NGOs without Americans because we weren't allowed to have people on the ground and the senior person on the ground would have to be someone from a third country. I mean, sometimes that could be a European, say, an Englishman—or a Canadian. But no Americans were allowed to do that. It was deemed unsafe. I was never allowed into Afghanistan even. We had lost an ambassador there—he was killed right, I think, over his desk, as the communists maintained or were establishing their stranglehold over the country. But now, you had Islamists. Anyway, nobody wanted an incident. Nobody wanted a captured diplomat to be taken hostage and paraded. Later, one project manager was actually allowed to go to Mazar-i-Sharif, where he dealt with the local warlord, General Dostum.

As for Pakistan, while we still lived there we weren't allowed to do new projects. My last enterprise there was to try to do those two Afghanistan projects. But that program got canned by the time I was already slated to leave the country and go to my next post. But to do those two projects, we needed some contractors. I knew some people who had been colleagues of mine in the past who were very, very astute; one of them ranked among the most notable educators in the world. He had been a USAID person whom we had known in Guatemala. He was retired and I got him back as a contractor to help write the project

paper and do the research needed to get the ultimate final approval for the education project. And I had another principal man who had been the deputy director in many countries in Latin America and who had been my boss in Guatemala at one time. I brought him back to write the maternal child. Health project paper after I'd written the initial request that got approved. Anyway all these contractors had to go home when the plug was pulled on the Afghanistan program. Shortly thereafter, I left the country. But anyway, that was the last thing I was involved in when I was physically in Pakistan. Then I went on to Jordan, which was my last post.

Q: Who was the ambassador there?

HAUBEN: In Pakistan?

Q: No in Jordan.

HAUBEN: Wesley Egan.

Q: Oh yeah.

HAUBEN: Yeah, now, he was fairly young. He must have been around my age, maybe a year older or younger. I know that because he, like me, when we were seventeen years old or whatever, living in New York, both of us not knowing one another, of course, had coincidentally both attended the Carnegie Hall concert of the Great Ray Charles, a blues singer. So, he and I both attended the Ray Charles concert at Carnegie Hall in late 1960 or early 1961. Anyway, Wes Egan was the ambassador. He had been ambassador in Cairo and there he was now in Amman, Jordan. When I was first introduced to him, I'd already been in the country for three weeks. He'd been on a TDY [temporary duty travel] somewhere and he came back. I was introduced to him, taken by my boss to meet Ambassador Egan. He said, "Well, Mike, what do you think of Jordan?" And I said, "This is really wonderful. Having come from Pakistan, this place is so wonderfully developed. It's so advanced—" When I went on about how well developed it was, Ambassador Egan said, "Well, in that case, Mike, what the hell are you doing here?"

He was a great guy, and I committed a faux pas at one embassy Christmas party. I was talking to the ambassador, and I wore a tie, which had, you know, some red on green. I mentioned to Ambassador Egan, "Well, this tie, you know, might be equally appropriate on St. Patrick's Day. And he said, "Well, on St. Patrick's Day, I wear orange." Had I been wide awake, which I wasn't, I would have realized that his first name, of course, Wesley, was a giveaway. Right?

Q: Oh, yeah.

HAUBEN: And he said, "Well, I happen to be a Protestant Irishman." I didn't ask him whether that was the same thing as being Scotch Irish, which it probably was, but maybe

not. I thought he was an impressive man and a great leader, a fine ambassador, in my opinion.

Q: What were you doing in Jordan?

HAUBEN: Well, actually similar to what I'd been doing in the Pakistan program. We did have a senior program officer and I was the deputy, but we split the workload between us. It was essentially very similar. We had to get the input from the project managers to write our reports to Washington and the congressional report and this and that, and then I would cajole them, "Send me your input in a timely fashion because otherwise, we cannot submit the report to Washington in a timely fashion." And the project managers, usually being academics, knew no time. They were all used to doing research projects. "I need this input," I'm screaming and yelling, and ultimately, we got our stuff and I was able to write my congressional presentation. Everything went well.

I was also in charge of public relations, writing pieces for the USAID newsletter and for publication in the news media, because it was recognized that I knew how to write. It was wonderful, but I was only there for two years because then I retired at the age of fifty-two. The family liked it there, the wife liked it, and it was a lovely place to live despite the political situation in the Middle East. King Hussein had walked a tightrope in the first Gulf War. He didn't want to sever his economic ties with Iraq because he had important constituents who were businesspeople exporting to and importing from Iraq. In a reflection of intra-Jordanian ethno-political divisions, it was significant that those constituents were East bankers, as opposed to Palestinians. In fact, the main players in the Jordanian economy, the big business folks, were Palestinian Christians, who, incidentally all seemed to belong to the most influential social sports club in Amman, called the Orthodox Club, because the well-heeled Palestinians in Jordan were overwhelmingly Christians of the Greek Orthodox persuasion.

Q: Ah, my God.

HAUBEN: So, Jordan was an interesting country. I mean Queen Noor was there at our farewell party and so forth. We gave funds to the NGO that she sponsored, which was dedicated to helping Bedouin women develop marketable woven products, you know, carpets and such. I was pleased we could help the Bedouin, whose other main source of income was money sent home by the breadwinners who were members of the Jordanian Army, the rank and file of which were largely Bedouin.

Q: Yeah, that's right. Wow. What were you doing in Jordan?

HAUBEN: I was handling the projects from the point of view of an overseer. If there were negotiations to develop a new project, I would attend the negotiations. But the negotiation would be between the Jordanian implementing agency and the USAID person who would be the project manager—generally an American academic. This might be in the realm of engineering, as we did do a lot of good infrastructure projects—sewage

treatment, water purification, et cetera. We would certainly sit in on innumerable meetings, but as projects were being developed and put on paper, I would have to fill in all the details and ensure that what was submitted to Washington included everything that had to be included to get an approval. Ultimately, Washington has to approve stuff and we served as the link between Jordan and Washington. So, I was always on email to Washington, always attaching to the email documents that they had to review and approve.

There was also "program assistance," which meant that the government of Jordan had to fulfill certain conditions in terms of liberalizing their economy, which then would have to be approved by Washington before a tranche of money was then released, which would be direct budget support for the Jordanians, in various sectors that we would agree to mutually. We would have to look and follow up to see whether the required policy conditionality was being met. One of the conditions might be passage of a law allowing private businesspeople to invest in such and such, for example, perhaps the petroleum sector. I don't recall if that was one of the sectors but I'm hypothesizing. Then, if such a law was not passed, we would have to meet with the Jordanians to harangue them and they would watch the status and inform us of progress. And once the law did get passed, we would quickly proceed to write it all up for Washington to get the promised funds released to, say, the Jordanian budget line item for the road construction sector. Often questions would arise and we'd try to answer them—a lot of back and forth traffic with a lot of phone calls to Washington, a lot of it done on, you know, Washington time, of course, despite the thirteen or fourteen hour time difference. But you got used to it, and that was all part of the job. It was a nice job.

There was a while there at the end of my tour when we had a new director and the deputy director had left on transfer to another country, so I was the acting deputy director. So in that capacity, I kind of ran the mission. While that was only for a couple of weeks, it was enough to make me feel good. My farewell from the agency, and that was it. Then, I retired and that was the end of that.

One interesting sideline on Middle Eastern customs—well first of all, on the Israel issue, while I was there, peace was made between King Hussein of Jordan and Israel. That was all well and good, as then we could travel to Israel and see the holy places and that was very interesting and great fun. But anyway, the point is, among the Jordanians, the Jordanian people who were "East Bankers," the ones who were not Palestinian, the non Palestinian Jordanians—they were quite happy. They figured money could be made, good tourism.

The Palestinians, however, were quite bitter because they believed that the whole of what had been the British Mandate of Palestine should be their country. They never stopped believing that, so that was an interesting divergence there in points of view amongst Jordanians depending on what they were by background. It was not religious. You could be the most the most devout Orthodox Christian Palestinian, and you would be like one of our embassy employees, who, on the day when Rabin was assassinated, was so happy

and all he could say was, “One less Jew.” Another Palestinian employee of ours, a Christian who had grown up in Australia and spoke English with an Aussie accent would tell me over a few beers at a party, “Mike, you’re the only American who understands us. So, I can tell you the truth. When we hear that a school bus in Israel has been blown up, we’re happy.” I am a good listener, what could I say. But I did understand their point of view, and theirs was radically different from that of non Palestinian Jordanians, non Palestinian Arabs.

I had another employee who certainly had prejudices against the Jews, but when Rabin was assassinated, he felt horrible. He was an Iraqi, but his dad had worked for the royal Hashemite regime in pre-Saddam Iraq, so he had a connection with the royal family of Jordan, also Hashemite, of course. But anyway, when Rabin was assassinated, and he heard what that Christian had said about another Jew dead, he was taken aback—not because he liked Jews, but because, “How could he say that? Rabin was a friend of our king.” So, you have different points of view.

But the Arab people are wonderful people, wonderfully hospitable, and I dearly love them, whether they’re Christian, Islamic, Palestinian or Jordanian. It’s hard not to love these people, and not to consider these countries as really charming. One could actually see why the great powers Britain and France were so reluctant to loosen their hold. These are wonderful places, and wonderful people.

But I will talk about a negotiating session when we were negotiating a new project. Across on one side of the table were the Jordanians from the Ministry of Planning of the Civil Service or the “Secretariat” that runs Jordan. And a couple of these guys were Bedouins, but of good families with money, even though they lived in tents—with good connections to the royal family, I’m sure—directorships in the Ministry of Planning. On our side of the table were the USAID officers who are going to be managing the project—and me. The future project manager was a young guy, who was an intern and a black American. And on our table, we also had some Jordanians who were our employees who were obviously proficient in Arabic. When the black American, my colleague, suggested something, the Jordanian government officials made snide comments to one another. They used their equivalent of the “N word,” which was *abed*, meaning slave in Arabic. The term they use for black people is “slave.” So, one says to his underlings, “Well, tell the slave such and such,” but our Jordanian employee caught it. And he said to my buddy, the black guy, “Hey, they just used a derogatory word against you.” And my friend, quite appropriately, said, “I think we should suspend this negotiating session.” He complained to Ambassador Egan, and Ambassador Egan went right to the foreign minister, give him a call immediately and vigorously, robustly complained against what had been said by one of the people in his government toward a black American simply because of the color of his skin, and naturally, the foreign minister was hugely apologetic as he should have been. But I thought I’d mention that episode.

Q: Oh, yeah.

HAUBEN: To provide some insight. The belief that only Americans are prejudiced and the Islamic people know no skin color—get out of here! That's not true.

Q: Did we have a particular program for the Palestinians occupied?

HAUBEN: Yeah, but get this, that program was actually administered out of the American embassy in Tel Aviv and out of the American consulate in Jerusalem. So, they're the ones who dealt with the West Bank and Gaza.

Q: And you had nothing—

HAUBEN: Pardon?

Q: So, you weren't involved in that?

HAUBEN: No, the USAID mission, Jordan, or the embassy in Jordan had absolutely nothing to do with that. It was all handled out of Israel. But the guy who considered himself the de facto U.S. ambassador to the Palestinians was our consul general in Jerusalem, because that Jerusalem consulate was viewed as a surrogate for an embassy to Palestine. The anecdote there is that one of the USAID guys handling Palestine was a Jewish guy from Brooklyn. So, he was supposed to go on a trip to Gaza, and his counterparts, Palestinian West bankers said, "Look, it really may not be a good idea for you to be wearing that ponytail that you have." The idea being that looking like a stereotypical proponent of American, Western counterculture could be offensive to religious, family oriented Muslims. So, the guy's answer was, "Well, I guess I'll just have to hide my ponytail under my yamaka." A yamaka is a skullcap that Jews wear at prayer. Anyway, that's my anecdote for the day. That covers it. Then I retired, and that was the end of that.

Q: What have you been doing since you retired?

HAUBEN: We retired to where I live now, in Hilo, Hawaii. I had years earlier bought a home here with the intention of retiring into it, which we did. We enlarged it and then retired into it. I started off with my wife not wanting me to do nothing, so I started off day trading stocks, and I lost a bit of money. Then, I learned about options and did S&P options, and I lost heavily. I was literally pissing away my life savings, but it didn't matter because I was making such a generous pension. In all honesty, I just shrugged it off. Then, I learned how to trade futures but was doing S&P futures rather than more conservative commodities. There, I finally learned what to do but by then I had lost too much and was already nervous. I retired in 1996. By 2001, I realized that I better stop fooling around with this stuff. It was ruining my health anyway, getting up, you know, before the opening of the market, say 3:30 am in Hilo, as the market opened at four am Hawaii time. Every night, I'd get up—often at three o'clock, if not 2:30 to go to my computer. It wasn't salutary, and I was losing money hand over fist, then I realized I shouldn't do that, and so I didn't.

What did I do then? For one thing, I wrote four articles about lessons that ought to be learned from the Vietnam experience that were published in smallwarsjournal.com, a website well followed by the counterinsurgency community. And, I have a hobby, which is swimming with reef sharks. I acquired that hobby while we were in Manila, because we had access to the Subic Bay Naval Station, and there was a wonderful R&R spot where you could do that, and I did that. That was my hobby since 1985. I found a place in Hawaii where you could find these sharks— Before finding that place, I used to travel once a year to Christmas Island, which is not far from here. I would photograph and observe the movement of the reef sharks. I just like to snorkel and observe them. But if you do that, people think you're nuts. But if you get a camera and take pictures of them, then people say, Ah, a wildlife photographer. How cool. We lived here, but we traveled to the mainland.

We wound up doing one month every year in Europe, and another three weeks or so every year in the mainland U.S. going to places we liked. We didn't do that until my younger son graduated from West Point and was stationed in Stuttgart. In 2003, 2004, we went to Germany and stayed a month, imposing on our poor son in Swabia in wonderful South Germany, and going to Bavaria and going off to Strasbourg, France, to eat escargot and have a great time. During the third year that he was there, we decided to see Italy and we did. We decided that from then on that we would spend a month in Italy every year. We started off in Sicily doing that and decided that's what we'd like to do. Finally, we figured out where in Sicily we wanted to go. We'd rent an apartment. We had the time of our life until Al Italia went broke. They were going bankrupt and we thought we'd be stuck in Sicily— And so, we figured from then on, we'd go to Spain instead. Now, my Spanish is really good. And then for five years, every year, we spent a month in Spain, and that was just delightful. We would stay three weeks in the mainland, mainly New York, as the wife loved it even when our kids were no longer living there. They were living in the Bay Area, but we liked New York more. Anyway, to make a long story short, the last time we did that was 2016.

In January of 2017, my poor wife was diagnosed with already advanced stage four cancer and that was the end of our traveling career. Then, I spent the next three years taking care of her, and then one year trying to keep from going nuts after her absence. Now, I'm better. A mutual friend from the Hilo Yacht Club to which I belong introduced me to a fellow member whom I hadn't met; a seventy year old lady who was the widow of a doctor, still running the doctor's clinic with hired doctors and hired medical help. She wound up as my girlfriend and that's where we are now. So, life begins at seventy-six. What can I say?

Q: Good, that's nice. I'm ninety-three now.

HAUBEN: Well, that's outstanding! That is outstanding. You have shown me that even I have something to look forward to.

Q: Well, thank you very much, and aloha.

HAUBEN: Aloha. Yes, sir! Thank you, Stu, for your wonderful leadership in this. I'm very grateful and honored for the time you have spent listening to me.

Q: Well, I've enjoyed this very much.

HAUBEN: Well, likewise, Stu. Honestly, thank you. I really am greatly honored. Thank you.

Q: Thank you.

End of interview