A Brief Memoir for My Family

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MEMOIR

Yesterday at breakfast I said to Shana (my wife) that I think this is the happiest time of my life. She laughed. Then she looked at me, and saw I was serious.

How could that be? We're in the midst of the deadly Covid-19 pandemic. I am 78 years old. Hence I am seizing the moment to begin jotting down some thoughts. I am overcome by a certain feeling of contentment. My marriage has lasted 52 years and promises to continue. Our children are settled and happy. We own a wonderful apartment overlooking the Bois de Boulogne just outside Paris. We are comfortably retired after an interesting and rewarding career. It's time to look back and see how we got here.

On January 3, 1942, in the middle of World War II, I was delivered to my parents, Kay and Robby, at the Huntington Hospital in Pasadena, California. Little did I know that a year later the same doctor in the same hospital would deliver a little girl, Shana Goss, who would become my wife in 1968.

My earliest memories were of a happy childhood in Pasadena with our dog Bruno. My parents owned a mountain cabin they named Porcupine Hill, at Lake Sabrina, above Bishop, where we would spend every summer, hiking and fishing in the High Sierra. Sometimes we would even go up there in winter on skis when the snowfall could reach as high as 14 feet.

My Protestant parents sent my brother and me to a Catholic grade school, St. Philips, for eight years. They believed the nuns would provide a better, stricter education than public school. I will never forget my first day in first grade.

Lunch was outdoors on picnic tables on the playground. I sat down at my place and then noticed that all the others were still standing up. Oh my gosh, I thought, those shiny benches have just been varnished. What have I done to my pants? No, the varnish wasn't fresh. Everyone was just waiting to say grace!

That same first day my British-sounding accent, inherited from my European-educated parents, drew laughter from the other students. I immediately began using an American accent outside the home while retaining my English accent within my family. This practice continued throughout my life.

Another thing that stuck with me from my early years was that everyone else seemed to bicycle or walk to school. My father always drove me and picked me up in his

Cadillac, a source of great embarrassment to me; so I asked him to please park the car out of sight around the corner. He was not a snob or spendthrift. The Cadillacs were used cars. He just liked top quality.

How I longed to have a Dad who worked outside the home for a living and how jealous I was of the boy whose Dad was a Chevy salesman. I vowed early on that I would have a tangible, visible working life so as to be a good model to my own children.

I was always the lone or one of just two non-Catholics in class. The Catholic catechism teaches that if a person knows about the Catholic religion (the "one true religion"), but does not convert, he/she will burn in hell forever. It felt strange when the other students would turn around to look at poor Chris at that moment. One nun asked me, "If you're good enough to sit with us in class, why aren't you good enough to sit with us in church?" Hey, I was just a little kid waiting for school to open after their daily Mass during the holy month of May.

And then there was the geography project where we would stick little pieces of cotton, corn, etc. on a map of Africa. My parents said I could enhance my project by using some photos from *National Geographic*. On the big day we put our projects on the chalk ledge. Our nun stopped in front of mine, and I filled with pride when I answered her booming question, "Whose is this?" "Well, you committed a sin. Come up to the front of the class and apologize." You can probably guess the problem. Some topless African women were shown harvesting their crop. It was very upsetting and got me thinking. Maybe that's one of the reasons I went to Africa with the Peace Corps, where toplessness was perfectly normal.

Well, it so happened that a close family friend was a Catholic priest from Robby's native Tyrol. He would come over quite regularly to swim, drink a beer, smoke his pipe and chat with Robby about their home country. When Robby learned of the incident, he went ballistic, called the priest, who immediately drove over from Torrance, went to the convent and gave the nuns Holy Hell. Apparently they were trembling from fear on their knees as they asked for his blessing and forgiveness.

Another memory is of our waiting at the railway station in Pasadena for the arrival of the transcontinental Super Chief. I could not understand all the fuss my parents made over a rather elderly couple who stepped off the train. I was much more interested in the fate of the Lincoln penny I had put on the track. Well, of course, they were Robby's parents, whom he had not seen since before the War. Grandpa Henze had been a professor of biochemistry at the University of Innsbruck. He lost his job and his pension because he would not allow Nazi uniforms in his classroom. He was welcomed as a distinguished professor at Caltech.

Another important part of my childhood was the clarinet. My parents started me on lessons at age eight. In truth, to this day I think I would have preferred piano or guitar although a highlight of my time at Pomona College was playing in the orchestra when we all were sounding our best. My favorite piece was and still is the second movement of Chopin's 2nd piano concerto.

I stopped playing after a long break. It was just too heartbreaking to remember how good I had once been.

Our parents sent my brother and me to boarding school for four years. I was 13 when I arrived at the Thacher School in Ojai, California. Thacher placed a lot of emphasis on riding, camping and the outdoors. Each boy owned a horse, for which he was totally responsible. Mine was named Caruso because apparently he sang a lot as a youngster. The founder of the school liked to say ,"There is something about the outside of a horse that is good for the inside of a boy." To this day, I have followed the principle of doing what I have to do before doing what I want to do. Take care of your horse before you take care of yourself.

I remember my first dinner in the school dining room when the prefect at our table asked me a simple question. I had just taken a sip of hot chocolate and tried to blurt out the answer before swallowing. Talk about nervous! Not a happy experience.

Unlike most of the other boys, who complained about all the rules and strictness of the school, my brother and I reveled in our relative liberation there after a very strict upbringing at home. I was not a good athlete and dreaded the mandatory daily recess baseball that everyone else seemed to enjoy. It wasn't fun to be the last one chosen for a team or to be so miserable at throwing a softball. Instead, I did very well academically. And Thacher taught us how to write, a skill that proved invaluable in my later career. I already had German, thanks to my parents who spoke to each other in that language when wanting to discuss things that were *nicht für die Kinder*, the quickest way to perk up our ears and get us to learn it. Two years of Latin plus three years of French at Thacher laid the groundwork for my lifelong love of French and interest in languages generally. In sum, I truly believe I gained a lot more from Thacher than I ever did from college.

For my 15th birthday, Robby gave me his .22 caliber Remington rifle. (He also gave me a purse-sized .22 pistol the Tyrolean priest had received in his confessional booth – no questions asked.) I was an active member of the rifle club and the National Rifle Association under the supervision of our English teacher and historian of the American West, David Lavender. In those days, the NRA was all about gun safety and marksmanship, not politics. The one time I shot at a golden-mantled ground squirrel in the Sierra at such a long distance that I didn't think I had a chance of hitting him, he leaped about a foot in the air. I think I did find a trace of blood, but not the poor creature. I felt so bad that I never again shot at a living thing, although I enjoyed target shooting.

For college I chose Pomona. Although accepted at Stanford, I did not want to attend the same school as my brother. I had no idea what to choose as a major subject. I initially selected German. Then switched to international relations and finally settled on Anthropology, with French and German as minors. I liked anthropology because it was sort of a broad umbrella - the study of man – covering many sub-topics: linguistics, archeology, paleontology, cultural anthropology. My personal interest was the latter, but since boyhood I had dreamed of becoming an archeologist. That dream was partially satisfied by participating in a "dig," several actually, along the banks of the Missouri River. My good friend Mike McCurry and I camped out for six weeks at three different sites previously inhabited by Native Americans (Amerindians) under

the supervision of a professor from the University of South Dakota. I remember the last gravesite we uncovered did not count. The bones of a pioneer were still greasy!

Kay and Robby were big on youth exchanges. A Swiss girl and an Austrian girl spent time with us in California. I, in turn, spent a summer with a Tyrolean family in Innsbruck. I also spent my junior year abroad after applying to the University of Geneva. I had planned on losing an academic year at Pomona and graduating belatedly. But no, the visiting head of our department from Norway, asked me how much credit I needed and came through. So did the head of the French department, and thus I graduated "on time" in 1963.

I began a doctoral program in anthropology at the University of California at Berkeley, but quickly became disillusioned. I had had enough of academia. Like many Americans I was devastated by the assassination of President Kennedy in November 1963. His call for service struck a chord with me. Much to my parents' disappointment, I withdrew from Berkeley and applied for the Peace Corps. This would be a chance to experience Africa first-hand instead of just reading about it in books.

To tell the truth, there was another big reason - Vietnam. Berkeley had partially been a draft dodge. Giving up my student deferment at Berkeley left me highly vulnerable for military service. In all honesty, I felt I could serve my country better in the Peace Corps than by stepping on a mine in a rice field in Vietnam. Did I have a back problem? Well, yes. Some might call it a yellow streak.

I was accepted for training at Oberlin College and Quebec to teach English in Ivory Coast. As my best Thacher friend, George Clyde, who served in Bolivia, said, the Peace Corps training alone was worth applying. I describe it in a self-published collection for my family of my letters home, *How It Was: Up Country in West Africa in the 60s*. My original letters are in the John F. Kennedy Presidential Library in Boston.

After completing my two years of Peace Corps service in 1966, the war in Vietnam was still raging. Once again I became draft bait. On my way home from Africa, I had checked out a graduate program in anthropology at Arizona State University specializing in Native American studies, but didn't like it.

Quickly I needed another draft deferment. It was late summer. Could I find a French teaching job starting in the Fall? My French was still fresh from Ivory Coast. Luckily Robby and Kay knew the Director of the Polytechnic School in Pasadena and gave me an introduction. Sorry, Chris, he said, but I have already filled the French teaching position. Would you accept junior high English, 7th grade? I did, expecting I would dislike the French teacher he had already hired.

Before the start of the school year, the Director hosted an afternoon reception for the faculty in his patio. I turned my head and saw a beautiful creature dressed in a Hawaiian muumuu with a lei around her neck, gracefully crossing the patio.

Yes, she was the new French teacher! Being a little backward about going forward, it was some months before I asked Shana Goss for a date. When I did, a little tyke at

school asked me why I was talking to Miss Goss in French. “So you won’t understand,” I replied. That did it. Word spread like wildfire around the school that Mr. Henze loves Miss Goss.

To add to her many attractions, her father, Norman Goss (Thacher Class of 1933) was a talented cellist (my favorite instrument), who played first chair in the Pasadena Symphony and also had a seat in the Los Angeles Symphony. His second career was as a prominent restaurateur and owner of the Stuft Shirt restaurant in Pasadena and later four others, including the architectural gem on the bay in Newport Beach. He was also an alfalfa/dairy rancher in the California desert and owner of a fast-food restaurant, Terrible Ivan’s, specializing in shish kebab. To cap his manifold career, Norman retired after winning the first prize for the chardonnay he produced on the vineyard, El Chamisal, that he created at San Luis Obispo, California. Quite a man and very nice to boot!

One year of teaching was enough for me, but I still needed a draft deferral. I saw an announcement in the Caltech library for the annual Foreign Service examination at the Los Angeles civic center and decided to give it a try. After all, I had nothing to lose.

There was no special preparation for the exam. I just read *Time* magazine cover to cover for two weeks beforehand. In my case, anthropology was as good an academic preparation as any since it covered so many fields. During the day-long written exam I heard whizz kids from UCLA and USC during the breaks say how easy it was. I, on the other hand, just skipped whole chapters on economics, for example, since wrong answers counted against one. I wondered if it was even worth returning for the afternoon session. At the end of the day I asked my best friend, Terry Kahn, in Hollywood if I could come over for a stiff drink since I had just wasted my day. I never saw those whizz kids again.

Two weeks later I received an envelope in the mail saying I had passed. They graded on the curve, and I got a 74 with a cut-off at 72. The next step was a 2 ½ hour oral in front of a panel of three senior officers. They let me lead the discussion, during which the Peace Corps played a major role. At the end they asked me to wait outside the room. Ten minutes later one of them emerged with his hand extended to welcome me aboard. Heck, I didn’t even know if I wanted to be aboard. I shook his hand and later asked if I could defer basic training until after one more summer in my beloved High Sierra. The Foreign Service agreed, and “the rest is history.”

That fall of 1967 I drove to Washington, D.C. and rented an apartment in Arlington, Virginia, close to the Foreign Service Institute, where I would study Kiswahili following basic training. I had joined the U.S. Information Agency (USIA), to put it bluntly and simply, the overseas propaganda branch of the U.S. government. More and more I wrestled with what to do about Shana. Go off to my preferred first posting in Africa, leaving her behind in California? Are you, crazy? I asked myself. You won’t find anyone who comes close to her there. So I invited her to spend Christmas with me “for a discussion.” I tried to think of everything bad about myself to tell her so that she could accept or reject my marriage proposal with open eyes. After several days of reflection she said yes. I think perhaps we both wanted to move away from life in California. I called her father Norman to ask for her hand, and he readily agreed.

Ours was a quickie wedding in February 1968 in Pasadena because I felt I had to return to my Kiswahili class. Shana would follow me later and join her own class for spouses. Our original destination was Tanzania, but due to an administrative complication I was asked to choose between Congo Kinshasa or South Africa. Kiswahili is not spoken in either of those countries. I had heard such bad things about Kinshasa, we decided on South Africa despite our abhorrence of apartheid. I felt that it would be important for anyone planning to spend much of his career in Africa to have first-hand knowledge of such an important country as South Africa.

South Africa 1968-69

South Africa was a training assignment. We lived in borrowed homes in Pretoria, Johannesburg and Capetown, spending more time in Pretoria than anywhere else. Since I spent most of my time in an office, I did not have the same amount of face-to-face experience with the cruelty of apartheid as Shana, who confronted it constantly in her daily activities.

I was put in charge of our cultural center in Johannesburg for a month while the director was away on home leave. I got friendly with our film library director, Basil Arendse, and suggested we go out to lunch together one day. I'd love to have lunch with you, Chris, he said, but we can't go to a restaurant together. You see, I'm colored. Basil's skin was lighter than mine and his hair a little curly. Stupid me, I had not checked on the racial identities of our staff. Basil and I had lunch often together but always with carry-out in the office.

It was a relief to visit Lesotho, Swaziland and Botswana and get an occasional breath of "fresh air". Reentering South Africa was always a bit of a downer. I was privileged to be in charge of the U. S. exhibit honoring Swaziland on her day of independence. We will never forget the warriors and dancers in the big stadium at Mbabane and King Sobuza II, equally royal in a pin-striped suit from Bond Street or barefoot, dressed in animal skins and the garb of a traditional chief. Our gift to the King was a set of Encyclopedia Americana, which we delivered to his palace at night. The King and his many wives were celebrating and feasting on oxen in the nearby *kraal*. A number of his wives, though, remained outside doing their own thing in the many Chrysler limos parked outside the fence.

On a visit to Botswana, we literally had a hard time finding the capital, Gaberone. The tall water tower indicated it was there somewhere, but we had to drive around to find an opening in the thorn bush fence! We were amused to find a sign saying Barclays Bank attached to the branch of a thorn tree in a village outside the capital. Turned out it was where the Barclays Bank truck parked on market day.

South Africa at the time had no television, for political, not technical reasons. It would have been too sensitive to broadcast programs showing blacks and whites as equals. Thus we were deprived of witnessing the first moon landing live on television. To see that, we had to wait for videotapes expedited from London. Instead, Shana and I listened to the landing on Voice of America shortwave radio in the house of the station chief where we were staying. I still cannot believe his indifference when I called to him to listen – the LEM was 12 feet above the surface and descending. I'll

catch it later, he said from the other room. Was what he was working on so important? Seeing the movie *Space Odyssey 2001* at a drive-in theater under a full moon after the success of Apollo 11 was a special experience.

In my scrapbook is a clipping from the Johannesburg *Star* about an Afrikaner farmer who was in trouble for having his Bantu laborers carry a telephone pole from Pretoria to Johannesburg, a distance of about 53 km or 33 miles. It was cheaper than renting a truck.

What a beautiful yet tragic place South Africa was. Magnificent landscapes and climate, great wines, and wonderful people of all racial groups. The problem was they were not allowed to intermingle. And it wasn't as if all non-whites wanted equality. The so-called "coloureds" and the Indians wanted the same privileges as the whites, not equality with the Bantu. And although many English- speaking whites talked a good anti-apartheid game, we suspected at least some of them voted for the National Party to maintain their status.

We chipped away at the system in our own tiny way by hosting a few multi-racial swimming parties at our homes. Everyone had such a good time. They had never done anything like that before. But we had to be mindful of the difficulties some of our guests faced coming to or leaving our home in a white residential area. The passbook controls were very strict.

Tears came to my eyes when Nelson Mandela was finally freed in February 1990 after being imprisoned for 27 years, 18 at hard labor on Robben Island. I called my children to watch the historic event on television. I also felt like applauding former South African F. W. de Klerk when I saw him at the Hotel Crillon in Paris. He demonstrated a great deal of courage for ending apartheid and releasing Mandela. A beautiful footnote was Mandela's inviting some of his former jailers to his inauguration as President of South Africa in May 1994.

Tanzania 1969-70

Our next stop was Dar es Salaam. We had the feeling my new boss, Pat Belcher and his wife Louise, were concerned about our having been "tainted" by a year in South Africa, which might also have a negative effect with Tanzanian contacts. The fact that we both spoke Kiswahili helped assuage them. They became almost like parents to us. It was the beginning of a lifelong friendship which continues through their children and ours today. I loved going on film safaris. After receiving permission from the authorities we would load up the Land Rover with camping gear, a generator, a couple of Victor Kalart 16 mm movie projectors and an outdoor film screen. Our Apollo 11 film was very popular. Before dark, we would drive around with a loudspeaker on the roof of the Land Rover, announcing "*Apollo kumi na moja imetua kijijini"* (Apollo 11 has landed in the village.) Our film on JFK, *Years of Lightning; Day of Drums* was more confusing. Due to flashbacks, the audience couldn't understand if the U.S. president really had died or if he had come back from the dead.

We also displayed a moon rock at the country's big annual agricultural fair. The rock, which resembled nothing more than a piece of asphalt one would find beside the road, was carefully mounted inside a sealed plexiglass sphere about one meter in diameter. I

remember one delighted *Mzee* (old man) who was convinced the sphere itself was the rock. Much more interesting! I didn't have the heart to set him straight. The title of our prestigious pamphlet on Apollo 11, *Mtu na Mwezi* (Man on the Moon), was also the subject of a highly embarrassing translation incident. [See my separate account, Man on the Moon in Addenda]

How we loved visiting the island of Zanzibar and our good friends and Kiswahili language training classmates, Principal Officer Don Haught and his wife Sue. Martinis flowed liberally after an afternoon of exquisite snorkeling among incredibly beautiful fishes and coral reefs.

Three guests deserve note. One day Shana answered a knock on our kitchen door. It was yet another person, this one dressed in the uniform for National Service with her hat pulled down over her face, seeking work, "*Natafuta kazi*." Just as Shana was about to turn her away, she started giggling. She was one of our Kiswahili language teachers from Washington who had returned to Tanzania. We immediately asked her to join us for lunch.

Another lunch at our house included the editor of the far-left newspaper *Ngurumo* (Thunder. I love the onomatopoeia.), Ben Mkapa, who later became president of Tanzania. Suddenly Shana let out the most blood-curdling scream I had ever heard. She was trembling and pointing to our beachfront veranda. I honestly thought of a Mau Mau uprising or terrorist attack. It turned out to have been merely a very large iguana come to see what was going on.

Washington, D.C. (I)1970-74

I was fortunate to work as the Agency's Assistant Science Advisor with a man I grew to admire a great deal, Simon Bourgin, a rare intellectual among government bureaucrats. Under Si's supervision, I wrote guidance and policy briefing papers on scientific and political topics for headquarters and our field posts. Many of these focused on NASA space programs and U.S. environmental and energy policies. It was a wonderful education for me.

I was privileged to facilitate foreign press coverage of several Apollo launches and can never forget the sound and shirt-flapping wave of sheer unimaginable power reaching us from four miles away as the tremendous rockets lifted off the pad at Cape Kennedy. You wouldn't want to be any closer. Equally amazing was my, and just about everyone else's involuntary, spontaneous shouting "Go, go, go" for the three brave astronauts as they began their trip.

I prepared the way and accompanied the Apollo 14 and 15 astronauts to Poland, Yugoslavia and Western Europe, where they met with dignitaries and lectured to the scientific communities. One evening I cornered Al Worden in a hotel bar to ask him two questions that had long been on my mind.

The first was as Command Module Pilot orbiting the moon 71 times alone while his Apollo 15 teammates were on the surface of the moon: Were you very busy piloting alone and without your colleagues? How lonely was it? His answer: No, I wasn't busy all the time, and frankly I was glad to be rid of them and have some time alone."

OK. That led me to the big question. Did your experience in space affect in any way your religious feelings or thoughts about God?

His astounding answer: "Yes, I came to think of the astronaut as God." Upon reflection, it made a lot of sense to me. After all, many religions emphasize that God is everywhere, in every thing and every creature.

Besides orchestrating the international travels of astronauts, I orchestrated the travels of the moon rocks they had gathered, for exhibition in foreign countries. Occasionally a rock would become dislodged from its mounting inside its plexiglass case filled with nitrogen for preservation. The disabled rocks then had to be returned to the Lunar Laboratory in Houston for resetting. I describe one such rescue mission in a separate little write-up, *My Piece of the Moon* [See Addenda].

Let me use this opportunity to kill off one misconception. Astronauts are not just glorified jet jockeys. They are some of the most impressive, intelligent and courageous people I've ever met.

Back to Si Bourgin. He was a great mentor and supporter of yours truly. Thanks to Si, I received two promotions while serving in Washington, almost unheard of for a Foreign Service Officer. I am forever grateful to him.

Slovenia 1974-76

When I was offered the post of Ljubljana, Slovenia, in then Communist Yugoslavia, I resisted. After all, I was not an East Europe hand and had never learned a Slavic language. Nevertheless, the Counselor of USIA, who apparently had kept a favorable eye on me as sort of an unknown godfather (Did Si have something to do with this?) persuaded me to accept. You'd do very well, he said. We know of your Austrian background. It's a natural. And don't worry about the language. We also know that you scored 100% on the Modern Language Aptitude Test, something nobody else has ever done.

Well, it was the toughest language we'd ever learned. We were lonely, and I was quite miserable during our first year. No real friends or feelings that I was making any kind of breakthrough in my work. The winter was as depressing as I could imagine, with so much fog and the constant stench of soft brown coal smoke.

Twice I arrived at my center to see it had been defaced with orange paint. ***Podružnica CIA. Dr. K je svinja***. (Branch of the CIA. Dr. K [Kissinger] is a pig.) Now, something like that doesn't happen in a Communist country without the permission of the authorities. In fact, it was probably done by the authorities.

I turned around to get my camera from home. (I don't think I even had film in it.) Then very obviously started "taking pictures." "What are you doing?" asked a cop. "Documenting this. I am the Director of the Center, and my government will want to know." Within three hours a clean-up crew had taken care of it. Mind you, this happened twice. It didn't give us a very welcome or secure feeling.

We needed a vacation badly. Went skiing in France and I promptly broke my leg. I think that was a major turning point, along with really getting a good handle on the language. People may have taken pity on me as I hobbled around town on crutches.

Anyway, we gave a party at home and invited the chief pediatrician and his wife, who was an important chemist and a Communist Party big shot. She couldn't make it, but after a while he asked if he could use our telephone. I guess he didn't know I understood what he was saying. "They really are very nice people. You should come." Within ten minutes our doorbell rang, and there she was! Breakthrough! We became such good friends that they and others invited us to their beach and weekend houses.

We still walked in the cornfield near our house when we wanted to have a private conversation. But by the time a beautiful springtime arrived, we had invested so much in just surviving and then grew to love it so much that I even asked to extend our two-year tour. Not possible, but I cherish the memory of the young Army soldier with the red star on his cap crossing himself as he entered chapel on the hill behind our house. Less nice was the bombardment of the local church by firecrackers during Christmas midnight Mass.

After we left, we learned of an incident involving our successor that I am very glad never happened to us. He and his wife returned early from a vacation on Christmas Eve to find three men in the living room of our former house. The carpet was up, and the back of the TV set had been removed. My successor was beaten. Do you call the police? Hell, they probably <u>were</u> the police.

(BTW Do you know which friendly country listens to us the most?)

Another vacation we took was camping in the Sinai with our friends, the Schlessingers, who were stationed in Jerusalem. We enjoyed carefree swimming and snorkeling in the Red Sea until one of our vehicles got stuck in deep sand. We thought we were all alone, but soon we heard a slight rumble. An Israeli military vehicle arrived to pull us out. No doubt they had been watching us all the time. It was on that same trip that I earned my MacGyver credentials. A friend's vehicle wouldn't start. No one knew what to do. I took the silver paper from a gum wrapper, fitted it on the battery terminal, and got an instant start. I must say a father likes being a hero to his kids.

<u>Bologna 1976-77</u>

An unexpected plum fell into my lap. After Slovenia I was told I would be assigned to an academic year at the Johns Hopkins University center in Bologna for graduate work in economics, political science and European Community Affairs. Let me discuss this offer with Shana, and I'll call you back with my answer on Monday, I said. Fine, said Washington. Talk with your wife, but you should know that Bologna is where you're going. This was an honor – and – a chance to learn Italian! Who could complain about a penthouse apartment with a view of the city and hills surrounding *Bologna la grassa* at full Agency salary? Oh those *tortellini*! And such bourgeois Communists!

Although I was a graybeard among the students, I conscientiously attended classes and wrote all the required papers. I think the academic assignment was to prepare me for a tour in Brussels, HQ of the EEC and NATO, but that never materialized

We had planned on a following assignment as Cultural Attaché in Ottawa, wondering if Canada really needed my promotion of American culture. Then the phone rang again. We would like you to be Press Attaché in Paris. No discussion with Shana this time. I'm in!

Paris (I) 1977-81

As ambassador we were very fortunate to have Arthur Hartman with his wife Donna. Cultured people and career Foreign Service professionals. I used to say if Ambassador Hartman asked me to throw my coat over a puddle so he could walk over it, I'd do it, because he would have a good reason for asking.

The highlights of our stay, of course, were the births of Sabrina and Blaise. Suddenly, I was no longer the most important person in my universe. They were. I well remember the airy feeling of walking on a cloud after both births, sensing both my mortality and, through them, my immortality. Today they are dual nationals, one a chef in Paris; his sister a government official in Bethesda, Maryland.

I found being Press Attaché and spokesman very satisfying, helping the media to do their job while helping my government tell its story. Relations with the press were really a two-way street, involving some "bone throwing." Sometimes I thought we learned as much from the media as they did from us. Not every State Department officer felt the same way, but I thought it was wrong and self-defeating to look at journalists as the enemy. I felt I was paid to do the job 24/7, unlike my German counterpart who unplugged his telephone at bedtime. To me, that was a cop out. Shana can attest to the midnight telephone calls.

Kolwezi remains in my mind as a beautiful example of U.S. – French military cooperation. We supplied the long-range transport aircraft from North Carolina. They secretly landed to refuel in Corsica, where they were boarded by French paratroopers who rescued French and other European hostages in Zaire. Our two governments prefer not to broadcast this sort of cooperation, but it is very real.

Presidential visits were always stressful. They could create bonds between us and the French, but I also spent time repairing broken bridges due to White House demands and lack of courtesy.

I remember being assigned to the Carter-Brezhnev SALT summit in Vienna. When Jimmy Carter hugged Leonid Brezhnev, I wondered to myself if he would regret it. Shortly thereafter the Soviets invaded Afghanistan.

How could I forget accompanying Ambassador Hartman for a briefing on NATO and the U.S. 6th Fleet. We took off from Naples to land on an aircraft carrier "somewhere in the Mediterranean." What a jolt and kick in the butt that landing and take off were. And we didn't get much sleep as they carried out operations during the night.

When my French press assistant called me early in the morning about the failed Iran hostage rescue attempt, I notified the ambassador and waited patiently for Plan B to go into effect. It was not a diversionary tactic, and there was no Plan B. Fifty-two Americans from our embassy in Teheran, some of whom I knew personally, were held prisoner for over a year.

Now, here's a big reveal. When I arrived in Paris, I told my staff I would never lie to the media. If they or I did so, we could pack our bags immediately since our credibility was of the utmost importance. We could stonewall or "no comment," or tell a partial truth but never lie.

Well, I did lie, once. Important, highly secret negotiations were taking place in Paris. If they became public knowledge, there was every possibility our colleagues in Teheran could be killed. When asked about these negotiations by the media, I categorically denied they were taking place, a bold-faced lie. I live with my conscience.

All in all, our time in France made us, as the Germans say, *Glücklich wie Gott in Frankreich* (Happy as God in France).

Washington, D.C. (II) 1981-84

Back to Washington and I was named Policy Officer for Europe. This was a high-pressure job subject to the volatility of USIA Director and close friend of the Reagans, Charles Wick. You could be his friend in the morning and looking for a job in the afternoon. I coordinated our role at the London Economic Summit and President Reagan's trip to Normandy and Ireland in 1984, as well as our hosting the Williamsburg Economic Summit and Queen Elizabeth's visit to the West Coast of the U.S. (See "The Royal Visit to California" in *USIA World*, April 1983.) My team deadheaded from Seattle to Andrews AFB on Air Force Two (Tail number 26000), lent to the Queen, the same plane that had carried JFK's body back to Washington from Dallas. For these missions, I received USIA's Superior Honor Award.

But it wasn't all good. This was the time of Project Truth, Project Democracy, Ollie North and others engaged in or planning various nefarious activities. I was required to attend meetings where things were discussed that I wanted no part of. It became so bad and stressful that I could hardly look at myself in the mirror in the morning.

I opted out of the policy job in favor of a lower-level position as Chief Editor of our European newswire. Not a career-enhancing move, but one I could live with better.

Shana and I were dinner guests of our French neighbors across the street. I was called away from the table too many times. A Soviet fighter jet had shot down Korean Airlines passenger Flight 007, and I had to manage the story for our newswire. Learning later that my Agency had knowingly withheld knowledge that the downing of the airliner was an unintentional error that we presented to the world as a deliberate act by The Evil Empire contributed to my disillusionment with the Agency.

It's funny how what goes around comes around. While in Paris, Shana and I had become friends of the senior editor for *Reader's Digest* and his wife. Later, in Washington that same correspondent became head of the Voice of America. As his guest over a BBQ at his home in Georgetown, he asked me what I would like to do next as an assignment. I told him I would like to go to Geneva. "I think I can help you with that," he replied. And so I got the position despite being under-grade for it and with lots of competition. My point is that corridor reputation and the old boys' network certainly functioned in the old days, and I was a beneficiary.

Geneva 1984-88

As Counselor for Public Affairs at the U.S. Mission to the United Nations and Other International Organizations in Geneva, I managed all public affairs activities for the U.S. Mission, the U.S. Trade Representative's Office and visiting U.S. delegations, including spokesman's duties for our nuclear arms negotiators.

I was also responsible for all press arrangements for the first Reagan/Gorbachev Summit in 1985, for which I received the Agency's Meritorious Honor Award.* We had six months notice to prepare for the momentous event. It took me three months to wind down afterwards. I had made lists and lists of lists in my head, trying to imagine everything that could possibly go wrong. It all unfolded beautifully. Nancy Reagan did not scratch Raisa Gorbachev's eyes out. Only I know what went wrong, and I'm not telling.

We had an inkling that Gorbachev was a new kind of Soviet leader. For example, I was invited to the Soviet mission to celebrate Journalists' Day. There, in attendance, was a long- bearded patriarch of the Russian Orthodox Church. The evening's entertainment was a singer's lovely rendition of *Ave Maria*. What a clear signal that the times they were a-changin' back in the good old USSR. Boy, did I write that all up in a cable to Washington as soon as I got back to our mission.

*A parenthetical word about awards/decorations. They come with fancy medals that one keeps in a drawer because one doesn't actually wear them except with white tie and tails. Well, my nephew's wedding in southern Sweden was such an affair, as they often are in Scandinavia. Aha, I thought, the one chance in my lifetime to wear my medals. And I did. My Swedish tablemate at dinner, though, had a much more impressive silver star at least six inches across the middle of his chest. We got to talking about our medals. I told him how impressed I was with his. "Oh, it's just for giving money to a charity," he said. And then he added, "But you have to be from the right family."

The next economic summit was in Venice in 1987. I think White House Press Secretary Marlin Fitzwater noted my quick action in "clarifying" some words by Ronald Reagan that may have spared the world a financial crisis. I had, of course, worked with the White House before, but some time later I was sounded out to see if I would accept the position of Deputy White House Press Secretary for Foreign Affairs. (It's customary to make sure a person would accept before offering such a job.)

Frankly, I was flattered, but not even tempted. Talk about a high-pressure job with an uncertain future. No, we were comfortably settled in Geneva, and I did not want to uproot the family or force the children to leave their excellent international school.

One of the battles I fought in Geneva, incidentally, with some success, was Soviet disinformation about the U.S. marketing "baby parts," from the Third World for transplant into needy American children. Another was The Hunger Project (THP), which tried to infiltrate our international school. It collected a lot of money, but only did a good job of feeding itself, not hungry people. My actions to expose it nearly got me fired since THP had connections with USIA leadership.

Our first ambassador in Geneva was an awful man – smart and mean, who obviously was full of disdain for the Foreign Service and the UN and did not like being there. After he said, "Fuck you, Chris," during a senior staff meeting with a lady present, I went home to tell Shana we had better prepare our bags to leave. I could no longer work under that man. The next morning I asked for a couple of moments of his time. He didn't even remember what he'd said.

It's customary when an ambassador departs post definitively for the senior staff (Country Team) to see him or her off at the airport. The only reason I would have gone would be to ensure that the airplane had wheels up. There's one other reason, but I'd better not write that.

By contrast, his successor, also a Reagan appointee, was the kindest man you could imagine. Once when our Deputy Chief of Mission complained to me slightly about something the new man had done, I told him, "Bill, you didn't know his predecessor. If you had, you'd get down on your knees every night and thank God for our current boss."

On a happier note, our children had not wanted to leave Washington for Geneva, but they soon adapted. (Later they didn't want to leave Geneva for Paris. Yanking them from school, home and friends was always hard.)

I was gratified to hear Blaise, atop the jungle gym in our garden during a birthday party, yell down to a French friend, "*C'est bien*, man." At the same party he called a pal a *connard*, not an elegant or polite term, but I was proud that he had used it correctly on the right occasion. The language was beginning to stick!

By this time I was getting tired of being the Agency's "Mr. Summit," and asked for some relief. It came in the form of an appointment as Cultural Attaché in Paris.

Paris (II) 1988-92

Although this was a higher-ranking position, I found it far less satisfying than the PressAtt job. Sometimes, I felt like the ambassador's social secretary, working on guest lists, receiving lines, toasts, etc. Everything no one else wanted seemed to land on my desk. Questions like "Do fake owls work in NYC to scare away pigeons?" came to me for answers to be signed by the ambassador. Much of the time-consuming correspondence could have been drafted by a competent secretary or junior officer. I told my boss I was paid too much to do that kind of work.

I didn't even escape another summit, as Director of the White House Press Center for the Paris Economic Summit of 1989. More interesting was coordinating all U.S. Government activities in France related to the Bicentenary of the French Revolution. We even managed to borrow back the key to the Bastille hanging on the wall at Mt. Vernon. It was given to George Washington by La Fayette, and we displayed it at the new Paris opera house at the Place de la Bastille.

One project that really grabbed me was the CSS *Alabama*. This Confederate raider was sunk off Cherbourg by the USS *Kearsarge* in the only battle of the U.S. Civil War outside American territory. The wreck lies 60 meters down in today's French territorial waters. Its exploration was a complicated matter involving both governments, and was a first in international jurisprudence. The *Alabama* story itself was fascinating – a ship secretly constructed in Britain, a dashing Southern captain who captured over 60 Northern merchant ships all over the world during a two-year period, nearly destroying Northern commerce and forcing insurance rates sky high. (Captain Semmes even captured an enslaved person who chose to stay on with him as a valet and a free man. Sadly, David White could not swim and drowned in the final battle.)

I first came across the story in Geneva's city hall when we were seeking a suitable site for the Reagan/Gorbachev summit. The Alabama Room there was not appropriate, but intrigued me. It was where the first international arbitration in history took place over damages caused by the *Alabama*.

I voluntarily and willingly acted as liaison between France and the U.S. in negotiations over ownership of the wreck. Our Naval Attaché wouldn't touch it with a ten-foot pole, since he still considered the *Alabama* an enemy ship, which had badly humiliated the U.S. Navy. After retirement, I served as head of the Association CSS Alabama, responsible for joint French-U.S. exploration of the wreck.

My account was published in the University of Alabama's *Alabama Heritage*, Issue 37, Summer 1995. For my articles on the *Alabama*, I was nominated for the USIA Director's Writing Award.

Another amusing anecdote before a more somber note. The wife of Dick Cheney, our Defense Secretary, accompanied him on a visit to Paris. Lynne Cheney was Chairman of the National Endowment for the Humanities and wanted to visit the Musée d'Orsay. As her escort, I arranged a personal tour led by the director of the museum. Her husband joined us for the tour.

He seemed like a pretty decent, relaxed guy in his sports shirt, and I was pleased that, he too, was interested in the arts. Trying to be helpful, I offered to carry his shoulder bag, which he politely declined. Stupid me, I realized later. He was probably carrying the nuclear codes. Not the president's "football," but something close. Actually, his military aide was following us discreetly with an ominous little suitcase.

As Cultural Attaché, I was *ex officio* the Treasurer of the Fulbright Commission and had to sign off on all expenses. I discovered that my boss, the Public Affairs Officer and his predecessors padded their entertainment expense accounts by making grants

to the Commission, which would then pay for their parties. This laundry operation was a clear violation of regulations and the intent of Congress.

I reported it to the security officer, the ambassador and the deputy chief of mission with no results, except to be removed as Treasurer by the ambassador. I used the USIA inspector's hot line. The investigators' report determined that everything I had said was true. Obviously this did not win me any friends among the higher echelons of USIA. My time was up, and I wanted to leave anyway with full retirement at age 50.

Shana and I couldn't agree on where to retire in the U.S., but we both love France. The answer was staring us in the face. We held a family council to see if we would all agree to live in France on the local economy without diplomatic passports or privileges – no more visits to the PX in Germany or Belgium, etc. No whining. And here we are.

I did hold two subsequent jobs, both of which were thanks to Shana, who worked her magic through the wives of the publisher of the *International Herald Tribune* and later the deputy director of the International Energy Agency. "My husband is looking for a challenging new position." I worked as a consultant for a year at the newspaper, assisting the publisher and then spent several years as acting head of the IEA's press and publications service while the incumbent was on prolonged sick leave. I didn't know a thing about energy but learned fast. It turned out to be a fascinating field. The more I learned, the more interested I became.

I've talked a lot about myself. I would be remiss if I did not say how much our children contributed to our happiness and pride overseas. I already mentioned Blaise's quickly getting a handle on French in Geneva. His early sensitivity to art and natural beauty became evident when he entered Monet's garden at Giverny and spontaneously exclaimed, "It's paradise!"

It was in Paris that Sabrina earned the Girl Scout's highest honor, the Gold Award, presented to her personally by Ambassador Pamela Harriman. The little ceremony took place in the same office where I had spent so many hours providing Ambassador Hartman his daily morning press briefing.

A final word about Foreign Service. It's not for everyone. We moved 19 times in our career and were glad finally to plant roots in a land we love. One problem was that the children didn't know what to say when asked where their home was. We told them to say it's where they were at the time. It was heartbreaking to uproot them from their schools and friends. They hardly got to know their grandparents except on home leave. On the other hand, they learned new languages and grew to appreciate different cultures, surely an advantage in their futures.

We had no regrets about Foreign Service, but no regrets about leaving it. We are very grateful for our good fortune and the road we traveled.

End of Memoir

ADDENDA

Man on the Moon

Finally it was ready! After weeks of painstaking translation into Swahili, the U.S. Information Agency's prestigious color photo pamphlet describing the odyssey of Apollo 11 and man's first steps on the moon had arrived at the U.S. Embassy in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania.

New expressions had been found to describe new concepts for which no previous vocabulary existed in Swahili. How, for example, do you say "Lunar Landing Module" in that East African language? Not so hard, actually. Following the lead of Tanzanian radio announcers, my native-speaking Swahili press assistant and I had agreed on *Chombo cha Kutua Mwezini*, literally "Vehicle for Landing on the Moon."

The title of the pamphlet posed no problem. In English it was "Man on the Moon," rendered directly in Swahili as *Mtu Na Mwezi* (*Mwezi* being the word for moon and month).

With pride we sent the first cartons of the pamphlet by air to the U.S. Consulate on Zanzibar, 22 miles offshore.

Then came the cryptic telex response from Zanzibar, the cradle of classical Swahili:

> To: Amembassy Dar es Salaam
> From: Amconsul Zanzibar
> Received today 300 copies of moon landing pamphlet, which, regret, unable to use. Recommend hold off on further distribution and phone ASAP.

Puzzled, I immediately telephoned the Consul General. "Sorry," he said, "You guys really blew it. Here on Zanzibar that pamphlet title means only one thing--Man is Having His Monthlies"!

My Piece of the Moon

Back in the days of NASA's Apollo program, I was responsible for orchestrating exhibits of moon rocks overseas on behalf of the U.S. Information Agency. Although the rocks resembled chunks of asphalt you might find along any roadside, their value was incalculable. They were mounted like jewels in pyramidical Plexiglas containers containing a special nitrogen atmosphere to ensure their preservation.

Despite being hand-carried to different sites around the world, inevitably a rock would receive a jolt that required its remounting, which could only be performed at the lunar laboratory at the Johnson Space Flight Center in Houston.

My job included escorting these disabled rocks to Houston. I remember my secret pride as I flew from Washington to Texas with my first moon rock concealed at my feet in an ordinary bowling ball bag. I had to resist a strong urge to ask my seatmates to guess what was in the bag so that I could tell them, "A piece of the moon!" and let them have a peek.

I arrived by rental car after hours at the Motel 6 in the desert across the highway from the entrance to the Manned Space Flight Center. It was dinnertime. Not wanting to dine alone with my moon rock and certainly not daring to leave it alone in my motel room, I thought I could secure it at the base entry gate overnight.

In retrospect, I can imagine the reaction of the gate guards: A man comes trudging alone out of the desert at dusk, carrying a bowling bag which he says contains a moon rock. Straight out of the *Twilight Zone*!

They told me to wait while they called base security -- about a mile away -- and reported the situation. Pretty soon a security car arrived and drove me to security HQ, where I was asked to open the bag. "Well, it does <u>look</u> like a moon rock," they said and agreed to lock it in their safe overnight until I could deliver it the next morning to the lunar lab. I proceeded to dinner with a good conscience.