

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

FRANCIS S. M. “FRANK” HODSOLL

*Interviewed by: F. Allen “Tex” Harris
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INTERVIEW

Q: This is November 29, 2015, and I’m at the home of Frank Hodsoll. This is Tex Harris, who is beginning an oral history interview with Frank Hodsoll. Frank, welcome. This is a very interesting project. We are producing a transcript for you to edit and perfect.

So let’s begin. Frank, tell us where you were born, and then we’ll talk about your folks.

HODSOLL: This is Frank Hodsoll, and I’m sitting with Tex Harris in our living room, and we’re starting an oral history. I will start with where I was born, as I was asked. I was born in Los Angeles, California, in 1938—May 1st. The rumor in my family was that my mother held off until May 1st. I’m not entirely sure why.

My parents: My father was an Englishman who was a very distinguished war hero. He had made his fortune, which was not that great, in the Philippines before World War II, with a British company by the name of Warner Barnes. He met my mother on the Queen Mary. My mother had moved out with her previous husband, who had passed away, to Los Angeles. She was an amateur architect and built a whole bunch of houses out there, and so on.

In any event, I was born in 1938 and had a most unusual upbringing. My family hired a woman by the name of Emily Croom, who was a Northland nurse who was sort of my tutor to begin with, before I went to school, and basically she had it so that by the time I was seven years old, I had read all of Dickens, all of Shakespeare, and had to make reports in writing on all of

them...which put me somewhat ahead of other people who were going to school.

So finally when she left to start her own school, I was put into a private school and skipped the first two grades. I became a sort of academic, unusual person but was totally inadequate in terms of my social skills because I was so much younger than everybody else who was involved with me. I was sent off to boarding school, because that was the British tradition, at the age of eight. I went off, and went to a couple different schools. And again, did well academically, but...

Q: Which ones?

HODSOLL: Before the Cate School, which was where I graduated, in Santa Barbara, I went to a place called La Loma Feliz, which was another school up in Santa Barbara, and was there for a couple of years. And my period before I went to Cate I did a lot of stuff in the arts. I played the piano; I was a singer; I was in a variety of different plays. My principal claim to fame was the fact that I spoke with an absolutely perfect BBC accent, and not everybody could do that in southern California. So I was rather unusual. I was also rather unusual in that all my friends as kids wore things like blue jeans and what not, and I wore little short pants, suits, as I walked around, which didn't make me hugely popular with my classmates.

Q: (Laughter.)

HODSOLL: In any event, long story short, I ended up at the Cate School, having gone through two years of the ninth grade because my parents felt I needed to recover from all my social inadequacies. That seemed to help, and then eventually I got into athletics and other things and became somewhat more of a normal person. But the school I principally went to, something called the Cate School ... I was there when the original Curtis Cate, who had come out from Massachusetts to start a school in California, was there as headmaster, and it was an extraordinary place.

We had horses, we played polo, we built houses, we had a pig farm. We did all sorts of things like that. But we also—if you take the whole of it—I had seven years of Latin and three of ancient Greek and then I became more involved in the theater. My first example of that was at the age of ten at Cate; I was in the chorus of Oedipus Rex in ancient Greek. And then I progressed from there to being the lead in Plautus's Menaechmi (“The Twin Brothers”) in Latin, but in between I did Cyrano de Bergerac in English. I had the lead in that and became pretty well known for that. And then I was promoted into managing the newspaper at Cate, in my junior year, which was quite unusual, and I went on and did it again in my senior year.

And I did very well at Cate. You know, I was captain of the squash team and became sort of a big man on campus, because I did well. In any event, long story short again, I completed Cate and then was accepted to a whole bunch of colleges: Harvard, Yale, and Williams. And I had wanted to go to Williams. My mother, who was very socially connected in Los Angeles, had made my godfather--the guy who was the founder and chief executive officer of Lockheed--his name was Bob Gross. When he heard about where I might go or not go, he said you better go to Harvard or Yale, Williams won't help you as much. But I'd received the Williams Prize for best writer on the West coast, way back when, so I thought I should go there.

But I ended up going to Yale since my parents thought I should go to Harvard—sort of avoiding doing everything I was told. So off I went to Yale with one other Cate classmate, who also went to Yale.

Q: What year?

HODSOLL: I started in 1955, graduated in 1959. I was a very peculiar person there. One, I had been very well prepared. Number two, I took just about every humanities entry course that there was—I did psychology and I did history, and I did English literature and French literature because I spoke French among other things. So I was kind of an all-over-the-place student at Yale. But not particularly in international affairs. I did a lot of history of art.

I ended up at Yale writing an honors thesis on the New York School, which was the abstract expression school that was becoming famous in New York. I had a radio show. I did a lot of acting, including some professional acting, in the summertime.

But then I was even more peculiar because basically, I did so much time in my extracurricular activities that I came close to flunking out. I was called in by the then-dean of Yale College, a very preppy sort of guy, who said I had a choice: I could either go into the Army or I could go to Trinity College in Hartford that summer and get 4 As.

So I chose the “4-A” approach, and came back, and from that point on I learned my lesson and was basically on the dean's list from there on in and did fine. Basically that was my period at Yale. I did much better academically as well, and had some extraordinary experiences with different teachers, and so on and so forth, and became sort of a popular student, which was unusual for me.

In any event, as I came close to graduation, I was thinking of going on and becoming a professional actor, because that's what I

had done most of, and somebody—a friend of mine--said, well why don't you—you had this period—I was also in the ROTC; there was the draft then. I had succeeded rather successfully in the ROTC because I became the commander of the drill platoon. I was Yale's choice to go to West Point for a week, where I found that it was extraordinary discipline, but their humanities courses weren't as good as at Yale so I was glad I had gone through Yale on those. But it was a very interesting period there.

Sort of a fun anecdote. My first morning monkeying with a couple of upper-classmen at West Point, all they had to do was zip up a tunic. I had to--mine was sort of an officer's – well, it was a regular Army uniform, and I had all these buttons, and I had to put on a tie. They didn't wake me up, and I almost missed reveille. So I was almost a disaster at West Point. In any event, long story short, because my Army period as a six-months' infantry officer didn't start until the fall, I had an early period through the summer. . . .

Q: What year was this, Frank?

HODSOLL: 1959.

Q: Okay.

HODSOLL: I had an early period through the summer. A friend of mine suggested, why don't you go into this Yale internship in a government program? I hadn't thought about the government at all at that point. So I said, well why not?

I interviewed and got a job with a guy by the name of Stuyvesant Wainwright, a liberal Republican from the first district of New York, who was the ranking Republican member--everybody was Democrats in those days in the Congress--on the education and labor committee. Wainwright and I got along extremely well. He decided to put me in charge, for him, of a bill that was going through the Congress at that point, to prevent the Teamsters [an American-Canadian labor union also known as the International Brotherhood of Teamsters] from shutting down businesses that they had nothing to do with. They just wanted to shut them down. So there was something called the Landrum-Griffin bill; it was developed by the Democrats and the Republicans, and I became his guy for that.

An interesting experience is that I had a 300-pound Teamster come in one day, sitting behind a door in the Longworth Building, who told me I would be dead by the end of the summer if I didn't stop this nonsense that I was involved with. Well, I

wasn't dead by the end of the summer and I didn't stop, so on we went. [The so-called Landrum-Griffin Act, also called the Labor-Management Reporting and Disclosure Act, became U.S. law in 1959.]

In any event, that worked so well that Wainwright asked me to come back after my military service. So I went off into the military first in the fall, first Fort Benning [Georgia] and then Fort Ord, which is now a branch of the State University of California, as an infantry training officer, and I really enjoyed it.

First of all, no one should be asked to be an infantry officer within just six months. I think I would have been positively dangerous had I got off to war at that point. But I did okay, and an interesting thing that happened to me while I was in the military...I got assigned for some reason, and I have absolutely no idea why, to give a sort of general course for non-commissioned officers. The non-commissioned officers in those days were all World War II or Korean War veterans and here I was with a bright gold bar on my uniform and had never done anything of importance, as far as I could tell, but I was asked to do this course, and they gave me a manual to look at.

The manual was about the level of "George Washington chopped down the cherry tree and was an honest man." I said, "I can't do this for sergeants who have been through war and everything else." "That is just outrageous." So I made up my own course, and they didn't hold it against me. While I was at Yale one of the courses I took was something called intellectual history 59 with a guy by the name of Frank Baumer. I now have read all of the books in it. It was basically a Western-thinking thought course.

So it was Kennedy and Nixon—we were in the election period at that point. I made up a course that related from the Greek philosophers on, to the elections. And it became quite popular, and all sorts of people started showing up, and in any event...shortly I was out of the military and back to Wainwright and doing all kinds of things for him in Washington.

But this was the beginning of my interest in government--the Wainwright thing in particular, less the military part. I changed courses entirely and decided I would go to law school. So I did, and I got into a whole bunch of law schools and in the meantime my family, my family's friends--Bob Gross among others--said, you know, you'd be a great Congressman. We've got a Congressional place coming up in four or five years. Go to law school, but you can't go on and go to, you know, some place in the East—I'd been accepted also at Yale and Harvard and other places. You need to come back to Stanford and become a Californian again. So I went back to Stanford, but then to show you how totally inconsistent I was, I learned that one of the guys who had preceded me at Stanford had spent a couple of years at Cambridge, in England, and got a year's credit for

that. So he had two years at Stanford and two years at Cambridge.

So off I went to Cambridge, where I took the last year of the Tripus, which is the English law degree. In England, law degrees are undergraduate. Then I had an LLB in international law, with about six people, which was quite extraordinary, where I spent almost all of my time on the United Nations and the specialized agencies and the legal background and ramifications of all that.

But while I was at Cambridge, I also audited a number of history of art courses because they had [Sir Ernst Hans Josef] Gombrich there and Pestner there, and so on and so forth.

Then, I was extraordinarily lucky, I was on my way to Paris for a little vacation, and a mutual friend said, you ought to meet this woman who is at the Sorbonne by the name of Mimi McEwan. I looked her up and walked up a flight of black stairs and she wasn't there; I left a note at her cold-water apartment. She was having her weekly bath at a wealthy friend's house on the Isle de Saint-Louis which was a heckuva lot nicer than where she was staying, or I was staying.

I think we hit it off because I took her out to breakfast in St. Germain des Pres and fed her an American breakfast. The next thing that happened is she came to visit me in Cambridge, and the rest is history.

We eventually got married in Chicago as I finished at Cambridge, and then came back to Stanford for my last year, which was 1964 though I graduated in theory in the class of '63 because I took four years of law school versus three.

Q: And what year did you meet Mimi?

I met Mimi in 1962. And then got married in 1963. So I went back to Stanford and we had our first, my last year there, and Dean Spieth, who was the dean of the school who had allowed me to do this, said I am never doing this again. You are much too complicated. You have to take all of the courses you are required to take in one year; fitting you in is absolutely unconscionable and we're never going to do this ever again.

I did get it all fitted in and eventually graduated. At that point my friends' family friends who thought that I would make a good candidate for Congress, some interesting things happened to them.

In my last year at Stanford, I had done some political work for Nelson Rockefeller, who was running against Barry Goldwater, who won the election [sic; should be Republican nomination; Goldwater later lost the 1964 general election to Lyndon Johnson.]

What happened was, my family friends were all part of the Earl Warren group which was a fairly liberal kind of Republican group in California. When Goldwater won the election [nomination], they were just out of influence. It was the end of them having anything to do with anyone running for any office. What happened was that I was then thinking, what do I do now? And because of the Cambridge experience, I thought well, I was accepted at two California law firms that aren't doing as much in the international area, and so I switched gears and applied to a bunch of law firms in New York. One of them was Sullivan and Cromwell.

Q: John Foster Dulles's firm...

HODSOLL: John Foster Dulles's firm, also Allan Dulles's firm.

So I ended up going back there. One of the partners who interviewed me said well, you've done pretty well at Stanford, but we don't know what that means. You didn't go to Harvard or Yale.

I said, "Well, if you have to ask me that question then I don't want to come here."

But they accepted me anyway, so I ended up going there. I was very fortunate because one of the senior partners with whom I worked the most, who later became Tex Harris's boss, a guy named Jack Stevenson, was the guy I worked most for as the relatively senior partner at Sullivan and Cromwell (S & C).

My main job at Sullivan and Cromwell was doing registration statements or helping partners do registration statements for people who were going public with their firms. I went all over the country and put together these things. In those days you had to go to the printers--they now do this all by computer--to get the registration statements letter perfect before they went to press.

One of my classmates had made a mistake and was fired within 10 minutes of his mistake, so I learned to be very careful about what was getting written in these registration statements.

Q: (Laughter.)

One of the things that Jack Stevenson and a couple of the others did, because he knew I was interested in foreign policy and had taken the Foreign Service exam and had passed it, and had put that on hold while I was thinking about what to do next, was to allow me to be the principal drafter of papers that the senior partner, Art Dean, would take to these very private meetings in Switzerland, mostly with CEOs (chief executive officers) of the major oil companies. I ended up writing papers on the Hickenlooper Amendment and all sorts of other things, and was successful at that.

Perhaps my most successful or fun anecdote was when I was writing one of these papers. Art Dean was in Paris on his way to Zurich where the meeting was going to take place. Guess what happened? I had just about finished the memo and the lights went out. It was the big electricity crisis in New York in 1965. Everything was electric. I did find a manual typewriter and was able to finish it by flashlight and walked down 16 floors, ending up on the catwalk of the Bank of New York with its Corinthian columns. Everything was dark; they had no special lights in those days. I bribed a taxi and got out to JFK and found an Air France pilot willing to take this memo to Paris that day. I sent a telegram to Art Dean and told him what was happening. They eventually picked the memo up and it all worked out. Anyway, it shows you what little things like that can do. I became famous at Sullivan and Cromwell.

Q: What did you send?

HODSOLL: I sent a paper for his discussions in Europe with the oil companies. In any event, I continued to be asked to do these various things. And it was after that, that I came to the conclusion that I, you know, these registration statements were really not something I wanted to continue with. I mean, the partners, I think, thought I was doing very well at S & C, and they made a huge effort to keep me there. They were going to send me to Paris when I told them I was going to join the Foreign Service.

One thing I should mention. In those days entry-level (FSO-7) paid 7800 dollars a year, and entry level at a Wall Street law firm was 7800 dollars a year. It ain't like that anymore.

I eventually left and went into the Foreign Service. And went down to Washington. As some of the others who have done oral histories have said a word about the exam and so I will.

Q: Let's stop there for a minute and then we'll go back.

Frank, thank you. That was a terrific introduction. Let me talk about—if you would talk a little bit about your father. I know he was very much involved in the British battles in the First World War. Please talk about his influence on you. And then talk about your mother and her upbringing and the ideas both your parents gave to you in terms of your perception of public service or who you were or what they wanted you to be.

HODSOLL: Okay, well my father in addition to being a businessman was a very distinguished war hero, actually, from World War I and Gallipoli. As he liked to say, he was sent in for both landings and was sent back to Egypt for repairs, and he had progressed from...

Actually my father's first experience in the military was in the Boer War, which was a very long time ago. And then he went into business. My father never graduated from college, but he was successful at almost everything he did. And in what my father taught me. My father was the quintessential Victorian gentleman. He had done very well in business and otherwise, and I have a whole bunch of his medals. He had two DSOs, Distinguished Service Orders, the equivalent of the Distinguished Service Cross here.

Q: What was his full name?

HODSOLL: His full name was Frank Hodsoll. I had more names than he did. My full name is Frances Samuel Monaise Hodsoll.

Q: Explain all those pieces.

HODSOLL: Frances was just the long way of saying Frank. Samuel was my grandfather on my father's side. Monaise was the somewhat made-up name of my mother, her maiden name. My mother—I didn't find this out until fifty years later—my mother was Jewish, but she never admitted to that, and nobody knew that, although we did know that she had so many different tales about how she grew up that something was missing.

My sister advised me, you shouldn't push it, just let it go. She doesn't want to tell you.

Later on, we found out she came from an extremely poor background. Her father, I found out, was a peddler. They came from Ukraine, actually from Austria, since it was part of the Austro-Hungarian empire in those days, and had started life in America at the end of the 19th century.

Q: Where in the U.S.?

HODSOLL: In New York City and then in Brooklyn. And she had somehow, much more than my father, who didn't care all that much about these kinds of things, had learned how to become a member of the upper crust of society. And how she learned that, my sister and I still puzzle about. How she learned to do all these things, do things like get yourself invited to the captain's table on the Cunard line, where she met my father. In those days it was not easy for the daughter of a peddler to figure out how to do all that stuff.

She had three husbands. First husband, my brother's father, we don't know too much about, except he came from Cincinnati. She divorced him and then married a guy who was very well connected from a distinguished family in St. Louis, and so she became a member of St. Louis society. And then he came down with cancer. They went out to California so that he could recover from cancer. While she was there and before she met my father, basically she became part of the complete establishment (laughs).

Q: In LA....

HODSOLL: In LA, and she built four houses in LA, two of which made Architectural Digest. And she was very much a part of that world. She was probably more concerned than my father, who as I mentioned didn't go to college, that I do extremely well everywhere. And so she was very much behind that, making sure that I went to the right schools and did that sort of thing and so on. And my father was very much a part of that too, but he was very lucky. In those days you came from the Philippines by air to California by clipper ship, the old Pan Am flying boats. And his plane was the last one to make it before they started getting shot down.

My brother spent the entirety of World War II in a prison camp in the Philippines. And so we finally as the war ended found out that he was still alive, thank God. We went to pick him up and he weighed 70 pounds. He had been working for my father. My brother was old enough to be my father. He was about 22 years older than I was.

Q: What was your father's business in the Philippines?

HODSOLL: It was a business that began as an American clipper-ship firm in the 1840s. Then it was taken over by some Brits, including a friend of my father's family in Britain, who asked my father, what on earth was he going to do? And he didn't know, so the friend said, "Why don't you go out to the Philippines?" This was a guy by the name of Bibby who ran and was the principal shareholder of the Bibby Steamship Company, a major British shipping company. And my father's response was, "Where is the Philippines?"

So off he went in 1907, which was just after the Americans took over the Philippines. It was a very unsafe place in those days. Anyway, he did extremely well. He went back to England for World War I where he served with great distinction.

Q: What was the business?

HODSOLL: The business was a British trading company. It had begun as an American firm but it became British. Basically we did every conceivable kind of thing. We sold sugar—once the Philippines became part of the United States—into the United States, but we also represented and had little factories of every conceivable kind of British industrial goods. We had an insurance company, we did all kinds of little things. My father wanted me to go and take over from him. He had the controlling interest in the firm. I went out after graduating from college and then also from law school and decided I didn't really want to go and live in the Philippines. I also felt that this kind of firm, which might have been okay in the colonial era, was something that Filipinos could do. And so I was very lucky in that I sold the business while I was in the Foreign Service, actually.

Q: How long were you out in the Philippines, and what were you doing?

HODSOLL: I was never there full-time. I was in and out of the Philippines from, well it started when I was in law school, and then I went back out on several occasions.

While I was in the Foreign Service on my first assignment, I managed to find some people who wanted to buy the firm, including the then-Philippines ambassador to the United States and several others. One thing that I had done while I was there was to nationalize the firm. The upper-level of the firm was all Englishmen, who had gone to Cambridge, interestingly. I decided that wasn't appropriate, so I hired in and promoted a whole bunch of very bright Filipinos, most of whom have gone to

Harvard Business School. Then I didn't get rid of the Englishmen; I basically found enough money in our profits...there were no pensions in those days. But I found enough money to pay them pensions and gradually ease more of them out and we brought in a very bright young Filipino guy and this was also part of my finding somebody to buy the firm. Most of these Filipinos were very well connected in the Philippines.

Q: So you really had an extraordinary business experience before coming into the Foreign Service?

HODSOLL: I did, I did.

And you know, I was in a unique position because I was the son of the controlling shareholder, so you know everybody said, "Yes sir." I didn't have to prove myself. How good was I? I was good enough that I tripled the profits.

Q: (Laughs.)

HODSOLL: I take some credit. I also hired a guy from the Wharton School of Economics to go out and live there. A guy by the name of Joe Petrus, who married a Filipino woman, who was very, very helpful, because I didn't have a huge amount of experience with spreadsheets and that sort of thing, at that point. He helped me sell it. I still stay in touch with him from time to time. But I never really wanted to do that, and as I mentioned earlier, I was interested in foreign affairs.

While I was at Cate School, incidentally, I wrote a series of editorials on China. My father was very pleased with my attitude towards China. I was lucky to have been able to bring that experience to bear.

Q: What were your father's political attitudes and international attitudes?

HODSOLL: My father's political attitudes were that he was absolutely an Englishman. And he also felt, and he wrote a paper—I have it around here somewhere—that shows that had he been around at the time that we declared our independence, he would have been on our side. He was very pro-American even though he never gave up his British nationality. I had a British passport, as well as an American passport at the beginning, but I never really seriously thought of becoming totally British as a part of that. But his attitudes were, he was part of that period of British colonialism, you know, when the map was largely pink.

But he never promoted, while he was there, versus me, Filipinos into the upper ranks of the firm. He had established some relationships with Filipinos. I have a huge number of letters between him and President Quezon, who was the first president during the Philippine Commonwealth period, before it became independent after World War II. And Quezon refers to him in a number of these letters as my father being his favorite Filipino. So he was well connected. I, peculiarly, grew up, had a year in the Philippines before World War II, shared a crib with Arthur MacArthur because [General Douglas] MacArthur was out there. So my father was pretty well connected with all the people who were involved and knew MacArthur very well. (General and U.S. President Dwight) Eisenhower was MacArthur's assistant at that time, and was not that keen on MacArthur.

[Arthur MacArthur IV, with whom Hodsoll shared a crib, was the son of General of the Army Douglas MacArthur and the grandson of Lt. General Arthur MacArthur, Jr. The MacArthur family had a close relationship with the Philippines. Arthur Jr. was Governor-General of the Philippines, 1900-1901, and Douglas held the titles of Field Marshal of the Army of the Philippines as well as US Military Advisor to the Commonwealth of the Philippines during the 1930s and 1940s. Arthur IV never achieved the fame of his father and grandfather, and later changed his name to avoid publicity.]

Q: You shared a crib with MacArthur?

HODSOLL: Shared a crib with MacArthur's son.

Q: Where?

HODSOLL: In Manila, in the Philippines. I was out there with my mother, who hated the Philippines. It was too hot for her, even though she spent a lot of time in St. Louis, which is pretty hot, too. But in any event, then World War II came along and we were all back in California and managed to survive. Obviously no money was coming from the Philippines at that point. Then my father went back out after the war and built the firm up and got it going again.

Q: You represented Rolls Royce.

HODSOLL: We represented Rolls Royce; we represented what was then BOAC [British Overseas Air Corporation]. We had firms in joint ventures including one with a big paint company in the United States.

Our sugar business, because of the special allowances for the Philippines, was all over the United States. What we did was

finance sugar planters in the Philippines, got them to buy British equipment for irrigation and the lot, and as we offered them financing. We would take their sugar and ship it to America under the quota system. After World War II and as the Philippines became independent, that was not a business that was going to continue indefinitely, so it started to fade out. We did all kinds of different things, and when I sold the company, one of my first ideas was I would go to Australia and take the money and start a firm in Australia or New Zealand. And that just didn't happen, as it turned out. I was in the Foreign Service as this was going on, incidentally.

Q: What were your mother's interests internationally?

HODSOLL: My mother's international interests were kind of nondescript. She never told us while she was alive about her Austrian-Ukrainian connection, and she was obviously for America winning the war and so on and so forth. And she was very much my father's wife. She was part of that generation of women who didn't do things beyond the family. But she was brilliant at what she did in cementing us into the absolutely most important people in LA.

Q: How many brothers and sisters do you have?

HODSOLL: I have one brother and one sister, different fathers all around. My brother, Bob Jones, passed away, and he was a businessman. Spent a lot of his time in Australia working for NBC. Sold packages of television shows all over Asia. Then he came back here, got married, and had a son who is my nephew. He also worked for Look magazine for a while, he was on the advertising side.

Q: Where was he based?

HODSOLL: He was based in New York, initially. In the city. And then he went out to Australia, and was based in Sydney, where he met his second wife. My brother died of cancer some years ago. He was always a great friend and a big supporter of mine, and would thoroughly agree with me that it wasn't in my best interests to go out to the Philippines and run a company.

My sister is Monaise McDonald. She has a nickname; we call her Punkie.

Q: She lives where?

HODSOLL: She lives now in Florida, near Naples. But for years and years and years, she lived in Greenwich, Connecticut. Married a guy who was on the board of MIT (Massachusetts Institute of Technology) and they were very well connected in Greenwich. And actually some of my people who were contacts internationally came about through my sister. Don Kendall, who used to be the chairman of Pepsi, is one of her closest friends. Don is still alive, in his 90s.

Q: What a guy!

HODSOLL: What a guy!

My sister became extremely well connected and was also an interior designer. Very much like my mother. My sister still has a check from Walt Disney, which she never cashed, for having been a cartoonist.

I lived a block and a half from Walt Disney. Once a year, the kids in the neighborhood would go up to Walt Disney's and we would run around his property on his train, which came before Disney World.

I guess one other thing I should mention about my father. My father had wanted to go back into the military for WW2. But he was too old at that point. He was in his early 60s. I was born very late into the marriage. My mother was 39 when I was born, and my father was 53. So I was the last hurrah so to speak in terms of children.

But in any event the British government decided that my father-- because we lived in LA and knew a lot of people who were in the movies-- would be a good liaison for British actors coming over to do war films. And so my house, I mean I didn't know anything about it, I was just a little kid, was constantly visited by the likes of Larry Olivier and John Gielgud. I was even offered a job as a young boy actor, because of my English accent, by Samuel Goldwyn Mayer. My mother went ballistic and said that wasn't going to happen, so I didn't become an actor at that stage.

Q: Where did you live in LA?

HODSOLL: We lived in a place called Bel Air. My mother had gone out there with her previous husband. Bel Air, initially, was not that fancy of a place. It had been started by a guy by the name of Bel, whose son became Congressman from the district that I was being promoted for originally. He decided to create a kind of subdivision in the hills of Los Angeles, which had a country club and a beach club, and he made it very tony. My mother's first three houses were all built in Bel Air. In any

event, I was extremely fortunate. I grew up with a silver spoon in my mouth. I can't say anything less than that.

Q: You tell stories about playing with some very famous producers' kids. Tell that story, it's wonderful.

HODSOLL: I was a real cut-up as a kid, when I finally got over being unable to communicate with anybody. Darrell Zanuck, Jr., who later became the head of 20th Century Fox, was a friend of mine from one of the schools in LA. So we decided that one day we would do something unusual and make a war out in Bel Air. Darrell was great! He got into his father's 20th Century Fox prop room and snuck out all kinds of machine guns and blank ammunition and grenades and everything else - and we had a war in Bel Air!

Q: This stuff was from the prop room?

HODSOLL: This was from the prop room. The police came, but we escaped. With real blanks, and so on. I was never caught. I guess I was lucky.

Q: Who were some of your other friends growing up?

HODSOLL: They came mostly from the Cate School. While they were holding me back, so I could better communicate with other people my age, I went to a place called the Harvard Military School, which is in LA. One of the seniors there was (Lt. General George S.) Patton's son. It was there that you can see that I was a bad kid in some ways. It was there that I had goofed up on some Latin assignment, and my punishment was two-fold. One, I had to memorize and say the Lord's Prayer in Latin in less than 15 seconds, which I did. And I still can almost do it. And the second was to mow the senior lawn with toenail scissors, which caused a lot of blisters on my fingers.

In the schools that I went to, and this includes Cate, there was no fooling around. If you didn't do what you were told to do, you got whacked. I had a two-by-four broken on my rear end, for example, by a senior. Seniors were in the position of whacking you. But you know my Latin teacher would hit me on the head with a pointer and make me bloody. That's just how the schools were in those days. But you learned how to put up with it and do it. Even though I nearly flunked out at Yale, that experience set me in good stead. I knew when I wanted to do something, I could do it.

Q: Frank, what did you know about the Foreign Service? When did you first realize there was a professional group called the

Foreign Service?

HODSOLL: Somewhat by accident, it was in law school. I hadn't paid much attention. I suppose I heard about the Foreign Service when I was working for the Congressman. But he wasn't on the international affairs committee. Incidentally, Win Lord was one of my classmates and part of that early internship with various Yale congressmen and senators. It wasn't so much the Foreign Service. I was interested in international affairs and the world getting along a little better, and not having to go to war so much. And I was also interested in how other people viewed the United States. That came in large part from what I did as editor of my high school newspaper. When I got to Yale, I was so heavily into the arts. I read a lot of stuff in the arts; it had nothing to do with the United States.

I didn't have any views of the Foreign Service. When I went to work for the Congressman, I didn't have any views of the Foreign Service. All my work for the Congressman was domestic. But when I had the opportunity to go to Cambridge, I became quite interested in world affairs. I was at Cambridge during the Cuban Missile Crisis and defended the United States against a smart guy who was also a Communist. He was outraged that we had practically committed the whole world to war, on our own. I became interested in that. And then later, I was graduating from Stanford law school on my way, in theory, at first to run for Congress. Because of Cambridge and one thing and the other, I asked, "Well, who does this international work in the United States?" It was the Foreign Service. I said maybe I should throw my hat in and take the test. And for some reason, I passed. But then I went to Sullivan and Cromwell first, because I didn't know if I really wanted to do that. But I told Sullivan and Cromwell that I had passed and I wasn't sure whether I was going to stay.

Q: Also at Sullivan and Cromwell you wound up writing foreign policy briefing papers for the partners.

HODSOLL: That's right. They knew I was interested, and they liked what I was doing on registration statements. They wanted to keep me involved.

Q: It was both. They needed the registration products; but it was something to keep you involved.

HODSOLL: And then I did okay on them. Everybody liked them, so off we went!

Q: I've read a lot of your papers and they're very good.

Q: Frank, did you have any uncles or aunts or other relatives that were models for you?

HODSOLL: No, no uncles or aunts. My models in the family were my father and mother.

Q: Did you have discussions at the table about world affairs?

HODSOLL: Yes, particularly about Asia, because of my father's interest in that area. It was very wide ranging. It was about every conceivable kind of thing. It would be triggered by something my father might have read in the Los Angeles Times, or you know, whatever it was.

And also I was an extraordinarily—oh I don't know about extraordinarily—but I was a very big reader. I was reading stuff all the time. My wife, Mimi, and I have sort of laughed about it. One of my reasons for me not being as active as I should be now, is that when I was a boy, I could spend a whole weekend and never get out of bed. I would read three books. This is all part of my governess' training.

Q: How important was your governess? Sounds like she was one heckuva role model!

A: She was a model. Her name was Emily Croom. She went on, after dealing with me, to found her own school, in Los Angeles. She was amazing. You know, much more recently when I was with the Arts Endowment (the National Endowment for the Arts) I was out talking to people in high schools and middle schools, and I remember asking the question in one fairly good—in the sense that it wasn't depressed—school, about Dickens and the English teacher (this was in a high school) told me they couldn't teach Dickens anymore because the kids don't have the vocabulary. And I said, well shouldn't you be teaching them the vocabulary? And I got a sort of a blank stare.

Q: Frank, what kind of books did you like to read?

HODSOLL: Every conceivable kind, I read all the Hornblower series [the Horatio Hornblower novels by C.S. Foster], in addition to...I am sorry, I am drawing a blank... in addition to the books I had to read before I was eight. Dickens was one. But I used to read everything. I read adult books, too. There was no rhyme nor reason to it.

Q: Did you read newspapers and magazines?

HODSOLL: Not so much.

Q: What professors do you remember both in high school, university and law school, and the courses that really were influential?

HODSOLL: In high school I remember my English teacher, a guy by the name of Dalton. I remember my Latin teacher, a guy by the name of Crawford; and my French teacher, a guy by the name of Woodruff, who was also my squash coach. The reason I remember them is because they bloody well made sure I learned what I was supposed to learn. They took the time and the effort and sometimes the physical abuse to make that happen.

In college, I already mentioned Franklin Baumer, who taught Intellectual History 59, but also Henri Pere, who was in the art history department, a Frenchman. He is mentioned in one of the oral histories you gave me to read, as an example of someone they didn't like. [Retired U.S. Ambassador] Tony Quainton, was not terribly happy with Henri Pere, I loved him. Let's see who else among the academics. Oh, I had an extraordinarily good fortune to be able to...who wrote Our Town? I am drawing a blank here.

Once I became a regular student, I had the opportunity to attend a seminar given by the guy who wrote Our Town [Thornton Wilder] and it was all about Finnegan's Wake. There were only six of us in the seminar. He [Wilder] went on and on about Finnegan's Wake. And it's a difficult book; it's not like Ulysses at all; it's a very difficult book. I remember asking him about it at the end of class: "You know, you spent a lot of time on Finnegan's Wake. Was it worth it?" And he looked at me and said, "I'm not sure."

Q: At law school?

Well, yes, I had two sets of law schools. The guy who taught UN [United Nations] international law---Perry was his last name—I forget his first name now. He was extraordinary; I mean, he just knew everything. One of the things I learned from him was, he said, "You know, when you worry about your neighbor to the north, in Canada? There isn't another country on earth where you still have a subjugated minority people." He meant the French. And he was totally English; there wasn't anything French about him at all.

As an undergraduate law student at Cambridge, the guy who taught me Islamic law. I still get occasional missives from people in India who attended Islamic law with me there. I mean I'm not sure what I do with it, other than I do know what the sharia is. So that was an interesting opportunity.

But in terms of people, at Cambridge...if I had to do it all over again, I would have gone to Cambridge as an undergraduate and done all my law school in the United States. It is much more professionally oriented here in U.S. law schools, than in the British law schools. Well, it starts...most British lawyers do the Tripos, which is the undergraduate course for lawyers and that's all they do. They don't go on and get the LLB or any other thing, which is sort of odd.

I think those are the teachers I remember the best.

Q: Sports? Hobbies?

HODSOLL: Sports, well, helped me become a normal person. I played football but was never that great at it. I turned out to have a real talent for squash. I also rowed at Yale, but the year that I rowed at Yale, Yale went to the Olympics and won the gold medal, but I wasn't part of that. So they were way ahead of me. I've never been that much of an athlete, largely because I don't have the discipline.

Q: Dating? You were in Hollywood, that must have been a very active social life.

HODSOLL: Well, sort of. In our high school yearbook, there is a picture of the guy who went to Yale at the same time I did—Cheever Tyler, who still lives in New Haven—and me with two, maybe you should call them bimbos. We did a lot of dating. We had a friend whose father was a minor British actor in Los Angeles. He got me a job several times as an extra, including in a movie with Marlon Brando. Yeah, there were a lot of good-looking ladies. But I was pretty timid when it came to girls.

Q: Talk about your writing, Frank. How important was writing to you?

HODSOLL: It was very important. Starting with Al Batador, which was the high school paper, I did a lot of writing. Other people wrote too, but I wrote probably half the paper. People liked the way I wrote. I was praised for it and therefore did more of it.

Writing has always been important to me from the point of view of setting out something in a cogent fashion so that somebody who's never heard of the subject matter can get it. And I'm not big on using six-syllable words and that sort of thing.

Was I a great writer? No. I wrote a lot of poetry when I was a kid. But no, I would basically say writing was a tool for communicating.

Q: What's your view of the different schools you went to, and the people who were there and the social structures in them? Let's talk about your prep schools first.

HODSOLL: Well, Cate was in Eagle Brook; it was part of my pushing back. I was put back a grade, so I could better relate to people my age. The great thing about Cate was that in addition to the academics, which were extremely strict...but they don't do that at Cate anymore. Latin and ancient Greek are gone, and Mandarin Chinese is in. It's not like when I was there, but I think that the big thing about Cate was that there were no excuses. None. You could be sick; you could make a mistake. There were no excuses. You were held to the high standard they thought you should be held to, no matter what happened.

That did me well in college even though I spent my first two years of college basically doing things other than academics.

Q: What about Yale? What was Yale like in terms of social composition, in 1955 when you first got there? What was your experience interacting with folks both on the campus and living in New Haven? You had not lived on the East Coast before.

HODSOLL: That's all true. Yale was very loose. By comparison to Cate, Yale was a breeze in many ways. I was exempted from all the required courses and sort of did whatever I wanted. I think I could have used a lot more guidance, because I didn't know what the hell I was doing, to be honest. That said, I took some great courses and had some terrific teachers and when I behaved myself...but Yale was very open. Having said that, there were no women. My roommates had all gone to Exeter. It was very much a preppy sort of place. Interestingly, my roommates after my first year felt that I'd been better prepared than Exeter had prepared them in terms of knowing a whole bunch of stuff. So when I wanted to work, it was relatively easy.

I think there were some real problems at Yale; they didn't affect me but affected things generally. I will never forget going in to see the Dean of Yale College, Sam Chauncey, after I'd become one of his favorite people for having pulled myself together. I had gone over a holiday to have dinner at a friend of mine's house – Peter Pastreich, who later became the executive director of

the San Francisco Symphony. I was at his home, and Peter told me he was very upset because a friend of his who had gone to one of the top schools in the New York area, hadn't gotten into Yale, and I said, "Did he not do well?" And Pastreich said, "No, he was at the top of his class."

I picked up on my ability to reach the dean and I said to Mr. Chauncey, "I've just had this lunch with Peter Pastreich's parents and he tells me that so and so wasn't accepted even though he was top in his class, a higher class level than Peter."

I've never forgotten what Chauncey said to me: "If we'd accepted this guy, you wouldn't be here." I said, "What do you mean?" He said, "It would be all Jews."

I said, "What? I don't want to be here if I'm taking away from somebody who's better than I am." The conversation came to a stop. Yale, whether it was prejudiced or they were simply trying to get some Californians to come or whatever, I did not appreciate that kind of an answer. It could have been a little more nuanced.

Q: Where you grew up, there were no Jews in Bel Air?

HODSOLL: There were no Jews in Bel Air. That's true, but I didn't know that at the time. I grew up and was part of the establishment.

Q: Were there Jews in Beverly Hills?

HODSOLL: Oh yes. Hollywood was overwhelmingly Jewish.

Q: Tell me about your friends at Cambridge and what Cambridge was like.

HODSOLL: Cambridge was an extraordinary place. Yale was an extraordinary place. I don't want to downplay it, or Stanford. But Cambridge was a whole new experience. When I first moved in, I was off-campus – that's what they did with students from abroad. I stayed in a little townhouse on the edge of town, and biked in every morning. We all had to wear gowns in those days; that doesn't happen anymore. I had a living-room on the ground floor, and a bedroom on the top floor – this is a house that had no central heating, no hot water. I ended up doing all my showers at the college because I didn't want to have my landlady have to haul water in pails up to the place where you could take a bath.

I was minding my own business sitting in front of the gas grate and in comes a guy in a loincloth; he turns out to be the first Daya – from Borneo – to go to college. He came from an upper-class Dayak family and he had tattoos all over his body - seen and unseen. I thought my goodness, what is this all about? He explained who he was. Great, I said, we're going to be housemates. We got along. He used to come and ask me what kind of suit he ought to wear. I said, "You shouldn't just show up in class with your loin cloth." But Cambridge was that way. [Frank's Dayak friend was Ron Wulnulick.]

Cambridge was easier than Yale, for example. Stanford was all law--I mean we did nothing, but law. Cambridge was great for getting to know people who were not in the law school who were doing other things. It was an amazing group of people from all over. The master of St. Catherine's College, the college I was at, was also a former judge in colonial India. Very much an Englishman. I started at Cambridge helping them to get money out of their graduates. I'd have to write in and say, "How do I send you money every year?" Now they approach you readily.

The great thing about Cambridge is, whether you were an undergraduate or a graduate, or were from who-knows-where in the world, we all intermingled and had serious conversations about things; sometimes after having had too much to drink.

Q: You did six, seven, eight months in the military; what was that like?

HODSOLL: I had six months in the military and then periodic short tours. Even while in the Foreign Service, I had to show up for reserve duty. I was quite impressed with the rigor at Ft. Benning, where I had my basic training. Like Cate, you did what you had to do and you did not have any excuses. While I wasn't there that long, at Ft. Ord, it was the same kind of thing and I particularly appreciated the non-commissioned officers who kind of ran the place. I was a second lieutenant; they didn't have many in those days. So I became a company commander instantly; you're supposed to be captain to be a company commander.

I was not a distinguished military officer but I appreciated the discipline, and, particularly, I appreciated the officers--none of them had been through war. They were like me, people who had just arrived. But the non-commissioned officers I got to know on a personal basis, particularly after my amazing experience with them teaching my take on Intellectual History 59, they were the greatest generation. They were unbelievably solid citizens.

Q: Shifting now to the Foreign Service, how did you become interested in foreign affairs?

HODSOLL: Writing all these editorials on China and other places and so on, in high school and at Cambridge. I read the newspapers, television was around, but mostly I read newspapers and magazines. My father being in the Philippines and so on, and being an Englishman, I was interested in how all these other countries worked, and was our foreign policy making sense, in the way we went about it. We were by far the most powerful country in the world; no question about that. Were we exercising our power in the best manner possible from our perspective, or that of other people?

And the Philippines; my involvement in Warner Barnes and Company also got me interested in that. I was part of a colonial family in the Philippines. My father would never make people feel like they were at a lesser stage, that was not his nature. But if you look at some of his writings, he came out of pre-World War I Britain.

Q: How did you come to join the Foreign Service? What was it like at your oral exam? Do you remember that?

HODSOLL: Only vaguely. I didn't have much of a feeling about it. I know some of my colleagues who have done oral histories were not very pleased with the way that the oral exam and even the written exam were run. Let's start with the written exam. If you read Time magazine on a regular basis, you could pass the written exam; end of discussion. The oral exam was conducted by a bunch of Foreign Service Officers. I didn't know enough about the Foreign Service and what diplomats really did to really have a good feel for it. It was kind of a social session. I didn't see that I was being asked anything terribly difficult. Did I know anything about anything? I don't know.

Q: Where did you take the oral test, and when did you actually apply to join the Foreign Service?

HODSOLL: I applied to join the Foreign Service while I was in my last year in law school at Stanford. I took the written test in California, the oral test in Washington. I can't remember exactly when I took it. I passed it and then basically told the Foreign Service people that I was probably going to go to S & C first. I think I had been told that the Congressional race thing wasn't going to happen at that point. And so I said, "Well you know, I have been accepted at a major law firm and could I hold off on this?" They said I could.

Q: When did you first come into the Foreign Service A-100 course [the basic orientation program for Foreign Service personnel]?

HODSOLL: I came into the Foreign Service in April 1966 , and had French training with Mimi after they decided we were

going to go to Brussels.

Q: Who was in your A-100 course?

HODSOLL: A whole bunch of people. The guy who did best as an ambassador was Ray Seitz, who became ambassador under [former Secretary of State James] Baker to Great Britain—which is unusual for a Foreign Service Officer. There was Roger Morris, who left when we invaded Cambodia, whom I got to know pretty well. [Morris resigned from the Foreign Service after the invasion of Cambodia]. He was also brought in by Dean Acheson to do a study on the future of NATO (North Atlantic Treaty Organization). In terms of others who were in my class, we just had a big reunion of the class. There was Steve Ecton. I didn't have that many close friends in my class. We got along, obviously, but my going through the Foreign Service A-100—with my discipline and so on—I learned everything I had to learn and did fine. I was not that impressed with it. But later in my career, I was really impressed with the Foreign Service Economics Course.

Q: You mention “discipline” several times, and your ability to really knuckle down and get things done. Where are the roots for that? Where did you get that discipline to get stuff done?

HODSOLL: Mother, Father and Cate School, primarily. Almost getting kicked out of Yale probably had some influence on me too. And working for Congressman Wainwright; because he, for some reason, really relied on me. So I felt I had to produce, and I did.

Q: When you came into the diplomatic service, what were your goals? What did you see yourself doing as a Foreign Service Officer? What career path were you looking for?

HODSOLL: I came into the political cone, and I didn't really have a career path. I wanted to do foreign policy without really knowing what that meant as a junior Foreign Service Officer. I didn't have a goal, so when I was assigned to Belgium, my goals sort of evolved from that. My first assignment in Belgium was in the administrative counselor's office, and my first job was housing.

All the US/NATO people were being kicked out of Paris because De Gaulle had decided he didn't want NATO, or particularly SHAPE (Supreme Headquarters Allied Headquarters Europe) in Fontainebleau. So as a brand new FSO, whose French was pretty good – I'm a big fan of the French training that they gave me in the Foreign Service. . . it was certainly not something I

was planning to do. And I was a lawyer, so I signed up 250 leases—in competition with all the other NATO countries that were also moving into Belgium—and brought it in under budget and got pretty amazing efficiency reports for that. Tony Gillespie, who was one of the guys who went on to become ambassador to a variety of places, in his oral history which he showed to me, said you probably didn't think that you wanted to do that but it made you famous because no one else had done something quite like that. Being famous was helpful.

Q: For the historian reading this in 20 years, why did SHAPE get kicked out of France and where did it go in Belgium?

HODSOLL: It got kicked out of France because De Gaulle thought it was an intrusion on French sovereignty, to be honest. SHAPE was Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe. The first Supreme Allied Commander Europe (SACEUR) was Eisenhower. I went on to work at SHAPE after leaving Brussels. But before we get into SHAPE. . . .

Where I was extremely fortunate—human relationships are awfully important, whether in the Foreign Service or any other place—and I did well in the Foreign Service because of Ralph Scarritt who was the administrative counselor who decided, “Let Hodsoll do it.” I got along well with [Army General] Lyman Lemnitzer, who was then SAC [Supreme Allied Commander] Europe. And my boss, Bob Brandon, who had been DCM in Greece before coming, had gotten sick when the Soviets and Poles and other Warsaw Pact people came in and attacked Czechoslovakia. I was the political person at that point. Because I got along with the military four-star generals, I was allowed to do stuff that most people would never have been allowed to do!

Q: As a junior officer!

HODSOLL: As a junior officer! I was an FSO-7. Maybe I was a six by then, maybe a five; I was pretty low!

Coming back to Brussels, because of the experience with housing for everyone—I did ambassadors' houses and secretaries' apartments, every conceivable kind of thing—Scarritt brought me in as a principal lieutenant or whatever you want to call it, for, first the Humphrey trip at the end of the Johnson Administration. Humphrey was released [from the duties of vice president] and was running for president. He came, among other places, to Brussels.

And because that ended up going well...I'll tell you a funny anecdote. I was invited back on temporary detail from SHAPE to do Nixon's first trip abroad after becoming president. I would not have had those opportunities but for the fact that Scarritt thought I could do anything. He was terrific. One of the things that came home from that is discipline. If you're going to do a

presidential trip and be relied on for having every briefing book in place and having all the stuff that's top secret cleared out of the hotel rooms before anybody else came in, and having the cars ready, when the cars should be ready, and having the various people from the White House and elsewhere properly involved so they wouldn't feel "I don't want this ridiculous Foreign Service Officer telling me what to do"--it's discipline. It's the discipline of doing things – not like writing a policy paper – it's about making sure no crack is left open. None. Zero. And I had to do that when I was writing registration statements, because as I said I had a colleague who was fired....

Q: And when you were declining Latin nouns at Cate School!

HODSOLL: And when I was declining Latin nouns at Cate School. I learned that discipline. And those two experiences on the vice presidential and presidential trips.... Now let me tell you a story about Humphrey; this was before Nixon.

Humphrey had been released to go abroad by Johnson; he'd been kept under pretty close wraps up until then. We were the last stop on the European trip for Humphrey. A friend of mine, Roger Morris, I had noticed in the cable traffic, had left the trip in Rome and I wondered why. When the Humphrey people came to Brussels, I asked some of them what happened to Roger? One of the guys on the trip, a middle-grade Foreign Service Officer, said, "Well, the Vice President fired him and told him to go home."

I said, "Really, what did he do?" He said, "He sassed the Vice President's steward." I said, "What? Who is the Vice President's steward?" I was told it was Sergeant

Lakum [phonic, an Air Force master sergeant.] I don't really know what Morris did but he was fired.

We go on...I was in the control room in the hotel in Brussels, and I was doing paper shuffling. And the guy who was on the trip who had told me about Roger Morris said, "You know, you could do the State Department an enormous favor."

I said, "What are you talking about? He said, "Lakum is causing trouble here and you could do us an enormous favor, would you please take him out and get him laid?"

I said, "What? There is a name for people like that." He said, "I agree it's an improper thing for me to ask you, but you really would be doing us a favor." I said okay. Of course, I had no clue how to do such a thing. So off we went, Sgt. Lakum and me. We went into several bars. Nothing happened. Finally, after nearly two hours, we end up at a bar and there is an elegant-looking Belgian lady sitting at the bar and Lakum goes over and sits in her lap and she shrieks. I went over, picked up

Lakum by the scruff of whatever he was wearing, and said, “This is unacceptable – we’re going back to the hotel.” He stands up straight, clicks his heels, and salutes and says, “Yes, sir.” I didn’t say it out loud, but I thought, why didn’t I think of that before!

So we went back to the hotel and I was okay.

Coming back to the second trip; I was now at SHAPE, in Casteau, near the border in southern Belgium. Scarritt was still at the embassy and he asked for me to be detailed up to Brussels for the Nixon trip. Bob Brandon was well enough at that point, and I could be spared. Off I go for about two weeks. Because it was the first excursion of the new president, we didn’t even know what to call him. Is he Richard Milhous Nixon? Is he Richard Nixon? Is he Dick Nixon? Who the hell is he? That’s how brand new it was.

The Belgians wanted to put him up where De Gaulle had stayed, a royal palace in Brussels with absolutely unacceptable plumbing, as far as I could tell. I had met Nixon when I worked for the Congressman and was made a young political leader of NATO. I was pretty impressed with Nixon at that point, so up I go. Several quite amazing things happened while I was on this trip. First of all, we had the career people from the White House Communications Agency who had been with Johnson on the trip because they didn’t want to change people right away. I got to sit in on these late-night sessions hearing these extraordinary tales about Johnson and the amazing things he did on his trips, including telling [National Security Adviser McGeorge] Bundy he was going to throw him out of an airplane at 30,000 feet if he didn’t have an appointment with the Pope in three days.

After I went in to see Scarritt and said, “We need to talk to Washington because I don’t think this Belgian palace is the right place; there is a brand new Hilton hotel.” In those days, when the President goes somewhere, you could remodel the hotel if you were so inclined; so there was no financial issue. We did change over to Hilton and did some substantial remodeling. Several things happened to me on that trip. One of the advance people on the trip was a guy named Bob Haldeman. I didn’t know Bob Haldeman from Adam. [Haldeman was chief of staff to Nixon and served time in prison for his role in the Watergate scandal that ended the Nixon presidency.] Many years later, during the Nixon administration, I learned that my experience of having Bob Haldeman calling me, “Sir” was somewhat unusual. We pulled off the trip, and Nixon was pleased with it and they went on to other parts of Europe.

Coming back to discipline, what stood me in good stead is there was no job too little, or too big. I didn’t complain; I did what I

thought was necessary. I did it quickly, and it all came off all right.

Q: What friends did you have in Brussels and in SHAPE?

HODSOLL: In Brussels, it starts with Harry Blaney, who was in the Foreign Service class ahead of me, along with you. He could not have been nicer; he wasn't married at that point. He helped us find an apartment and really nice restaurants and all that good stuff. He became a very good friend. From time to time, I did urge Harry to be a little less outspoken about some of his views. That was one extremely good friend. The other good friend was Tony Gillespie, who was the regional security officer for Belgium, which included the Mission to the European Community and over time, also to NATO. We got along extremely well. And Ed Dillery, whom I kept in touch with later. [Former Ambassador Dillery passed away on January 23, 2016.]

I probably have more Foreign Service friends from the Brussels experience than from anywhere else, because we were all there together. My ambassador was Ridgway Knight, a very elegant guy who spoke perfect French and who had dinners that were to die for, when he had you over. Interesting anecdote on Knight; when I was getting people housed, I went with Knight to a meeting with the Conte de Keukhof (phonic) who was in charge of the Belgian end of the transit of people coming from France. I drove down with the Ambassador in his limousine and I told him, "I don't know much about protocol, Mr. Ambassador. You're going to have to tell me if I get out first, do I open the door for you? How am I supposed to do this?" I think he saw in me somebody who didn't think much of this protocol stuff. So the next Saturday, I was summoned to his office for a full day of protocol and also a discussion of all the people who had been killed in the famous gathering at the end of the Napoleon era. [perhaps a reference to the Thermidor reaction to Robespierre's Reign of Terror] So I spent a whole day with the ambassador being told that I might not live long, if I didn't know about protocol. But he was a good ambassador, a really good ambassador.

Q: What skills did you develop as a political officer in the Brussels tours?

HODSOLL: It was all at SHAPE. I had a brief session with a woman named Alta Fowler in the consular section, but it was very brief. The anecdote there, I had a woman come in with a French passport who wanted a visa—she was in Belgium for some reason. I was looking her up on the list, and she had a mark against her; she had evidently been accused of prostitution, which is a crime, when she was in France. I talked to Alta and asked what do I do, it doesn't sound like a big deal. She said it is a big deal, you can't give her a visa. So the visa applicant came back in and I said, I can't give you a visa and she said why.

You are on our list as somebody accused of prostitution; and she looked at me with a look that withered and told me, “That’s charming,” and walked out.

I found out, after the war, she didn’t have any resources and this was the only way she could get food on the table. I felt badly about it and talked to Alta about it. There has to be some way out of this. Of course nothing came of it.

I was in the consular section for only two or three months and then I went off to SHAPE. I was never a political officer there, other than doing the presidential trips. I never wrote a political telegram. I did write a lot of political telegrams about SHAPE and how to fit it in--how do we work with the Belgians to make this a smooth transition. But in terms of the European Union and things of that nature, I was never part of that. Harry Blaney was.

Q: You were involved in the integration of the headquarters.

HODSOLL: I was heavily involved in getting the place, the office building for NATO in which it still exists. I was heavily involved in that. But I was not involved with should we have so many troops and that sort of thing.

Q: Tell me about other things that impressed you about your Belgian assignment.

HODSOLL: Well, I was very fortunate. I mentioned earlier that for some reason [General] Lemnitzer and I got along. Because my boss, Brandon, had to go to the hospital, I was the one State Department guy there. Because of that, in part, I would expect, I also got along with all of Lemnitzer’s lieutenants: two four-star generals, and the British general, who was the deputy, and the guy who went on to become chief of staff of the U.S. Air Force, a guy by the name of Charlie Gabriel, who was an assistant to Lemnitzer. And again, it’s partly discipline. When I was asked to do something, I bloody well did it.

So then what happened: The Warsaw Pact, the Soviets in particular, invade Czechoslovakia. We weren’t likely to “put up the balloon.” I think there are still some things that are classified, so I probably can’t talk about everything that I did down there.

Q: It’s now 30 years later so now everything has been released.

HODSOLL: It’s beyond classification? Well, maybe I can talk about it. I remember participating as an observer in an exercise—this was before the invasion of Czechoslovakia—we did a war exercise on how long we could hold off before going

nuclear—how long SHAPE could hold off before going nuclear. It was everybody’s opinion—this was the U.S. side of SHAPE; we didn’t bring in all the other countries on this. It was the overwhelming conclusion by everybody that we would have about a month before we’d have to go nuclear. Otherwise we would be back in England.

Here’s what was wrong: It was based on an assumption that the Soviet military was what *it* said it was--that it had all these divisions, tanks and one thing and another--what we didn’t know at the time, but that turned out not to be true; they really were a pretty hollow army. We probably could have held on for longer. They had many more troops than SHAPE or USCENTCOM [U.S. Central Command] and so on. The U.S. was the biggest, but we were based all the way across an ocean. And the Soviet Union was right there. So that was an interesting experience.

Coming back to Czechoslovakia: Again, I was sort of on my own. Lemnitzer said, “You know, I have a very good U.S. intelligence group here.” A lot of it came out of Stuttgart, where EUCOM (U.S. European Command) was. And he said, “We have pretty good stuff from the Americans; what I want you to do is monitor all the other nations' intelligence.” And the French were part of it too; so that’s 14 countries. So I said, “Yes, sir.” And I spent probably three months without sleeping. And I would come into the morning staff meeting and report on whatever I could figure out to report on. At some point—not at the end of it, the Warsaw Pact intel was still coming in—I went in privately to see Lemnitzer, and I said, “You know General, I am telling you this stuff, and it’s the best I can do, but I don’t know what I’m talking about.” I said, “To be honest with you, I get reports from the French, or the Dutch, and the Brits. It’s all about six tanks going down some unpronounceable street and turning left! I tell you that’s what happened, but I have no idea what it’s about.”

He looked at me and laughed, and he said, “Well you’re honest and you’re right. Keep it up.”

Q: We are going to stop here. It is now 4:30. Time has just flown.

Q: Today is November 29, 2015 with Frank Hodsoll.

HODSOLL: One or two more anecdotes from SHAPE [Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe]. One is, because of my real estate experience we found an extraordinary place to live called the Chateau d’Arcy. It didn’t have any bathrooms, but we installed the bathrooms. We had a moat and a secret tunnel, and it was quite extraordinary, and we had a lot of great parties.

The second extraordinary thing was, I ran into [U.S. Army General and Commander of SHAPE Lyman] Lemnitzer at the U.S. SHAPE PX in Stuttgart [Postal Exchange, a network of stores set up by the U.S. Army to offer discounted merchandise to

service members], and I went up and said, “Hi, General! How are you?” And he said, “Shhhhhh.” He said, “I’m here incognito.”

I said, “Really?”

He said, “I’m seeing if our PX is as good as the one at Stuttgart. We have a general in Stuttgart who isn’t treating us right and I don’t want you exposing me on this.”

I said, “Yes, sir!”

What happened between Stuttgart and SHAPE on this, I have no idea.

Q: That’s wonderful, that’s wonderful.

Q: This is session number two of the oral history with Frank Hodsoll. The interviewer is Tex Harris. Today is December 6, 2015, and we are in Frank’s home. We are going to continue with Frank’s work in Brussels. Here we go. Frank, if you could talk about your work towards the end of your assignment in Brussels, which was your first assignment overseas in the Foreign Service.

HODSOLL: In my last session with you, we talked about SHAPE [Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe], but I wanted to add into that, the fact that I took a leave of absence from SHAPE, at the very end, just before I was assigned back to Washington. The purpose of that was two-fold, one was to move along the sale of my father’s company in the Philippines, and the second was to volunteer to go to Vietnam, and to make a visit to Vietnam with a view to cementing that in. So at my expense I went out to the Far East. I think I began in Vietnam, and went up and visited all of the State Department offices in the field. The State Department in Vietnam was divided into five corps for political advice [offices corresponding with the territories assigned to the U.S. military corps] outside Saigon. The job that was coming up was I Corps in the north of South Vietnam, right on the North Vietnamese border, and so I visited with people out there, and thought that would be a good place for me to go. It [I Corps] was the most important thing for both the Johnson and the Nixon administrations. I thought maybe I could lend my hand out there. Then I went on out to the Philippines and brought to a close—actually I closed later when I got back from Belgium—the sale of the company in the Philippines. I did that as well.

An interesting anecdote from the Philippines: My last dinner in Manila was with a guy by the name of Johnny [Juan] Ponce Enrile, who was the son of my father's attorney in the Philippines; Johnny was also the director of Customs for the Marcos administration [Ferdinand Marcos was president of the Philippines, 1965-1986]. In my last dinner with him before leaving, he said, "Guess what's happening to me? The president is promoting me to attorney general, but there's a caveat."

And I said, "Really? One, congratulations, and two, what's the caveat?"

He said, "The caveat is I can have nothing more to do with Customs, which is under the Department of Justice." What that meant was that the Marcos politicians wanted to keep their hands on the money coming from Customs, and let Johnny, who was a Harvard graduate, just do the legal stuff and stay out of the way of the Marcos people. I should point out that Marcos initially was a good president, but then he became a most corrupt dictator. Both of those things happened. [Marcos was ousted by the so-called "People Power Revolution of 1986, of which Juan Ponce Enrile was a leading organizer. Enrile is still prominent in Philippines politics, having most recently served as a senator, during which he has faced charges of corruption.]

After returning to SHAPE, I was simply informed I had been assigned to the Bureau of International Organizations Affairs at the State Department as the desk officer for the Law of the Sea, but with no particular explanation as to what had happened with regard to my foray into Vietnam. They were looking for junior officers for Vietnam at that time.

Shortly thereafter Mimi and I flew back to Washington. The year was 1969.

Q: Frank, tell us about your courtship with Mimi and your time together at Stanford and in Brussels and also the birth of your children.

HODSOLL: As I mentioned earlier I met Mimi in Paris—I had known her slightly before, and after a bit of back and forth she accompanied me to Cambridge, where she was with me during my last year at Cambridge. We were planning to have a rather romantic wedding in France, in a small town. We were going to establish post bans and all that. In particular, my mother raised hell about that, you have to have a proper wedding. So eventually we had our wedding in Winnetka, Illinois, where Mimi was born. The Hamill and the McEwan families put on quite a spread. Then Mimi followed me back for my last year at Stanford.

One of the things that happened there was, we had made friends in Cambridge with two Argentines by the name of Nash. They originally came from Romania, but they were Argentine citizens. Mimi wanted to learn how to cook better, and they had given

her a copy of Julia Childs' Mastering the Art of French Cooking. So we went back to Stanford, and Mimi started going through the book from A to Z. We had a different French meal every night, and I gained 25 pounds while in my last year at Stanford. It was quite glorious, with lots of butter and cream and eggs.

As I have mentioned, when I graduated I went east to work for a law firm, Sullivan and Cromwell. Our son, Francis, was born in New York, and I can remember taking him out in a taxicab to go walking around Central Park. We lived near Grand Central. Mimi made a huge effort to have Francis naturally, but he ended up as a C-section; he grew up fine. Our daughter was born in Belgium—Lisa Monaise Hodsoll. She was almost born in the back seat of the Porsche. We had gone to the PX [post exchange, common acronym for a special store for U.S. military personnel] in Bitburg to pick up some supplies. We certainly knew Mimi was well along in her pregnancy, but it never occurred to me she would start to give birth on the way back. We made it back to Brussels and the Croix Rouge (Red Cross) Hospital, but everything worked out fine, and Lisa was born.

We were then stationed in Brussels and both of them went with us to SHAPE, or to Erci, where we had our house. They initially spoke nothing but French because we conducted the entire household in French. When we finally came back to the United States they still spoke a lot of French, but in the course of two or three years, most of the French disappeared and they were doing English. They went to school, obviously, in the Washington-Virginia area. They grew up to be quite wonderful—two people we are very proud of.

Q: What are they doing, Frank?

HODSOLL: At the moment our son is a consultant for renewable energy, doing a lot of work with the state of Virginia. He graduated from Sidwell Friends [a Quaker school in Washington, DC] and then Colby [College, in Maine]. He had a spotty career in school but thanks to my brother-in-law got into the Massachusetts Institute of Technology [MIT] and graduated in the top 10 percent of his class at MIT in the Sloan School.

Our daughter went to Exeter [Phillips Exeter Academy in New Hampshire] as a high school student and then to the University of Virginia, where she primarily majored in theater and began her love for and interest in theater. She did very well. Unlike our son, she did okay in school. They both ended up being just fine. We moved back to Washington recently, in large part because they're both here, and we see a good bit of them.

Q: Grandchildren?

HODSOLL: We have two grandchildren. Our daughter has never married or had children. The eldest was Brindle, our granddaughter, and a year later along came Francis Jr., who is our grandson. They're just terrific. So we're very happy with them.

Q: What year was Brindle born?

HODSOLL: She's 10. We're now 2015, so it must be 2005, and our grandson was born in 2006.

Q: Frank, let's go back to pick up the story as you flew back to Washington with your family of four, and where did you live, and what was your work responsibility in the Bureau of International Organizations?

HODSOLL: We flew back. We bought a house. Originally we thought of remodeling a house in Georgetown, but that proved to be too expensive, given that we had a rather fancy architect who was the brother of a Yale classmate. He was going to do something quite fabulous, and we couldn't afford it. We bought a house in the Virginia suburbs, and then remodeled it and built a swimming pool, and painted it black to everyone's surprise. It looked emerald green in the sunshine. It was a good house; if we had to do it all over again, I think we'd just stay there.

My job at the State Department was as a low-level, junior bureaucrat. I guess that's the best way to describe it. I was in the United Nations (UN) political affairs office, which interestingly had Law of the Sea, which I was in charge of, to the extent I was in charge of anything. My office mate, Richard Brown, was in charge of outer space. Between the two of us, I figured, we had the entire universe covered, from the bottom to the top. There was a lot going on in Law of the Sea. I suspect, though nobody ever told me this, it was my legal training, and the fact that I had a degree in international law from Cambridge, including in the various parts of the UN, that got me back there. At that point, I renewed—I think I had only vaguely met—a guy named Tex Harris, who was working for the then-legal adviser, Jack Stephenson, who was the partner at Sullivan and Cromwell with whom I'd had the most back and forth, particularly on writing papers on matters of international affairs.

I worked for a guy named Stu Macintyre, who was the office director. And I had a lot of back and forth—Stu was really very open about this sort of thing—with the then-senior Deputy Assistant Secretary Martin Herz, who had returned from Vietnam. I did all the things that a Junior Foreign Service Officer does in those circumstances, in making sure that whatever our delegation in New York needed got the proper clearances from everybody. The Defense Department was enormously

important; so were the oil companies on the private sector side and all kinds of other people.

My job was basically to make sure all the papers were put together with the legal adviser's office, and others that had clearances. And then as a part of that, I discovered that somewhat to my shock, that nobody had done an analysis of the real political and economic interests [in the international seas] of the other countries of the world. First of all, the oceans make up two-thirds of the earth's surface, and back then most of it was beyond national jurisdiction. The most important thing to the United States, militated by the Defense Department, was to make sure that our nuclear submarines could go through international straits like Gibraltar and Malacca and so on, and do so even though it was within the territorial seas of the littoral states, and do so without notifying the coastal states that we were doing that.

That didn't take a whole lot of effort to be agreed upon, but the big issue was how much territorial jurisdiction would there be for resources? At that point, at the beginning, before the Law of the Sea Convention came to a close, essentially the United States had a 12-mile territorial sea, and an undefined bit more for fisheries and oil exploitation and things of that nature. And there was a huge interest, particularly on the part of the coastal states, to make that bigger.

And so the Law of the Sea Convention moved along in a direction that eventually resulted in a 200-mile economic zone, and beyond that economic zone was the international portion of the ocean—for which there was a great deal of discussion that is still holding up our ratifying the treaty, involving who did what in that area beyond national jurisdiction. There was a guy who was briefly one of the chairmen of the UN Law of the Sea Committee—most of the time I was there it was chaired by Amara Singh, the Sri Lankan ambassador to the UN. I used to refer to him as the fastest gavel in the east. He was really pretty good at what he did.

The negotiations and conversations were about these limits on national jurisdictions, but the big issue, which was more one of polemics, was what happened in the area beyond the economic zone, in the deep sea bed? The only thing that anybody thought might be worth having out there was something called manganese nodules. Manganese wasn't that important but there was nickel and copper and so on. Because [the Swiss-born Maltese diplomat Arvid] Pardo and some others had thought of this as the heritage of mankind, the evolution of the discussion was toward an international body of the UN that would regulate this and people could get licenses.

When the Law of the Sea Convention was finally concluded a couple of decades later—I had another session later with Law of the Sea much later—that issue [the notion of resources from the international seas being under the purview of a United Nations

agency] became—as a matter of philosophy—the thing that has held it up. A number of conservatives [in the United States Senate] felt that there shouldn't be an international, UN-operated regime for licensing the exploration and exploitation of these minerals. The last time I looked, three or four years ago, these minerals weren't worth exploiting; the price of copper and nickel wasn't high enough to warrant giant, off-shore exploration. So nothing much has happened. [The U.S. Senate has not ratified the Law of the Sea.]

Coming back to the thing I discovered, nobody had done any analysis of the interests, so I got together with the then-geographer of the State Department. We got the Secretary to send out a cable to all posts, including landlocked countries, and we were able to tabulate what countries cared about. We looked at legislation, speeches made by political leaders in all the countries, and because it was such a massive undertaking—there are a lot of countries in the world—it proved useful while I was still there and hopefully it has been updated.

One other thing that happened while I was in Law of the Sea was that George H. W. Bush had just been nominated and confirmed as our ambassador to the United Nations in the Nixon Administration. He was looking for an executive assistant in New York; he came down and interviewed a bunch of people, including me, and then offered me the job. Sam DePalma, who was the Assistant Secretary for International Organizations, said, “Under no circumstances.”

So I never went to New York and stayed in Washington. Whether that was good or bad for me, or for Ambassador Bush, who knows?

Q: Bush liked Yalies [graduates of Yale, alma mater of both George W. Bush and Hodsoll]. Frank, let's add in what you did later in your career on Law of the Sea.

HODSOLL: I was on detail to the Commerce Department – I left Commerce at the beginning of the Carter Administration. The last Secretary of Commerce under the Ford Administration was Elliott Richardson; he was appointed in the Carter Administration as Ambassador for Law of the Sea. He asked me to come along with him; I was a low-level political appointee in the Ford Administration in Commerce, deputy assistant secretary for resources. I did a lot of energy work. I came over from Commerce in the Carter Administration with Richardson and sort of ran his office. Very similar to what I'd done many years earlier: to make sure that whatever we did in New York or elsewhere was agreed to by the bureaucracies of the various departments involved. My job was to make sure the studies and paperwork supported what we were up to.

Q: Essentially, you were the chief of staff for the Law of the Sea efforts headed by Richardson.

HODSOLL: I was director of the office that backstopped. Dick Dorman, for whom I later worked, and Jerry Smith for whose father I later worked—were part of Richardson’s negotiating group that went on the trips. My job was to make sure we supported them.

Q: Where were you headquartered? At State?

HODSOLL: At State.

Q: We’re now through your period of work with International Organizations (IO). Other things you worked on while you were in the political office in IO?

HODSOLL: Not really. It was all Law of the Sea. There was enough going on; actually it was where I had met Richardson. An interesting anecdote: When we came up with the idea of going along with Ambassador Pardoe from Malta, who called this area beyond national jurisdiction “the common heritage of mankind,” we came up with the idea—because the Indians, particularly, wanted a more international approach to resources that were beyond national jurisdiction. I remember being in Elliott Richardson’s office in State with him laughing and saying, “We’re going to let the Indians just pull us out there and we will follow them and get their support.” And it sort of did but it never came to a conclusion while I was there.

Q: Frank, the next thing you did was, you went to the Foreign Service economics course; talk about that.

HODSOLL: It was a great course and I learned a huge amount, and was honored to graduate with distinction. I learned how to do all kinds of things that I never knew how to do before, like do regression analysis—manually as well as on a computer. I learned how to use a computer for that purpose. I learned about how Federal Reserve policy was made. The instructors, which the State Department arranged at the Foreign Service Institute, were outstanding. We had the chief of staff of the Federal Reserve, congressional types, people from academia, and so forth. I think I’d had a basic economics course at college but never at this depth. I think all of us who came out of that course could actually be useful in terms of economic analysis. I am a big fan of the economic studies course. I don’t know how it is now, but I highly recommend it for any Foreign Service Officer, whatever their cone [specialty]. This was in 1971.

Q: What did you do next?

HODSOLL: After graduating from the economics course . . . my old friend, still friend, Harry Blaney, came over one day in a White House limousine—a great giant car—to take me to lunch. I was a very junior officer--nobody had come in such a car to pick me up for lunch--and we got talking about what he was up to. He was up to being the principal staffer for an initiative in the Nixon Administration on the 20th anniversary of NATO (North Atlantic Treaty Organization), which created the NATO Committee on the Challenges of Modern Society (CCMS), and he had been working in the White House for Pat Moynihan, who, while a Democrat, was a member of the Nixon White House staff--he was counselor to the President. They created this thing called the NATO CCMS. The political motivation, in addition to the 20th anniversary, was to create a part of NATO that would appeal to young people, who were very much against the Vietnam War and rioting and doing all sorts of things in the streets.

Help me remember to tell you about being sent by Bill Harrop to explain our Vietnam policy on college campuses. That happened during this period as well. Before I get into CCMS, let me just let me talk about Bill Harrop and Butts Macomber.

While I was doing the econ course, Harrop, and maybe others were involved in this too, wanted to get younger officers to go out to college campuses and explain our Vietnam policy. I was picked among several and went out to a variety of campuses to talk about Vietnam and why it was important. In hindsight, I was certainly being a good soldier, but we made lots of mistakes in Vietnam. What was really astonishing to me, though I might have read about it in the polls, was that when one went out to these higher education campuses, the anger that people had about Vietnam--remember there was a draft, people had to go into the military or find a way to not have to.

To give one example I will never forget, I was at Michigan State University in East Lansing, Michigan. They had a big hall and a bunch of people were there, many of whom were in fatigues.

I got up and started to speak, and everybody started shouting about how the Nixon Administration was criminal and people like me were criminal. Actually I was at a party earlier in New York, and one lady at the party just spat in my face. That's how it was in many places. When I saw I was just going to be shouted down, I discovered that behind the lectern was part of a 2x4 [piece of wood]. I pulled it out, and I smacked it down on the lectern and it made a huge noise and everybody shut up. I said, "We now have a choice; I can leave and you can go on shouting, or you can listen to me and then say whatever you want." So they decided to be quiet for a while.

The thing I brought home from that experience--and there were professors in fatigues as well who were part of the crowd--talk about not wanting any freedom of speech! It was really extraordinary how it was very unpopular what was going on in Vietnam. Maybe rightly so. But in my view totally wrong; if you're going to have somebody come out and talk to you, you listen and then you can shout at him or her afterward. That was a piece of it.

Q: Frank, I had a similar experience when I was on the road talking about Ronald Reagan's anti-apartheid policy. I had microphones grabbed from me, and threats. So it's a real experience of Foreign Service folks learning how American foreign policy is viewed domestically.

HODSOLL: I did not know that. The other thing I wanted to talk about: [William] Butts Macomber was Under-Secretary for Management during the Nixon Administration. He decided that he wanted to set up a series of task forces on reforming the Foreign Service.

Q: Diplomacy for the 21st Century....

HODSOLL: Maybe that's what it was called. I'll look it up. For some reason he [Macomber] put Art [Arthur] Hartman, who before or later became our ambassador to the Soviet Union, very senior FSO who was in S/P [the Secretary's planning and policy staff], who picked me to be his factotum on this. I welcomed the opportunity because it was about openness. My experience so far, which wasn't all that much, was that the Foreign Service wasn't open enough. We didn't do a good job on the Hill. We didn't cultivate people on the domestic side. That was certainly true on Law of the Sea. If you want to get something done in the multi-faceted American government, you need allies all over the place. Otherwise people can mobilize against you, or they simply don't understand what on earth you are up to.

I wrote a paper for Art on openness, which was highly oriented to making the process of diplomacy more open and establishing more relationships. Art liked it. With some modifications, it became the paper. I don't know what happened to all those papers afterwards, but I was pleased to be able to throw my hat in, to be helpful. With my experience with Foreign Service folks since then, and being involved in a number of foreign policy issues, I could be wrong here, but I think the State Department has to do a much better job in this area. Our government is a political system and if you don't have a sense of how to orient that political system in the direction the foreign policy leaders--not just junior officers—are heading, you won't succeed—unless it's automatically popular, and it may not be good policy.

Q: That point about diplomacy and domestic policy is a key one, and we'll come back to that later, in the discussions of your oral history. It's a very important one, and you were able to observe diplomacy at work from many different vantage positions, and your observations will be useful. After the course, you went to NATO CCMS. Tell us that story.

HODSOLL: Harry Blaney was responsible for it. He thought I might be helpful and he introduced me to Russ Train, who had succeeded Pat Moynihan as our representative to CCMS. Russ was then Chairman of the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ—predecessor of the Environmental Protection Agency). He was located in a townhouse near the White House, on Lafayette Park. I was introduced to him. A senior FSO was with CEQ at the time, Ottie Hayne (xxxx), for whom I worked for while having direct access to Train as well. I was impressed, even though it wasn't a mainstream Foreign Service assignment, with what CCMS was up to.

Because of Harry Blaney and his persistence and sheer guts, and his ability to maintain a White House phone number after Moynihan left, he was able to get assistant-secretary-level people in domestic agencies to join and attend pilot projects. They weren't dictated by the international bureaucracy, to demonstrate and get things done. Some of them were quite extraordinary even if not all that useful, like the road safety program, where Moynihan told, among others, the CEO of Volkswagen that they would never sell another car in the United States if they didn't get with building experimental safety vehicles. The vehicles weighed about 50 tons and used up gasoline at the rate of one mile to the gallon, and cost a quarter of a million dollars each, and no one would ever buy them.

So there were some peculiar things like that, a lot of things in the environmental area. And Harry gets enormous credit for having started those, and I basically filled in after him, and Train was totally open to all kinds of different projects. So I had a lot of fun doing that, and traveled the world, because I was able to bring in people to CCMS who were not NATO members, like Japan and Australia. It also allowed me to get to know a lot of people on the domestic side of government, whom I would not otherwise have known. Coming back to openness, it was the ultimate in openness.

I think that some of the things that we did, a number of the projects Harry started—work in education and a variety of other projects—were incredibly useful. Because it was a pilot project process, we actually did things; we didn't just write papers. Now the United States was the principal leader and a number of the European members of NATO weren't as thrilled about CCMS as we were, but we were able to pull off a number of useful things. In my period there, I was extremely fortunate. Train, about midway through my period there, had been appointed administrator of EPA [Environmental Protection

Agency]—again, this was in the Nixon Administration. And so he left CEQ and took me with him to EPA.

So I moved to EPA with him. While I was at EPA, one of the assistant administrators [xxxx] came up with the idea, why don't we do some energy projects? At the time we started thinking about this, there had not yet been the embargo [the 1973-1974 oil embargo imposed by the Organization of Petroleum-Exporting Countries] and all that happened shortly thereafter. And so we invented, with the U.S. being in the lead, projects in solar and geothermal energy, and energy conservation. And I ended up gathering up a whole bunch of people into that. Again, the assistant administrator made sure I knew what I was talking about.

And then along comes the embargo. Needless to say, particularly conservation became a hot item, not just in CCMS but in general in terms of the U.S. policy, and also in Europe. So this little project took on a life of its own. We got a huge amount of support from all over the place for it. So then I became somewhat of an unusual fellow in the State Department hierarchy. After the embargo, [Secretary of State Henry] Kissinger organized the Washington energy conference, which included a conference in Europe that was the beginnings of what became the International Energy Agency. And I was pulled into that as this odd person who knew all kinds of people in the energy field internationally, including the Japanese, from my work at CCMS.

I was still at EPA, but I was sent by the State Department to Paris for the big energy conference that took place there, and I was appointed rapporteur for a Japanese chair, who was a major industrial figure in Japan, on energy conservation. And we did the report for all the countries that were involved in conservation. In the course of that, I met a guy from the Department of Commerce by the name of xxxx, who I worked with and he basically offered me a job at Commerce. I think I was an FS-04, and he offered me GS-15 pay to start an industrial energy conservation program at the Department of Commerce. I went off to do that.

Question: Please talk about pilot programs at CCMS.

Back to CCMS: [Harry] Blaney gets credit for this; I didn't start it. The system we had was to create pilot projects where one or sometimes two countries would take the lead, and then the other countries would be part of it. We weren't talking about paper projects. We built third-generation sewage treatment plants—I mean actually built them. By “we” I don't mean CCMS; the pilot process gathered people from different countries to put the money in. You know, major money, billions of dollars. The reason why that was effective was that it committed the countries involved to actually doing something instead of just checking the box on a piece of paper. That was the great strength of CCMS.

Question: There was no international staff. Staff was headed by the pilot project leaders.

HODSOLL: There was no international staff, and the pilot project leaders were the staff you well know, Tex, because you followed me [in the position].

I think, and I could be wrong, and this is something that Harry started, is that we had a hand in making seat belts the law in the United States. This followed on the Australian precedent, where they had required seat belts early on, and they had very good data that showed that deaths and serious injuries from car accidents were down if you used seat belts.

This was the period when Secretary [John Anthony] Volpe was the number two guy on CCMS; he also was Deputy Secretary of Transportation. That gave us the right to use Coast Guard 1, a wonderful little jet airplane that would take you places. This was the time when the initial testing in our country of airbags had failed, and Volpe had been highly embarrassed, just on the domestic side. A bunch of seat belts going off at the wrong time would have killed people if they had been in use at that time.

Eventually we all have seat belts now, and we all have air bags. That has progressed a long way. In the course of that I got to meet so many interesting people... like Bob Brenner, who was the chief scientist at the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, which had been started on a political basis after the book Unsafe at Any Speed by Ralph Nader had called the Corvairs “unsafe at any speed.” Brenner was an amazing character because not only was he an entrepreneur but he was also totally committed to reducing the number of deaths and serious injuries from this.

I will never forget. We were in Paris trying to convince the French. We were at a restaurant having bouillabaisse. We created the CCMS resolution on seatbelts and brought it in the next day to the Paris Embassy and there were blotches of bouillabaisse all over the piece of paper, but the secretary was kind enough to type it up for us. Remember this was in the days before computers were in regular use.

[Head of CCMS and EPA Administrator] Russ Train was amazing. There was nothing he wouldn't do to help you move along. [in the government]. I was very fortunate. At the end when I was heading over to Commerce, I found a guy who is involved in this oral history. He was thinking it would be a good thing to go ahead and be the next CCMSer. His name was Tex Harris, and he did a great job.

Question: Those were good days. Let's go on: Next job.

Moving over to Commerce. I was the director of the brand new office of industrial energy conservation. That's what I went over there to do. This was 1974, and I set up an office. I was working with Bob Sheppard, the guy who hired me. And we set out a plan to work with the most energy-intensive industries, which we had identified in CCMS, to jawbone them. This was part of Nixon's Project Independence. A brief word on that: There was no way that the United States was going to be independent from foreign oil and gas at that point in time, long before fracking. But it was a good political stance.

My job was on the industrial side, not the houses and buildings and commercial side. The goal was to see if we could talk to the most energy-intensive industries, which included chemicals and oil, into conserving energy.

We had the attention of the then-Secretary of Commerce, a guy by the name of [Frederick Baily "Bill"] Dent. So I ended up heading all over the damn place, talking to the CEOs of major companies, with Secretary Dent. I did analysis and got analysis from other places; there was no Department of Energy in those days. So Commerce had this little slice that we did on the industrial side. It got me trips out to Colorado to see shale operations. The then-Undersecretary of Commerce, a guy named John Tabor, was interested in the energy side of this. While I was having my little office with five people in it, I was going around the country jawboning on this, using analysis from CCMS and from other countries. This was in the Nixon Administration. That went along, and Undersecretary Tabor, who had been Secretary of Transportation in Pennsylvania, sort of a moderate Republican type, found I was good at writing papers and getting people to agree to them.

One last thing about Nixon. My last trip was Dent, who himself resigned after Nixon resigned, even though he had nothing whatsoever to do with Nixon's problems in the White House. I will never forget. This was two or three days before Nixon's resignation, Secretary Dent and I were at a meeting in Chicago at Inland Steel with the CEOs of half a dozen or more major steel companies. We were talking about conservation. Dent, a good soldier, said he had just met with a number of other cabinet secretaries and with Nixon, and Nixon was going to hang tough, was a good guy, and so on. A lot of the others, including me, thought that it was just a matter of time before he would have to resign because there was just too much against him. I will never forget the look on the faces of these CEOs—just rolling their eyes. Dent was a good guy, doing what he had to do.

So, the Nixon Administration comes to an end, and Dent resigns. I'm not entirely sure why he resigned. I think he wanted to go back to his business—he was a major textile manufacturer in the South. There was a question of a new secretary at Commerce. Ford becomes the new President. Before all of this happened, I had been promoted in rank to executive assistant to the Undersecretary, John Tabor.

Commerce at the very beginning of the Ford Administration had been designated by President Ford to produce—with the Office of Education inside HEW [the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare] and the Department of Labor—a policy paper on how one could better integrate the world’s work and education, so that people coming out of high school could find jobs. Tabor asked me to take charge of that for Commerce. It was difficult particularly with the Office of Education, which thought they should have been tasked with this and not the Department of Commerce. We produced this paper, which was okay; I don’t know how great it was. We sent it into the White House, and we never heard another word.

What had happened was this: Ford had come in with three or four people from when he was Vice President, and they had these initiatives, and the holdover Nixon people didn’t like them one bit. What happened was this paper went over and the Nixon people made sure it disappeared into the murk. That was the end of that.

Coming back to Commerce, Ford decided that he wanted Rogers [also known as “Rog”] Morton, former U.S. Senator then at Interior, to take over Commerce rather than Interior. Commerce was easier to take over than Interior, which had problems, all kinds of lawsuits going on. So Morton replaced Dent and he didn’t much like Tabor, so Tabor left. I assumed I was going back to the State Department.

But then something truly fortuitous happened. Jim Baker, who was looking around for a job in government, wasn’t quite sure what he would do. Among other things, he was offered the number two position at EPA and the number two position at Commerce. I can’t remember if he got other opportunities, but he picked Commerce. So he arrives on the scene, and after dealing with me for a few weeks, he said, “I’d like you to stay on if you are willing.”

So I stayed on with Baker, which turned out to be cementing oneself in with someone who turned out to be a very important person later on. Baker and I did a number of things together, at Commerce.

Q: What were those?

HODSOLL: They were all over the damn lot. Morton had brought with him the chairmanship of the Energy Policy Coordinating Committee. There was no Department of Energy at that time. [It was created by President Jimmy Carter in 1977.] And because I had done a lot of stuff in energy, I became the guy on the fifth floor, the equivalent of the seventh floor at State [the floors on which the Secretary’s offices are found at Commerce and State, respectively]. I had one of the nicest offices I

ever had; my window overlooked the White House. It was quite splendid, actually.

Q: Morton had come from Interior, which had the licensing authority for energy.

HODSOLL: No question about that. At the same time that happened, there was another individual named Simon; he became the energy czar. Quite an amazing character. Well, Commerce was to some degree a minor player in all of this because of Morton coming over with his very close relationship with Jerry Ford. People would always come through us and ask us what we thought about this, that and the other. We were among a small group of agencies that were designing energy policy at that time. I was doing that for Tabor, and when Baker replaced Tabor, he kind of liked the idea of staying in the energy field, too.

The biggest part of Commerce, then and now, is the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), which had been put into Commerce by Warren Magnuson, a very senior U.S. Senator from Washington. [Magnuson served as Chairman of the Senate Committee on Commerce from 1955-1977.]

Because I had come over from EPA, I became the senior guy at Commerce on NOAA. Bob White was the senior administrator of NOAA. Most people in senior ranks at Commerce didn't know what to do with NOAA. They were used to talking with business people about promotion of trade, sale of American goods and services abroad, and those kinds of things. I think I was the principal liaison between NOAA and the Secretary's office.

Now NOAA didn't need the Secretary's office every day, but when they did need them, particularly at budget time, I became the guy. I had a lot of fun figuring out what to do about the National Weather Service and fisheries. I still had some experience with Law of the Sea issues, so fisheries became a big thing. I became a regular correspondent with Senator Ted Stevens from Alaska, who was very concerned about whales.

So I did a lot of stuff with NOAA, and a kind of fascinating sidebar, under Baker: A minor issue but a big fuss involved the senior senator from Louisiana, a man named Johnson. He had decided that as part of a program we had put together to help with the planning of coastal zone management, that the money should primarily go to Louisiana. A number of the rest of us felt that was inappropriate. Senator Magnuson from the state of Washington didn't think it was appropriate either.

After a lot of effort on the Hill, we got the legislation to turn out that Louisiana got a little bit but not a disproportionate amount. The Ford White House was very pleased with this, because they didn't think I was going to succeed. My very favorite

piece of correspondence from the Hill was a letter put in the Congressional Record by Johnson that said there was this upstart undersecretary of Commerce who had screwed the state of Louisiana! So I got a promotion out of it! I was the named person [in the Congressional Record]; I was up there working with congressional staff people from the other Congressmen and Senators.

So I did a lot of stuff there on that. Got a nice note out of the White House for that. But most of this, Tex, has to do with relationships. I was not the world's greatest policy analyst or anything like that, but if you figure out who it is that counts, and make sure that you have the ability to talk with those people or their staff on a regular basis, there is no end to what you can accomplish. You're not going to win everything. But I heartily recommend that [establishing good relationships] to others who are working their way up.

Q: What other views did you have about how to work in the federal bureaucracy at that time? Based on the work that you had done at the staff level in the front office of a secretary or undersecretary or a Cabinet official. That is a pretty senior job. You don't make the decisions, but you watch all the decisions being made, and you help influence the making of those decisions.

HODSOLL: Principally because you write most of the papers from which the decisions are made.

Q: So writing is key.

HODSOLL: Writing is key. But it's basically relationships. I got along with Baker. There wasn't a time when I couldn't say, "Hey Jim, we have an issue here." We would work it out. He did not always agree with me, but that is fine. When Baker kept me on, he made me a GS-17. I was only an FS-03. So that was a huge difference in pay and everything else. I don't think the State Department gave me credit for this. Forget about me. Say it was Smith or somebody else. If somebody is doing well in another agency and showing they can do high-level work, they should get credit for it at the State Department. I was on detail, in theory.

Baker was an extraordinary guy to work for. At that point he had had no experience in the federal government, but he had something that most people, either political or career, don't have: he knew how to figure out in his head what would sell, and he knew how to sell it. He was like Ronald Reagan, too. If he had to talk to somebody six ranks below him but who was in a key position, he'd do it. He would call them up and flatter the hell out of him or her. He had no experience in the federal government, but he knew how to get things done. And he also knew how to establish the relationships that most counted.

[On the Ford presidential campaign] Baker was a deputy to “Rog” Morton, who was beloved by Jerry Ford. He had never run a campaign before. He worked for Morton, but Morton was ill. He was not well. Morton was head of the campaign, but he got so sick he couldn’t continue; it was just a matter of time before he died.

Ford liked Baker and picked him to replace Morton. That was amazing because Baker hadn’t had anything to do with campaigns before. Ford and Baker got along. Notwithstanding Watergate, it was a very close call between Ford and [Jimmy] Carter. [Carter was elected President of the United States.]

When Baker left Commerce for the Ford campaign, he asked me to go with him. I didn’t have any particular expertise, but if I was asked to do something he knew I could get things done.

Q: What was it about your performance? What were you concentrating on in terms of getting things done? What things did you look at that were key to your performance that were key to the relationships with your bosses?

HODSOLL: It was mostly in the energy area. There were a zillion papers going on at the time, what our policy should be—whether it was energy conservation or import substitution. I became the Commerce scribe, the go-to guy to write papers that other people would agree with. It wasn’t just what I thought of, I had to make sure others agreed with it.

What my bosses were looking for is something that they could say, Ah! We have the major players; let’s go with it. A lot of these things in energy and other areas as well...it’s not that if you go this way, it’s wrong, or go this way, it’s right. It’s somewhere in the mix. The question is, what can you get done? If you can’t get anything done, you can have a great poem about it but it’s not going anywhere.

Q: So your philosophy was being developed then as a senior official operative in the federal government. And it was political. It was two parts relationship, one part knowledge, one part writing ability, and maybe three parts knowing where the middle of the road was between all the major players, and identifying all those major players.

HODSOLL: Yes, all of that. And also being able to do enough policy analysis so you weren’t going to do something crazy. So you had to learn how to do all of those things.

Would I have been able to do all those things at the State Department? I don't think so. I think I was extremely lucky. Leave aside that my salary went up, by a fairly substantial amount. I was extremely lucky to have landed in the right place at the right time. So it worked.

Long story short: Baker suggested, why don't you come over and help me, basically shuffle papers and learn something about running a campaign? But I don't know; I was kind of chicken at that point. That would have required a resignation from the Foreign Service, which I did later, but not at that point.

Q: What year was this?

HODSOLL: The year before Carter was elected [Carter was elected in November 1976 and became President in January 1977.]

So I stayed on at Commerce after Baker left, and Elliott [Richardson, the Secretary of Commerce who followed Dent] offered me a deputy assistant secretary job, to be in charge of energy and resource policy. He came in after Dent but before Baker, the number two to Dent, left. I don't think Elliott remembered me from the Law of the Sea days....

Q: Could you read Elliott Richardson's handwriting?

HODSOLL: Yes, but not easily. It was partly in doodles. I have some of his doodles downstairs.

Q: Describe his handwriting. Let's try to include one or two of his doodles in your oral history.

I remember in meetings when Richardson was at State, he was an inveterate doodler, but it might have been pica 4, it was so small. When you would send him a paper, he would put little marks in the margins as he read it. That was his thought process. His secretary, very kindly, would type out on little stickies what he had written in the margins. The paper would be returned to the drafter with Elliott's unreadable scribbles and a little sticky note, which said: "Good point!" or "This follows" or "A jump in logic here!" It was wonderful for drafters to know that the Under Secretary was reading their paper thoughtfully.

HODSOLL: He was quite a guy. Elliott not only wrote small and made these doodles that were quite marvelous. For a guy who was as senior as he was, who had been in a variety of presidential administrations, he wanted to explain things. When he was

coming to a policy decision, he tried to explain whatever he was scribbling. He tried to talk about every conceivable approach to the problem. If you were getting stuff back from Elliott with his scribbles, it was sometimes all over the place. It took a bit of doing to try to figure out what he wanted to do at the end of it. He was very analytic and he wanted to look at things from a variety of perspectives. He was very much helped in this by his deputy, Dick Darmon, who had been with him his entire career, also from Boston.

The wonderful thing about Elliott was he was totally principled. There wasn't an ounce of short-termism, or "I'm going to get along with someone in order to get this or that."

One thing he taught me: He said to me, "If you go into a meeting and know more about the subject at hand than anybody in that meeting, you will win. So, think about it," he said.

So he was the Secretary, then when Baker left...Baker was never replaced. It was towards the end of the Ford Administration. Dick Darmon and J.T. Smith, for whose father I later worked, were Elliott's lieutenants and ran things. I was moved down the hall and worked for Darmon, as deputy assistant secretary for Darmon. Darmon was assistant secretary for policy.

Q: So you were still on the inside team, doing what you had always done. What happened next?

HODSOLL: What happened was that Carter won the election, so I assumed I was going back to the State Department. Then later, Elliott was offered the position of Ambassador for Law of the Sea. He asked me to come along with him. I'd also been offered to stay on as deputy assistant secretary at Commerce by the Carter assistant secretary for policy.

I went with Elliott over to State. It was early 1978. Because I never worked for money, per se, it was kind of an annoying situation.

Elliott said, "What can we do to up your salary?"

I said, "I don't think we can. I have to go back to the Foreign Service. I am an FS-03. I'm now a GS-17. But I'll just go back and be an FS-03." [This would have caused a significant drop in salary.]

Something embarrassing happened. This is kind of a peculiar thing. I had to go back to State, with a salary and rank of FS-03

and was supervising two FS-01s. [In other words, Hodsoll was supervising those ranked above him.] It was not good for them and not good for me. I think the State Department should do better at handling things like this.

I was working for Elliott Richardson who reported to the Secretary. I was doing what I had always done, which was to make sure our positions were agreed to by the various agencies and to some extent the Hill, and the American Petroleum Group.

Q: You were working for Elliott and you had two FSO-1's working for you.

HODSOLL: Yes and I think there has to be a better way to operate. While I was working for Elliott one of Carter's first presidential orders was zero-based budgeting and basically we were to look and see what every piece of the various departments look and see what they needed and what they didn't need and go back to zero-based in terms of budgeting. I looked at our Law of the Sea office and I think we had about ten people in the office and maybe it wasn't that much. This wasn't just aimed at the two FSO-1's who were working for me in general and I went in to see Elliott and said, "I don't think we need ten people I think we can do it with six," I've forgotten what the exact numbers were. So I went over it with him and he said, "That sounds reasonable, why don't you ship that upstairs to the undersecretary for management." So I did and then I got a call directly, still an FSO-3 mind you, from the undersecretary for management whose name I forget; he was a political appointee. He asked me to come up and see him so I said, "Yes, sir." I went up to see him and he said, "What are you doing?" I said, "Well the president has said he wants to do zero-based budgeting and I talked with my boss, Elliot Richardson, and we only need six instead of ten and that should be better for everybody." He just looked at me with a glare and he said, "Let me tell you something," and he used some very graphic four-letter words. "We aren't doing zero-based budgeting in the State Department." "Yes sir." I use that when I make speeches on management. I said, "Presidents don't carry everything necessarily." I certainly wasn't going to get Richardson into a big fuss with somebody at the State Department over that so we just let it go.

In any event, after doing this for the backstop guy, Darman and Smith were going to leave and I...

Q: They were in the office too?

HODSOLL: They had their own titles and so forth.

Q: But in that same Law of the Sea?

HODSOLL: In the same Law of the Sea operation. At that point I had bought a piece of land, actually pretty close to Elliott Richardson's house in McLean, and I thought it would be great fun to build a couple houses, one for us and one to sell so we could afford to live in the one for us.

Q: This is on Crest Lane?

HODSOLL: This is on Crest Lane.

Q: Which is one of the most fashionable streets in Washington.

HODSOLL: I was pretty fashionable and we'd gotten the property for a little bit of a song; it was just blank property.

Q: It must have been a heavy area?

HODSOLL: In any event, so I went in to see Elliott and said, "You know I've got this and I just think it would be fun to take a leave of absence and go out and build these houses as a general contractor." I did not know at that point that Darman and Smith were going to be leaving too and he said, "What if I make you my deputy?" I said, "Well, that's really kind of you and very flattering but I've been doing all his stuff with papers and whatnot and I think it would be good for me to get out and be on the land somewhere shoveling cement or whatever." So we had a nice talk and he let me go and so I went out to build these houses.

Q: Talk about building the houses because they were fabulous.

HODSOLL: Well we were introduced to an architect by the name of Don Hawkins who never did that well. I think he was better but never became a famous architect. He designed, particularly our house, in an absolutely phenomenal way. Our house cascaded down a hill and looked over the Potomac. He was extraordinary, but he wasn't very thorough and I had at the beginning a number of things going wrong. I felt if I'd read enough books and talked enough I could do almost anything like that. So after the architect produced the plans I just followed them religiously and a fun anecdote of all of this is that the building blocks that the houses are built on from the foundations are eight inch in height and the plans said do the footings in twelve inch increments. Thank goodness the back-hoe operator said, "You can't do this in twelve inch increments because the

building blocks are eight inches.” He pointed that out to me and I said, “That’s what my architect said.” He said, “Well I’ll do it anyway you want but you are going to screw it up.” So I got on the phone and discovered that I would have screwed it up and we went back. So if you are going to be a general contractor it's better if you’ve had some experience and so on and we didn’t screw it up and it all worked out as such. In any event, we built the two houses and moved into the one house and had an interesting experience with the County of Fairfax. We created a tennis court between the houses that would be shared between the two houses and somebody in the county of Fairfax building department had had an altercation with some previous division of land about tennis courts. Evidently, one of the owners of the tennis course had shot the other owner of the tennis court and they wanted to make sure that I wasn’t going to cause grounds for murder. So I wrote a long piece of paper to the county saying that I would guarantee that that would not be the case and I wrote it all up legally and so on and so forth. Anyway, we built the houses, we loved living in our house, we sold the other house and it turned out to be a success. As this came to an end....

Q: You sold the other house to Darman?

HODSOLL: No, Darman had his own house and we sold the other house to the guy who was then the head of one of the big consulting firms, I’ll think of his name shortly.

Q: You sold your house to Frank Carlucci.

HODSOLL: We sold our house to Frank Carlucci; that was later.

Q: Who was then secretary of defense?

HODSOLL: Yes he became secretary of defense shortly thereafter.

Q: He was at Sears I think World Trade.

HODSOLL: I think that’s right he was at Sears World Trade and so on. In any event, houses were built and then I was looking for an onward assignment presumably at the State Department and Darman then was extremely helpful and was quite taken by my peculiarities of becoming a general contractor. He once gave me high praise for sweeping the street and getting mud off of it. In any event, he introduced me through his friend and my friend also, J.T. Smith, the guy who was then the Ambassador

At-Large for Non-Proliferation, Jerry Smith. So I went in there and was picked up as a deputy U.S. special representative for non-Proliferation.

Q: What year was that '79? '80?

HODSOLL: Whatever year it says in there, yeah.

Q: It doesn't; it gives a range of dates you can put that date in.

HODSOLL: I can put the date in. Jerry Smith was a great guy to work for and it was a whole new field. I was paired; I was put in more of the charge of trying to get the other countries that had nuclear expertise to stop selling sensitive stuff to people who might be proliferators.

Q: What was your title Frank?

HODSOLL: Deputy Special Representative for Non-Proliferation. There were two of us, me and another guy and I'll get you his name, and then Jerry was on top of it. This is where I met Tom Pickering who was then Assistant Secretary for Oceans, Environments and Science. They had a bigger staff than we did and they were very helpful in working through some of these issues.

Q: Smith reported to the secretary directly?

HODSOLL: He reported to the secretary directly and to some degree the president because we had lots of calls coming in from the president or from the president's senior staff more than the president. So I was put into the lesser position because I didn't know much about non-proliferation at that point; it was a new subject.

Q: You were not the smartest guy in the room?

HODSOLL: I was far from being the not smartest guy in the room and so my job was to go to the IAEA (International Atomic Energy Agency) and other places to try and talk to people with technology and so on to be more circumspect about just

shipping stuff to people who might cause a problem with proliferation later on. That took me in and out of Vienna on a regular basis and then to a lot of other places as well. I think we were successful with most of the Europeans as there was a lot of money in it for the Germans, in particular, because they could sell stuff to other people. In the meantime, Pakistan was selling stuff to North Korea and so on and so forth.

Q: Did you know that then?

HODSOLL: Oh yes, well yes we did know that it may have been classified at the time I can't remember. But the one thing I did was accompany Jerry on a couple trips to India and Pakistan and many to Europe.

Q: Talk about those trips to India and Pakistan and also to Argentina.

HODSOLL: Okay, well I didn't go to Argentina. My colleague did the Latin American stuff but the way I look at it is this. When we went to India and Pakistan Pakistan was just getting started at that time and India was on its way. We were starting to talk to both of them including India because they hadn't done it yet out of going for a nuclear weapon. I basically carried the suitcases and the papers for both of us. I was tagged with a professor from MIT who knew how to build a bomb as I certainly didn't know how to build a bomb. We really didn't get anywhere as you well know from history with either the Indians or the Pakistani's. However, we did make progress. I was not specifically involved with Argentina or Brazil because they were in tandem thinking about going nuclear....

Q: About building.

HODSOLL: ...

Q: Any other states?

HODSOLL: The big ones we were worried about I've mentioned. Was there anybody else?

Q: Libya?

HODSOLL: Who?

Q: Libya? That was later.

HODSOLL: That was later. Anyway I wasn't involved with it.

Q: You mentioned there were six India, Pakistan...

HODSOLL: Argentina, Brazil, South Korea, South Africa we knew the Israelis were going to go ahead and do their own thing.

Q: And the South Africans had a bomb.

HODSOLL: I don't think they ever had a bomb did they? You would know more than I do about that.

Q: I think they did and the Israelis helped them explode it in a terrible heavy rain storm so it disrupted a lot of the fallout, which would have taken place.

HODSOLL: Okay, I had just forgotten that but my principal job was to go to the IAEA and capitals and get them to agree not to just ship stuff that was sensitive.

Q: So it was COCOM?

HODSOLL: Yeah, yes. We were modestly successful with that. Again, we did not know at that point that Pakistan had this guy by the name of Khan who was busy making money off of selling stuff to various people.

Q: Were you promoted then at that level were you and FSO-2??

HODSOLL: I resigned from the Foreign Service to rejoin Jim Baker and the Reagan campaign and after I had done that, without knowing it, I was promoted to level 2, which is Senior Foreign Service in those days and I was quite amazed because I had already resigned; however that was fine. Anyway, Baker and I kept in touch and Baker basically said, "I need help; I've been asked by the Reagan team before to run the Bush campaign."

Q: Let's do this in detail. Where were you when you got the call and how did he know to approach you and what happened? Give me the whole...this is interesting stuff. It will be history and people love to read this stuff, okay? This is James Baker building his team to run Ronald Reagan's campaign.

HODSOLL: Well not to run the Ronald Reagan campaign because there were other people involved with that but to run the debate preparations for Reagan in the Ronald Reagan campaign.

Q: Okay.

HODSOLL: Baker was viewed as the guy interestingly--because he had only had a brief period in the federal government--as the guy who knew Washington. The Californians didn't really know--Ed Meese and Mike Deaver and so on and didn't really know Washington. There were other people but essentially Baker in his extraordinary way had established trust with the Reaganauts. So in any event, Baker offered me a job with the Ford campaign I called him up and I said, "How are you doing, this that and the other thing?"

Q: You called him?

HODSOLL: I called him first and he said, "Well I'm doing this new thing and I can use some help."

Q: This was during your phone call to him he said....

HODSOLL: Yes and Dave Gergen was working for him--from multiple Republican administrations in the past. I said, "Well, I don't know, I think it would be really interesting to do." I was also having real doubts about Carter and to tell you one other anecdote from my period....

Q: Great.

HODSOLL: I had written a paper and to be honest with you I can't entirely remember, I probably can figure it out and remember what it was on but it was on non-proliferation for Cy Vance who was Secretary of State to send to Carter. I think it had to do with the other hi-tech countries that were in my area of the situation. In any event, a copy of the paper comes back from the secretary's office with all kinds of little notes from Carter in the margin;--a question here and an observation there and

so on and so forth. I was just quite taken by that because I thought I had really scored high on something and I remember going into Smith and saying, “Jerry, look at this I got this paper that I had gotten for the secretary and it’s got all kinds of presidential notes.” He looked at me with actually a grin and kind of a scowl he said, “Do you really think that the president of the United States should be annotating your paper?” I said, “Well I think maybe you’re right.” That was the problem with Carter, he loved to get into details that should be left to other people which I have another story about when I went into the White House with Baker. Anyway, a long story short, y yes, I called Baker to see how he was doing and the next thing I knew I was getting sent in to get an interview with Ed Meese and others and I ended up working primarily for Gergen and my job was less about how you should conduct yourself in the debate because I didn’t know diddly beans about that than it was to make sure that the president knew what the policies of the Carter administration were, what the strengths and weaknesses were and strengths and weaknesses of other positions the Reagan campaign had taken and so on and so forth. There were a lot of other people I could draw on, which I did. I did a lot of homework and produced many little pieces of paper and so on that were used.

Q: These went into the briefing books?

HODSOLL: These went into the briefing books.

Q: Now how did you get information to the president-elect or the candidate Ronald Reagan who is notoriously not a good reader?

HODSOLL: He’s a terrific reader.

Q: He’s a terrific reader?

HODSOLL: That is absolute nonsense.

Q: Good.

HODSOLL: Absolute nonsense. In fact, Nancy Reagan used to complain about some of us throwing too much stuff at him. He is a terrific reader.

Q: And retained.

HODSOLL: And retains and he is very smart. A lot of people never gave him credit for that. I mean he didn't do what Carter did and that was write little notes on middle-grade officers' briefing papers. He didn't do that but if he had an interest in the subject or it became important to him he would just call you in and you'd have the opportunity to tell him whatever the heck you were going to tell him.

I wasn't sure exactly how I was going to react to Reagan. I thought that Jimmy Carter shortly after he made his speech about malaise, I didn't think the president should be doing that sort of thing even if that is what they felt and I had huge respect for Jim Baker. I had never done anything quite like this and I was stuck in this mid-level position in non-proliferation and we'd accomplished most of what we needed to accomplish in terms of stopping, I think I've already mentioned an extraordinary trip I made to Australia.

Q: No, you haven't.

HODSOLL: Well I will go back to that before I get on. I was in Vienna doing something with regard to supply and I got a cable from the State Department, Jerry Smith--it must have been--saying we need to talk the Australians out of building an enrichment plant and you know more about this than anybody else. We've got an appointment for you to meet with the ministry of energy--or something I've forgotten who the heck it was. So we need you back here. I said, "Well yeah I've got all the stuff I am doing here." He said, "Well you can get back in time." So I got on a plane and I had to go to Washington first to get my instructions and then I had to go off to Canberra. We were able to talk. I'm not sure it was just me but we were able to talk the Australians out of going forward with their enrichment plant and then I had to fly all the way back via Washington; that's a hell of a lot of time in the air to Vienna. I was exhausted after all of that but that was an interesting side. _____ where I was just sent on a mission and it worked out I don't think the Australians really needed to have I guess it might have meant some money for them at least some aspects of it.

In any event, coming back to Reagan and reading here is a guy who had been governor of California for eight years and a successful governor. He was a successful governor not because the majority of Californians were 100 percent with him on conservative positions and that kind of thing he was a successful governor because he was modest, he did not believe he knew everything, he listened to people and most importantly he stroked them; even people who were fairly far down from being governor and so on and so forth. He knew how to count votes and he had absolutely no ego. I mean he was just wonderful. He would do anything once he agreed with it that you asked him to do and if he thought it was important. When we were

preparing him for the debates we gave him all kinds of things to read and he would not write little notes on it he would come back and say, “Well what did you mean by this? Could I do that or how would that fit. Who’s in favor of this?”

Q: So he read the stuff, digested it and questioned it?

HODSOLL: Yes, all of the above on a regular basis.

Q: How much time did you spend with him briefing him?

HODSOLL: In the campaign not that much. I was there in the room but Baker did it.

Q: I mean your team. Did you spend days with him in preparation because debates won Ronald Reagan the election as president of the United States?

HODSOLL: He won it by things that were not in the briefing books like asking Carter the question or asking the panel the question, “Are you better off than you were four years ago?” I paid for this microphone....

Q: In New Hampshire.

HODSOLL: In New Hampshire. He just had an innate sense; he was a master politician that didn’t come out of briefing books. I wrote briefing books and other people wrote briefing books and most of my briefing books were used by the surrogates so I ended up being in charge of a process that resulted in position papers on every conceivable thing. I’ll tell you something that may be of interest to you.

Q: Historians, not me.

HODSOLL: Or whoever. Well Marty Anderson, who was from the California crowd, conservative guy, and I were in favor of the Carter administrator of EPA, whose name was...

Q: Douglas Costle.

HODSOLL: Costle, thank you. We were in favor of what he was doing to allow flexibility with regard to some of the EPA regulations. So in one of the papers that I wrote on environmental policy with Marty's agreement--and Marty was a true blue conservative, was that we are in favor of the Carter administration's EPA policy and then we appointed a couple of nitwits like Anne Gorsuch and at Interior Jim Watt but that was separate and eventually they got fired. So the Reagan campaign and Reagan himself, there were some things he said that I didn't fully agree with but most things he was a very practical guy and that's why, in my view, he was a very good president. So in any event that all went along and....

Q: We've met our goal today, which was to get you through the Foreign Service so you've now resigned from the Foreign Service and you've gone through the transition election period as the...

HODSOLL: I have a lot to say about the transition. We'll do that.

Q: We're just doing the election.

HODSOLL: Once Reagan won then all kinds of things happened.

Q: Then we will start next time. Any additional things that you have with regard to the election period and other stories and then on the election period?

HODSOLL: I didn't really have much to add on the election period. I have my job and I worked ump-te-ump hours on it.

Q: Where were you headquartered?

HODSOLL: We were in Arlington in a dreadful building with a McDonald's down on the ground floor.

Q: Lots of french fries.

HODSOLL: Lots of french fries and it was a very modest campaign group; there were no fancy offices. The governor had a nice office with a secretary and the rest of us were just all crammed in every which way. They were by and large pretty good people and I shared an office and I will never forget that with one of the women who was the co-chair of the National Right to Life Committee, which is not something I espouse particularly. So I would listen to her on the telephone and learn a huge

amount about fetuses, which never occurred to me that I would ever learn. In that particular instance it brought home to me how passionate some of these people were about it. It wasn't that they were evil or anything like that but the upper levels of the Reagan campaign including the governor at that time didn't want to get into this. It came out of Hollywood and there were all kinds of different people in Hollywood, believe it or not, of the same view and he also knew because of being governor of California. California which is a Blue state. Here was this guy who could give conservative speeches but he also knew where he could win and he was really good at that. He read stuff and sometimes he would read something that we would have to recuse him of.

Q: But it stuck in his mind and he liked it.

HODSOLL: Yeah that's what would happen. The group Ed Meese, Mike Deaver, obviously Baker, and Marty Anderson and

Q: Gergen.

HODSOLL: Gergen and Fairbanks who used to be at EPA, somebody Fairbanks. Anyway, Dave Stockman came in and played the part of Jimmy Carter when we did mock debates and for somebody who had been a career guy and who--had happened because you've got to remember--during my career period most of the presidents were Republican. I didn't come up because I had been in the campaign or saying this is what we have to do to get votes in Nebraska or anything like that. I didn't know entirely what I was getting into and what I do know is I thought Baker and Bush would moderate things a bit. I didn't know much about Reagan because if you go back to the earlier conversations my family friends were going to run for Congress, they were part of the Earl Warren group, which is pretty liberal Republican. But when I met Meese and Deaver I thought these people are first class so off I went and that's what I did.

Q: This is a continuation of the oral history of Frank Hodsoll; the interviewer is Tex Harris and today's date is December 13th, which is a Sunday and it's an absolutely gorgeous day, spring-like in Falls Church, Virginia. Frank, over to you.

HODSOLL: We were up to transition into the White House.

Q: Transition into the White House. Alright, let's begin there Frank. I guess the first thing is we left off when you were working on the team during the elections with Jim Baker and others to prepare candidate Ronald Reagan, Governor Reagan for the presidency. What happened after that? Okay?

HODSOLL: Well after that the first thing that happened which was the most important Reagan won.

Q: Frank, we left off last time with your work with James Baker in the role of preparing Governor Reagan for his debates for the presidential election against Jimmy Carter. Let's pick it up there and what happened next?

HODSOLL: Well the thing that happened next was Reagan won obviously and then Baker asked me to come with him into the White House to help with the transition in the White House. I said, "Okay." We all left the campaign headquarters, which was a rather dilapidated building on top of a McDonalds and went into a very nondescript building that the General Services Administration provides for transitions and we had quite a lot of space there. I had an office there with Baker and Margaret Tutwiler and David Gergen and others. Basically, what Baker had me doing was threefold. The first thing was anything he wanted me to do on any given occasion, the second thing was to help with the actual transition into the White House and the coordination with the Carter people in terms of office space, parking and how paper would flow and all those kinds of things. Then the third thing he gave me responsibility for coordinating with the Carter administration on the return of the hostages from Iran; so those were the three big things going into the White House.

Q: Oh my God well let's talk about those first. Let's start with the last one first. Who was your point of contact and what were the issues that you were working with in the transition regarding the return of the Iranian hostages?

HODSOLL: Well I had various points of contact but the guy at the top of it was Carter's legal counsel Lloyd, a very well established Washington lawyer, Cutler, Lloyd Cutler, there we go. He was the legal counsel to President Carter and he was the principal guy in making the arrangements from the Carter point of view with returning them. I was, in addition to these other things, I spent a lot of time in the Carter White House with not just him but him and a whole team of people on the arrangements that were being made and what kinds of agreements we would make with the Iranians. I would report back and then get permission to go forward or it was up to President Carter not up to us but to make sure that President Carter's people knew where we stood on some of these things. We stood pretty positive because we were very anxious for the hostages to come back and we were hoping that it could be arranged under Carter and we were delighted. It was that kind of a thing. The Iranians decided they didn't actually want the hostages to get airborne and out of Iranian airspace until President Reagan was sworn in, they didn't want to give Carter any credit for it. Why that was I don't really know. Basically the essence of the deal was that we would release some assets we were holding, the hostages would be airborne and out of Iranian control before that happened but we wouldn't open a new embassy. We wouldn't have normal relations with Iran but the hostages would be on

their way home. The fact of the matter was the hostages were airborne as Governor Reagan was being sworn in as President Reagan. I conveyed that to the president via another staffer who was there and once we knew that they were airborne the Carter people told us that they were beyond Iranian control.

Q: So you got the signal for the Reagan camp and it was minutes away from being the Reagan president and passed that on.

HODSOLL: Yes.

Q: There was a commitment that President-elect Reagan had to make in terms of keeping the terms of the agreement so....

HODSOLL: He didn't do that before they were airborne the actual approval by the new White House came after he was president but he knew and his people knew Dick Allan who was to be the first National Security Adviser knew and Al Haig knew who was going to become Secretary of State at the beginning. So what the essence of it was and I didn't have all the papers at that point and we agreed assuming once we had all the papers and reviewed them so on and so forth that we could live with that so I let Lloyd Cutler know that.

Q: In general terms?

HODSOLL: Well in pretty specific terms and as an administration we didn't approve it until we were an administration.

Q: But you sent them a soft signal.

HODSOLL: That we were on the right track.

Q: You were on the right track. So that was a clear issue of, clear issue of good cross policy. How, in fact, were the substantive matters of the transition between the Carter White House and the in-coming Reagan White House?

HODSOLL: Well the President Carter White House teams were terrific. I mean they had made every effort to help and were completely open to my coming over and asking all kinds of questions as to how they had organized their White House and so on and so forth. I had a lot of dealings with the Carter White House secretary who was in charge of paper flow and they gave me how they organized office space, who went into the West Wing and who went into the Old Executive Office Building and

so on and so forth and briefed me on all of that. Then there were a couple of issues that arose which I can tell you about that will give you a sense of the Carter versus the Reagan administration. One of those issues, very important for any White House is paper flow, what goes through to the president and when because on our team we had people who had been in the Nixon White House and other White Houses like, for example Dave Gergen. So we knew what had happened in previous Republican administrations. The first time I went over to talk to the secretary, I can get you his name but I don't have it at the moment.

Q: This is a rough draft.

HODSOLL: I basically quizzed them. How do you organize papers for President Carter and I briefed myself on what had happened in the Ford and Nixon administrations. I was quite amazed to learn that President Carter got up very early and he liked to read everything so everything was put into his mailbox without any effort to segregate stuff out or whatever; it appeared that way to me. Well without telling the Carter guy this I knew without having to check with anybody we weren't going to do it that way so we organized a different system in which what went forward to the President had been cleared by various people and the opportunity for others to comment on whatever it was before he started reading stuff. We set that up and eventually I got Baker to bring in Dick Darman who became our office secretary and he did very, very well. The new system seemed to work.

Q: You suggested to Baker that he bring Darman in?

HODSOLL: Way, way back. Way back when. Darman didn't come in initially but he came in during the transition before the president was sworn in. So that was one thing and then along with that we had all these people from different parts from what was to be the Reagan administration. We organized who was going to be part of the inner circle, so to speak, who was going to go into what offices, what would their titles be, would they have parking spaces, what would their salaries be. I was at the center of all of that. I didn't make the decisions but I was at the center of bringing that to the fore.

Q: So if it was a person and a job that needed an office you made sure that issue came up?

HODSOLL: Yes.

Q: Who decided who got the office closest to the president, furthest from the president and the one with the window that looked at the Washington monument and the one who looked at Lafayette Park?

HODSOLL: Well Baker, Ed Meese and Mike Deaver were a triumvirate and basically they signed an agreement which Baker drafted as to who would do what and what the titles would be for those three; those three were the key people under Reagan.

Q: What were their titles and what were their jobs?

HODSOLL: At the top of the list was Ed Meese who was counselor to the president on all matters, then Baker chief of staff of the White House, and then Mike Deaver who was deputy chief of staff and in charge of the outreach aspects and the positioning of Reagan when he went on the road and all of those kinds of things. Deaver was also the closest of the three to Nancy Reagan; Nancy Reagan was a very important part of the Reagan administration. She was sometimes referred to as his human resources person because she was very good at spotting who was helping the president and who wasn't. And when she weighed in on those matters, which she did much later, they were usually decisive in terms of what happened to various people. In any event, the three of them Meese, Baker and Deaver signed an agreement, a two pager, that laid out how they would relate to each other on a broad basis and then everybody else was one step below and reported back and forth to everyone. Baker had charge of all Congressional stuff for the president of making sure that the right people were brought in and so on and engaging the president for discussions with people on the Hill. As I say, Deaver had responsibility for all of the positioning of the president in outreach and so on. Meese sort of cut across the board and basically Meese is a lawyer and knew that side of it pretty well. The three of them were in offices--Baker had the corner office, which was the chief of staff's office, Deaver was right next to him on one side and then at the beginning Meese, as counselor of the president, had the office that later became the National Security Advisor's office and so on. Then who gets West Executive parking and all that sort of stuff. I basically staffed and made sure that there was some degree of agreement not always total before titles were handed out. All that would have to go to the president to make his own decisions but it was kind of an interesting position to be in. One of the things you learn on those is there are a lot of egos involved with those kinds of things.

Q: Oh my God.

HODSOLL: But I will say this in terms of Meese, Deaver, and Baker--and all three of them get credit--they established a working relationship and there were no secrets, there was nobody trying to push out one versus the other. Actually it was a less political system than anything I had seen in my previous career anywhere at the State Department or any of my other assignments. If there were disputes on any particular issue there would be a discussion, that would be arranged and then we'd go see the president.

Q: That sounds good and then everybody had a clear vision that they were there to support the president and make his term successful.

HODSOLL: Absolutely, no question about that.

Q: Now the second issue was the paper flow.

HODSOLL: Well the paper flow we just arranged a system in which whoever was involved if it was national security the National Security Advisor, the State Department and the Defense Department and so on. If it was a domestic issue Marty Anderson who was the assistant to the president for domestic issues would be involved with it. Then we'd get the Cabinet people who were involved in it and I think we were pretty successful. We never tried to shut out the Cabinet people and the power was really in the White House but the Cabinet people were brought in or sometimes we went below the Cabinet person, if it was a very technical issue. So during the time I was there I'm unaware anytime anybody really tried to just shovel everybody out and just do it within the White House; we just didn't do that.

Q: So everything was straight forward and everybody knew there was transparency throughout?

HODSOLL: There was transparency throughout but there were mistakes made and so on; it's like any place. No I thought it was pretty good though now I hadn't been with any other White house so I can't really tell.

Q: Was the president strict in terms of having things come through the front door or there is always a temptation to go through the back door or the side door and get the president to agree with you and then have a fait accompli and then run.

HODSOLL: There were always attempts at end runs but they didn't work; the president was pretty good about that.

Q: Great. What was the president's working style in terms of just his regular work day? When did he like to do paperwork, when did he like to have meetings, when did he like to have breakfast, lunch and dinner? What was an average day for the president in the White House?

HODSOLL: He would come in in the morning and have his national security, CIA briefings and that would be between eight

and nine o'clock. Then there were all kinds of appointments--different kinds of people wanting to see him and so on and so forth throughout the day. He had meetings with key people, not very many Cabinet meetings. Actually, in my view, Cabinet meetings aren't where you have the whole Cabinet; there isn't much point in it because you don't have people concerned about a particular issue. So he would have meetings throughout--the day the triumvirate would look at his schedule usually two or three days in advance and sometimes things had to be changed because there was an emergency or whatever. Then his schedule would be proposed to him for him to make a decision he thinks this sounds about right and off we would go and people would be scheduled in either to see the president or to see people below the president, if that was what seemed like the right thing. Reagan didn't make decisions on that sort of thing all that much. There were people who could get access to him separately from this but it didn't happen very often.

Q: Nancy Reagan played a key role because people could get ideas to the president through her.

HODSOLL: They could but that didn't happen all that often. Mostly Nancy Reagan's operation was if we were over burdening the president by feeding him too much stuff; he would stay up late at night and I will come back to that in a moment. She would make sure we learned about this saying, "You are overburdening him, you've got to give him a chance to rest, he shouldn't be calling people at midnight" and so on when he did do that on occasion. She did that and she had a sense of who was serving her husband and who wasn't and who was helping him be a first class president and who wasn't. She'd make that known often through Deaver but directly to Baker and maybe Meese too. I'm not as clear on that as perhaps others would be. As we set up the White House you had Baker and I had this very peculiar thing in the Washington Post showing my office was right next to Baker and the president was only two offices down; it was right on the first floor. But the president was very formal; he never ever didn't wear a coat and tie in the Oval office but he would go to another little office that was right next to the Oval office and take off his coat.

Q: But not his tie?

HODSOLL: Well he would sometimes take off his tie too but rarely. He had a huge respect for the office of the presidency.

Q: Did he work weekends?

HODSOLL: He absolutely worked weekends, I mean not always in the Oval Office but he would either take stuff home to his living space up above in the White House and he would read enormously. The one thing that was really great, I thought, about

Reagan was when he was elected the Senate turned to have a Republican leadership, the House stayed overwhelmingly Democratic so one of the first things Reagan wanted to do was establish a personal relationship with Tip O’Neill and he did and they had drinks almost every Friday and chatted. I used to refer to them as the two Irishmen. What that did was while they didn’t agree on all that much, there was trust so if Reagan said he was going to do something or not do something Tip O’Neill trusted him and similarly Reagan trusted Tip O’Neill that Tip O’Neill wasn’t going to lead him astray. That plus the other thing that I should mention that really helped with a lot of issues as we went forward.

The other thing that I should mention is that when we were having a fight with the Hill on whatever the matter was, and sometimes it involved Republicans as well as Democrats, Reagan was willing to call people at home. Whenever even if they weren’t committee chairman or the speaker or whoever, he tried to jawbone them and Reagan would do that up until about midnight. I wouldn’t but others would prepare talking points and then he would write next to the talking points little snippets about what the other guy said. I think this had an enormous impact on his ability to get the necessary votes to do his initial economic plan and various other things. I’ve never forgotten that because I think that to be a successful president you have to be a leader in the sense of bringing people together and it’s basically gathering votes. My guess is, although I don’t know this for a fact, he learned that in California where they had primarily Democratic legislatures. I would hear back in some cases; I wasn’t in charge of the Hill. Baker brought in incidentally a substantial number of people who had served in the Nixon and Ford administrations who really knew the Hill. Max Readersdorf was our top guy but we had an extraordinary bunch of people who knew people on both sides of the aisle and everything else and they were extremely helpful in saying, “You know you’ve got to talk to Smith or whoever the heck it was on this issue because Smith controls five votes or whatever it turned out to be,” and Baker gets credit for that. He pulled together an extraordinary team in that regard and so we had actually a pretty good administration for a bunch of years.

Q: And the president was willing to do the hard work, he was willing to put the hours in no questions asked?

HODSOLL: Absolutely, he would read his talking points and if he had a question about the talking points he’d call up Baker or whoever it was and sometimes he’d even call me but that was rare.

Q: What was your personal relationship with the president?

HODSOLL: I was a junior person but it was good. He and I always said hello to each other when we ran into each other in the hall. I wasn’t in on all the big meetings or anything like that but I was around. When Baker couldn’t attend a big meeting I was

the person who was sent in as his stead, mostly to take notes.

Q: Did he recognize you as a fellow Californian?

HODSOLL: Not initially because I had a relationship with Nancy Reagan not so much with President Reagan long before he became governor of California. My sister, her name is MacDonald, lived right next door to them on Amalfi Drive in Brentwood and she and Nancy Reagan were great friends.

Q: And neighbors.

HODSOLL: And neighbors. At the time I knew them Ronald Reagan was still trying to have a career in Hollywood which wasn't going all that well but they had a house right next door and General Electric for whom he did spokesperson things had given him a kitchen that was absolutely top of the line for General Electric at the time. I remember going in and wandering around but none of that connection transpired before I went into the White House. I kept it to myself and it later transpired for another reason that has nothing to do with this because when I got involved with the arts basically I put my sister's husband Angus MacDonald on the Arts Taskforce. The president put him on but I recommended him for this and then they came down for a couple occasions and, of course, knew each other.

Q: That's wonderful and a small world. What were the other issues you were dealing with in this initial stage going in? One was getting the right person in the right office, with the right title, the right pay and their car parked in the right spot and the other was the Iranian. There was a third issue you mentioned.

HODSOLL: The paper flow and basically Darman took that over eventually. I drafted the first cut of this and other changes that were made but basically it was to make sure that anybody who had a real substantive take or shall I say authority with regard to an issue, if it was important, had a chance to see what was going in to the president. If it was some minor thing we wouldn't send it in to the president. We made sure the views of those people even if they weren't part of the inner circle or that high were factored in because a lot of these factors got to be technical and you need somebody who really knows what they are talking about to be part of it.

Q: How was your paper flow different from the Nixon administration? Clearly it was very different from the Carter one where everything was just thrown in but how was it different from the Nixon and Ford administrations because you had a lot of

people in your White House who had served in those previous White House administrations?

HODSOLL: I don't know the answer to that. I think it was probably more similar to Nixon and Ford than it was to Carter. I did look at papers as to what they did and again I don't remember high detail other than at the broad level anybody who knows something about an issue and is in the position of either having to help formulate what our position was going to be or even more importantly in the position of having to implement whatever the Reagan Administration came up with had a crack at it but it didn't mean that they were going to get it accepted but a crack on it before the president made his decision.

Q: Frank, what was the physical decision-making and staffing of the paperwork in the Reagan White House. You had an executive secretary operation. Who ran that, how many people were there, who decided who was missing on a memo, whose views had to be brought in and who called them up and did all that?

HODSOLL: Darman and his staff primarily and sometimes I would get in on that but it was either Darman or me.

Q: As a secretary?

HODSOLL: As the secretary and if there was a huge dispute and there sometimes were with Al Haig then Baker might have to get into it or Meese or Deaver but for the lesser things it was people like me or Darman.

Q: How many people did Darman have on his staff looking at all the hundreds of letters and memos coming over from all the agencies every week?

HODSOLL: Initially, he only had himself and then he hired somebody who worked with me on non-proliferation and bit by bit but Darman....

Q: Who was that?

HODSOLL: I'll put it in later, he was the other deputy. But Darman is a past master at getting to know all kinds of people and he was extremely good because of the Elliott Richardson connection and he'd been in a wide variety of departments so he had a lot of connections and people that he knew who needed to be asked about things so he was the principal person. He was also the principal person in starting under Baker the Legislature Action Group which essentially was a group in the White House

that did the initial advice and often made decisions. But he gave initial advice to the president of who we needed on board on the Hill.

Q: The Hill staff. What other things did you do as staff coordinator of the White House transition?

HODSOLL: Well I then was put in charge of actually the administration approving or not approving but mostly approving of the agreements that had been made under the Carter administration on the Iran hostage return. I brought in a guy from the legal advisors office and a couple of others and Dick Allan and we ran that through and basically approved essentially everything that....

Q: Do you remember who that was in L? Was it George something? Aldridge?

HODSOLL: No, I don't remember George Aldridge, I don't remember that name. Let's see. Well Dick Allen was the National Security he was involved with this. Mark Leland was in the White House Counsel's office and had done international work before and we became friends while I was there. So I brought him into this picture; there wasn't a whole lot of dispute about it. Then once we get into the White House and beyond the transition again anything that Baker wanted me to do, I became heavily involved in budget and environmental matters and I mentioned Iran and immigration because there had just been a guy who was then the president of Notre Dame who had done a big report during the Carter administration and the immigration subject came up. Basically, I was like an executive assistant to Baker. When it wasn't something that required the highest level Baker would say, "Hodsoll, go help me figure this out."

Q: Great. Tell me about your relationship with Baker. How was he to work for and what kind of an operator was he in the White House situation? You talked about him at Commerce and being able to identify the political sweet spots; what was his style of operation in the White House as the Chief of Staff? You were very close.

HODSOLL: Yes and Baker is in a class of his own. He knows innately who has to be involved in any given decision for it to be successful. Number two he knows how to ingratiate himself with other people even though he never knew them before and how to figure out what their interests are so as to accommodate at least some of them as he moves forward. And number three he was totally without ego in terms of "I'm the Chief of Staff" and you've got to say, "Yes, sir." He would work on almost anything.

Q: Is that a good thing or a bad thing?

HODSOLL: A very good thing and allotted to do more good things than a lot of people thought he could. It was to the benefit of the president that was the case.

Q: A much broader perspective and range of interests than normally you might have?

HODSOLL: No I think that's exactly right and the other thing that Baker did was he was very perceptive as to what matters. He would draw people back or ignore them if people were off doing things that he thought the president didn't need to get involved with at this point of time given the other things that were on the president's agenda. So he was extremely good at that and had been before. You have to remember that when Baker came into government way back in the Ford administration he had had absolutely zero government experience, he was a lawyer in Houston and so on and so forth. His father had helped found Rice University and was also a lawyer. But Baker really knew how to put what I would call a coalition of the willing together. The other thing about Baker and I remember being on a trip when I was at the Arts Endowment by accident sitting on a plane in Texas next to some guy who was at the University of Texas, I don't remember his name, an Austin political science type. We were talking about why Texans tend to be quite good at politics and we both at the end of our conversation and this was Baker to a T said that when you give your word you are going to go do something or you are not going to do something you can take it to the bank; it's the end of the discussion and you have to be very careful about when you do that but when you do it you don't go back and chisel or try to change it around after the fact. The reason why Baker was so successful was because people knew that. They knew that when he spoke and he said he was speaking for the president he was speaking for the president and they also knew even when he wasn't that if he said, "I am going to try and help this happen or not happen," as the case may be they could take it to the bank.

Q: That's great. It's interesting that both the president and Baker were Westerners and not having met Reagan but having met Baker he has that very much senior executive Texas style of very smart, very charming but also very straight forward. That must have chemically done well with the president; I'm just speculating.

HODSOLL: Their chemistry was great and so it was with Nancy too. Part of that was the fact that Baker, Deaver and Meese were a triumvirate that the president could trust as they were being together or if they had a dispute they'd go in to see the president, hash it out and the president would make whatever decision he was going to make.

Q: So he did have this dispute thing? Can you think of any disputes that they had?

HODSOLL: Not really when I was there. By disputes I mean well let's do a little bit more than this versus that. We are not talking about some major disputes at all but again that was true of Meese and Deaver as well as Baker with an assist from Nancy Reagan and the president worked to make sure that the White House operated in as friction free a way as possible. It doesn't mean that there was never going to be friction.

Q: One friction point you mentioned already was Al Haig because Al Haig had a very clear I'm in charge here view of American foreign policy and also you had Ambassador Jeane Kirkpatrick in New York who also had a very clear view of what should be done as a role of the United States and you had an NSC operation reporting to the president. I know over Argentina there were problems, there were problems over South Africa and also you had Buchanan aboard at that time. And Buchanan had some very strong views on these things. The triumvirate may have been very congenial and focused but there were some significant gaps at the next level down; talk about some of those.

HODSOLL: Okay, well I think I'd better say the appointment of Al Haig turned out to be a disaster and it wasn't so much foreign policy.

Q: Stop beating around the bush Frank, just tell me what you think.

HODSOLL: I won't beat around the bush and the disaster aspect of it came to a fore when Reagan was shot. Al Haig shows up at the White House and says he's in charge. The vice president was on a trip and immediately came back and so on and I was there sitting in the back row kind of thing.

Q: When Haig made that...

HODSOLL: ... when Haig made that announcement that he was in charge and so on and so forth. That just ticked everybody off in the White House. It was done in the way like I'm a commanding general kind of thing. Then Al Haig did stuff behind the scenes and so on. We're not talking about major differences of policy so much as just his autocratic nature. He had been one of the key people at the end of the Nixon administration and then was kept on by Ford. He was not the Reagan style and Reagan hated to fire people but the various forces combined and eventually the president just fired Haig, just told him to go do something else. Unlike what I've described in the White House Haig thought he was going to be like Kissinger over there at

the State Department and run everything regardless of what everybody else thought and leaving aside the substance of any particular issue that did not sit well with the style of the Reagan White House. George Shultz not so long ago wrote a wonderful article about a book that's been written by, I've forgotten who it was somebody I've never heard of, about Reagan losing his marbles or not having any. Shultz just said, "I was his Secretary of State for seven years," I'd forgotten that Shultz had come in that early on. "Reagan knew what he was doing throughout that entire period" and that was true. A lot of people accused Reagan of being this light weight who didn't burrow into things. He didn't burrow in like Jimmy Carter and correct Hodsoll's paper for the Secretary of State or write notes on it or so on. But he knew where the big stuff was and that was innate; it was part of him. He was extremely good at that and my experience was I never saw an occasion even after he had been shot and he was lucky to be alive after being shot, where he was just out to lunch about something. He didn't focus on fine detail but he was a very, very smart guy and he read a lot of stuff and he worked hard at it. But most importantly he knew the relationships he knew he had to create in order to get stuff done. He was pretty good at it but he didn't win everything.

Q: But he worked at it.

HODSOLL: Oh he worked at it absolutely.

Q: And that probably was his style he brought in. I think your point was an interesting one that roots probably lay in his political work as a two-time governor in California.

HODSOLL: Yeah, and you know California is not a highly conservative state so....

Q: It's blue, very blue. Alright then I'm trying to think of other relationships. Did Baker have people who challenged him in the White House? Buchanan was another.

HODSOLL: I don't think we ever saw Buchannan. He was there but I'm damned if I know what he did.

Q: He was the political counselor to the president or something like that.

HODSOLL: I don't remember; Buchanan was not a key guy.

Q: Okay, good. Ambassador Kirkpatrick how did she get along with the president and how did she get along with Haig? I think

they had some real difficulties.

HODSOLL: I don't know the answer on Haig and I think the president viewed her as being too much of an ideologue in terms of getting things done so she went off to the UN. She had wanted to be Secretary of State but that didn't happen and I had practically no dealings with her in the course of all of this. So I really don't know what relationship they had.

Q: The relationship with George Shultz must have been fine, Shultz was a Californian as well.

HODSOLL: Yes, he was and so was Cap Weinberger, interestingly both of them had been with the same company; they didn't like each other much. Cap Weinberger was the Secretary of Defense and Shultz is a genius. He is a little like Baker, he knows how to keep the main pieces working together and he is also very smart and then Reagan who had not particularly known him before liked him because he operated in a way totally different than Al Haig. I should say also that Dick Allen was National Security Advisor initially but he was a very weak National Security Advisor. There is nothing against him but he just wasn't a guy who got in there and really got stuff done. He didn't do anything bad but....

Q: Not the strong lead person that you had in a Kissinger presence or whatever.

HODSOLL: Not at all.

Q: Who succeeded Allen?

HODSOLL: Allan let's see it was after I left, who succeeded him? I have a terrible feeling it was Poindexter; we did not have good National Security Advisors. Once Shultz was there and Cap Weinberger, who was close to the president, was at Defense....

Q: Weinberger was actually closer to the president from California relationships...

HODSOLL: Yes, yes.

Q: Although they had both worked for Bechtel?

HODSOLL: That's right and Weinberger basically was a principal force behind the president. I should tell my little story about being subbed in for Baker for a full National Security Council meeting in the Cabinet Room where Dave Stockman, Baker, for some reason was somewhere else I don't know what the deal was. Stockman was trying to cut back Cap Weinberger's request for budget for the Defense Department. The president was there, was Shultz there at that time or was it still...I can't remember who it was from the State Department; it was one of the secretaries whoever it was at that time. In any event, and this was all the president, there were no cue cards for this. The president turned to Casey and our CIA director who had been writing and I got copies of these. These were extraordinary; he went on a lot of trips at the beginning of his period at the CIA around the world. He was writing these extraordinary cables that went to Haig and they went to the president and a whole variety of people in which he said, "The Soviet Union is having enormous difficulty economically. They have a hollow armed forces, a lot of the stuff that is on paper really isn't there, and they can't afford weapons modernization and so on and so forth. We need to make it tougher for them in that regard." So anyway, here I am sitting in the back row with the staff at the National Security Council meeting and the president turns to Casey and says, "You've been writing me these letters, I think he called them, saying that the Soviet Union is in some difficulty and so on and so forth. Tell everybody a little bit more about that." Casey was a very good advocate, so he went into high detail and started talking about all kinds of facts and figures and everything else. Nobody denied his facts and figures and the president listened to all this and then tuned to Davy Jones who was Chairman of the Joint Chiefs, Air Force Chief of Staff is Chairman of the Joint Chiefs, and he said, "Davy, you've just heard the CIAs opinion on this what do you think?" He said, "I think Casey is absolutely right." So Reagan just turned around, looked at Stockman and said, "Give Cap everything he wants, we are going to bury them."

Q: Wow, great story.

HODSOLL: And he did and let's just say I reported that to Baker.

Q: That's a great story, yeah, that's incredible. Any other relationships you can think about in the White House during those early days when you are coming on board? It must have been rather daunting to win an election and then have to take on responsibility as a senior staff person in the White House.

HODSOLL: Well, we will come to the arts eventually; you mean after the president was president.

Q: That early transition...

HODSOLL: Oh you're talking about the transition...

Q: ...not the transition but when the president is sworn in and you come back from the Hill. Where were you during the swearing in? Tell me about that.

HODSOLL: I was in a wonderful seat. I was with Mimi and was in the front row, reserved section, we weren't obviously up on the Hill or anything like that. The first thing when I came back I knew that the Iran thing would have to now be looked at seriously as opposed to me just being over there at the Carter White House. So I came back and went into the White House counsel's office that had been Lloyd Cutler's office thinking that there might be a folder there that said something about Iran. The White House career staff had just cleared the whole place out, as they should, I'm not arguing that. I remember scratching my head and saying, "Now what do I do?" But I eventually went to the State Department and to various other places and recollected the papers and so forth and we went off and we started.

Q: So you had to get the terms of reference between the Carter administration negotiations and the Iranian government as your starting point?

HODSOLL: That is correct because I knew sort of what it was but I didn't have any paper from the Carter administration at that point.

Q: So when you are talking about starting at ground zero, you were starting with empty file folders that didn't have anything written on them?

HODSOLL: That is exactly right but they are all there you just have to...it is quite right as a career staff in any White House to clear everything out because it is political and there is no reason why the Reagan administration or any administration should know about what the previous president's private correspondence was at least not as a whole. So that was a piece of it but then I got different assignments. We had in my view two pretty awful people that the president nominated and were eventually confirmed at EPA, Anne Gorsuch and at the Interior Department Jim Watt.

I should mention one other thing and remind me to come back to this. You've got to remember that Baker was the chief of staff to George H. W. Bush when he was running for president and he was chosen to help with the debates but he was a Bush guy. So Baker had to be very careful that he was quite clear and did things that were absolutely evident that he was now a Reagan

guy. That is not to say that Reagan and Bush didn't have a cordial relationship. Bush was in the White House right next to Baker right in that office the Vice president has and he had his weekly lunch with Reagan but there was never any question that this was Reagan's administration and Bush was detailed to do various things. So let me come back to what ended up on my plate.

Baker wanted me to be his eyes and ears on the budget so I had a lot to do with Dave Stockman, his eyes and ears on international affairs so I had a lot to do with Dick Allen and people at State and Defense Department and so on. And then other odd things and among the other odd things for some reason, and I still don't know how this started, I was asked to take on immigration because Al Simpson who was a senior Republican Senator.

Q: From Wyoming.

HODSOLL: ...from Wyoming who had picked up on immigration as something we needed to reform. So I didn't know Simpson but he had called me up and said, "You are in Baker's office and I'm going to need some help on this."

Q: Simpson Mazzoli.

HODSOLL: Simpson Mazzoli was the Democrat on the House side and in 1986 they passed immigration reform. So I got into this and Baker was not at all pleased about my getting into this. In his view immigration was not something he wanted on the front of his desk. It wasn't like today on immigration, there wasn't a huge fuss going on or anything like that but I think we had 12 million or something like that illegals in the country.

Q: It was fewer but it was high.

HODSOLL: Anyway there were a number of people.

Q: There were millions.

HODSOLL: There were millions so I discovered in the White House there was a guy who offered me a job to become his deputy instead of my going off to the arts; a guy by the name of Marty Anderson, who had been a principal assistant to Arthur Burns when he was Chairman of the Federal Reserve, a conservative Californian economist.

Q: What was his job?

HODSOLL: His job was assistant to the president for domestic policy. He and I had gotten along because I'd used some of his staffers in producing some of the papers during the campaign on all kinds of domestic policy issues and we managed to come to an agreement on all the various things. But in any event, Marty had this idea which particularly given today's experience on immigration is kind of interesting. His idea was we should have free flow in labor as we have free flow in goods and services. While I didn't know anything about immigration per se at the time I said, "Marty, that's just not going to be acceptable; there's going to be a huge fuss if you just let anybody come from making a dollar a day to making \$20 a day or whatever it is people won't like that. We've got to have a more balanced approach to that, we still need to bring people in." In any event, thanks to the vice president I was able to overcome that and attended a whole bunch of meetings for which I wrote papers on immigration. So we ended up with Reagan and Simpson who came down on several occasions and so on more or less adopting what became the Simpson-Mazzoli approach. Then eventually the president signed the bill some years later and I think it was the right thing to do in terms of immigration. So that was one issue.

Q: One of the major achievements of the Reagan administration.

HODSOLL: Well, I think it worked pretty well but now we have a big group of illegal people back in the country so you know how this all works and you can argue about it. But, any event, that was one of the additional things that I got involved with. I'll tell another little story.

Q: These stories are wonderful, they are great, and your earlier tells are great ones.

HODSOLL: Well, Reagan went up to the Hill with his first economic plan which included reducing taxes and cutting back on some programs. After consulting with Tip O'Neill even though Tip O'Neill didn't particularly agree with all of this I remember Marty Anderson's people, Reagan was going to make a speech on television, produced a speech and Reagan was up at Camp David and I was the guy there on the weekend who put it on a helicopter; Reagan didn't like faxes he preferred to have hard copy that he could see better but we had a classified fax system. So off it went in a helicopter to Reagan; Reagan had some guests at Camp David I don't remember who they were. The helicopter probably arrived on a Saturday afternoon or something like that and in those days I worked seven days a week. Then Sunday afternoon the helicopter came back with a new speech written entirely by Reagan in long hand on a yellow pad which said exactly the same thing but it was so much

better than what we had sent him in terms of communicating with regular people that with minor adjustments that was the one we were going to do. So Reagan had a knack for putting in regular language what he wanted to do and again the substance didn't change materially in any particular way but...

Q: Yes, but the communication did.

HODSOLL: ...the communication did change. But bear in mind buttressing that on the other side is Reagan telling Dave Stockman, "Let's bust the Russians, if they are having all these problems let's buildup our own and make it even more difficult for them," and that has nothing to do with style that has to do with this is what we should do.

Q: Instinct.

HODSOLL: Instinct.

Q: Talk about the vice president.

HODSOLL: He's a wonderful guy and I worked for him as president also.

Q: What was his role with the president in the early days? Did you work in the...

HODSOLL: Extremely good partly because Reagan wanted it to work. Even though the vice president, when he was running for office, had said that some of Reagan's economic ideas were, I forgot he had a famous phrase...

Q: Voodoo.

HODSOLL: Voodoo economics, right. That didn't affect anything and Bush made clear I am your man now but I'm going to tell you when I think you want to have a different approach or whatever. But if you decide against me I'm your man. That's the way it was so they had their lunches and Bush was given one thing that I ended up being on a co-chairs of a task force was our relationship with the European Union. Bush was I'm not quite sure exactly how Bush became in charge of this but Bush had a National Security woman who was, well I'm not going to say anything about her but anyway I got involved with that. I had great experiences with the vice president; he was enormously helpful on immigration in his quiet way.

Q: Well he is a great Yale hero.

HODSOLL: True.

Q: And you go into Mory's the famous pub there they have very understated a small picture of whatever the years was that he was captain of the Yale baseball team and it is right by the door there. It's not a picture of him in presidential garb or whatever as president, it's a picture of him captaining the Yale baseball team, which I think is a just picture.

HODSOLL: He is also a war hero and he was like Baker; they were very close friends that's how Baker came to know him from Houston. If George H.W. Bush said something you could take it to the bank, end of discussion.

Q: Frank, I want to ask you two tales about friend's that you worked with during your time in the White House and the first one is me, okay? I was the associated minister of the Environmental Agency and one day you kindly called me up and you said, "Tex, I have some bad news for you. I see your position, the associate administrator of the EPA for International Affairs is on a list of jobs to be filled." I had thought you told me and I had told you that the administrator, Anne Gorsuch, had said she was going to keep me on. But tell me your relationship with EPA and Interior and the other agencies because you had a watching brief on them.

HODSOLL: I had a watching brief mostly on EPA not so much on Interior and that came about through Boyden Gray who was then the council to the vice president. We wanted to make sure that we didn't have a counterproductive set of policies when it came to the EPA. Remember that I told you in an earlier session of the oral history that Marty Anderson who was the assistant to the president for domestic policy and I and others had agreed in the campaign that the Carter administrator was doing a good job. So the papers we wrote for the campaign said, "We are on the right track with EPA." I'll have to go look up precisely why we thought that but that's what we thought. In any event, so in comes Anne Gorsuch and I had nothing to do with her appointment and I didn't really have anything to do with anybody's appointments outside the White House. Anne Gorsuch came in and she called me up because she knew Boyden and I had written a two-pager of environmental principles that the Reagan administration should follow and they were quite reasonable; there wasn't anything anybody would have a big fuss about unless they were ready to abolish EPA. Anyway, Anne Gorsuch called me up and she had been nominated but not yet confirmed, I didn't know her from Adam actually. She says that she is having a lot of trouble because she has all this career staff who are briefing her for her confirmation hearings and she thinks she shouldn't have to talk to any of them. I said, "Anne,

you really should because they are going to know what's on people's minds up there and they can tell you what kinds of questions you are going to get asked. You can reject their advice, you are the person, but to just not have anything to do with any of them I don't think makes any sense." Well she totally ignored my view and went on with whatever she was going to do and then eventually it all came apart and so on. One of the things that I probably was useful, sometimes at the Cabinet level particularly the less important Cabinet levels and sometimes at the sub-Cabinet level because I was often the one who was called in when new appointments were being made, by appointments I mean nominations were being made, not all of them but some of these people were sent in to see me to give them whatever advice I might have as to what it was like to work in the federal government. I can come back to my general advice because I did that in the George H.W. Bush administration as well.

Q: Well let's do that.

HODSOLL: We can do that but in any event so that is something with Anne Gorsuch. I have to confess to you I don't remember having spotted your name or position on the to be filled, but I'm sure you are right.

Q: You kindly gave me a call, thank you.

Q: Another big Presidential decision involved the Carter administration imposition of a total grain embargo on the Soviet Union in response to the Russian Christmas-time invasion of Afghanistan, in which Carter also withdrew the United States participation from the Olympic Games in Moscow and took various other punitive steps. The major, long lasting action that was taken by the Carter administration was a total grain embargo against the Soviet Union which cost U.S. farmers billions of dollars of exports. Tell me that story.

HODSOLL: Sure. Well Paul DeLaney is his name; he's a long-time trade lawyer. He was also deputy trade representative in the Nixon administration and he came in to see me or he called me, I can't remember but anyway he contacted me and said, "Have you looked at this issue of the Soviet grain embargo?" I said, "No, not really." He said, "It is underway. Can I come in and talk to you about it." So I invited him to come to the White House Mess and we had lunch. He absolutely convinced me that we weren't doing anybody any good except the Argentines who were selling all kinds of agricultural products to the Soviet Union. So I talked to Baker about it and to Dick Allen and I've forgotten who our secretary of agriculture was and I talked to Al Haig actually because he was still there then. None of them thought this was doing us much good. The grain embargo and the Soviet's were getting all the grain that they could possibly need from other people to the detriment of U.S. farmers and the agricultural interest to the United States. So I went to see Baker about it and said, "This has come in and here

are the reasons why it's not working. It's not causing any harm much to the Soviets, it's causing harm to American agriculture. I will also confess you know American agriculture is important to the American constituency in terms of the second term and voting they are all over the damn place" that more or less came from me. Baker agreed and he went in to see the president and the president said, "Yeah, let's get rid of this. Help me design a process that could do that." So we did and we did abolish it. It was not only popular with the agricultural community and the farm bureaus and so on and so forth but it was generally popular. I don't remember anybody in the White House or from the outside coming in and saying, "God, you can't do that, they are bad guys these Soviets and one thing and the other."

Q: It was close to a win-win?

HODSOLL: It was largely a win-win We and so we did that and the president got credit for it. Paul Delaney thinks this is a reason why when he President was being elected to his second term; he won every state except Minnesota against Mondale as the Farm Bureaus turned out in force in supporting Reagan throughout all those states; that's just a comment I don't know whether that is true or not but certainly Delaney has been very kind to me even today to draft up letters of appreciation in which I get mentioned its really Baker who did it I was the conduit.

Q: You were the in-house spark plug.

HODSOLL: I was an in-house spark plug, yeah.

Q: So you made the cylinders fire.

HODSOLL: Nobody was talking about it before I started this.

Q: Absolutely well that's the spark plug, congratulations that's great. I understand now documents are being collected at the Reagan library and they are building a full record on this...

HODSOLL: Going back to more recent times, I helped Paul get access to the Reagan library and they have a little sub-section on it.

Q: That's great. Any other stories you can think of Frank? These are so rich in terms of you are talking about the structural

things but some of the ornaments on the tree that if there are any other things you can think of that landed on your desk and you were spark plugging around?

HODSOLL: I mentioned the big ones I think. I mean there were dozens of things.

Q: Think of six and put six in this space of the thing because that's the stuff historians and others look for are these are wonderful anecdotes to make the tree have a great structure.

HODSOLL: There were a lot of issues and I'll have to go and look because I don't remember where I wasn't. My principal role was to make sure that the damn thing got decided and that it went up the system.

Q: For me that's an important role.

HODSOLL: They were little things I'm not talking about great or major things.

Q: Yeah.

HODSOLL: I'll have to go back and look, part of my job was to help Baker make the trains run on time. It wasn't on everything it was on some things and so on and so forth. I'm just trying to think....

Q: And the major areas that you had were budget, international, environmental and immigration. Any other areas you can think of?

HODSOLL: Right and we'll get to arts later no international includes national security.

Q: Yeah, sure, and also included the budget. Stockman is the most brilliant and most unusual guy. What was the relationship between Stockman, the triumvirate and the president?

HODSOLL: Well it was good Stockman was a conservative Congressman from Michigan which is unusual with Michigan not being particularly a conservative state and he was brilliant. As OMB, Office of Management Bureau, director the OMB career staff including those who didn't agree with him on all occasions will tell you that to this day who were there with him once he

got there and after a very short period of time there was no one who knew more about the budget in every detail than Dave Stockman. He was just an incredible absorber of information. He also had a very analytical mind and so he was able to not only absorb information but to compartmentalize it in ways that allowed him to design policy. Stockman had come to the attention of Reagan in the campaign as the guy who played the part of Jimmy Carter in our debate preparations and he was absolutely brilliant at it.

Q: How did he perform?

HODSOLL: He performed beautifully.

Q: How?

HODSOLL: He obviously had done his homework on Jimmy Carter and what kinds of things Jimmy Carter would say and almost everything that Stockman had predicted Jimmy Carter might say, Jimmy Carter did say or came close to saying in the same area. He knew the budget; he had been on the budget committee or on appropriations, I think the budget committee in the Congress. He also had a lot of friends in the conservative community of Republican Congressmen like Vin Weber and Jack Kemp, who the Reagan administration was very fond of. Jack Kemp is an absolutely extraordinary person. In any event, a long story short he comes in and he wanted to be director of OMB and there was no other candidate that had put in his name for that. As far as I knew, everybody I knew applauded the idea that he would. So he goes over to OMB and quickly becomes the world's greatest expert on what was going on there. Actually, we didn't have huge problems with the Carter administration. Carter was not left wing; he was a centrist political guy from the South.

Q: A military officer.

HODSOLL: A military officer and so on and so forth. So there weren't a huge number of changes. One of the things that Stockman did was to collaborate with a number of people to put into effect a new part of OMB called OIRA, the Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs.

This office was to review agency regulations to make sure that they weren't overly burdensome and had been adequately justified and that continues to this day. In any event, so he goes over there and because he feels that the federal government has gotten too big and too broad he was looking around for some things that might be pared that might cause a huge fuss on the

Hill and could be easily pared. Of course, one of those was the National Endowment for the Arts and the National Endowment for the Humanities, which is where I came into the arts. But on general budget and leaving aside what happened as I mentioned earlier on Defense and Cap Weinberger by and large we were on board with what Stockman was suggesting. None of what he was suggesting was just totally beyond; he was a former Congressman who knew what we could sell and what we couldn't sell so he wasn't going to go off on some huge tangent and suggest we get rid of three Cabinet departments, and he wasn't for that kind of thing. He did a good job and I saw him on a number of occasions beyond the ones that I've mentioned in meetings with the president and with Cabinet people and so on. There wasn't a Cabinet person that could stand up to him on the merits. I mean Stockman just knew his stuff.

Q: And he knew their budgets better than they knew their budgets.

HODSOLL: He knew their budgets better than they did. You could argue we need more for this or less for that or whatever but you couldn't argue with him about his facts; he had them. So I had quite a lot of back and forth with him because Cabinet secretaries or their deputy secretaries or whoever would often come to me and say, "We are having an awful time with OMB, could you help?" So I would get into some of these things and I rarely took him on.

Q: Could you give us an example of those Frank? Can you think of one battle as an example?

HODSOLL: I'll have to go look at my facts, I don't remember.

Q: Look at your notes and put it in here. Let me ask you, we are coming to the end of the deputy chief of staff time and it's been terrific stuff and really useful but the perspective we are talking about is the top of the Christmas tree, okay, and the pyramids, the top of the pyramid. You are the right hand to one of the triumvirate that sits underneath the president of the United States and so you look at the government in a special way.

HODSOLL: I was a right hander not a right hand man.

Q: You were a right hander but how does the government look? There is all this mass of two million people down there working, more than two million if you count the military working and going up the decision tree to one guy and the vice president's office and these three lieutenants.

HODSOLL: And a number of sub-lieutenants below the top three.

Q: Right, but how does the government look from that perspective? I mean it is very different as you've got to do triage, how do you do that?

HODSOLL: Well you do it by looking at what the president got elected to do and he is a conservative; he's not for expanding government into all kinds of areas and that kind of thing. But there was never a case that I am aware of, of the career people in government being trashed; certainly nothing that I was aware of. The president and others viewed the career people, obviously not everybody, but as a class of people that were hardworking people trying to do their jobs. If somebody went against that belief there would be pressures to fire that person or get somebody else or whatever and Cabinet secretaries and agency heads were given lots of latitude on that; we didn't get into that at the White House. But there was never a case ever while I was there in the Reagan administration or the Bush administration after it where people were out to say, "Look at all these awful people," or like Anne Gorsuch when she told me she didn't want to deal with any of the career people in EPA. That wasn't in the White House. So the president himself and certainly among the principal lieutenants we were constantly talking with career people where they had more expertise than anybody else to see what they thought. We might disagree with what they thought or we might find that they didn't really have their facts together whatever it was but that was a process that wasn't an automatic conclusion on the part of anybody at the White House.

Now coming back to your basic question for me, I had been a career bureaucrat in all kinds of different places doing different things. I didn't agree with everything that we ultimately ended up doing but I agreed with most things that we handled it reasonably well but that is not to say that everybody either in the bureaucracy or certainly in the Democratic Party would agree with what I just said. But again leaving aside the Anne Gorsuch and Jim Watt's of the world who were a minority I didn't get the feeling it was a war between the people who had been here and the new people who had come in at any time, no, not at all. You have to bear in mind that the reputation of Reagan leaving aside those of us who were working directly for him in the government generally was not positive. It was assumed he would want to get rid of all kinds of things and so on and so forth, which was not true. The government is enormous as you made that point so how do you keep track of all of that? We did not try to keep track of all of that in the White House. There are White Houses since that have been much more into every conceivable kind of thing than we were. We relied on the Cabinet, on agency heads whether Cabinet or not and we would track partly with the Hill both Democrats and Republicans as to how we were doing and what people thought of what we were doing. If we thought that things were getting off track to the point that we couldn't get more important things done then we would call in a Cabinet secretary, an agency head or maybe a deputy or program director whomever the heck it was and

somebody like Baker would say, “We don’t want to do this anymore so let’s bring it to a halt.” Other times we’d say, “We are going to support you, go forward.”

Q: It was when the wheels squeaked?

HODSOLL: It was mostly a question of the wheels squeaking because we knew what the president wanted to do--he wanted to reduce the budget, he wanted to make the government more accountable in a variety of ways in terms of being able to measure what government programs were doing. We know that he wanted to reduce taxes and remember in those days the top rate was 75% or something. Reagan never got over when he was a movie actor paying 93% to the government for relatively minor roles because he was earning over \$100 thousand a year or whatever it was in those times. He never got over that and I think there is some merit to that; I’m not sure people should have to pay 90% of their income automatically so there were certain things we knew that we wanted to do. So essentially Baker was the key guy and later Darman was a part of it in saying these are the three, four or five things that we really want to do and if we do X we are going to jeopardize being able to do those four or five things, so let’s get off X for the moment even to leave aside even if it’s a good thing to do or not a good thing to do.” The purpose of Baker’s legislative strategy group was just that to make sure that our legislative liaisons and so on were solid, and they were very, very good, we were making sure that. If Smith were someone that we could count on for a vote to reduce the budget or work some of the things we cared about but he was absolutely committed because of some constituent in his district or in his state to doing the arts or something that was at a lower level of importance and there were people that wanted to get in and let’s support this guy in doing away with these things we would rein them in and say, “It is more important. We need this guys vote for X, Y is not as important, stay away.”

Q: It’s called politics.

HODSOLL: It’s called politics.

Q: Thank you for that answer that was very helpful. Same question but, there is a slightly new perspective everybody thinks their issue should go to the president’s desk because it’s the most import issue because it’s been on my desk as the assistant secretary of whatever agency it is and this is a decision the president needs to make and we need a new X, Y, and Z. How does that get filtered out in the White House and those kinds of non-presidential issues fall by the wayside and how are they averted?

HODSOLL: Baker and Darman essentially had with inputs from other people. When we thought something shouldn't go to the president's desk and there were reasons for it and unless there was a huge fuss in the White House or something, we did derail it and take it to the Assistant to the President Marty Anderson or some other person at a lower level.

Q: And they would decide?

HODSOLL: And they would decide; the president never saw it.

Q: So essentially issues unless they were squeaky wheel issues which were affecting other high priority issues of the Reagan agenda those issues would be winnowed and redistributed to lower levels inside the White House or below the White House by the duo of Secretary Darman and Chief of Staff Baker?

HODSOLL: That's right.

Q: Okay. Now did you see those issues?

HODSOLL: I saw most of them but I didn't input on most of them. I inputted on some issues that I thought I had something to add.

Q: Okay so that was the process, that was the process.

HODSOLL: Well basically once a week Baker and Darman would have the legislative strategy policy group meeting and they would go over these kinds of issues and they would decide as a whole. Meese attended that and Deaver occasionally attended and I sometimes attended it. Basically there would be a hash around and that's where the decisions would be made to tell Secretary X that we are not going to deal with this, he has to deal with it on his own.

Q: Frank, now you were the Deputy Assistant to President Reagan and Deputy to the Chief of Staff during 1981. When did you leave that job and what were the circumstances?

HODSOLL: Okay, I left it at the end of 1981 and the circumstances came about by accident in my capacity of doing anything that Baker wanted me to do. I'll tell you a funny story about this. What had happened was a classmate of Jim Baker's from

Princeton, a guy by the name of Barney McHenry who later became the CEO, Chief Executive Officer, of the Wallace Foundation and was on the board of the New York Museum of Fine Arts, came in to see Baker. I didn't know Barney McHenry at that point from Adam and I wasn't in on this first meeting. As Baker reported it to me, McHenry had come in and asked Baker, "Why are you," being the Reagan administration, "trying to get rid of the National Endowment for the Arts and the National Endowment for the Humanities?" Baker said, "I don't know; I haven't heard about this." McHenry left and when I came back at some point Baker asked me to come in and he said, "I've had a friend of mine from New York who is asking me why we are trying to get rid of the National Endowment for the Arts and by the way what is the National Endowment for the Arts?" So I gave him about a one sentence answer on the second question, which is about all I knew, and I said, "I will talk to Stockman, this hasn't come to my attention." So I talked to Stockman....

Q: Stockman would take your calls immediately?

HODSOLL: Yes. We worked together because he and I had respect for each other when he knew I had been on the campaign and I knew he really knew what he was talking about; I might disagree with him but he did know his stuff. So Stockman simply said, "Well you know we got too many agencies and too many things going on. This is not an important one and it will be an easy one to get rid of as a good step in the right direction." I reported this back to Baker and I said, "You know I don't really know but our president was a former President of the Screen Actors Guild and has a lot of friends in Hollywood and so on and so forth and I've done some checking around as to who likes the National Endowment for the Arts. I'm not sure that he would want to have all kinds of people calling him from his old profession on this. It's minor from the point of view of a budget issue; we are talking about \$150 million or something for each of those endowments." Baker took that in and said, "Well let's go see the president." We went in to see the president and....

Q: Were you with him?

HODSOLL: Yes. We went over this and he said, "No, I can see why Chuck, Charlton, Heston keeps telling me what a good job the National Endowment for the Arts is doing and he is one of my best friends and also a good Republican." Baker said, "Let's see if we can find a way for you to deal with this without having to become necessarily directly involved in terms of saying we are going to overrule Stockman or whatever." So we got the president to set up a task force on the Arts and Humanities. The president made three people chairman of that with one being Chuck, Charlton, Heston, one was Hannah Gray who was then the president of the University of Chicago and a good conservative and the other was Dan Terra who had been the chairman of the campaign finance, a very wealthy guy from Chicago; all of whom wanted to continue the Arts Endowment and the

Humanities Endowment. We set that up and then Baker in his inevitable way told Marty Anderson and I to recommend to the president the members who could be on it. So Marty and I got together and we did that with enormous help from Ed Meese, a Yale graduate, who liked the National Endowment for the Arts for reasons that are not entirely clear to me but it wasn't odd or anything like that, and Mike Deaver also liked the idea. I might add this was the first year of the Heritage Foundation report on government and the Heritage Foundation had a chapter in it and never did again, that stood up for the National Endowment for the Arts by two absolute conservatives one of whom we put on the National Endowments Council for the Arts a guy by the name of Sam Lipman and the other was Hilton Kramer who was the principal visual arts critic for the New York Times. In any event, we got all these people and had all kinds of celebrities like Beverly Sills and so on; we had a star studded group.

Q: No pun intended.

HODSOLL: No, no pun intended, and it came out more or less the right way. Basically it said, "These are useful and there are a few tweaks that should be made." In any event, that is what happened.

Q: And that went to the president of the United States.

HODSOLL: That went to the president of the United States with a recommendation from Baker and me. While that was all going on I became quite intrigued. I had certainly not come into the White House to be chairman of the National Endowment for the Arts but I had spent a certain amount of my time doing this and it was quite heady to meet all these famous artists and one thing and another. I believed in the idea of having a federal component just as we have a federal component in other areas.

Q: We are continuing to talk about Frank Hodsoll's work at the White House.

HODSOLL: So continuing along the task force came to its conclusion, which was positive, and because, if you look at my background I had been in part a history of art major, an actor, had a radio show and produced concerts in New York and so on.

Q: What was your radio show?

HODSOLL: It was called The College Sound.

Q: We haven't talked about that.

HODSOLL: It was at Yale, it was *WYBC*, and I basically invented a program which brought together all kinds of different musical people to both perform and to talk about music on the Yale radio station. In addition to the singing groups and choirs and some aspects of Yale's own thing, we brought in Odette and all sorts of famous people to be interviewed and I played a rather unusual collection of music that people seemed to like; that was the radio show. I mean it was a very small audience because it was a radio program that went into the Yale dorms.

Q: We had one at Princeton and it was broadcast through the radiators.

HODSOLL: Wherever it came from I don't remember any more. So I'd done all of that and I'd written an honors thesis at Yale on the New York School, which was the abstract expression that was getting going in New York and so forth. I thought I might become an actor at that point, so that was all there. So I had an interest and I'd been going to stuff obviously as a member of the audience. So here I was helping President Reagan organize a task force on the Arts and Humanities and the jobs were coming up because we hadn't appointed anybody into the heads of those agencies. I thought to myself whatever this may be for my career, which if it was not a great thing for my career, it would be such good fun and I don't think I'll ever have another chance to throw my hat into the ring. I also had been approached by Heston and some others saying, "You ought to go take this over," because they thought I had done a decent job.

Q: Well, you were the director of the study.

HODSOLL: Well I wasn't. I was the White House liaison for the study but yes, I did do most of the writing.

Q: More important than being the director, you were the author.

HODSOLL: Part of it. Well I had to get everybody on board and so on. So I went in to Baker and said, "I hope you are sitting down but I think it would be great fun to go over and be the Chairman of the National Endowment for the Arts." He said, "You are absolutely nuts." He didn't say no but he said, "You're nuts." Then he sent Deaver in to see me and said, "You can do better than being the chairman of the National Endowments for the Arts; there are all kinds of jobs we'd love to have you in if you don't want to stay in the White House anymore." I said, "Well no, I like being in the White House. I'm not fed up with the White House it's just..." and I told them I had this peculiar background. I said, "As a matter of fact, you can see it and the president knows about it too because when you come into the West Wing you are allowed, Clem Conger was then the archivist

of the White House, to go to the Smithsonian and select paintings to go in your office. Virtually everybody in the Reagan White House had Remingtons and things like that, which is fine. I said I wanted to go over to the Hirshorn and get some abstract paintings and so I ended up going over to the Hirshorn and getting three fairly large, for my tiny office paintings that covered every space of wall; I had three abstract paintings. I remember the president coming in to see Baker and he stopped in my office to see what I was up to. He looked at the paintings and said, "My gosh, look at all that; do you like that?" I said, "Yes, sir, I sort of do." He said, "Well, good for you."

Q: Oh that's wonderful.

HODSOLL: So that had been part of my visibility in the White House. But in any event a long story short Baker offered me some other things including staying in the White House, promoting me to an assistant to the president. I was offered ambassadorships, all kinds of different things. I was offered two deputy secretary ships to work with secretaries who hadn't been in the government and they figured I could help with that.

Q: Where were they?

HODSOLL: Labor and what was the other one?

Q: That's incredible, deputy secretary of Labor.

HODSOLL: In Labor, yeah. I can't remember what the other one was.

Q: You'll think of it.

HODSOLL: I'll think of it.

Q: Think of it, we are just doing a rough draft here.

HODSOLL: In any event, what occurred to me was that if what I wanted to do was to progress at the high political level in the administration I'd be better off staying in the White House. I was liked there and I got all kinds of jobs to do that people seem to think I did okay at. But if I wanted to go out of the White House, here was this unique experience and I figured that because

I had really good relationships with a lot of people, if the time came for me to leave the Arts Endowment, I could probably come back assuming the president was still the president. So after a little bit of back and forth on all of that Baker and I went in to see the president and he said, "Well, if you want it you can have it." That was the beginning of my moving in that direction.

Q: Was there criticism of you being a Foreign Service officer working in the Reagan White House?

HODSOLL: No, I had resigned from the Foreign Service.

Q: When you went political?

HODSOLL: No, because of my period of time in the campaign, the Reagan people viewed me as totally trustworthy.

Q: And the conservatives outside the Reagan White House?

HODSOLL: I was okay on that too because I had worked with a lot of them on the campaign. And back to relationships, I'd established relationships and then was able to write stuff that the Reaganauts, if you want to call them that, thought that guy knows what Reaganauts believe.

Q: Frank, we have now come to your shift to chairman of the National Endowments for the Arts. That's going to be a long conversation.

HODSOLL: It could be.

Q: I think what we ought to do...

HODSOLL: Stop for the moment?

Q: Stop for the moment.

HODSOLL: Okay.

Q: And then we've come to a very natural stopping point. We will pick up next time with that. I want you to be thinking about those other six anecdotes of that incredible year in the White House.

Q: This is the oral history continuation with Frank Hodsoll. Today is Wednesday December 16, 2015. We are beginning with Frank exiting the White House and moving to head the National Endowment for the Arts.

Q: Frank, anything that you've thought of in the White House years, that incredible time in the campaign and getting the administration up and running before you moved over to the National Endowment for the Arts? [Hereafter, the interviewer and the subject refer to this federal agency as the endowment or as NEA.]

HODSOLL: Nothing new; I think when I see the transcript I may add or whatever.

Q: Tell us about your transition from the White House to the chairmanship of the National Endowment for the Arts.

HODSOLL: Sure. It was late 1981, and the President [Ronald Reagan] gave us a luncheon for the task force on the arts and humanities which we put together, and I was a part of that. That was a nice send-off; he [the President] said a bunch of nice things. So off I went. And my first speech. . . .

Q: What about your confirmation? You were confirmed, were you not?

HODSOLL: Yes, I had to be confirmed. Before I went over there, I went up and met with various senators, including Ted Kennedy and Ted Stevens, with whom I had worked at the Commerce Department, and Claiborne Pell, who had helped start the endowment. All those went very well, perhaps except for Ted Stevens, whom I had thought was a friend of mine. Except I guess he thought that for Alaska, I was too highfalutin and wouldn't treat the Alaskans properly. He made some acerbic comments, and then he called me back and apologized. It was one of those things, and we were fine.

Q: Were those acerbic comments in his office or were they public?

HODSOLL: They were in his office. Nothing happened publicly, by anybody.

Q: Who was your predecessor?

HODSOLL: My predecessor was Livingston Biddle, who had helped draft the language for the Endowment. He had worked for Claiborne Pell way back in the 60s; he was at the endowment and so on and so forth. [Livingston Biddle, Jr., not only participated in the drafting of the 1965 legislation creating the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) and the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH); he also served as President Jimmy Carter's chairman of the NEA.] He was totally happy with me being there; so was Joe Duffey, [President Jimmy] Carter's head of the humanities endowment, whom I had gotten to know. His wife was a powerful Democratic operative, whose name is escaping me...Anne something.

Q: Anne? Hm, I worked for her when she was in the White House. [Anne Wexler, Joseph Duffey's second wife, was a special assistant to President Carter.]

HODSOLL: But no, I was viewed, because of the way the task force had come out, and the President had come out, I was viewed by the politicians as a relatively friendly person. That was not true of the staff who were there, many of whom just quit because they thought I was going to go over there and burn the place down, which I wasn't going to do.

[The Reagan Administration had come into office promoting the idea of cutting domestic programs that Republicans had deemed wasteful and inefficient. Thus, whether the arts and humanities endowments would survive this period was in question. Reagan created a task force to consider the issue; the task force came out on the side of cutting the budget of the endowments but not doing away with them.]

Q: This was the staff of the endowment who were concerned that the Republicans were coming in to set fire to their institution?

HODSOLL: That is correct, not all of them, but many of them. And so, I was fortunate that a whole bunch of them quit, and I was able to bring in a lot of new people.

In the endowment, at the program director level, they are not career civil servants; they are Schedule A. So, they can be dismissed without the normal protections. I didn't do that, with maybe one or two exceptions.

[The Office of Personnel Management allows certain exceptions to the hiring regulations. For example, "Schedule A" appointees are those who have been hired for their special qualifications—doctor or lawyer—or to fill a short-term vacancy. Persons with disabilities are also eligible for Schedule A appointments. Conversely, just as they can be hired more quickly than

civil servants, Schedule A appointees can also be fired more quickly than can civil servants, who are guaranteed certain rights in a termination process.]

But that allowed me opportunities. While I was being confirmed, and my confirmation was relatively simple; it wasn't a big deal, because I was able to convince senators who cared about the endowment that I meant well, I was going to learn a lot and try to be helpful. That was on the Republican as well as on the Democratic side.

In any event, my first activity—maybe this was my legal training--my first activity after I had been confirmed, was to read every grant the endowment had given in the last year. My staff put little candy bars in the files—no one had ever done that before. So that was my introduction.

Q: What's this about candy bars?

Well, they put candy bars in with the files—to keep me alive, they said—as I was going through the grants.

Q: When you went through a file there would be a candy bar?

HODSOLL: There would be a candy bar stuffed in the files as I went through the files. I learned a lot from that. I'll come back to that in a minute.

Q: What was the total budget of the endowment, the approximate number of grants. And how was the endowment organized when you took it over?

HODSOLL: When I took it over, the budget was 155 million dollars. We reduced it to 143, but that was a lot better than 0. And then it grew back, and over 155. At that time, and later—the number of grants didn't change all that much—we gave about 4,000 grants a year. They varied from as much as a million dollars—though that was rare—to a lot of little grants of 10 to 20,000 dollars, that kind of thing.

We had fellowships that went to individuals, but most of our grants went to not-for-profit corporations that were arts organizations, from large ones like the Metropolitan Opera to the little tiny ones, that had budgets from five to 10,000 dollars per year, some of them 50,000.

Q: There were some Alaskan native institutions in there as well.

HODSOLL: And there were some Alaskan native institutions in there. We didn't change that much about that.

In any event, once I got over there and went through the grants, I discovered, among other things, that in the theater program, there were on the order of 19 grants for which no one had anything good to say. And one of my first actions at the endowment was to bring this to the attention of the council. [The National Council of the Arts serves as an advisory board to the Chairman of the NEA.] And I said, "You know, I'm going to reverse these grants." If they're good, and the panel...first, the endowment runs on a bunch of programs that are mostly discipline based: Opera, music theater, theater.

Q: What are your departments?

There are a whole bunch of them. First, on the public partnership side, there are the state programs, which by law, a certain amount [of funding] goes to the state arts agencies. Then the rest are by discipline—everything from literature to the various performing arts; to interarts, which is the presentation of the arts; museums; and so on. And all the grant applications come in and go directly to the program people. And then they are sent out to panels we convene, and still do. We have always convened panels from the disciplines, to make the judgments as to who should get the grants and who shouldn't.

Q: So there is a dance panel.

HODSOLL: There is a dance panel, and there is a music panel, etc. And they make the basic decisions. But ultimately under law, the chairman makes all the decisions. The chairman can overrule everybody, which I rarely did.

Q: The chairman's word is final.

HODSOLL: The chairman's word is final. The chairman signs off on the grant. That's the way the legislation is set out. So, there is accountability in the chairman for that purpose. That's why I read all the grants for one cycle. I didn't read all the grants that had ever been made, by any means. And as a result of the reading of those grants, I went through program by program, and I brought in new directors for a number of the programs.

We spent quite a bit of time talking about what constituted eligibility for a National Endowment for the Arts grant. We came to an agreement, mutually, on what the basic criteria should be. We changed several of our grants guidelines to reflect that.

Q: In each discipline.

HODSOLL: In each discipline and in the state programs. And I created some new programs as well, which I'll talk about in a minute. That all happened at the very beginning. I was interested in the views of the National Council on the Arts, which reviews and makes advice to the chairman at the very end. All [of the Council members] at the very beginning had been nominated by President Carter and confirmed by the Senate. I got applause [from the Council] for turning down the theater grants. I don't know why they were ever agreed to. I'm not sure I ever got a good answer. But in any event, we changed that.

Then we made consistent rules. You know: These are the criteria. We are going to go by the printed guidelines. We are not going to make it up as we go. We are not going to give the grant to Smith versus Jones because of unknown factors. I did quite a lot of that, and I also, at the very beginning, spent quite a lot of time with my program directors—and I'll come back to some other processes—making sure that as best we could that our panels were top-notch, that they came from the arts, that they were the top people in the arts.

I did a lot of jawboning with my program directors to get a few famous people on every program panel. So that when we gave a grant, people would say, "Oh, well, you know, so-and-so was a part of that. It wasn't just Hodsoll making these grants." It was a decision by peer panels, very like the National Science Foundation, or the National Institutes of Health--from which, you know, in terms of process—the National Endowments on Arts and Humanities came. So, I did quite a lot like that at the beginning.

Q: You were a new broom and you swept clean.

HODSOLL: Well, I didn't sweep clean the people. I kept a lot of people.

Q: But you reviewed all the programs.

HODSOLL: But I reviewed every program, and I also created—this was a little controversial at the beginning because the National Council wasn't sure I wasn't going to supplant them—I created a series of seminars in every program area. I brought

into a variety of places across the country, people of real stature, in each of those program areas. Basically, what I said to them was, I gave them the guidelines for their area. I said, “This is what we do now; I want to know what is most needed from a National Endowment for the Arts. I want you to tell me what is most needed. And then we are going to tweak these programs. And if a program is just fine, that’s fine too, by me. But I want to make sure that this isn’t something just done in Washington or just by a peer panel. I want to make sure that a whole variety of people get in on the act, to at least provide advice, as to what seems to be at the center of gravity of some of these things.”

Q: What were some examples that surprised you from that process?

HODSOLL: I don’t remember what surprised me, but you mentioned the dance program. We put a lot more emphasis, for example, on touring. That’s what dance companies want to do; the lion’s share of their income comes from touring. Also in dance, we put special monies into providing an avenue for dancers who were, say 30 [years of age], 40-plus, when you couldn’t dance that much anymore, to make sure they had avenues into universities and other places to do something, to do dance or something other than dance.

In the media arts, it led to a whole bunch of connections and projects with commercial arts institutions. The endowment doesn’t give to commercial arts institutions by law. But whether an arts institution program is successful financially or not has nothing to do with its excellence. I mean, you know, Broadway and the movies are important.

Q: So, the Metropolitan Opera gets a grant.

A: The Metropolitan Opera gets a grant. While I was there, it got our largest, single grant, except when we helped [film actor and director] Bob Redford start Sundance. [The Sundance Film Festival, now part of the Sundance Institute, became one of the primary venues to promote independent American film makers. Sundance is headquartered in Utah, Redford’s home state.]

It’s important, and you could argue, and if you go back to the beginnings of the endowment, you will discover the big, well-known institutions like the Metropolitan Opera or the New York Philharmonic or Los Angeles Philharmonic—they didn’t want an endowment, because they had money from the private sector, and they were afraid that if the endowment came in, private philanthropists would feel they didn’t have to do that much. The amount of money that we gave in percentages of the budgets of these larger institutions was minuscule.

But it was important because if you had the right people on the panels and on the council, even for the Boston Symphony or whatever, it was something they could then use to get more money from Boston philanthropists. It meant something. Then several of these people would invite me to their fundraisers, and I would make speeches on behalf of the nation, about how important this all was. I sometimes brought letters from the President, not on all occasions but on some occasions. He was very good about that. He let me draft stuff.

Q: A Hollywood guy.

HODSOLL: He was a Hollywood guy. [President Ronald Reagan had been a film actor prior to his involvement in politics.]

So, we did these seminars, and then I went back to the council and the panels. And I said, “Look, this is what I think.” I did a lot of the drafting [for what we presented to the panels and council.] “I think we’ve learned from the seminars. And I want you to tell me where you think it’s right, and where you think it’s wrong, and what you think is possible.”

Q: As the chair, you were still doing the drafting.

HODSOLL: I was doing a lot of the drafting; that’s just my nature. But I had my program directors doing some of the drafting; I didn’t do all the drafting by any means. Getting back to the program directors, and this was before we had the first round of Reagan nominations for the council, everybody but four had left the endowment. So, I had to hire a whole bunch of people.

The four who were still there were some of my best program directors. There was Brian O’Doherty, a very renowned artist who ran the media arts program, but who had been The New York Times and [radio station] WNYT art critic for years before coming up under Nancy Hanks [the second chairman of the NEA, who served both Presidents Nixon and Ford].

There was a woman named Bess Hawes, part of the Lomax family, who was our folk arts director, and nothing short of superb. [Bess Lomax Hawes was the daughter of the noted folklorist John A. Lomax, who was instrumental in compiling the Archive of American Folk Song at the Library of Congress. Bess and her brother Alan assisted their father with this endeavor.]

There was Anthony Turney, who was in charge of the state programs, who was also superb, and all of them stayed. [Turney went on to become deputy chairman of the NEA and later, chairman of the Names Project, the custodian organization of the AIDS Memorial Quilt.] And then I brought in a lot of other people, because while I had this interest in the arts, I didn’t know

who the people in the arts were at that point, because of my prior career [as a federal employee, U.S. Foreign Service Officer, and political appointee].

I was able to get Nancy Hanks, who had been Arts Endowment Chairman under [President] Nixon to join me, and a woman by the name of Muffy Brandon, who was Nancy Reagan's social secretary, who had quite a bit to do with the arts in New York. The three of us sat around in a room even before I was confirmed, and then afterwards, to help me identify and then lure in some people, including my deputy, Hugh Southern, who started one of the ticket programs for theater in New York. I was able to bring in some pretty extraordinary people, so it wasn't all me.

Q: Who were some of the favorites who joined in advisory roles in the council while you were there?

HODSOLL: In the council . . .

Q: Or staff?

HODSOLL: I can do either or both.

Q: Do both.

HODSOLL: We'll start with the council. The council comes out of the White House. And I cut a deal with Penn James, who was then the special assistant to the President for presidential appointments. I basically cut a deal on the way out of the White House. I said, "You know, I want to create a President's committee on the arts and humanities, and we can do that by executive order, and we can put political people and philanthropists on that, but I want the lion's share—I'm not saying there can never be an exception—I want the National Council to be from the arts, regardless of party."

Q: Qualified people.

HODSOLL: Qualified people, and with stature, because you never know how people are going to react on a council. And I got that deal, as I got a deal out of [David] Stockman, after we ended up on where the budget was that it wasn't going to get cut again and I would get raises as we went along. So, I left the White House with those deals. [David Stockman, President Reagan's first Director of the Office of Management and Budget, had come into office committed to Reagan's vision of cutting

the role of the federal government in American life.]

And it worked. I mean, it wasn't a problem. I mean, every now and then I would get a suggestion, particularly from Nancy Reagan, who helped me bring in the famous dancer, Martha Graham. That came from Nancy. She was involved from time to time. Obviously, there was nothing wrong with having Martha Graham on your council. So, that was good!

I also did a lot of telephoning around, and gradually got not only some artists to join in with me, but got chairmen of the boards of the major arts institutions. Because I went around talking to them and had some of them at the seminars.

What would be some of the typical arts institutions that you would bring in?

HODSOLL: Well, at the upper end it was the six major symphonies, the Metropolitan Opera, the San Francisco Opera. I brought in the American Film Institute; we helped to create Sundance, as I previously mentioned. I also established telephone relationships with every one of the major studios, so I could talk to them from time to time, if it seemed appropriate. I didn't want to take their time if it wasn't appropriate.

Q: So, you would call the CEOs [Chief Executive Officers]?

HODSOLL: I would call the CEOs. I thought it was important that if the endowment under its statute was to be a leader, with a relatively small budget—I mean on the not-for-profit side, our budget was only one or two percent of the total that was going into the arts across the country. If we wanted to have an impact, and encourage things that people wanted to do, one would need relationships—back to relationships—with key people in the arts. I mean, you know, a violinist in a small symphony orchestra that has only five full-time paid positions is going to be quite intrigued by the idea of associating with the first violinist of the New York Philharmonic, because they are at another level. They have a hundred paid positions on a full-time basis.

I thought it would be good to do that. It would also help the funders of those organizations in some of the smaller towns to raise money, by being able to say, “Hey, you know, our music director has just talked to the music director of so-and-so!”

I also thought it was important—as in the Science Foundation—and this was less successful, to have at least a program, but in some other programs also, to have an opening to new, experimental stuff.

Q: And you started that?

HODSOLL: No, there had been some of it before, but I added to it. I increased the amount of money available for it. It made me popular in New York City but not everywhere else. One of the problems I had was, as I put together a panel on this, the panel wall came from one side of the experimental, so we ended up with some sameness and some not-so-good quality, so I had to reverse that a bit and change it around.

On the experimental side, you also get some of the grants that are problematic. One of the things I did, I discovered it had been the practice in the Biddle administration, to have the panels who had come from the arts community, to make decisions as to what might maybe be politically unacceptable. I changed all that.

I said, “I didn’t want the panels making decisions about politics. What possible expertise will they have in that? That’s not what they’re there for. They are here to say whether this is good theater or not-so-good theater.” I said, “I want all of that in my office. I will take responsibility for being the political guy.”

While I was at the endowment, I may have vetoed maybe a dozen grants out of 4,000 times eight, which is 32,000 grants. I sometimes made mistakes, and I can talk about that. But I did feel that we were very fortunate in Ronald Reagan. He made a wonderful speech three or four years into my tenure there, aimed at the Soviet Union, that artists must be free to do the unthinkable, and make everybody mad if that’s what they’re about.

I used that with some people, but there were also areas where you could give a grant—I will come back to Mapplethorpe at the end. [The late Robert Mapplethorpe was an artist who received an NEA grant; his work, which in some cases was sexually explicit, attracted controversy and condemnation in some quarters. Conservative Senators and pastors lobbied in the 1980s to end federal funding for the arts because of NEA support to experimental art.]

Q: [Laughter.]

HODSOLL: That was my last year.

Q: You did the deed [awarded a grant to Mapplethorpe]?

HODSOLL: I did the deed but under circumstances that changed because of the nature of the grant. Here is an example of a grant that I denied: There was a guy who was chairman of the board of something called the Washington Project on the Arts; he was a good friend and still is. He wanted to have us help an artist he was encouraging, who wanted to do an outdoor exhibit of television sets with absolutely critical views of every congressman and senator in the Congress, and stick it up on Capitol Hill right in front of the Capitol.

I basically said, “This may be a good piece of experimental art, but given where it’s going to go, and the hoorah it is going to cause, I don’t think we should be doing it.” So, I turned it down.

I also turned down some sexually explicit things that I thought would cause a huge fuss, particularly where there were pictures that people could go wandering around and say, look at what the endowment is up to now!

While we are on this subject, I also had some conversations with people on the very conservative end and in the religious communities about it. I got Mark Hatfield [U.S. Senator from Oregon] to help rent me the Sequoia, the former presidential yacht, to take the guy—who was the guy from Yale, who was so against the endowment? I took the guy, a pastor, and his wife out on the Potomac. We went down the Potomac and had a very nice time. I boned up on the Bible, and we were fine until our literature panel; there was some poet who had used one four-letter word. This guy went off the deep end—not the deep end—I don’t want to phrase it that way. He basically went back to what he had earlier thought [that the NEA should be shut down].

Q: This was the Yale guy? Divinity school?

HODSOLL: He had gone to Yale; he was a preacher. I’ll think of his name. He hammered away at us. But he made a huge mistake; he went on national television and read the poem he objected to, and then added some more four-letter words of his own!

And then we had a woman from Peoria, Illinois, who called in to my public relations person, Dotey Kasingen who I brought in from the White House, complaining primarily about this guy. How can you at the Arts Endowment let this idiot use four-letter words on national television? He got into more trouble out of it than we did.

Coming back to the endowment generally. There’s nothing like coming out of the White House [literally being present at the

White House to get things done]. When I went over there, after being confirmed, I was able to get Chief Justice Warren Burger to swear me in, who was also a big fan of the arts.

Q: Where was the ceremony held? In the White House? His chambers?

HODSOLL: It wasn't in the White House. We weren't in the Old Post Office yet. It wasn't his chambers. I can't remember. It was maybe a hotel, nothing spectacular.

But before I get to that, let me backup. Before I left the White House, having settled the appointments process and having settled the budget issue, a colleague of mine there by the name of John Rodgers came into my office, or maybe [James] Baker, came in and said, "The Attorney General is trying to steal your building." And I said, "What?"

[Former NEA Chairman] Nancy Hanks had arranged for the modernization of the Old Post Office, with the understanding that the Arts and Humanities Endowments would go in there once the renovations were completed. [Nancy Hanks also led the effort to save the Old Post Office from demolition.]

Q: And now it is the latest Trump Hotel.

HODSOLL: And it is now the latest Trump Hotel. I knew Bill Smith [William French Smith, attorney general under President Reagan] pretty well from my immigration, because he was involved with immigration policy when I was at the White House.

Q: Who was Smith?

HODSOLL: First attorney general under Reagan. So, my first reaction was, I don't see any benefit in taking on the attorney general as one of my first acts in office. We'll find someplace else. Since Nancy Hanks had been involved in saving the Old Post Office building, I called her up, and said, "This is what's going on. What do you think?"

And she said, "If you don't get the endowment into the Old Post Office, I'll never speak to you again." I said, "Oh."

Thanks to John Rodgers, and then I went over to see Bill Smith. But first I went over to the Old Post Office to see what it looked like. I had never been inside as opposed to outside. I learned that the Justice Department, which is just one block down

the street [from the Old Post Office] wanted to put a high sensitivity group with high classification into it. I walked around this open-air building, and thought, they can't put something like that in here. It's not going to work; it's going to be a mess.

I got an appointment with Smith. I said, "Have you ever been to the Old Post Office? Your people want to take it over, for the following purposes. I just don't think it's going to work. Would you be willing to take 15 minutes out of your day and just walk over there with me?"

And he did, and he said, "I couldn't agree more." And that was the end of that. And we [the endowment staff] went into the Post Office.

Q: So, you walked over during your meeting? Ah!

HODSOLL: I had a relationship with him. Again, you see, all of this is relationships, nothing more.

Q: And keeping one's word.

HODSOLL: And keeping one's word. And so, we went in, and Nancy did speak to me again. And as I say, Muffy Brandon helped me hire people.

Q: Well, I was in your offices; they were quite glorious.

HODSOLL: They were. I picked the office nobody thought I would pick, because it was in the back, overlooking the rooftops. It was like being in Paris, because the rooftops of the neoclassical buildings were back there, whereas the front offices on the same floor faced Pennsylvania Avenue and overlooked the FBI (Federal Bureau of Investigation) building, which was hideous. It was and it is. So, I said I'd rather be back in the rooftops.

Bill Bennett, who became the humanities endowment chair, went into one of those corner offices. [William J. Bennett was President Reagan's Chair of the National Endowment for the Humanities from 1981-1985.] I can't remember who was in the other office. After about a year in, we went into the Old Post Office. It wasn't ready for us when I first went over there.

Q: So, the General Services Administration took care of the building and so on.

I fought much later on, obviously without success. The GSA decided to just take money from [Donald] Trump. I still don't know how Trump is going to make a hotel out of it.

While we were getting ready to go over there, we were doing all these things internally.

My speech at the beginning is a sort of interesting commentary. I drew it mostly from André Malraux, who was a French minister of culture at one point and also a great author and intellectual. His book Les voix de silence (Voices of Silence) was primarily about the visual arts, and if you look back at history over time, these are the voices that tell us about previous civilizations. Drawing on the last three pages of his book, I said I hope we help not only preserve the best of the old and make it available to people who normally wouldn't be interested in it, but also encourage those who have the greatest chance of passing the only test that matters in the arts, and that is the test of time.

I would make speeches about this. If you look back at those things that have passed the test of time, most of them were commercial in their day. They appealed to broad audiences. Shakespeare was commercial in his day. The broad audience was the wealthy class and the aristocracy, but that was the audience of the day. Now, folk arts were in a slightly different place than this.

But I felt from the beginning that some important people agreed with me. That caused me to take some initiatives not only with the movie industry but also with television and the recording industry. This was before the internet had gotten around as fully as it has today. I think that helped, because I could bring in people.

I mean, there was not an actor in a not-for-profit theater who didn't want to go on Broadway or be in the movies. There wasn't a director who wasn't in that frame of mind. Just as there is only a very small percentage of classical music if you look back over time, that has passed the test of time, there is only a small percentage of movies or television that has, or will, pass the test of time. So, I felt that the endowment should get involved in that.

Q: I downloaded Topper last night because it has passed the test of time.

HODSOLL: It was a joyful film.

If you look at the basics, those were the things that I did. I just have a couple of other notes here that I used for the 50th anniversary of the endowment when I went with the other chairmen still living. I mentioned already developing a bipartisan policy and political relations. Maybe I need to start there. I mentioned the President and First Lady, White House staff, key Cabinet members, and Congressional leadership.

I eventually established a really good relationship with the Democrat who mattered most: Sidney Yates, from Illinois, who ran the appropriations subcommittee in the House of Representatives. We were all about the appropriations committees. I mean, no one was out to change the basic structure of the endowment. We got along. Although in my opening foray and my earlier speeches, I kept talking about the importance of the endowment to civilization, Sid had me up one time for a sandwich in his office. He said, “Frank, you know, you and I agree on civilization. But I can’t get any votes for civilization. So, you must get over that, and talk about what it does for people in their home districts.”

So, I did, and that seemed to work.

Q: That relationship—that give-and-take relationship is a very important factor for establishing rapport with a committee chair, who decides on a number, which will decide how many grants you get.

HODSOLL: That is exactly right. On the Senate side, I had the Republican senator from Illinois whose wife was a piano teacher. He was a great guy. We got awards together. I can’t remember his name.

Q: And Claiborne Pell [U.S. Senator from Rhode Island, instrumental in the creation of the National Endowments for the Arts and Humanities].

HODSOLL: And Clay Pell. He was on the authorizations side, not appropriations. But I made a big effort with that, and I also made a big effort to get to know the leadership.

Q: So, your years of political work at State, at Commerce, in the White House were excellent preparation for you as were your wasted years at Yale chasing the various muses instead of studying your calculus.

HODSOLL: All true, and the other thing that was a product of my early career was to talk to your enemies, and make sure you understand why they are your enemies. And try to see if there are places around the edges where you can turn things around,

and at least make them not as big an enemy as they had been.

The other thing that I did: We had these programs that I mentioned already, and we had the state program, but we had no program that brought in mayors and county commissioners and locals. And the vast majority of not-for-profit arts organizations are local institutions. Even if you're the Metropolitan Opera, it's all about New York, let alone if you're a symphony in Lincoln, Nebraska, or wherever you are.

So, I made a big effort to bring in a new program—the locals program. Which established grants for, and panels for, local arts agencies, to bring public monies at the local level. I am not suggesting there wasn't money there already; New York City had a huge budget. But we wanted to make them part of the mix so they could provide ideas as to how they could increase that—to bring in chambers of commerce and so on.

Q: There was another analytical view of where the money was going, so you looked at it not only by the medium—dance, art, visual arts and whatever—but you also wanted to see where it was going, see how it was spread across the fifty states and the localities.

HODSOLL: Well, the 50 states were easy; we already had a panel on that. But the locals.... You're talking about thousands of locals, from little tiny places to New York City or Los Angeles. The point was to get their perspective, and I wanted little local arts agencies to be part of it, too. So, we created a locals program, which became quite popular. I had a guy at the White House, Rich Williamson, who sadly died not so long ago, who was our special assistant to the President for state and local government.

He called me up and said, "You're the first person who's had the Congress of Mayors appraise the Reagan Administration."

[Joint laughter.]

HODSOLL: I said, "I hope you won't hold it against me."

The guy who was then Chairman of the National Conference of Mayors, who was and is still mayor of Charleston, South Carolina, was Joe Riley. And Joe and I got to know each other, and we decided that we would start at the endowment something called the Mayor's Institute, and it continues to this day. Basically, what the Mayor's Institute does is provide a

meeting, every year for one week, that brings together the mayors from different kinds of cities with the best design architects in the country, in terms of city planning. This all grew out of working together.

Q: This is something you would think would be coming out of HUD [U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development]?

HODSOLL: It was coming out of the Arts Endowment, and it wasn't just about aesthetics. It began, in part—I had a fine arts director whom I was able to lure in: Adele Chatfield Taylor, who was until recently President of the American Academy in Rome. She came up with this idea [the Mayor's Institute]. It wasn't my idea. Most of the ideas I capitalized on came from other places.

Q: That's your job; if there are a thousand ideas coming, you pick ten.

HODSOLL: Or pick some that work. That one did work. But the context for it was, just before we started this, there had been a disastrous set of decisions by the U.S. Department of Transportation in the city of Seattle. They had decided that they were going to connect one portion of the interstate [highway] with another portion of the interstate. They ran a big interstate connector right through the center of a whole bunch of Seattle neighborhoods, destroying the neighborhoods, destroying the sense of community of those neighborhoods. It made the press, The New York Times, and various other places. That became the issue.

Of course, in Charleston, South Carolina, Joe Riley was concerned about preserving the historic inner city while continuing to encourage the city to be economically viable. How do you combine historic preservation with the economy of a local community? And so, he was extremely interested in this.

I'm very proud of the fact that a couple of years ago he did the Nancy Hanks Lecture, and he shouted out in the middle of his lecture, "Is Hodsoll in the audience?" I raised my hand.

He said, "You remember when we spent a lot of time on the telephone talking about the parking lot at the edge of historic Charleston? And I said, "Yes!"

[The Nancy Hanks Lecture on Arts and Public Policy is an annual forum intended to stimulate dialogue on policy and social issues affecting the arts.]

And this approach gets back to NATO CCMS.

Q: North Atlantic Treaty Organization Committee on Challenges to Modern Society, of which you were the U.S. secretary. [In the 1970s, Hodsoll had been assigned to staff the U.S. Office of CCMS. He worked for John Barnum, who served concurrently as Deputy Secretary of Transportation and Chairman of CCMS. Hodsoll discusses in detail his assignment to CCMS in this oral history.]

HODSOLL: I remembered that traffic patterns—we had some program—

Q: Road safety.

HODSOLL: Road safety. John Barnum had been the Under Secretary of Transportation. I had written some notes for the director of policy at Transportation, a short piece of paper about buses vs. trains. I was for buses as opposed to trains in those days. And so, I had gotten into some of the analytics.

But anyway, I could talk with the mayor of Charleston with some memory of what went into traffic patterns and where you put parking lots in places that didn't cause blockages. He remembered that, and he thought that was quite unusual for an arts endowment person to be talking with him about such things.

Q: Let me go through a couple of things that you've touched on and I want to expand on, Frank, and then we'll take a break. You talked about needs. What were some of the needs panels and what were some of the recommendations and suggestions that they made regarding needs in the U.S. arts?

HODSOLL: Well, in dance it was for more touring, getting companies out traveling, and better ways of helping dancers who were no longer able to dance to do other things. In literature, it was increasing the amount of money available to not-for-profit presses, and encouraging for-profit presses to have not-for-profit arms so that people's stuff could get published. There wasn't an Amazon in those days. [Amazon.com is an online retail seller of books and other merchandise; it is also possible to self-publish a book on Amazon.]

In the visual arts, it was helping unknown artists to get shown in the major art centers of the world. In film, it was helping

independent filmmakers to be able to contact Hollywood filmmakers, and to have a chance to be seen and be trained in how to put on a commercial film. In opera, it was getting people to produce operas beyond the divine 12 of the 19th century, and the same thing in classical music, to get beyond just the 19th century Germans, and to open people particularly to American composers. So, we gave special points for that in our grants process. We changed guidelines and made more emphasis for some of these areas that came up.

In the state arts agency, one of my big initiatives was about art education, and opening arts education programs to things other than helping artists in schools, which were an adjunct to what the schools were doing, and to helping arts teachers. Eventually we were able to get arts standards passed at the national level. But basically, to engage the education universe in the arts. We were able while I was there to get Elizabeth Dole [Secretary of Transportation under Reagan and then Secretary of Education under President George W. Bush]. Her assistant secretary for policy [at the Department of Labor] was the husband of one of my arts directors. And we got him to do a scans study by the Department of Labor, which showed that people who had had arts education could do better than people who had not had arts education. I can talk about that if you'd like.

So, that came out of the state panels, who weren't sure how they were going to take on the much bigger state education bureaucracies around the country.

Q: And your local initiative . . .

HODSOLL: Well, we didn't have a local seminar at that point because I hadn't thought of it yet. But the locals program came to some degree from a similar direction.

Q: Frank, talk about the work in terms of supporting Sundance.

HODSOLL: Well, my brilliant media arts director, Brian O'Doherty, knew Bob Redford well, and Redford was a big supporter of the Arts Endowment. He was thinking about taking a magnificent piece of property in Utah that he had bought, primarily for environmental reasons, to turn into a reserve for the environment. It is still there, and we have meetings out there even today. But he wanted to use his contacts in Hollywood; he was a major star. He could get some of his colleagues who were also major stars to join him in creating a place in which there could be two things: one would be training and the other for contacts for new filmmakers and new actors, but mostly filmmakers. It is interesting to note that although Redford has never gotten an Oscar as an actor, he has gotten four Oscars as a director. He would then bring in, and still does bring in, major figures from

the industry to work with young filmmakers.

Coming back to Brian O'Doherty, when we had the seminar on film making, Redford came to that. We had it in Cleveland or somewhere in the Midwest. Several other people came as well. The idea sprang out of there, mostly Redford and Brian. I didn't invent it. A year passes, and it gets to the point where Redford is ready to move forward. Brian came in to see me and said, "Bob is ready to move forward on this. Can we give a special grant of 250,000 dollars to help him with walking-around money to get it started?" I said, "You bet." And so, we did; it was a Chairman's grant.

Q: So, that was the kick-start money.

HODSOLL: That was the kick-start money.

Q: For the Sundance Film Festival.

HODSOLL: For Sundance Institute, which brought the filmmakers into Sundance. The festival came about as part of that, but later. That's commercial; it doesn't need any help from the endowment.

But there wouldn't have been a Sundance Festival if there had not been the Sundance Institute. That's where Redford started. The people involved in the Sundance Institute became, if you will, like the National Endowment for the Arts; they became the hub for the festival. People wanted to go to the festival and get an award or a nod or a pat on the head, because the people who counted in Hollywood were part of it. The people who could green-light a show were part of it.

We did things like that in other areas. I convened a meeting of the major commercial publishers with the not-for-profit publishers to get them to talk about who did what, and how one could help the other. I did a lot of that with the recording industry as well. Because I felt that first of all, an individual artist is not not-for-profit and is not commercial. He or she wants to make a living. To make a living, you've got to sell things. You have to sell yourself as an actor, or your book, or whatever. You need to become somewhat commercial in the process.

There is not a theater or symphony orchestra in the country that doesn't today use the most popular pieces, whether they're going back to the 19th century German composers, or whether it's Shakespeare or whatever, that doesn't look very carefully at what they're doing, to make sure they have enough ticket sales to stay in business. That's a commercial decision. That is why

Broadway today is mainly all musical. It's hard for straight theater that isn't musical, because of the movies and television, and people are looking at things on iPads and other devices.

Q: And because of ticket prices! If you pay 150 or 160 dollars for a seat, you certainly want some strings and drums to go along with it.

HODSOLL: Ticket prices are huge, that is true. I may take here a note from the theater, from Molly Smith, the artistic director of the Arena Stage [in Washington, DC]. I first met her when she was running the Perseverance Theater in Alaska, in Juneau. She had put together a fine theater; we sort of brought her into the endowment. Nobody had heard of her on the theater panel, but when I went to Juneau on other business, I went to one of her productions, The Cherry Orchard. It was mind-bogglingly good, and there wasn't a single professional actor in it! She was the director, and she got paid, but she was the only paid person. She had managed to get people from the community to act in The Cherry Orchard, and it was knock-your-socks-off!

I had a long talk with Theo Bikel, the guy who used to be head of Actor's Equity [the professional union for actors] and who was on our council then, and I said, "How can we find a way to get an exception from union requirements to allow people who are doing amazing things, who are not union, who are not threatening any union, but who are out in remote places where it would be hard to get unions started?" He got together with us, and between us we were able to change the guidelines around to allow for some of that, without taking on Equity and just saying "we're not for unions."

The other thing that we did: We had a challenge program, to provide larger grants, as much as a million dollars, to institutions that needed help getting over a hump or going a little more strongly in a different direction, whatever it was.

I got [Senator] Sidney Yates [a Democrat] and Jim McClure, the Senator [from Idaho] on the Republican side, to agree to double the amount of money we put into the challenge program; we had to reduce some money in other areas in exchange. While we did that we created an advancement program, much smaller, for little institutions that needed technical assistance. And the idea was to get these institutions to build endowments that would last over time, instead of spending it all on the operating side.

And by the time I left the endowment, my challenge program director—and I'm not going to vouch absolutely for the mathematics—but she said we had raised a billion dollars—that's B for billion—in new money over and above what people had been giving before. If that's true, or even half that, we did well. So, that was one thing.

National recognition: There were two programs that were not yet in place—that hadn't started, but had been talked about—when I arrived. One was the Heritage Awards for folk artists, and the other was Jazz Masters for the best of the jazz musicians. We started them officially, although I give credit to Hanks and Biddle [Hodsoll's two predecessors at the helm of the NEA] for both of those programs.

Then we created the National Medal of Arts. There was a National Medal of Science, which got no recognition whatsoever, particularly. But I thought it would be a good idea to bring in the President once a year to lay on hands for some of our best artists. The Kennedy Center Honors went only to the performing artists. We thought we would do both performing artists and writers and painters. I was able to get that through the Congress and the President signed it, and that's been going on ever since, on an annual basis, at the national level.

Q: Is there a lunch or something at the White House?

HODSOLL: When I was there we always had a lunch or a reception. I can't tell you how it works today.

[Changing subjects] Preservation: One of the things I thought was important, and this had started before I got there, was to preserve elements of our popular culture that had existed before and that had passed the test of time. There was an outfit called the American Film Institute, which had started to catalog some [films], but it had been let go; it wasn't progressing.

So, I talked to several people in the film industry and major artists in the film industry, including Chuck [Charlton] Heston. Basically, everybody agreed that there needs to be a better way. The Museum of Modern Art [in New York City] has a program or museum of television, but there was nothing that put it together and made the studios feel like it was an important part of their mission. I also carried this over into television and met with every one of the CEOs of the television studios. But television is so much more difficult, because there is so much of it.

Q: Storage technology is improving.

HODSOLL: It's improving a lot. Remember, this was before the internet had blossomed.

So, we did that, and that became quite popular, and we got an Oscar for that. That was for the endowment. (The National

Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences presents annual awards for excellence to films and to individuals involved in creating American films. The so-called “Academy Awards” are also called “the Oscars,” named for the golden statuette that is given to each awardee.)

Q: The endowment got an Oscar?

HODSOLL: And I got to go to an Oscar ceremony and make a little speech. The Emmy Association gave me, for me, a special little thing—not a big thing—for the same thing in television. But we did a lot less in television, to be honest with you; it was immense and too hard to deal with. (An “Emmy” award recognizes excellence in the American television industry in the same way that an “Oscar” recognizes excellence in American film.)

Q: That’s great, Frank. Congratulations!

HODSOLL: So, that was on the preservation side.

Arts education. As I mentioned earlier, when I got to the endowment, the arts education was about putting artists in schools. And it was perfectly decent, but I felt that if we wanted to make a difference in schools we needed to get into schools, not take artists and move them into schools, but to get their community to make the arts important.

I already mentioned the issue with the Department of Labor and the scan study. We hired a guy who had been a superintendent of one of the California school districts—Ed Newman or somebody? —and produced a report called—well, I called up [Senator Sidney] Yates before we agreed on the title, and said, “We’re going to create a book called Towards Civilization. I know you are not that keen on civilization, but this is about arts education.”

And he said, “Well, that’s fine. Do what you need to do.” So, we created a booklet that became quite popular.

Q: That was a nice touch to recall that conversation with him.

HODSOLL: I never forgot any conversation with him.

We created that booklet, and I made a huge effort. Bill Bennett had gone on to the Department of Education—he was Secretary

of Education—and Lynne Cheney was now Chairman of the Humanities Endowment. And I made a big effort to bring both into what we were doing, and got their consent—not money but consent—to the general direction of where we were heading. And obviously I had to bring in arts educators. We didn’t have any panel of arts educators, and I had to make sure the artists in education didn’t have a riot over this. And we had a lot of meetings all over the United States, regional meetings.

Q: So, your staff was hopping.

HODSOLL: We did hop, and I brought in additional people.

Q: How many people did you have, roughly, on staff?

HODSOLL: I would say, I don’t know, probably a little less than 100. In any event, this went over well, and the National Council for the Arts went along with it; the Department of Education went along with it—Bill Bennett had gone over there; and Lynne Cheney was in favor of what we were up to.

We then drafted up—we basically had a bunch of meetings with the arts educators and some artists—and we put together national guidelines for arts education, and that took a bit of time, about a year. Eventually we had a document, and I took it over to see Bill Bennett, at the Department of Education. I said, “Bill, we have been working on this education stuff....”

Q: This is all in the Reagan administration, and you are sending out guidelines from Washington?! [President Reagan had campaigned on the promise of reducing federal mandates to the states from Washington, DC.]

HODSOLL: This is in the Reagan administration, but we hadn’t done that yet [issue guidelines]. I talked to Bill. I said, “We want your department involved in this at the ground level, and you should take it over. We are not the Department of Education.” And he read it over, and called me back, and said, “It seems like you are on the right track. I’ll assign somebody to work it through.”

What happened, before anything happened, there was a process that was started under Bennett, but it didn’t conclude under Bennett. It concluded under [Richard] Riley, who was [President Bill] Clinton’s secretary of education. About the second year of the first Clinton administration, they issued the arts education guidelines.

There were already guidelines in history and a number of other subjects. They are not mandates, they are guidelines. Then long after I had gone, within about the next two or three years, every state adopted these guidelines, almost verbatim. But, and here comes the big but; I have said this in public speeches, too:

There are 16,000 school districts, and there are precious few, hardly any, that have adopted these state guidelines, and the reason for that is, they didn't vet it at the local level. The lesson for me was, we did some good stuff. But if you want to make a change in education, you've got to get the school districts on your side. While I had met with a number of school districts in the associations of school districts, I didn't make it as much of a priority as I should have.

And as I said at the 50th anniversary of the endowment, "Hierarchical pieces of paper do not get you from here to there." Even if they're coming from all kinds of fancy signatures. What gets you from here to there is the people who have to implement them. We need to think about that even today, in arts education.

Better communication among arts funders: We instituted in addition to the panels, regular meetings with state arts agency leaders, and we established the locals program, and then meetings with the leaders of the locals. That's on the public money side. I would bring in some of my program directors, depending on the subject area. That had never happened before. That was a question of bringing in public funders at other levels of government with people at the national level who were concerned about this. Some good ideas came out. These were ministerial kinds of ideas, not major things, but ministerial kinds of ideas. Most importantly, people were talking to each other. The conversations, the introductions helped.

Q: There were states, were there also localities?

HODSOLL: We also brought in several locals.

Q: Big localities.

HODSOLL: No, little ones, too. We always made sure of the little ones that were in there, too. Because if you look out across the country, the big ones have major institutions. Eventually I became the commissioner of Ouray County, a tiny place of 4,000 people. They needed more help than New York City, which had a staff of more than 100 people administering New York City funds for the arts.

Special projects with foundations: I did a lot of traveling to New York and other places to establish relationships, particularly with the Rockefeller Foundation, and others. We entered into several joint projects with them, which increased our budget. They could use our panels.

Q: Was there a political overlay because of Reagan's conservative principles, which underscored who he was and how he governed?

HODSOLL: Ronald Reagan was a master politician, and he knew, and since he had decided he was in favor of the arts endowment, that if you were going to have a successful arts endowment, you needed to reach out to all kinds of people regardless of their political views. So, he supported that.

In terms of the arts community in general, a large majority of them were not in favor of Ronald Reagan. I doubt they voted for Reagan in his second term or George W. Bush in his only term. But after I got there, after about six months, I never had a single time when any of the people I dealt with regularly—whether on my staff or at high levels in the arts community—ever mentioned Reagan. They knew I was the person they were dealing with. They knew that Reagan was supportive because the administration was basically supportive. They may not have liked the administration on other things. There wasn't a political issue, and I respected their right to have whatever political views they had; we just never got into it.

The last thing I'm going to mention is, we increased the amount of money for research. I was a big believer in numbers. We did some five-year planning. And that sort of guided in general. I would bring all kinds of people into that. And if somebody felt left out, I would say, "I'm sorry," and bring them in.

I want to summarize all this by saying that the key thing to running any government agency of any kind, whether it's the arts endowment or something else, is to identify the key people you need to have, if not totally on your side, at least more or less on your side. And they must absolutely trust you. And if you can create that trust, they will let you get away with some things they may not agree with, because you're a decent guy and aren't doing this to do me in. That's just critical.

Coming back to the Foreign Service—I don't know today. But when I was in the Foreign Service, the Foreign Service and the State Department, and a lot of other government agencies needed to do twenty times, a hundred times, the amount of that [trust-building] than they do. In this government of ours—and it's true of other people's governments, too—we tend to compartmentalize it into dinky little pieces and fight for whatever the heck it is we think we should fight for, without thinking,

“Why are these people fighting us? Do they have anything to say that we should think about?”

If there is anything I learned in government, that is the most important thing. If you want to change things, you need to think about it. And you need to respect people even if they disagree with you. I think that’s extremely important.

Q: That’s very good. Let me close with a couple of questions here. Bill Bennett and Lynne Cheney: Would you talk about your relationship with each of them, and the transition between when Bennett left and Cheney came in?

HODSOLL: Sure, well, Bennett came in after I got there, and I helped him get the job. Bennett was at the humanities center down in North Carolina; he was director of it. The guy who was there [at the National Endowment of the Humanities] previously was quite awful; he believed in segregation. When Penn James and crew were going through all of this as to who to appoint, they asked my views, and I said I don’t know either of them, but Bennett seems to be a solid citizen, and he was certainly conservative. Whether that had any influence, I don’t know, but Bennett got the job. My relationship with Bennett was excellent.

Q: How often did you see each other?

HODSOLL: Practically every day in the hallway, once we got into the Old Post Office. I would only bother him, and he would only bother me, on occasion. The humanities endowment does a lot of public television. He would come down and ask if my panels could help him: “Is this being done well from the television point of view?”

Bennett was always quite appreciative that I had drawn on Voices of Silence [the Andre Malraux book] for my opening statement, which showed that I wasn’t totally a politico; I thought about some of these things. We got along. He did his thing, and I did my thing. Arts education brought us together, because my view of arts education was relatively conservative.

Incidentally, while I was helping to put this together, I learned that doing the arts is as almost as important as learning about the arts. Learning about the arts helps you understand other people’s civilization, their culture and history. But actually doing the arts is quite extraordinary. When you’re on stage, and I can remember this from my high school days, you’re not just writing down something in a blue book that nobody ever sees. Everybody is looking at you and seeing if you did your stuff. And if you do not do your stuff, then thumbs down, and there are no excuses. It’s like playing football. When you are on the football field, you either catch the ball or you don’t. You either block the guy or you don’t, and if you don’t, everybody knows that you

failed.

Q: And there are consequences.

HODSOLL: And there are consequences, and you can't hide it. That's one of the things that doing the arts does, which I didn't fully understand at the beginning, although I should have known from my own experience.

The transition from Bennett to Lynne Cheney: I didn't know Dick Cheney or Lynne Cheney [the husband and wife team active in Republican politics. Dick Cheney served as Vice President during the George Bush presidency.] No one asked my opinion about Lynne Cheney being the new chairman of the National Endowment for the Humanities. But Lynne Cheney had a relationship with Margaret Tutwiler, one of Jim Baker's principal assistants in public affairs [at the Department of State]. Evidently Margaret had said some nice things about me, so when Cheney came over after being confirmed, she invited me to lunch. And then I invited her to lunch, and it went back and forth. We got along.

Was there a transition from Bennett to Cheney? I don't really know. Lynne made her big thing trying to change the history standards and got into a mess over it. I am on Lynne Cheney's side on that. Some of the history courses in high schools in this country are really not very good. It's not a question of being conservative or liberal. It's that they don't get to it [they don't really teach history]. So, I was on her side on that. We would have periodic lunches and get together on occasion. But like with Bennett, she did her thing and I did mine.

Q: There were some areas of overlap, more in the education area [between the NEA and the NEH].

HODSOLL: There were areas of overlap in education and television.

Q: Frank, you mentioned Reagan's speech on the USSR [the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics]. Were there other ideological kinds of things in your portfolio that were drawn in by others in the administration?

HODSOLL: Well, the Reagan speech came out of the Reagan White House. There was a very conservative speech writer, whose name escapes me, but he asked my opinion [of the draft]. And I said, "Well, the Russians keep a pretty tight lid on anything that could be critical of the Soviet regime"—just as they do today. In those days, we had USIA [the United States Information Agency] programs that brought jazz and Dizzy Gillespie. [USIA existed 1953-1999, when it was shut down and

its functions brought under the Department of State.]

USIA did wonderful stuff, and Russian people and other people in the Soviet republics loved it. People would applaud quietly or in secret, the fact that in America we had all these artists doing all these things, most of which was quite extraordinary; it was good. The Russians had to go back to the czarist period, the 19th century, where they were producing their extraordinary stuff. So, we were in sync [NEA and USIA].

Charlie Wick, the director of USIA, and a dear friend of the president, was totally supportive. He sent me on a major tour around Latin America, for the quincentennial of the voyage of [Christopher] Columbus. I guess that came at the end of my career. While I was at the endowment, we had the quincentennial of Columbus, 1492-1992. It must have been before 1992 because I left in 1989. At any rate, we were planning for the quincentennial.

Q: A quincentennial: My goodness, we don't have a civilization that has that concept!

HODSOLL: That is true. And I learned quickly that in Latin America, as well as many other places, you need to talk about Columbus as an encounter and not as a discovery. I figured that out quickly. [In the United States, Columbus Day is celebrated as the “discovery” of North America. However, many persons throughout the Western Hemisphere dispute this interpretation of history.]

At any rate, I went to see Charlie, with whom I had a good relationship. We had not done much in international, only every now and then. We did produce panels for USIA on the arts.

Q: What do you mean, you produced panels?

HODSOLL: USIA used NEA panels to pick artists to send abroad.

Q: Oh, really? So, if they were looking for painters or musicians, they would turn to your panels.

HODSOLL: They would turn to our panels. If the panel recommended Smith and they didn't like Smith, they could reject Smith; that was fine.

Q: But if they liked Smith . . .

HODSOLL: We were the initial cut. We did other things. We helped finance the [U.S. national exhibit that was shown at the] Venice Biennale. That's where I got money from Rockefeller. I was a source of resources, in very minor amounts. We got interested in the quincentennial. I said, this would be a wonderful way to bring together the Western Hemisphere in the arts. We could have the countries in the Western Hemisphere have more interchange with the United States. They wanted to do that, because we were the media hub of the world.

I went over to Charlie and said, "I'd like to see if we could spearhead some specific projects on the quincentennial. I also shared with him—and I may want to delete this later—that the guy who was head of our quincentennial commission was just hopeless. He didn't do anything; he just had a title.

Q: Don't delete him but don't criticize strongly.

HODSOLL: Charlie said, "Why don't I get some money together, and we'll send you off on a tour of Latin America." I think it was something called AMPARTS; is that a program?

Q: Yes.

HODSOLL: I said, "That will be great, because I don't think we should use arts endowment money for this." He sent me first class, and off I went, and it was South America, mostly. I started in Brazil and went all around South America.

Q: Did Mimi go?

HODSOLL: Mimi [Hodsoll's wife] went to part of it; to Peru and Colombia. Tony Gillespie was then ambassador in Colombia. She did not go to Brazil, and she didn't go to Argentina.

Off I went and talked to ministers of culture and various other people in these various countries and there was tremendous interest in having some group come to the United States to represent their country as part of the Columbus Quincentennial. Most of it was European-derived art. We weren't talking about Indian folk art; take that back, we did talk a little bit about it, but not as much.

So out of that came a series of projects. I can't remember what they were, I'll have to check. I know that the symphony orchestra in Santiago, Chile—I got letters from them for about a year saying how glad they were that this had happened. And this was under Pinochet [President of Chile, 1973-1990; he was concurrently chief of the Chilean armed forces and ruled Chile as a dictatorship.] And when I was in Chile, the minister of culture was Pinochet's daughter. And she took me out to a theater production in Spanish, and she helped translate. I said afterward, "You know, this is pretty critical of your dad." She laughed and said, "It will never be on television. This is an outlet."

Q: What were the divisive issues? Mapplethorpe was one, and what were the others?

HODSOLL: Throughout my career at the endowment, we had grants that came up that I either rejected or had to defend.

Q: What percentage were the tough ones?

HODSOLL: Oh, tiny, less than one percent. I vetoed 12 grants out of 42,000. I may have made a mistake. What happened on [Robert] Mapplethorpe and [Andres] Serrano...

Q: This was the "Christ piss."

HODSOLL: This was the Piss Christ [by Serrano] and Mapplethorpe's erotic photography. What happened here, first, was on Mapplethorpe. My museum director came in to see me, as did all my directors when they thought something might be problematic in terms of politics. This was my last year in the endowment. The museum director said, "We have a proposal from the Institute of Contemporary Arts at the University of Pennsylvania for a Mapplethorpe exhibit."

I said, "What Mapplethorpe exhibit?" Most of what Mapplethorpe did—you could argue whether he was a great photographer, but most of what he did was not going to cause anybody an issue.

I was told it was the Whitney Show, sort of repackaged. I was shown the Whitney Show, which I think we may have funded in New York. And the only thing that came close was a nude family scene. I said I could defend that, and so we gave the grant.

Q: You hadn't seen the Piss Christ?

HODSOLL: No, I'm going to come back to Piss Christ. This is all Mapplethorpe. They are separate issues. So, I made the grant, and then Mapplethorpe died of AIDS in New York. And Janet Carden, who was the head of the University of Pennsylvania Contemporary Arts Institute added the X-Y-Z series as a tribute. We had not funded that, but she added it. And then it went to the University of Pennsylvania.

Q: To the same space?

HODSOLL: Yes, as part of the exhibit, it went to the same space. Nothing happened at the University of Pennsylvania, but then it came to the Corcoran [a gallery in Washington, DC], and all hell broke loose. I was then at the OMB [Office of Management and Budget].

Okay, Piss Christ. Piss Christ was something we didn't choose. At Nancy Hanks's suggestion, very early on in my tenure, we funded the North Carolina School of the Arts to pick a visual artist, once a year, to be recognized by the National Endowment for the Arts as a distinguished artist. They picked Serrano, and they picked Piss Christ. Serrano was the photographer for Piss Christ. And so, no one had brought that to my attention.

The irony is, when I agreed to do this Nancy Hanks program with the North Carolina School of the Arts, I was criticized by the then-visual arts director for being an unapologetic conservative. It had nothing to do with being a non-apologetic conservative. North Carolina School of the Arts was a well-regarded place; we had other places outside Washington that made decisions, and we blessed the process.

Then Piss Christ comes along, and all hell breaks loose. By the time it came, I had left the endowment and was at OMB. I was told to keep out of it, which was appropriate. From one perspective—and some of my arts friends and I have laughed about this—my timing was exquisite, because I didn't have to deal with it when it broke. [John] Frohnmayer did, the guy who succeeded me. [John Frohnmeyer served as NEA Chairman under President George H.W. Bush, from 1989-1992.]

The trouble with Frohnmayer was, and I think the arts community would agree: He was a decent sort of guy. He had not a clue as to how to deal with the politics of this. Soon, nobody trusted him, either on the arts community side or on the conservative side.

Q: And it became political in the White House.

HODSOLL: And it became political in the White House, and eventually Frohnmayer was fired.

I testified before a commission that was put together by Lynn Garner, a principal benefactor of Nancy Hanks in the Nixon White House, and some others. I testified that what I would have done, had I been there, which I was not: I would have made crystal clear that we had not funded the X-Y-Z series, and would not have done so, and that it had been added on [to the original exhibit, after the fact]. The endowment imprimatur applies only to the original approved grant.

Q: So, there were two different artists, the X-Y-Z series by Mapplethorpe, and Serrano. There were two separate incidents.

HODSOLL: They were done at the same time but they were two separate exhibits.

Q: But there was essentially an attack on the judgment of the endowment, for funding two separate exhibits: the X-Y-Z, which you hadn't funded, and the North Carolina School of the Arts—the Serrano—which you had funded. But you funded the institution, not Serrano.

HODSOLL: We had funded the other part of the Mapplethorpe, too. It was very confusing because there were two exhibits going on at the same time; it wasn't the time to get into a long exegesis as to what's in the grant papers.

But what I would have done is simply say, we did not fund this. It's not appropriate for funding. Any future funding of this show can only refer to the general Mapplethorpe show and not to the X-Y-Z. And I would have put on my walking shoes and walked over to the Hill and talked with every conservative I could find.

I had a very good relationship with [United States Senator] Jesse Helms. The reason was, he had a pet project in North Carolina that he loved. It was not something I would have necessarily gone to every year. It was a history pageant about Jamestown. I went to it every year and shook hands with Jessie, and I never had any difficulties with Jesse Helms, whatsoever. That is the sort of thing you do, politically. There was nothing wrong with the pageant. It was a perfectly fine thing to do at the local level.

I would have gone to see him, and I would have repudiated the X-Y-Z. You must think about politics. Jesse Helms was in a

tough re-election campaign against a moderate Democrat. He was able to use the pictures from the X-Y-Z series in his political campaign, to say, you need me, a good conservative in Washington, to keep your tax dollars from funding this crap.

On Serrano, I would have said, first, we didn't fund it. Secondly, I would have gotten into the press and said, it's not appropriate for funding because it's not the art, it's the fact that a crucifix in urine is going to be highly offensive to a huge number of people. It's like going to a historically black college and calling them all 'n word.' It's just not appropriate. I would have said, I'm going to withdraw the money from the North Carolina School of the Arts and ask them never to do something like this again. And I would say I was sorry.

Now, Frohnmayer never did any of that. Had I been there and done that, would it have saved the day? I don't know.

Q: Looking back on your time at the endowment, and I think this is enough. We've done two hours, and this is brilliant stuff, you hit this over the wall.

HODSOLL: I did this on the 50th anniversary [adapted the oral history from his notes for that event].

Q: History needs more and this is good stuff. In fact, there may be more people looking at this particular thing, because anybody who is going to be writing anything about the endowment or OMB will be looking for this in the search engines.

Mistakes: What were the tough issues? If you had to do them over, whether directions or scope or people, with the hindsight of 20/20 and 20 years, what would you have done a bit differently?

HODSOLL: On arts education, I would have engaged the school districts and local schools. I mean you can't spend time with 16,000 school districts, but I would have spent more time on it, and not just with the federal and state level.

I would have probably put more effort into sort of local pilot projects that would demonstrate how public sector and private sector can get together to make communities better off. Not only better off from having the arts available, but better off financially, because people come to places because of the arts. The arts sell more tickets and bring in more money in aggregate than all sports events.

Q: Say that again?

HODSOLL: People in aggregate spend more money on the arts—including movies—than they do on professional sporting events. It's important financially to a lot of towns. People who come to smaller towns because either they have relatives there or they have something specific they want to see. That's why the national parks are such a huge draw.

I should have spent more time at the Department of Commerce to establish relationships with tourism and so on, because tourism can make an enormous difference. It's also great from a public diplomacy point of view, for people to know that in the United States, you have all this myriad of fantastic things that are going on. You don't have to go to New York City, although you should go to New York City. I could have spent more time on that.

I will tell you something where I made a mistake. Towards the end of my time at the endowment, I noticed because of my sort of inability to stay away from detail, that our peer panels were—I had them all ranking the institutions that came in. You can't do this for individual grants. I noticed there was no necessary relationship between the percentage of the grant request given and the rating in terms of artistic excellence or impact. And so, I started talking to my program directors. I said, "Why is this? I don't have a problem with inconsistency, but if there are going to be major inconsistencies then you are going to have to explain it to me. We gave more money to this lower-ranked organization as a percentage of the grant request because so and so. Maybe it's just fine; I'm not saying it's wrong."

Nobody particularly liked that idea. So, I introduced computers at the endowment. To show you how much I knew, I brought in Wang. Not a terribly good decision, but it seemed okay at the time.

Q: At one time Wang was the top-of-the-line, state of the art!

HODSOLL: Well, they were. They had a good reputation.

Long story short, I started to change the guidelines. Nobody wanted me to. I should have been smarter, and then there was a hoorah out in the hustings. Panels should not be juries.

I said, I don't understand; there should be an explanation.

Q: If you rate somebody high and give them low money, why?

HODSOLL: And then what happened was, the hoorah went public, and [Senator] Yates called me and said, “I’m going to cut you off on this.” No appropriated monies—and that meant my salary—could be used to push this forward. And that was the end of it. That was a failure, in hindsight....

Q: But a good example of how Congress rules.

HODSOLL: In hindsight, it was not a big enough issue to have gone to the mat on. You have to pick your battles.

Q: Something you learned from Baker.

HODSOLL: I got overly intrigued with my mathematical mind. That didn’t serve the endowment well; forget about me.

Q: Well, if you think of anything else, think next time to add. There are things that will pop up when you wake up in the morning, and we will do it. Probably when I get back from California.

HODSOLL: Well, have a good trip.

Q: We’ll look forward to seeing you on the way back, and let’s get together and do something other than oral history, too.

Q: This is February 1, 2016, the continuation of the oral history of Frank Hodsoll. Interviewer is Tex Harris. We are about to begin with a little bit of a retrospective from Frank’s work at the National Endowment for the Arts, dealing with Grammy and Academy awards.

HODSOLL: We never got a Grammy. We got an Emmy—I personally got an Emmy—and then an Academy Award for preservation. I had made big deal about beefing up our preservation program with the American Film Institute, and we completed what had been started some years earlier, making copies of particularly nitrate films that were deteriorating, of movies that dated to the 19th century and all the way up to the present date, and the AFI catalog thereof. The Academy [for Motion Picture Arts and Sciences] thought that was a good thing to do, and so a former council member of the arts endowment, a guy named Bob Wise, who was the Academy-Award winning director of The Sound of Music and West Side Story, called me up. Actually, one of my deputies had spoken with him, and he said the Academy would be willing to give the

endowment an Academy Award for this. So that happened. I went out there, and it was quite a thrill. That was kind of fun. Who is the woman who presented me the award, with whom I'd been on a panel before? Her father was from Wyoming. She was a very famous actress, Glenn Close.

So the endowment [National Endowment for the Arts] was able through that television program to reach 50 million people, so that was a step forward. And then the Academy for Television Arts and Sciences decided they had to be part of this too, so they gave me a special Emmy Award. We also went after television. One of the things I discovered was, it's a lot easier to preserve feature films than it is to preserve television, for the simple reason there is so much television. Are you really going to keep all of it?

I made quite an effort with the television industry to visit with the CEOs [Chief Executive Officers] of the various television networks at the time. We did make a dent in it, but the motion picture side of it was probably more important. We were able to preserve a greater percentage of what was there than of television. The other thing that I did when I was there was that my media arts director introduced me to Bob Redford, and he was then thinking about putting together what became the Sundance Institute, which has both a festival and the production of films and a television series as well. And we helped him get that started, and as I told him [Redford], it was one of the best investments the endowment ever made, because it became a huge success. So that was another piece of the arts endowment. I got lots of awards from all kinds of people, but those were the big Hollywood awards.

Q: Any other awards that were kind of memorable or that had a lasting impact in the communities where they were done?

A: Most of the awards came from the American Symphony Orchestra League, or Theater Communications Group—they came from the trade associations. I got one for being an entrepreneur in the arts. That was given to me primarily for things I did internationally after leaving the endowment. The arts are a kind of thing where if you do something good, you get awards. It's part of the deal.

Q: Frank, I am interested because people who know you well know that you could have gotten a deputy cabinet post, deputy secretary of a cabinet agency, or the head of a much larger agency than the National Endowment of the Arts, which would have feathered your nest later in your career with a thicker pile of feathers. What is your thought about that choice that you made, to grab for the endowment when it was available, as opposed to the deputy secretary of labor or some other position which was also attainable at that time?

HODSOLL: Well, Jim Baker thought I was absolutely nuts. There is no question that had I either stayed in the White House or gone to some other position in the government, I would have probably had a better career in the sense of titles and responsibilities. Since I had not gone to the White House to be at the arts endowment, and since it kind of came along, and since I got along with the people that I was involved with in getting the president [Reagan] to endorse continuing the arts and humanities endowments, I thought to myself, given my undergraduate experiences at Yale and my previous acting experience, this wasn't something that was going to come around again. Later, and if I had gone and done these other things, a continuation in many ways of what I had been doing, more analytical probably, I thought that I would have never have this opportunity again.

As I mentioned in an earlier segment of this oral history, the people in the White House thought I was absolutely plumb bonkers. But they said, if you want it, you got it!

Q: Frank, there were rumors around that Baker was getting tagged because people thought that a Yale who was his deputy and someone on whom he relied heavily, who had been a Foreign Service Officer, not something which is highly regarded in deep conservative circles in the United States, that you were a bit suspect. Sorry I don't have a softer word than that. You were not as conservative as one might have hoped in that job. What were those pressures like?

HODSOLL: There were no such pressures, because Baker vouched for me. I had a long interview with Ed Meese [counselor to President Ronald Reagan]. Between all of that and my work in the campaign, which was successful, I was trusted, and no one thought of me as a Foreign Service Officer. Probably, the majority of people in the White House didn't even know I had been a Foreign Service Officer. I was valued for what I did at the White House, and Baker knew that I had been a Foreign Service Officer, but that didn't matter to him one way or the other.

Q: Well, your word product was your contribution to your bosses, your ability to get the projects done, get cooperation from other agencies, was absolutely critical to their success and to your success. So congratulations on that!

This past week we have had a very interesting example, which was foretold by Ronald Reagan, that he did not engage in the last debate prior to the Iowa caucuses. And I just wondered if you had any recall of that. You were part of the team putting that together. There must have been quite a bit of discussion, whether to debate or not to debate, in Iowa.

HODSOLL: I was not involved with that. I read about it recently, just as you did, and thought, well that's interesting.

Q: But you were working on preparing Reagan for the Republican debates with the other runners [candidates for the Republican nomination] at that time, as well as the presidential debates?

HODSOLL: Just the presidential, because [George H.W.] Bush had basically dropped out, and when Reagan hired Baker, who had been Bush's campaign chairman, Baker went to work for him on the debates, essentially. Reagan was already the nominee. That had already happened. What happened before then, before Baker got involved, wasn't part of my involvement at all. So it was strictly the presidential debate. There was an Independent named John Anderson, who had been in Congress, whom Reagan also debated. It came and went, and Reagan did fine. But the big debate was with [President Jimmy] Carter.

Beyond Reagan's circles, the general feeling was that Reagan won that debate. Part of it was just Reagan being Reagan; it wasn't something he prepared for.

Q: Let me ask about something that is talked about today, is the Reagan spirit of optimism as a defining characteristic of his campaign. You were in on preparing the debate dealing with that. Talk about that, if you would.

HODSOLL: Well, Reagan was a natural-born optimist. There have been recent articles because of the somewhat disarray of the Republican party, that Reagan was an unusual guy. He liked to say this: "You are dealing with somebody who is conservative but who voted four times for Franklin Roosevelt." So Reagan came out of a liberal and moderate background and became more conservative as time went on.

Q: And he was a union leader!

HODSOLL: He was union leader of the Screen Actors Guild. Then he was a two-term governor of California, which is not exactly a conservative state, even then. So he was used to dealing with all kinds of people. And the one thing he had learned, as a union leader and as governor of California, and then exemplified while he was president, was that if you are going to get anything done, you need to get people of all persuasions, a sufficient number of them, together with you, or else you're not going to win.

He was very practical, and he was very good at that. And he worked very hard at that. He would stroke people. His

relationship with Tip O’Neill was extraordinary. [The late Thomas Phillip O’Neill was a member of the U.S. House of Representatives from 1953 to 1987. O’Neill, a Democrat, was Speaker of the House, from 1977-1987, during the Reagan presidency. While O’Neill and Reagan disagreed on many issues, they were able to work together effectively.]

Q: That was something that he put forward as his modus operandi.

HODSOLL: He had his own views and he was a conservative guy, no question about that. But he also knew that to move something somewhat forward in his direction, you had to be able to give as well as to get. You also had to be charming about what you did. You had to show interest in other people and think about what their interests were. He was damn good at that.

Q: It’s interesting because in the White House you had an enormous split. You had Baker, who was a mainstream Texas conservative, and then you had [Patrick] Buchanan, who was strongly ideological. How did they get along? [Buchanan was Reagan’s director of communications. His background was as a conservative political commentator on television.]

HODSOLL: I don’t really know. We didn’t see all that much of Buchanan, at least I didn’t. But Baker, Meese, and Deaver [deputy chief of staff to Baker], under the President, and to some extent the vice president, ran the show. So other people were dealt with in a polite and accommodating way, but the policy went forward without regard to high ideology.

And some of the people who came with Reagan from California who were known for being conservative were also highly practical, like Reagan. Marty Anderson was one example. He was in charge of domestic policy. Who was the first national security adviser? He was very conservative—Dick Allen.

None of the people who had influence, including the president, were in it to make speeches. They were in it to use speeches to move the ball forward to some extent in their direction. They exemplified that and they were largely successful because of it.

Q: How was the decision-making process that you saw with the president? You had one example that you gave us on the lifting of the grain embargo, in which you discussed it with the president and he gave you direct instructions.

HODSOLL: He gave Baker instructions.

Q: That was done without the usual blizzard of the bureaucracy. Had it been turned over to the bureaucracy, [the Department

of] Agriculture would have produced six feet of paper, and [the Departments of] State and Treasury also. You would have had a pile of paper as tall as the room.

HODSOLL: We had those papers, but the President made his decision based on the parts of those papers that he thought made sense. To be honest with you, I don't recall the State Department going up in a flame over getting rid of the Soviet grain embargo, maybe Agriculture a little bit. The embargo hadn't worked very well. Other countries were supplying grain; the Soviet Union wasn't really suffering. [The U.S. grain embargo against the Soviet Union had been initiated by President Carter in January 1980 in reaction to the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan the previous year. President Reagan lifted the embargo in January 1981 upon entering office.]

Q: The views of the ambassador to the UN notwithstanding [Jeanne Kirkpatrick, Reagan's ambassador to the United Nations, had previously been an academic well-known for anti-Communist views].

HODSOLL: I don't remember her getting into it. Maybe she was involved, but I don't recall her getting into it. The people I knew who got into it were Al Haig at the State Department, our secretary of agriculture [John R. Block] and some of the other president's staff.

Q: Well, wonderful. So Frank, when did your tour of duty at the National Endowment take place, and what was the transfer of power and what happened after that, from the endowment to OMB [Office of Management and Budget]?

HODSOLL: The short version is, the transfer was after we were largely into completing the president's task force on the endowments for the arts and the humanities. [President Reagan had come into office pledging to cut the National Endowment for the Arts and the National Endowment for the Humanities; however, he reversed himself after a task force recommended keeping the endowments with some changes.]

I threw my hat in the ring, and after everybody was shocked and said I was crazy, they let me have it. The president couldn't have been more supportive; he gave a big lunch for his task force. I then finished up what I still had to do at the White House and then I moved in.

Q: How long was your term for?

HODSOLL: Four years, and then I was renewed for another four years.

Q: So, you were at the endowment [NEA] for a total of eight years.

HODSOLL: Yes.

Q: The entire Reagan administration.

HODSOLL: Except for the first year of the Reagan administration, when I was in the White House. I left the arts endowment at the beginning of the Bush administration.

Q: What month; do you remember?

HODSOLL: Well, the president had been re-elected, so we were into 1989. Somewhere in the spring of 1989, something like that. I felt that I had done my bit at the endowment and it was time for me to move on to something else. I enjoyed the arts endowment. I might have been able to stay on; I don't know. I started having conversations with Jim Baker at the State Department and Dick Darman at OMB and ended up going to OMB.

[Richard Darman, who had held White House positions during the Reagan Administration, served as OMB director under President George H.W. Bush. James Baker III, who had been chief of staff and then Secretary of the Treasury under Reagan, became Secretary of State in the George H.W. Bush Administration.]

Q: Tell us that story. How did that happen?

HODSOLL: Well, I knew that I wanted to move back into more of the kind of thing I had been doing before the arts endowment. So I called up the two people I knew best in the Bush Administration, who were Baker and Darman, and said, you know, it's probably time for me to move on and do something else. And I got offered various jobs, and decided to go with Dick at OMB—initially, sort of being the program associate director for international and national security. So I had the Defense Department, CIA, and State Department budgets for review at my level.

Q: That's huge! That's a third of the budget!

HODSOLL: Yes, a lot of stuff. A third of the discretionary budget, and on the national security side a huge amount of it is super classified. And I had some very good career people working for me.

Q: Gordon Adams was one.

HODSOLL: No, it wasn't Gordon Adams. It was Bob Howard, who had national security, and then on international affairs, it was, I'll think of his name.

But then Darman wanted me to do management as well, because he didn't have anybody to do management. But I couldn't do both, it was too much. Little by little I ended up doing management, then negotiating legislation that made a second deputy, and then I was nominated and confirmed for the second deputy. And at that point I gave up the budget stuff.

Q: So you went into OMB and there was only one deputy, and you were in that position.

HODSOLL: No, a guy by the name of Diefenderfer [William M. Diefenderfer III] was the deputy, and he came off the Hill. He was an assistant to Packwood [U.S. Representative, and later U.S. Senator, from Oregon Robert W. Packwood]. He did across-the-board budget stuff and Hill work. I had national defense and national security and international affairs before I became total management.

Darman wanted to make a bigger influence on the management side, as he told me on several occasions, "The Defense Department is not about policy, it's all about management." And so at the beginning when I was doing the Defense Department, when Dick Cheney came over as Secretary of Defense after Tower had flamed out, we spent a lot of time on the Defense Management Improvement Program, which was fairly successful. [President George H.W. Bush had nominated former Senator John Tower of Texas as Secretary of Defense, but he failed to win confirmation from the Senate amid allegations of alcohol abuse and "womanizing." Richard Cheney became Bush's Secretary of Defense in the wake of the Tower scandal.]

The Defense Department is difficult because management improvement is also extremely political, because you have all these Congressmen and Senators who have all these big plants in their districts that are producing stuff for the Defense Department. You have to bear that in mind, whatever the merits may be as a strict matter of management. So you attempt to balance good

management without causing such a fuss that you're going to lose.

Q: Fascinating. What jobs did Baker offer you?

HODSOLL: I got offered a couple, but I think I'll leave that out.

Q: Alright.

HODSOLL: Actually, much later in the Bush Administration, I got a call from John Rogers, who later became Under Secretary for Management, asking me if I'd like to come over to the State Department and become the Under Secretary for Management. And I said I was grateful and honored, but I'm doing this job for Darman. I've just been confirmed and I don't think it would be appropriate.

Q: Fascinating.

HODSOLL: Then John became the Under Secretary for Management. [John F. W. Rogers was Under Secretary of State for Management, 1991-1993.].

Q: What were the issues involved, how many years were you in the M (Management) billet?

HODSOLL: We got the M billet in legislation in 1990, and the end of the Bush Administration was 1992-1993, so I was nominated and confirmed two or three months after [the legislation passed]. Before the position [was created in] the Chief Financial Officer's Act, I didn't have the title, I was executive associate director of the entire agency which included the management portfolio. So I was doing the management in addition to national security the first year or two.

Q: Could you go in rough chronological order in talking about four or five major issues that you dealt with and tackled, or lost and had a draw on, both while you were doing the national defense work as well as the management work at OMB?

HODSOLL: I think we were quite successful in the management reform effort at the Defense Department. In regards to the State Department budget, we didn't do all that much, even tinkering with it. I had a certain amount of back and forth with regard to USIA [the erstwhile United States Information Agency, since folded into the State Department] as it was at that time,

but the Darman OMB and Frank Hodsoll weren't going to make a big issue out of Baker's proposals for the State Department budgets. There were minor tinkers, but there was nothing major there. The Defense Department was different; we had a lot of back and forth on that.

Now, did I have a major role in changing those budgets? I don't think so. My job was to make sure that where there were disputes, that the president had the right kind of information. I did a lot more on the management side than I did on the budget side. Cheney came over from the Defense Department. Who was the director of the CIA? I don't recall. [The Bush administration was served by two CIA chiefs. William H. Webster was Director of Central Intelligence, 1987-1991. He was succeeded by Robert Gates, 1991-1993.]

I had some back and forth on the CIA, which I can't talk about, particularly on the covert side. But the budget piece of that was rather small. Later on, even though I was in management, I got involved to a degree in the Baker-Cheney initiative to get others to help pay for the first Gulf War. We made a profit on that war. I don't want to overstate it, but other people contributed. I got involved a little bit with that, but by that time I was almost exclusively doing management stuff.

Q: How did the issues get hardened so they could be presented to the president? I mean, that's rare. Most of the issues and battles are between the head of OMB and the agency heads, and the relevant Congressional committee heads have some input as to whether they are realistic. What you send up has to be approved [by Congress]. Talk first about the normal process, and then talk about when there were differences of opinion.

HODSOLL: Well, basically the agencies would come in with their budgets, and if there was an issue that struck me as requiring more than my level, we would go in and see Dick Darman. And at the end of the day, 90 plus percent was approved, with minor variations that the department involved agreed to. And then there were a very small number of issues that had to go to the President, or be resolved at the Darman level as opposed to my level.

Q: So, it would be Darman versus the particular cabinet department secretary.

HODSOLL: It would be Darman versus the department secretary, and if Darman couldn't settle it outside, or even inside, with the president—I've been at meetings where Darman would present his view to the president, the cabinet secretary would be there, and there would be a back and forth. And the president would make his decision. But these were all big items. We're not talking about a million dollars for this or that. We're talking hundreds of millions, or billions of dollars. It was the same thing

for all the domestic agencies.

Basically, like Stockman, Darman ran a very good process. [David Stockman served as OMB Director in the first Reagan Administration, 1981-1985.] He knew what was going on. He read everything. And so by the time we got to the president, sometimes the president would overrule OMB. But more often than not, OMB would win the argument. And we won the 90 percent that never went to the president. We won those cases, an overwhelming number of times. We gave up on a few things. When you went to the cabinet secretaries, whether it was with Baker or Cheney, or Cheney's head of budget, we had very good discussions back and forth and some of it was, is this a good idea or a bad idea? And some of it we didn't do because it would cause so much of a fuss on the Hill that it wasn't worth doing. We ended up winning more than losing. We used to have those discussions, and OMB had good relations with Congress.

Congress was all Democrats during the Bush Administration. We had good relations with the appropriations committees. Sometimes I would go up and tell the chairmen of those committees, this is what we think and why we think it, and if your interest is x or y or z, why we think it won't hurt your interest to go along with us. Furthermore, if you do, we will give you this.

Q: So you had two kinds of concerns: one was the political viability of the agency's budget on the Hill, and secondly, you had to somehow balance the budget between all these agencies in the discretionary budget. Everybody couldn't get everything they wanted, so you had to rob Peter to pay Paul.

HODSOLL: That's true, and after the Budget Enforcement Act of 1990, which was a Bush Congressional initiative, which established the PAYGO ["pay-as-you-go"] principle, it was an enormous step forward. Because it meant that the Congress, during the period that the act was in place, had to find resources—it could be increased taxes or some offset—to pay for it. You had to have less of x or y or z. Those discussions would take place. We didn't win all of them. The Budget Enforcement Act was an enormous Bush victory. It was achieved through very close relations with the Hill and the Democrats who ran the Hill.

Q: Those relationships were built by you, Darman, and people working for you.

HODSOLL: Yes, but they built on what had happened in the Reagan administration. I mean, Bush came in and he had been part of the Reagan administration as the vice president. He came in, not with everybody saying we are going to get this guy. He was very practical and also, like Reagan, willing to make phone calls to key people.

Q: That's interesting. So the calculus was a very complicated one on many levels. I don't understand how at the OMB helm, you essentially kept all the accounts from the agencies. I can understand the interagency fights. But if the Defense Department gets another 50 billion, then there's less. Then two billion comes out of Labor, two billion comes out of State. The money has to come from someplace.

HODSOLL: You have to remember, in my day there was no sequester, so you could add money. We didn't, but you could add it. It wasn't automatic that—I am making up numbers here—if you gave 20 billion more to Defense, you had to have 20 billion come out of somewhere else. But PAYGO, which started a couple of years into the administration, required that we find the money somewhere, and that could be through additional revenues or through cuts. We would recommend both. Sometimes we would end up getting a bit of what we wanted, and the Congress would get a bit of what they wanted, and we would end up with a budget.

[Budget sequestration is a procedure in United States law that limits the size of the federal budget. Sequestration involves setting a hard cap on the amount of government spending within broadly defined categories. As explained by Hodsoll, the hard caps were abandoned and replaced with a “pay-as-you-go” system that was part of the budget reform initiative of the George H.W. Bush Administration. The PAYGO system was in effect until 2002. Sequestration was brought back again as part of the Budget Control Act of 2011, which resolved the debt-ceiling crisis that year.]

What the sequester did: Everybody thought that the sequester [which began in 2012 and continues at this writing] would force people to the table, and it didn't, and we still have sequester going on. The Defense Department is particularly upset by it. And the problem is, the lion's share of the budgetary resources is entitlements. And it's even bigger today than it was in the Bush administration. Well over half the budget, and going up, and you can't touch entitlements, unless you change the underlying legislation, which most people, both Republican and Democrat, have shown no stomach for. And so here we are today.

Just yesterday or today, there was an article by [regular economics columnist Robert J.] Samuelson in The Washington Post, saying that somebody has to start paying attention to the fact that our debt is continuing to increase and we are having a larger percentage of GDP [Gross Domestic Product] going toward servicing the debt. We got a tremendous boost out of the fact that we have very low interest rates. Some of my Democratic friends have recently told me, well, let the Chinese pay for it. That's got a point to it, but it's not sufficient by itself.

Q: Frank, mention a few battles, specific ones if you could that took place at OMB, that we should include in this record.

HODSOLL: Well, I'm going to management. The battles on budget were relatively minor. We changed a few things, and we won a few. But on management, there was quite a lot to do that had not been given high priority.

Q: And you spent three years doing management there.

HODSOLL: I did, well, two and a half or three years. The first point is, Darman believed in management, and he gave me extra staff. I got to go out and hire people on the management side. And the president occasionally would get into it, every now and then. I have mentioned the Budget Enforcement Act of 1990, which is primarily budget, but there was also management stuff [in the legislation]. The thing I was most responsible for was perhaps the Chief Financial Officers Act of 1990, which created the deputy director for management.

Q: So you were very much involved in the writing of the act.

HODSOLL: The writing and the negotiation of that with the Hill.

Q: Just for the reader, can you explain what a chief financial officer does?

HODSOLL: Well, the Chief Financial Officers Act, in addition to creating the deputy director for management at OMB at the deputy secretary level, it also made sure that there were financial officers in every department and every agency. The chief financial officer's purpose is to make sure that the numbers add up, that money is not going out to fraud and abuse—and this is something that I was involved in—that we had performance measures, that we could see how this program versus that program is doing. On the domestic side, there are lots of semi-duplicative programs, so you could measure them. So, we had a lot of stuff in the CFO Act about performance measures, which was one of my highest priorities. I will come back to that in a minute.

Darman made sure that I would have the attention of the cabinet officers, so we created a committee, a presidential committee on management, which consisted of the deputy secretaries of all the major departments.

Q: So that was not in the [CFO] Act.

HODSOLL: That came before the act, we were already doing that. And we also heavily used the inspectors general. Through the President's Committee on Information and Efficiency, PCIE, that I chaired. I chaired all these committees, and then I had a staff, obviously, to make sure that I was prepared. We developed high-risk lists. This was before the GAO [U.S. Government Accountability Office] did it, and then they followed on from us. And we put it in the budget every year. This was a list of programs, or parts of programs, that were at highest risk of not doing what they said they were supposed to be doing.

Q: You told the Congress where the problems were.

HODSOLL: We told the Congress where we thought the problems were, and we consulted with the Congress, so that we weren't doing something that was just going to cause a huge fuss. We were political as well as on the merits about it. We had stacks of papers that I commissioned that showed why this particular program . . .

Q: You couldn't use the GAO, so who did you use?

HODSOLL: We did use the GAO, and in some cases, we commissioned our own studies within the executive branch. We did both.

Q: If you had a problem area that you were worried about, you would have your staff look into it.

HODSOLL: Right, and the programs that were at the biggest risk in terms of dollars and/or being unable to deliver services in a quality way, we put on the high-risk list. And then we allocated money from the budget specifically to address the high-risk problems. We gave money back to the agency or department, but we said, here is your budget, but you are going to spend x amount of money on this problem.

Q: Monitoring and fixing as you go.

HODSOLL: Fixing and reporting back to us and letting us know was key. And we engaged the inspectors general, because they had the staff that was able to get in and under law, had the right to get in and challenge program managers.

Q: Under the OIG Act [Inspector General Act of 1978].

HODSOLL: Under the OIG Act. And some of the inspectors general were enormously helpful. There was a guy named Dick Kusserow at HHS (Department of Health and Human Services), which is the second largest agency after Defense. Our collaboration was—we saved billions in the Medicare and Medicaid parts of HHS. Did we win all of them? Absolutely not, but we won a lot of them. [Medicare is the federal health system for persons aged 65 and over and for persons with disabilities; Medicaid is the joint federal and state assistance program for persons with limited incomes.]

Q: But you set up new processes.

HODSOLL: Well, the processes were there, but we made them count. Darman made them count. What the cabinet secretaries knew—I met with all of them and their deputies—was that we would have these periodic meetings where I would embarrass them in front of their peers. I would say, “This is on the high-risk list, and you were supposed to do something about it. What’s going on? Why are we not doing this?”

Q: You were very straight in your Frank Hodsoll way, asking the question very matter-of-factly.

HODSOLL: I would add in, “I know you have a problem because of whatever it happened to be.” One of the problems with the performance measures, which you can’t really argue against, is that they were pretty rapidly—and certainly this happened after the Bush Administration—devolved over to the management side of the departments. And the management side of the departments are generally not going to get the job done.

As I said at a gathering a few months ago, you’ve got to get the program managers invested in this. And while it is true that under the new Senior Executive Service Act, senior executives are to be graded in part on their management capacity, the fact of the matter is that it doesn’t happen. Because the way you get ahead in the bureaucracy is to please your appropriators and the interests that are getting benefits from whatever the program is. That is why it is so hard to reform the government. Not just the federal government, it is also true of state and local governments as well. So, you must pick carefully what you’re really going to go after, because otherwise you will be viewed as just a bunch of paper that comes up. So, we tried to zero in.

Darman came up with the idea of sending SWAT teams to different agencies, and getting the secretary or head of the agency to go along with it, which we could do. [SWAT—or Special Weapons and Tactics Teams—was initially a police term. Over time it has come to be used to describe any specialized team dedicated to solving a difficult problem.]

OMB would be on the teams; we would pick staffers from the agencies, so you would have honest people, including from the programs. Because if you don't have the program managers who have the day-to-day relationships with the appropriators, you are not going to get anywhere. And many of them have decades of relationships back and forth, and they are career people. They are good people who are not going to try to subvert a president, but what they try to work on are the things that will move their program forward.

So, in management you must be very aware. There are not very many Admiral Rickovers in the career bureaucracy; he was quite unusual, and a hero in many ways. [Admiral Hyman G. Rickover, known as the "father of the nuclear Navy," served as a commissioned officer for more than 50 years. He created controversy in Washington for his unvarnished criticism of persons in authority, regardless of their rank or position.]

Most of the career people were good. They would do what the president wanted them to do, but how high a priority it took would depend on convincing them it is in their interest to do this. And that has both carrots and sticks. As you design ways of doing this, you must [take this into account].

If you haven't read Jack Welch's book on running General Electric, that was a very similar situation. [Welch was CEO of General Electric, 1981-2001. His book on the experience, Winning, was published in 2005.]

Q: Can you talk about some particular cases?

HODSOLL: I will talk about one from the foreign affairs community. One of the high-risk areas while I was there was USAID. We had a guy whose name I forget, who was the head of USAID, he had been a president from a Midwestern university.

Q: I know him well. This is terrible [don't recall the name].

HODSOLL: He wasn't very strong.

Q: McPherson.

HODSOLL: No, the guy before McPherson. His name started with an R. [The USAID administrator during the George H.W. Bush administration was Ronald Roskens.]

You had, not huge sums, but in the millions, going into various AID projects around the world, which weren't producing very much. The money was going out, to somebody-or-other.

In terms of the goals, whether better government, or getting food out to people who were poor, or better water, or you know, whatever it was, the end results—the performance measures—weren't measuring up. Money was going out, and there were lots of issues. Here we had a problem with the IG (Inspector General). The IG was a retired major general in the Marine Corps. He was a very good guy in many ways, but he didn't understand the politics of a lot of this. Unlike the guy I mentioned with great praise, Dick Kusserow at HHS, the USAID IG told everybody to do this, and they said, yes, sir, and they would go ahead and not do it.

I hired Tony Gillespie to be the head of our SWAT team at AID. We came up with a bunch of recommendations. That was toward the end of my tenure, and I don't know which of the recommendations were taken seriously. Eventually they got a new AID Administrator and so on.

But one of the problems, Tex, and you will appreciate this. You know, your interlocutor here had been in the Foreign Service and knew the efficiency report system. We got into this issue in depth regarding Egypt.

Q: Egypt was the monster program.

HODSOLL: It was a big program. Things hadn't been going that well. I brought Tony in, and then I got into it. I discovered that what was happening was, the USAID officer who got the grant approved to put in a sewage treatment plant in some city, had left USAID before anything had happened on the ground to put in the new plant. His efficiency report was graded on having given the grant, not on whether the grant worked.

One of our recommendations, although I don't think anything was ever really done about it, was to create and introduce an editing possibility into the efficiency reports, that would allow bosses at the embassy to be able to say, well, did the sewage treatment plant go in? Did it come in under budget? Is it treating sewage? Is it doing what it is supposed to do?

And then, coming back to the officer in question, unless there were some extenuating circumstances showing that it wasn't his fault [that the sewage system never got built], the personnel system would have to show that he'd get dinged on his next

efficiency report. And I thought that was entirely fair. We did get that changed on paper, but I had left at the end of the Bush administration, and I don't know what ultimately happened.

Since I left, I have done a lot of work at the National Academy of Public Administration, of which I'm a fellow, on performance measures. One of the problems with the way in which we went about it—I'll take the blame in part—we thought that if we got everybody, including the [Congressional] appropriators to agree that this was a reasonable performance measure, we would get the performance measure implemented. Actually, getting it implemented and getting people to pay attention to it was a completely different matter. You can have all kinds of stuff with the secretary's signature on it, and nothing matters unless you have a system that damages people who don't play by the rules.

Q: Accountability.

HODSOLL: Accountability. I don't think we could have done as good a job as we could have. Actually, a better job was done in the George W. Bush Administration by their guy who was in my job, by having red, green and yellow diagrams in the budget, because then people would get embarrassed. They would find friends on the Hill, whether political or substantive friends, who would make sure these things got raised at appropriations hearings. At a minimum, there was some embarrassment that this or that had not happened.

Working with GAO and the inspectors general—the inspector general cannot be stopped by his secretary. That is helpful. Now, not all inspectors general are terrific. But of those who are, I am a big fan. Their pathway to the future is not based on whether they can expand their program by 50 percent or whatever. Their pathway to the future is exposing what doesn't work and finding fixes. Finding fixes is extremely important. You know, we made some progress, and other administrations have made more progress.

A guy who is really good [at finding fixes] is in deep hot water right now. He is the commissioner of the Internal Revenue Service, John Koskonin, who had my job in the Clinton administration. I don't know who is right or wrong in terms of what is going on at IRS, but he did an extremely good job.

The big thing in government management is to find ways to make it in the interest of the program managers to do what they are expected to do. To find out what they are expected to do, you must go back and look at the words in the authorizing language. This is the theory of what they are expected to do. You create your performance measures around that. Sometimes

the performance measures have to be done by the state or local government. So, you must get buy-in not only by the federal agency but also by state and local governments. After my time, CDBG (the Community Development Grant, a program of the Housing of Urban Development), did an absolutely superb job getting the states and localities on board, so that they wanted the performance measures to be better, too.

While I am on the subject of performance measures, I can't resist. One of my great victories with the Hill was with Jamie Whitten [longtime Democratic Member of the House of Representatives from Mississippi], chairman of the appropriations committee. After the Chief Financial Officers Act had been enacted, Whitten decided he didn't like what all these CFOs were doing, writing all these embarrassing reports. So he put forward a bill on the Hill, to abolish all the CFOs. And he had the support of most of the appropriations subcommittee chairmen on the House side.

So, I talked to Darman about it, saying, we really have to defeat this. I went out and got people like Citizens Against Government Waste, which John McCain [U.S. Senator from Arizona] has been a part of, and a whole bunch of people who were on the good government side of things, including politically powerful people, to join with me, and we defeated Whitten on the House floor.

I remember spending one very late night in what was then Newt Gingrich's [Republican member of the House of Representatives from Georgia] office, helping to coordinate people to come in and vote against this thing.

I remember Steny Hoyer [Democratic member of the House of Representatives from Maryland], with whom I had a very good relationship from another good thing we did—locality pay. We had a situation in New York City in which senior FBI agents were being paid less than a junior patrolman on the New York police force. It costs a bit to live in New York City. We got that through, although it was never fully implemented by any administration. That was something Steny and I worked on. The guy who later became Steny's principal assistant [John Berry] later became the head of OPM in the Obama administration.

I remember with great pride, after we'd won, Steny came up to me and said to me, "You know, I got to hand it to you, Hodsoll. This was not our best day but you done good." We did things like that.

I could mention a bunch of other things.

Q: Do, do!

HODSOLL: Our high-risk list. We had 106 areas; we made significant progress in 36 of them.

Q: Now when you say “areas,” what do you mean?

HODSOLL: Well, they were programs, or parts of programs, not necessarily all of the program. GSA telecommunication system 2000 saved two million dollars in voice services [telephone].

Q: Talk a bit about each of them, Frank.

HODSOLL: Basically, through the GSA [General Services Administration], we were paying standard rates for voice services to AT&T and Verizon, not getting much of a discount—there may have been just a bit of a rebate. The federal government is a huge customer. So, we got that fixed.

The FBI Integrated Automated Fingerprint Operation—we didn’t have an integrated fingerprint automation system!

Q: That’s incredible!

We got that. That was one of our high-risk areas.

Q: And a great achievement!

HODSOLL: I think so. I will tell you about something that appeared to be a great achievement, but turned out to be a disaster.

Q: Frank, your honesty is to be much appreciated, your reticence, not!

HODSOLL: We got SWAT and review teams to go in and do accountability on the following: student loans, Medicaid accountability, HUD Section 8 automated system, Department of Energy clean-up pilot. This was Hanford, from the nuclear days.

[Per www.Hanford.gov.: The Hanford Site is in a 586-square-mile shrub-steppe desert in southeastern Washington State.

Beginning in 1943, the site was used to produce plutonium for the bomb that brought an end to World War II. Weapons production processes left solid and liquid wastes that posed a risk to the local environment including the Columbia River. In 1989, the U. S. Department of Energy (DOE), Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), and Washington State Department of Ecology entered into a legally binding accord, the Tri-Party Agreement (TPA), to clean up the Hanford Site.]

Q: Go slow, somebody has to transcribe this. One of my pals was a project manager for two [nuclear clean-up projects]. He was the only guy who ever cleaned up and handed over the keys to the community, somewhere in Tennessee.

Q: We got the Medicare people to change their regulations to consolidate oversight and claims payments; we closed loopholes in durable medical equipment. This was with the inspector general.

We incorporated quality as well as price into the federal acquisition regulations—that took a lot of doing.

Federal locality pay legislation, I’ve already mentioned.

Q: And that was not just for the Justice Department but for the whole federal government. So, it affected people in Alaska.

HODSOLL: Oh yes, it changed pay all over the place. Different administrations have been more or less favorable, because it costs a lot more money, if you’re going to give more money to people in New York, or wherever.

We had a number of successes in 36 of 106 high-risk areas. I was asked at a recent gathering, how about all of the ones that are still on the high-risk list? Now the list is at GAO, OMB doesn’t have the high-risk list.

I basically said, it’s because your program managers don’t get ahead necessarily by doing better management. No matter what’s in their SES reports, and you have cabinet agency heads or agency heads not in the cabinet, who are more interested in expanding their programs rather than better management.

And better management is not the end-all-and-be-all, anyway. It has to be constructed in a way that is compatible with what the program is supposed to do. In my NAPA work after leaving government, I got involved in a whole bunch of that.

We reduced subsidized housing for the U.S. Postal Service.

There were a whole bunch of programs. Oh, federal credit programs. It used to be, before we got there—this was eventually taken care of in the Budget Enforcement Act of 1990—that if you made a loan to somebody to do a small business loan, it didn't count against your budget, even though there was a default rate. We got the Congress to agree to a change that created a risk-based budget consequence to the size of your loan programs. We created the credit – there is some name for it. What do we call it? It's still there. So, I think that helped make a difference.

The CFO Act. The Obama administration did a 2011 appraisal of the CFO Act that was extremely positive. My big failure in the CFO negotiations, there was a big fuss that goes on; it still happens today. The Reagan administration had created something called the OIRA [Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs], to look at agency regulations and to see if they were appropriate to the risk of whatever the regulation was supposed to accomplish. This caused a huge fuss particularly among liberal Democrats on the Hill.

The House authorizing committee for OMB, who was the famous African-American chair who has been there forever?

Q: Cummings?

HODSOLL: No. Anyway, he didn't like the idea of OIRA at all. There were some things in our administration and previous administrations where OIRA went overboard. The vice president was involved in this as well; he was very interested in this. I came at it from the point of view, what were the numbers? How did it add up, right, wrong or indifferent. Some people came at it from the point of view, we don't want regulation at all on this issue.

Anyway, there was a big fuss. Some of the Democrats on the Hill were trying to get rid of OIRA, get rid of OMB's ability to fund OIRA. We had a career guy in OIRA while I was there.

Q: That is in OMB.

HODSOLL: That was in OMB, and it reported to me. But the vice president was in charge. So Darman said to me, you've got to be careful and make sure you keep the vice president, or someone on his staff, on your side.

In any event, long story short, there was this threat of defunding OIRA. I came up with a plan that the Bush administration adopted, to basically create some language that would make sure that OIRA had facts and figures and was being done on a nonpolitical basis. Then we had these people—I will remember the head of the committee who was against it.

I had a guy named Cokely, who worked for the Democratic senator from Florida who was on our side. Ran for governor of Florida at one point.

As we were coming to the end of getting the House to agree to this bill, the Chief Financial Officers Act. We were having trouble with John Glenn [former astronaut and Democratic U.S. Senator from Ohio], head of the government affairs committee. Cokely came to the rescue and said, “Hodsoll, we are not going to be able to give you OIRA because we’ve got a couple of Republican Senators who are putting a hold on this stuff. So, we will put a hold on OIRA, but your nomination is going through.”

I felt bad about it, but Darman said, don’t worry about it. These things happen.

So, I would have liked to have seen us come up with [a compromise]; in the House, we had the Democrats on our side, and eventually we had the Democrats in the Senate. But we had a couple of Senate Republicans, including a former schoolmate of mine from California, Malcolm Walcott. They were just adamantly opposed to any restraints whatsoever on OIRA. Anyway, we lost that one. The Chief Financial Officers Act went forward with everything else.

Q: Any other big ones on that list? This is wonderful stuff, Frank.

HODSOLL: These are all the things that we did on the budget. I wasn’t the only one responsible for this.

Quality as well as price in procurement is really important.

Oh, yes, as part of our performance measurement, we had high on our list service delivery at the IRS. I will tell you a story about IRS in a minute. . . Social Security, Railroad Retirement Board, Civil Aviation.

During my period at OMB, the IRS needed to have a restructuring of their computer system. It wasn’t performing. After much back and forth with my staff, we approved a major increase—in the billions—for an improved computer system for the IRS.

One of the things that we were focused on, was what I call the “gray area.” That is, the people who are not paying what they should be paying, who somehow got away with it. They weren’t reporting all their income, or they had hidden it in an offshore bank. Some of this was in the millions of very tiny transactions. Some of it was big stuff. You had to have something [an IT system] that can do both.

In designing the new IRS information system, I had a whole branch of my operation that was into computers and IT [information technology]. I was no expert on this. We designed a system with the IRS that allowed more of this stuff, when it reached a certain threshold, it would come up so people knew about it. And we made it part of the efficiency reports of IRS agents who were responsible for the gray area. And we congratulated ourselves after this was all done.

But then, in the Clinton administration, it became apparent that because we changed the performance measures so that senior people in the IRS would get either dinged or bonuses, depending on what they had done, that they were going out and hunting down grandmothers who had missed a payment of 10 dollars, and being abusive. They weren’t exercising any restraint. Going after bad guys with millions of dollars is one thing, but it’s another thing to go after somebody with a 20 cent under draft or overdraft.

And so that eventually got changed, rightly. So, when I make management speeches, I say, here is an example of something that on paper looked perfect, but you must think of what’s going to happen when GS-15s [the highest level in the Civil Service] get into it. If they can get an extra 10,000 dollars by locking up 23 grandmothers, well, that’s something you have to bear in mind.

Q: Grandmothers know where you live! Oh, Frank. What exciting times! What was your work day and your work schedule like?

HODSOLL: I worked very hard, and all the OMB staff worked hard. I mean there wasn’t a laggard among them.

Q: You were in every Saturday for sure.

HODSOLL: Yes, and sometimes Sundays.

Q: And what were your hours? What time did you get there?

HODSOLL: I was usually there 12-14 hours a day, sometimes all day and night.

Q: Wow.

HODSOLL: There was just a lot of stuff.

Q: Did you have a car and driver?

HODSOLL: No, I did not. As an executive level 2, I was entitled to one, but I told Darman, there are only two of these cars. One for you and one for your senior deputy, Dick Diefenderfer. I have a West Wing Executive parking space, I can drive myself in and out.

Q: That is a terribly long day.

HODSOLL: Yes, well, I have never been one to not have relatively long days, in almost all my jobs. I got vacation from time to time, and Darman was a good guy to work for because there was no bureaucratse about it. As long as you did your job, he didn't give a damn how you did it.

Q: And what were your relations with the White House? I mean, you were in the Office of the White House, you were in the New or the Old Executive Office Building?

HODSOLL: I was in the Old, with an extraordinarily fancy office.

Q: I think I visited you there with a fireplace.

HODSOLL: You may have. Yes, I had a fireplace and a lot of other stuff. Whoever had been there in the Reagan administration had allowed a pizza to be squashed on the rug, and the cleaners couldn't get it out. So, I told Darman, while I wasn't going to ask for new furniture, I asked for the carpet and the drapes to be replaced. The drapes dated to the Nixon administration and were in tatters. I said, you can't expect me to operate in an office that has squashed pizza on the rug! Otherwise I didn't change anything; it was a very nice office.

Q: And your dealings in the White House, who did you interface with?

HODSOLL: I interfaced mostly with Boyden Gray, who was counsel to the president. He was particularly interested in the OIRA, the regulatory side of things. Boyden was much more of a middle-of-the-roader than the vice president [Dan Quayle]. So, we would collaborate to ensure that nothing too drastic happened. And he was very interested in management. We had worked together on environmental issues during the Reagan administration, when he was counsel to the vice president. [George H.W. Bush was Reagan's vice president.] And Boyden also had a very close personal relationship with George H.W. Bush. He was a good person.

Occasionally [I dealt with] John Sununu [chief of staff to President George H.W. Bush], and [Samuel] Skinner, who replaced Sununu as chief of staff. But mostly I dealt with the next level down. Darman had the high-level back and forth.

Q: But the Domestic Policy Council and those people?

Not really. [The Domestic Policy Council, the domestic equivalent of the National Security Council, became official by executive order in 1993.]

I dealt with Brent Scowcroft [national security adviser to President George H.W. Bush], when I was doing the national and international security, and when I got called back in to work a little bit on the first Gulf War, and was making sure we got our money back. Bob Gates was deputy national security adviser, and he brought me in from time to time to make sure that the numbers were adding up. I'm not quite sure as I had left Defense Department responsibilities by then. I didn't do that much.

Of course, a lot of these people in the Defense Department used to work for me, and Bob Howard would come in every month or so and say to me, "Guess what's happening!?" And that was always fun to hear.

Q: The Gulf War audit—tracking for the Gulf War, where was that conducted?

HODSOLL: In terms of the money? OMB. Bob Howard was the principal guy. The NSC [National Security Council] was involved. But in terms of following up, making sure that the check was really written, that was done by OMB.

And the guy who gets credit for that was [Secretary of State] Jim Baker. Jim Baker was unbelievable. I mean, the accomplishments that he achieved!

Even though I wasn't directly involved with him at the time, not only on the issue of getting people to pay, the stuff he did with the Israelis, the Madrid Conference, his relationship with [Richard] Cheney. And with the former chairman of the joint chiefs, Colin Powell, it was a good group. Scowcroft was the right guy to manage that group. They were all reasonable, and the president was reasonable. They pulled off, compared to later involvement in Iraq [the 2003 intervention in, and occupation of, Iraq] an enormous success.

Q: A 100-hour victory.

HODSOLL: Yes.

Q: And then they stopped. Objective accomplished.

HODSOLL: All exactly right. And the president was part of that. If you read Jon Meacham's biography of George H.W. Bush, you realize that he was a much-underestimated president.

Q: He was very lovely. I received a personal handwritten note from him after he visited us in Melbourne. He was always so gracious. I have a deck of playing cards he gave me; I won't play with them. I just keep them!

How do you look back at your OMB stint in terms of the challenges you faced, the challenges the country faced? What big-picture observations do you have about your work then?

HODSOLL: It is less about my work than the entire work of the Darman team. I think Darman was superb at what he did at OMB, but then I'm prejudiced. But the Bush White House, including OMB, was an extraordinary place to work. The career people at OMB, they had trouble even when I was there. It was easier for OMB to attract truly the best and the brightest, if you go back over time. It is less easy today, because there is less of a feeling that by graduating from the best universities, that government is a good place to go. I can't speak for now, it's been quite a long while since I was there. But when you look at the younger people, you weren't getting the same quality that you got at OMB twenty years prior. I went out on several recruiting trips to business schools, and we got a few people in, but they could make ten times as much with an investment

bank.

And so, there is a need to really work on recruitment. The civil service system doesn't help much with that. It's complicated, it takes a long time to get a job offer, job offers are put in categories as opposed to by career, which was unusual. I got to bounce around and got to do a lot of different things. And people coming out of college or graduate school today, that's what they want to do. They want to bounce around, do different things, help move the country forward in some way, not just do a bureaucratic piece of business that works your way up.

Having said that, 95 percent of the time the people at OMB were the best there is. The senior people at OMB now were there when I was there. I have never run into people better than the ones at OMB. They were there on the merits, they were politically savvy, they worked 24 hours a day if that was what was required, they were honest, and they were just bloody good. And they would tell you when they thought you were wrong.

Q: There was a culture there that was open to people standing up.

HODSOLL: Absolutely. Certainly, if I was wrong, I would say, "Keep going."

That was helpful. It kept me out of a lot of trouble. I was very impressed with the OMB people. Because of my work at NAPA, I have since had jobs with OMB, and most of the people are very, very high quality.

Q: And dedicated.

HODSOLL: And dedicated. You can talk with them about anything, and they will be straight with you. A lot of people who worked for me are now senior. Some of them are starting to retire now. There was one guy by the name of David Kleinberg who ran the health care budget side of OMB. Darman once said to me, "Among our good OMB staff, Kleinberg is major league."

Kleinberg got fired by the Clinton Administration, over Hillary's first healthcare proposal. He raised issues, in part with the political aspects. You can't do it in secret and expect everybody to just say, "yes, sir," or "yes, ma'am," as it was in that case. He was viewed as an obstructionist and went on to become assistant secretary of management of transportation.

I still see him, we've worked together on other projects since. I'm not blaming the Clinton administration in general for that.

Q: But it's an attitude that comes into discussion.

HODSOLL: I can't speak for other people's administrations, but the White House in the [George H.W.] Bush administration, and the Reagan administration, were very respectful of the OMB staff. Whenever I would have to come into the White House, they would want to know, who is working on this with you? And if I said Bob Howard at Defense, then they would say, oh, he's a pretty good guy! It was like that.

Q: Frank, it's being part of a successful team that is one of the thrills of government service. You were both blessed in having been on some high-powered teams that just magically appeared with some of these superstars. It was like being on a championship team, like a Yankees World Series Pennant team!

HODSOLL: Even at OMB, we had a few . . . I fired a half-dozen people while I was at OMB. I was one of the few people to do that, because it's quite a business to fire somebody. But if I felt somebody wasn't holding their own, and other career people felt they weren't holding their own, I would have a chat and say, "You've really got to pick up." And if something happened, I would talk to Darman about it, and sometimes it would take a year for me to get rid of them, but we did.

Q: You could move them on, too.

HODSOLL: Well, in some cases I moved them on, but in some cases I fired them.

Q: That is tough, a lot of paperwork. I think I fired two in my government career. It's a lot of work. That's one of the reasons people don't do it.

Any other thoughts on your time at OMB, Frank.

HODSOLL: I think I've given you the essence of it.

Q: What were the toughest times, the major disappointments?

HODSOLL: Well, I mentioned OIRA.

Oh, evaluation. I sort of instituted, on a more serious basis than had existed before, a series of evaluations for different programs, partly for the budget side, partly for the management side. I think my biggest disappointment was the degree to which we would get something agreed to, in an evaluation or performance measure, or change of management structure, and everybody would sign off, including the cabinet agency head. Then six months later, I would come back and say, how are we doing? And they hadn't done anything, notwithstanding having it in the president's budget. I would go into Darman and raise hell.

You can't go...one, I would not have had the time or the brilliance to run a department in addition to the things I was doing. You have to rely on the people who are there. And you have to start that, at least in the management area, with the political employees.

While the career staff stays on usually for a period, assistant secretaries come and go every two years. Career staff stay on, and the political appointees come and go, not in every case but in most cases. And some political appointees are better than others. But their getting ahead in their onward jobs is not going to depend on whether they got more widgets per dollars spent. It is going to depend on whether they are viewed by the political structure as having done a good job, which is usually seen as increasing the size of the program, those kinds of things. Sometimes that's good; sometimes you want to increase the size of the programs. It's not always a bad thing to do.

So, it's extremely difficult. Management is viewed [very negatively] by political appointees, and the senior career people devolve management to the management cone. The management cone people don't have influence on anything. They write papers that go into file cabinets or a computer, and nothing much happens. And they are protected by appropriators on the Hill or people in the constituency. And so, it is very difficult.

Let me go one step further. The committees on the Hill that are responsible for management or government operations are "nothing" committees. They write papers or legislation that are often ignored. The power is in the appropriators and/or people who are involved with regulatory issues. This is true of people in power in both parties. Both parties see it as their interest to make their constituencies happy, even if it's not being done in the most efficient or effective way. They may not want to change a program to make it more efficient or effective because it would open a can of worms of some sort that they would have to deal with, that they don't want to have to deal with.

So, government is different from the private sector in that way, because in the private sector you're either producing widgets that work or not, that make you money or not, and you can look at it and see a number that says "plus" or "minus."

Q: And your stock price will reflect that.

HODSOLL: Your stock price will reflect that, but often not as well as it should, because it's more about quarterly earnings as opposed to long term. But in government it's particularly difficult.

If you turn over all your performance measures to some management bureaucrat who nobody pays attention to, he's going to write you a paper with all the "right" things in there. You can't trust him, because you don't know what's really going on.

Q: And what the unintended consequences are?

HODSOLL: And what the unintended consequences are. And you also need to have enough good sense...when I was at the arts endowment, I mentioned one case where I should have backed off what I thought should have been better management. You can't win all of them, you have to back off sometimes. But it is particularly difficult in government. It requires that the people in charge, the political people, including the cabinet secretaries, not just second-level bureaucrats at OMB, understand that it's a political system. To make management improvements, you must line up your forces just as much as if you're going to increase social security by x dollars.

Q: It's a reach.

HODSOLL: That's exactly right, and it's difficult. I think the Clinton administration did a good job of relating the management side of OMB to the budget side. Had I thought about it when I was there, I would have done the same thing. But they didn't do so well on other things.

Vice President Al Gore was put in charge of management, and most of the reductions in budget that he got were by basically allowing people to retire and not replacing them. And the White House spun high credit for that. It may be a useful technique. But it is a technique. You must look at it in terms of who are the people, and who is making the difference in getting these programs done, and not just automatically say, we're not going to replace x, y, or z.

When I had my session with the other deputy directors of management at George Mason [University], I didn't make a big point of this, but I sort of said, you know, it's more complicated than simply reducing the budget. And then I shut up. These were all colleagues and I didn't want to get into a big fuss in front of a bunch of students.

Clinton did some good stuff. I think George W. Bush's guy [Clay Johnson, deputy director for management at OMB—the same job that Hodsoll once held] did some terrific stuff. You know what his problem was? He loved performance measures so much, he created too many of them!

If you want performance measures that work, you need three or four for each program. And then make sure people really hone in on those three or four. It could be five or six, but it can't be 25 or 26. We never did 25-26; we just had a few important ones. Johnson did a good job at showing up and embarrassing people who weren't fulfilling their performance indicators.

I would say to career OMB people, you can't have this many performance indicators. Nobody's going to pay any attention to them! Pick a few that are important now, and succeed. And then change to a few others. You expect people to measure and take seriously 25 or 26 performance measures? Don't be silly. It's not going to happen.

Q: Frank, this has been a fabulous tranche. Let's agree to meet next Wednesday the third. We're going to stop here.

Q: Frank, hello, this is February 3, 2016, and it's a very rainy day here at your very lovely home in Falls Church. We are headed into the last 23 years of your career. We're looking forward to this.

Frank, before we start with the chronologies, I wonder if you could talk about your family and where you lived, your hobbies, what you were reading—something about the other half, quarter of your life. Let's start off with first, where did you live in Washington and afterwards during your career?

HODSOLL: When we came back from Brussels, we bought a house in Arlington. It was a traditional kind of house. Actually, we were dickering with the idea of remodeling a house in Georgetown, but it became too expensive. So, we ended up buying this house, and we ended up remodeling it extensively.

Q: Was this the one with the black swimming pool?

HODSOLL: This was the one with the black swimming pool and the discotheque in the basement. We remodeled it again before we moved out of there, and our children came back and learned to speak English again, having spoken French basically in our household in Brussels.

They went to the Taylor Elementary School in Arlington. But then we became somewhat disappointed with the elementary school in Arlington. We yanked them out of that. We felt the teachers were kind of bureaucratic and didn't seem to have any discipline. We put them in Saint Stephens and Saint Agnes, private day schools. Later, they managed to get into Choate, in the case of our son Frances. And he came back to Sidwell Friends. And our daughter went up to Exeter in New Hampshire.

Basically, they grew up here until they went off to boarding school. We were involved with their education and so on and so forth.

We had a lot of very good parties at our house in Arlington.

Q: I can attest to that.

HODSOLL: Including some Foreign Service Officers who jumped off the roof having had too much to drink—too much of something, not sure what it was.

Q: Jumped off the roof into the deep end of the pool!

HODSOLL: Jumped off the roof into the deep end of the pool, over a sort of balcony kind of arrangement that was very dangerous. I told Dick Browney, who was at IO/UNP [Bureau of International Organizations, Office of United Nations Political Affairs—the office to which Hodsoll was assigned at the State Department during the period] with me, that if he didn't stop I was going to have to call the police and have him removed from the place.

We also adopted a couple of dogs that just sort of strolled onto our property. We had a very lovely personal life. Unfortunately, the family didn't see a lot of me. I was working non-stop during most of that period. When we were off, we had a lot of fun.

Q: Where did you vacation?

HODSOLL: Let's see. We went skiing out in Colorado, to Aspen. We ended up in Colorado after federal service. Initially we were in and out of Aspen more than any of the other places. Mimi had gone out there multiple times when she was a young girl with her family, who knew the Paepckes, who had started Aspen as an international spot. [Walter and Elizabeth Paepcke were wealthy Chicago philanthropists who popularized Aspen as a cultural and ski resort starting in the mid-1950s.] And so, we went there.

And you know, we did all the usual things [in the Washington, DC, area]—walking on the [Chesapeake and Ohio] Canal. But most of the trips were out to Aspen, Colorado, during that period.

Q: I remember some very wonderful times we spent when you made arrangements for friends to use Camp Hoover. We went out and had wonderful retreats there, and played very, very incredible games of charades and other parlor games long into the night. It was great, great fun and merriment.

HODSOLL: One of the benefits from having been in the White House—I don't think this came from the Arts Endowment or OMB [Office of Management and Budget]—was that I had access, and continued access thanks to a friend of mine named John Rodgers, who stayed in the White House. He eventually went off with [James] Baker to [Department of the] Treasury.

They kept me on the list so I could use Camp Hoover, which was President Hoover's equivalent of Camp David. It's a [United States] Park Service facility, which is now closed. I don't think you can use it anymore. It's relatively modest but was great fun to go out and take the whole place over. [Hoover's Rapidan Camp, located in the Shenandoah National Forest, was restored in recent years by the Park Service and is now an historic site.]

We had friends like Tex and Jeanie Harris, and Mark Leland and his daughters, and Harry Blaney and Julia Moore, who came out for these occasions. You're right. We did charades, and we did a lot of walking around.

Q: Miss Moore was there.

HODSOLL: Miss Kate Moore was there. We had a lot of good fun.

Q: With kids! Filled with kids!

HODSOLL: Easter egg hunts in the woods and so on. Unlike one of our son's best friends—Fred Malik, Jr. Fred Malik was a Republican operative from the Nixon days, and a very senior guy in the Marriott Hotel business.

He [Malik Jr.] had gone out [to Camp Hoover] at one point, and the ranger told us he wanted to go up and see the bears. This was something we never did. Evidently the best place to see the bears is where the dump is—not for Camp Hoover, but for people who worked for the Shenandoah National Forest. Evidently, he lost control of his car and it rolled down into the dump. They spent the whole night waiting until someone could come help. This was before adequate cell phone service. That didn't happen to us. So, we did Camp Hoover, we had quite a few years of wonderful times.

Q: You had Sunday walks on the canal followed by lunch at Clyde's [a Georgetown restaurant, still in operation].

HODSOLL: All of the above. Sunday walks on the canal, and a lot of theater. One of the things that happened since I first arrived here: In 1959 when I arrived for an internship on the Hill, the only professional theater that I was aware of was Arena Stage, operating out of a warehouse. There was no Kennedy Center. Now, Washington has really become a highly cultural place.

There were also not very many good restaurants [in Hodsoll's early years in Washington]. As some people used to say, it was a city of Northern charm and Southern efficiency. But, you know, a lot of interesting people.

So anyway, the Hodsolls lived first in this Quebec Street house, and then we decided we would like to build a house of our own. There was a period of transition from the Arlington house to Crest Lane [in McLean, Virginia], where we built two houses so that we could afford to live in the one that was built for us. We hired a wonderful architect by the name of Don Hawkins, who designed these houses.

I took a year off from the Foreign Service, from Elliott Richardson [Hodsoll's supervisor who later served as secretary of four federal agencies] when I was doing Law of the Sea, to build the houses. Mimi was absolutely critical to this. We had an incredible time in those houses. As we got towards the end of it, and our kids were going on to college, we needed a bit more cash to make sure they could go to college and not have any debt and all that kind of thing.

So, we sold the house we had built for ourselves to Frank Carlucci, who had been Secretary of Defense, who still lives there as far as I know. We moved into a much smaller house. Basically, when the Bush 41 [George H.W. Bush] administration came to an end we decided to go out to Colorado. We sold our house in Washington.

We had bought land in Aspen during this period. It was overlooking the town of Aspen, and we had built a road down into where a house might be put, and it was during this that we ran into a woman by the name of Diane Wolfe, whose parents had decided that they wanted to have a rather big ranch of more than a thousand acres near Ridgeway, Ouray County, Colorado. We were with them [the Wolfe family] in Aspen, probably at Christmas, and they said, why don't you come down and see a more beautiful place than Aspen?

And we did that, and were taken around by his ranch hands, by Irving Wolfe, a wealthy guy from Wyoming, who had started from scratch but then had discovered how to buy and sell oil properties on the railroad rights-of-way when the Intercontinental Railway was put one square mile by one square across the country. He became a multi-multi-millionaire, maybe a billionaire.

We became friendly with him and his family. His eldest son's wife is Maya Lin, who did the Vietnam Memorial. That was one of the first things I was involved in at the [National Endowment of the Arts].

We went down to Ouray County [where the town of Ridgeway is located] and wandered around and concluded that we didn't need the social life of Aspen and the music—you could always go up there for that kind of thing. From the point of view of sheer beauty, you could not beat this part of Colorado, with the northern face of the northern San Juans, which are geologically much younger than most of the Rockies, so they are really craggy.

What had happened in Ouray County was that a good portion of the valley, called Pleasant Valley near Telluride, where Ralph Lauren's ranch was...I used to accuse Ralph Lauren of keeping our lawn. We were on a mesa overlooking his lawn, which was thousands of acres of cattle ranching. There was no question that it was absolutely gorgeous. If you wanted to go skiing you just spent an hour on the road to Telluride; that was still possible.

Though it didn't have the things the Paepckes had initiated at Aspen—the Aspen Institute and the concerts and the symphony. So, we built a house out there. We built it ourselves. I had a little help from our architect, Don Hawkins, but mostly Mimi and I designed it, and we were the general contractors for putting it together. We built a house on the ridge.

Originally, we had no running water; we used to truck water in. Then Mimi, to her great credit, was able to convince the local water company into probably the worst deal they had ever entered into, and they ran a water pipe all the way up there, thinking there would be a lot of development along this ridge overlooking Ralph Lauren's ranch and the Wolfe's ranch and others. Anyway, the water came in, and the price of the water was about the same as the price of the water in the valley. But they had all these pumping stations to bring the water up.

We really lucked out, because getting the water truck up the hill in the winter was dangerous, even with chains. Particularly when the truck was empty going downhill, and the back wheel would just go back and forth.

So we had built a house out there before we left Washington and went out there from time to time, and then, when the Bush administration came to an end, after some thinking about what to do next with my life, we decided to just go out to Colorado and make that our permanent place of living. So, we sold our house in Arlington and got a U-Haul truck and motored out there with all our belongings. And made our house in Ridgway our permanent house. So that brings us to the Colorado period of our life.

Q: Great. The children?

HODSOLL: Basically, Francis for some reason didn't like Choate much, and came back and went to Sidwell Friends. We are talking about the 1980s and early 1990s. There were some problems at Sidwell Friends, which is where the Obama kids go now.

I will never forget going to a parents' conference at Sidwell. The headmaster and various other people were there, and everybody was worried about the kids getting into drugs and that kind of thing. And these were all well-off kids, because Sidwell Friends did not have a lot of scholarship students. And the well-off parents could not agree on anything. They couldn't agree on drugs, they couldn't agree on anything!

About the most we could come up with was a list of telephone numbers so that if somebody else's kid had gotten drunk, or whatever he or she had done —whatever, they could call another person's parent who would not tell the other parent but go pick up the kid who was in trouble. And drive the person home who was in a drunken state, or maybe it was marijuana, who knows. But I found that kind of indicative of the lack of consensus on what should be done about discipline with kids. So, I pass that along as an anecdote.

Q: A good one.

HODSOLL: At any rate, the Bush administration came to an end and after a certain amount of cogitation of what to do next, we picked up our belongings and went to Colorado.

Q: Tell me about where Francis and Lisa went to college and what they have done professionally.

HODSOLL: Well, Francis was a real cut-up at Sidwell.

Q: And a football player.

HODSOLL: And a football player. He got into Colby; we were quite relieved because we weren't sure what was going to happen. He spent four years at Colby.

Q: Very successful.

HODSOLL: Well, sort of. He got his act together. Our daughter went to the University of Virginia, where she was primarily engaged in acting—being a theater major, and she spent four years there.

Q: It's a very fine theater school.

HODSOLL: I think it is. Francis spent four years at Colby, got through, then came out and sort of wandered around in non-descript jobs for a while. Then our daughter graduated; they were a year apart in terms of graduation. Then our son sort of got religion somewhere, after Colby and odd jobs.

My brother-in-law—my sister's husband, now passed away—was heavily involved with MIT, where he had gone to school, and got Francis into MIT [the Massachusetts Institute of Technology]. That was extraordinary because his undergrad grades were not impressive. But Francis got religion and graduated in the top ten percent of his class. He got his MBA from the Sloan School and became successful in that.

So, our kids did that. Our daughter is still involved in theater, in Chicago, doing a one-person show that she started here, called Medea Has Issues. In my view, she is a pretty darn good actor. She is not making a lot of money but she is doing well.

Her significant other for quite a few years was Pascal Waidacher, a very peculiar person in our view. He wore a Communist hammer and sickle on his clothes and was a declared Communist. They lived not just modestly but on what I would call the edge of existence.

Q: A Bohemian lifestyle.

HODSOLL: A Bohemian lifestyle! They remodeled two houses in Baltimore. Lisa is selling one and will be selling the other.

Q: And a firehouse!

HODSOLL: That was Pascal's. In any event, Pascal is no longer part of the picture.

Q: He is a well-known artist from Austria.

HODSOLL: I don't know if he's well-known but he lives now in France. Lisa has now taken up with another guy, Dana Galloway. Lovely guy.

Q: And he's from Texas!

HODSOLL: He's from West Texas. Grew up on a ranch. His brother is an art dealer in Santa Fe, New Mexico. He has a wonderful car. Our daughter has a broken-up old Volvo and he has a Mercedes and that really helps them get around to places.

He has just taken her out to Chicago and will pick her up when her two months of Medea Has Issues play is done. They have ended up doing that.

Francis is now in a major way involved in producing an increased amount of solar power in the Middle Atlantic region but particularly in the state of Virginia. He has entered a partnership with another guy. He did a lot of work for the Defense

Department in Afghanistan.

He was in the government for a while, during the George W. Bush administration, in the Energy Department, in their international section. Then he went over to the Interior Department as the number two guy in offshore mineral leasing. And then he went off to the private sector, initially to Richmond, to work for a company that works at converting solid waste into energy, in small amounts, to add to the grid. And now he is the partner and co-director of Solunesco, which is in the process of starting a business to option and then to lease and to buy the land on which solar collectors would go, to provide additional electricity into the grid.

They have an option on 400 acres in Virginia, and they are getting another one up for 1000 acres. We are keeping our fingers crossed. We try to be helpful and hope this will work for Francis. He was on a radio show today. Did you get notice of that?

He is the senior executive in a wide variety of solar energy companies.

Q: And he is passionate about it.

HODSOLL: And he is passionate about it. So, they are doing well.

Q: It's delightful that both kids are doing things that they believe in very strongly and that they are knowledgeable about: Lisa in the theater and Francis in alternative, green energy.

HODSOLL: No question about that. All good stuff.

Q: And Mimi has been a very lovely artist and done very wonderful watercolors, particularly, which are fabulous.

HODSOLL: No question, she is the artist in the family. Most of our art collection dates from her having run an art gallery in Chicago when she was a young woman. Henry Geldzahler, the head of the Metropolitan Museum of Art's contemporary section said it was the best art gallery in Chicago. So, our house is graced with all of Mimi's possessions. She has a great eye, and I think she is also a very fine artist.

Q: This is wonderful although it is not the hard stuff of your government work. It enriches your oral history, Frank. Leave this

in and expand on it because your major readership, another channel of your readership, will be your grandkids and then their great grandkids. So, they will enjoy it as much as the stories of the OMB and the other things that might be a little more remote to them.

Let's go now to your career. You left on the last day of the Bush Administration in 1993, I guess it was January, and we are today about 23 years almost to the day. You have since done a lot of things in several areas—in the arts, in management as a management consultant, in government roles at the local level in Colorado, and significant work internationally in UNESCO [United Nations Educational, Science, and Cultural Organization]. You also did some special assignments such as looking at the loan program of billions of dollars for Sally Mae in terms of a major commission that they have done. Why don't we go through each of those at your pace, and if you could give us some of the highlights of this last 23 years? Why don't we start off with management?

HODSOLL: That's fine. Okay. I organized this by date, so let me pull out "management."

I guess the first thing that happened in federal management—when I went to Colorado I was doing this: I became a principal of the now defunct Council on Excellence in Government, which is something Elliott Richardson had helped to start. And I was involved with them on a wide variety of projects including our capacity to respond to terrorist attacks at the local level, across the country. I went out with them to a wide variety of places.

Q: What year, date, did that start, your involvement?

HODSOLL: The council had started before I became involved. [The Council on Excellence in Government was a public-private partnership that ran from the mid-1980s to 1989, when it was absorbed into the Partnership for Public Service.]

I was on the council even while I was still in government, and continued with it. Then I was asked by the then-president of the council to take on some specific assignments while I was in Colorado. The assignment that I remember the best had to do with the communication between federal, state and local—the people involved in responding to an attack of some sort, whether terrorist or otherwise, and how recovery could take place. And how one would save people, particularly if it were a biological attack.

And I knew some people—a guy who had been a friend of mine and colleague in the office of the science adviser to President

George H.W. Bush and later became a key guy in HHS [Department of Health and Human Services]. He was the guy who helped to eradicate smallpox, D.A. Henderson. I worked with him on a number of things and translated them out to the state and local area as well. [Donald A. Henderson was the American physician and epidemiologist who directed the 10-year effort that eradicated smallpox worldwide and launched childhood vaccination programs. Later, he initiated national programs for public health preparedness and response following biological attacks and national disasters. That was the context in which he and Hodsoll cooperated.]

Another management issue: I co-chaired the Sally Mae Education Services Council and was the author of the final report. I was privileged to be co-chair with Dick Cyert, the then-president of Carnegie Mellon University.

Sallie Mae wanted this done because they were thinking about getting into the business of providing information technology (IT) services to universities. We pulled together a committee and then drafted a report, as to areas where Sallie Mae could help. This was in 1995-1996. [SLM Corporation—commonly known as Sallie Mae, originally the Student Loan Marketing Association—is a publicly traded U.S. corporation that provides consumer banking. Its nature has changed dramatically since it was set up in 1973. At first, it was a government entity that serviced federal education loans. That was its mission when Hodsoll participated in the committee discussed here.]

During this, I must have visited 50 or 60 college and university presidents across the country, talked with them, and became friends with several of these college presidents. That also translates into something I did at OMB, which I don't think I have mentioned.

A friend of mine from arts involvement, a lawyer named Jim Fitzpatrick, came in to see me with his client, Donald Kennedy, then the president at Stanford University. Donald Kennedy had been the food and drug administrator in the Kennedy administration. His name was Kennedy but he was no relation to JFK [President John Fitzgerald Kennedy]. He had gotten into trouble with the Congress, and rightly so, because he had taken part of a grant that Stanford had received to help Stanford with its higher education responsibilities, and used it to buy an antique commode and some other bits and pieces for the president's house. And this caused an outrage.

I hadn't even heard about it until Jim Fitzpatrick and Donald Kennedy came into my office. But this caused an outrage on the Hill, particularly with John Dingell, a senior Democrat.

Q: And a guy you don't want to get crosswise with.

HODSOLL: And a guy you don't want to get crosswise with. [John David Dingell, Jr., of Michigan, was a member of the U.S. House of Representatives for 59 years. He retired in 2015.]

So, I ended up being the OMB principal on this. Essentially, I told Jim Fitzpatrick and his client, who came in in a rather arrogant way and said, "We should be able to spend this on anything we like"—I said, "It's federal money, and you're not spending it on antique commodes for your house, for Christ's sake." I said, "What's wrong with you? You used to be in the government. That just doesn't pass muster. You may be able to do that with a wealthy, private donor but not with the government. You have put the whole program in jeopardy."

I told him right to his face.

Q: Good!

HODSOLL: I never saw him again, but I did participate in a committee of university college presidents, in particular the presidents of Johns Hopkins and MIT and all kinds of people, and essentially my job was to go up on the Hill and said that we fully agreed with Dingell and others, that the money should not be spent for the president of Stanford University's house!

Q: Oh, so OMB was the bellwether of the administration for this.

HODSOLL: We were the central point on it. Eventually we were able to talk, with a lot of help from these presidents, who had lots of influence with these committees. Eventually we got it down so we added some legislative language that under no circumstances were funds from the federal government supposed to be used for these kinds of things. But draconian regulations were brought in that said you couldn't do any of this or your budget would be cut by so many dollars.

So, that essentially made me favorably known to the university community, and that's what got me into the Sallie Mae job. No, the woman at Sallie Mae who hired me used to work for me at the arts endowment. So maybe it was that relationship, at any rate they knew I could write papers that would bring people together. So, off I went with Dick Cyert, who was such a great guy.

Q: So, you did a lot of the writing.

HODSOLL: I did all the writing. He would edit. He has now passed away. For those who don't know him, he was one of the seminal leaders on information technology in the country. Just an extraordinary guy. I was very honored to be with him, and I also got to meet a lot of college presidents and hear what their issues were.

These were the days when--what was the music system that was causing such a fuss then? People were pirating music? The whole question of what information technology was doing and how young people viewed copyright became part of this, but almost as a separate matter.

Q: You met Diana Natalicio, who is now at Carnegie.

Yes, I saw her again last year in El Paso, and she took us on a nice tour of the University of Texas at El Paso [where Natalicio is president]. She is a great lady, a very nice person, one of the people I spent some time with. Another person I spent time with is a guy named [Robert] Berdahl, then the president of the University of Texas at Austin, and he went on to be chancellor of the whole University of California system. He knew [James] Baker well, who had gone to UT Austin law school.

I will never forget. Berdahl and I were chatting about the Sallie Mae program. He said, "Come on over and let me show you something." He took me over to his window and he said, "See that big building?"

I said, "Yes, what is that?"

He said, "That is the legislature."

And I said, "Really?"

Berdahl said, "I look over there at the legislature, and I shake my fist at them regularly. But never in public!"

And I said, "Well good for you! Are you getting more money?"

And he said, "A little."

(Laughter)

HODSOLL: A lot of my capacity to do this for Sally Mae was my relationships, again back to relationships I had built up over a long time, doing things like trying to tamp down the Dingell issue over Stanford, which is one of my colleges. I went to law school at Stanford.

Q: That case is as famous as the 200-dollar hammer with the defense contractor! These war stories are just wonderful.

HODSOLL: [Don] Kennedy obviously is not around anymore; he may not even be alive. I don't think he ever took what I told him seriously. I think he was just plain bloody arrogant! I may take that out.

[The scandal over misuse of federal funds led to Donald Kennedy's resignation from the presidency of Stanford University in 1992. At this writing, he remains affiliated with the university as a scientific researcher.]

Q: Modify a little but leave the story in. Other management consultancy things?

HODSOLL: Coming back to management, I didn't do all that much federal management consulting while I was in Colorado. I did some but not much. I think there were bits and pieces with the National Academy of Public Administration and some with OMB [Office of Management and Budget] where people thought I could be helpful.

I had kept in touch. When the [President William J.] Clinton administration first came in, I was asked by a senior person, David Taylor, who had been at OMB with me, to give Bob Dole, then the senior Republican on the Hill, an idea about the Clinton proposal for management reform.

I got into it and read it, thought about it, and talked about it to some people I knew. I came back with the following recommendation for Dole. I said, "If they mean it, it's terrific. But hold them to it, because they may not mean it." In my own view, they didn't totally mean it, or totally not mean it. Whether my recommendation was accepted or not, I got a nice note from Dole thanking me for taking the time to go through it. So that was a management issue.

Q: Let me break the chrono here. This is very indicative of the Hodsoll style. That is, focusing on a subject. You have done that

with your friends when you become interested in a policy issue, you will just devote several days to it! There was Piketty's book which got your interest and you wrote a 10-page paper on his observations and other observations in terms of the policy implications. . . . [Thomas Piketty is a French economist who wrote a well-received book in 2013 called Capital in the Twenty-first Century. The book remains controversial in the United States due to its thesis that the capitalist system leads to vast inequalities of wealth.]

HODSOLL: I am an absolutely incurable wonk.

Q: On the implications of economic research and thought on public policy. And that seems to be a gift! Can you talk about that? Being a wonk is one thing, but what made you a wonk?

HODSOLL: Well, my jobs had been wonkish jobs for the most part. I get interested. Some people say I have no taste. I am interested in almost everything that has a problem. I find the competing views—who is for what and why—just fascinating! So, then I like to get into it.

You mentioned Thomas Piketty's book [Capital in the Twenty-first Century]. I had read about it. I love it when I read about somebody's book that is praised by people from the left and the right. Then I figure he or she may really have something going. And so, I read up on it and then think through what I think about all this. I may not know much about it, but I really enjoy that sort of thing. I spent my whole career doing it.

Q: And then you put your thoughts to paper.

HODSOLL: Then I put my thoughts to paper and write something, who knows who reads it but that's okay.

Q: No, no, no! [Your writing] is excellent and very thoughtfully detailed and very wonkish, but knowledgeably wonkish. The other thing is that in your writings there is no real ideological spin. You are clearly conservative, and a Republican. And those are values that are abiding, but they are not overwhelming. And the interest is apparent in terms of finding small t "truth" and workable solutions.

HODSOLL: I like to think that, and it is certainly my nature. When I first went out to Colorado, a very few people knew that I had been in the government. I ran for county commissioner, and I was told to keep all my background to myself and not say a

word about it. Some people knew I had been in the George H.W. Bush administration.

When Hillary Clinton came out with her health care bill in the early days of the first Clinton administration, I was asked by the head of the chamber of commerce in Montrose, Colorado, to come in and give a talk about the Clinton proposal. I did not know at that time she had done it all in secret and not brought in the Hill. So, I got a copy of what had been sent to the Hill. Basically, I said there is some good stuff here. Whether it will work or not, I am not an expert. But I don't think it should be dismissed out of hand, either.

To be honest, Hillary Clinton's problem at the time was less the issue of the [health care] proposal than it was her really screwed-up way of dealing with the Hill on it.

Q: Process.

HODSOLL: Yes, keeping it all secret and saying we are in charge, and we know better than the rest of you, which was just dumb.

Q: Your experience with the Congress led you to that conclusion.

HODSOLL: Absolutely. Working with Reagan and George H.W. Bush, that was not the way we operated. That is just dumb. You don't get things done that way. Even Democrats didn't like it much, because of that. It's the same problem that [President Barack] Obama has.

[Hillary Clinton's health care bill died in the Congress without being given serious consideration. A health care proposal would not be accepted by Congress until the first administration of Barack Obama. Even then, the Obama health care bill passed without a single Republican vote.]

Q: Let's go through the rest of the management things.

HODSOLL: Okay. I became more involved with the National Academy for Public Administration [NAPA]. Before I was a fellow at the NAPA, I was involved with various things they were up to. They wanted some help with a commission. I think this was after I came back to Washington, though.

Let's see what the dates were here. I told you about Sallie Mae. That's while I was out there [in Colorado].

I mentioned the senior adviser to the Council on excellence in Government, Homeland Security from a Citizen's Perspective project. That was when I was back here.

Q: When did you come back here [to the Washington, DC, area]?

HODSOLL: I came back about 2001 or 2002.

Q: And you sold your home?

HODSOLL: We sold our home in Colorado. Our kids were back here, and I didn't want to run again. I'm not sure I would have won another election. Some people wanted me to run again, but I didn't want to. One of the interesting things about being a county commissioner in a small county in Colorado in those days: you got paid 15,000 dollars a year, for what was not a full-time job, but became a full-time job before it was all over. The salary is much higher now.

I needed to make a little extra money, I couldn't just live off my federal pension. So, I took on these other jobs. As I got older, to get from the Montrose airport, the airport that services Ouray County, you go into Denver in a little tiny plane, and then you have to walk quite a distance to get to the bigger planes that go to Washington, carrying in my case, my overnight bag and my computer and everything else, and it was tiring. So, I decided we should probably head back, because I needed to make a bit more money than I was making out in Colorado.

So, let me turn to Colorado, to my full-time job.

When I got to Colorado, and again, more things happened to me by accident than by thinking it forward, we had a neighbor who was about a mile away—in the rural area, all the houses were a mile apart—who came up for dinner one night. She and her husband came, and during the dinner they were saying that Ouray County is going to hell in a handbasket because development is taking over the beautiful valley. It was still light outside, and we looked out the window, and I said, "It looks pretty beautiful to me. What's going on?"

They both said, “Well, the county doesn’t know what it’s doing, and they don’t have any maps, and people are tying up land.”

She said, “You ought to go down to the county courthouse and take a look and see what you think.”

I said, “Well, okay,” and so I did. And they didn’t have any maps. They had only hand-drawn maps. They were all public records, so it wasn’t an issue of being able to get access. It seemed to me they weren’t following through on this.

I went to see my private attorney, who had helped us buy [our] land, and who was a friend of Irving Wolfe, the wealthy guy who owned a house and ranch in the valley. And I said, “You know, I just had a neighbor who asked this question, and I went down and had a look. It seems to me the county needs to do something about this.”

He said, “You’re absolutely right. Would you be willing to take a hand at trying to organize something?”

And I said, “Well I might be, but I’m not a map maker. I don’t have a clue as to how to go about doing that.”

And he said, “Well, you ought to meet this guy Bill Ferguson.”

I said, “Okay, who is Bill Ferguson?”

Bill Ferguson was an aging hippie who was head of a tiny little ranch that raised things. He was at the far end of the political spectrum from me. He was a Bernie Sanders type of guy. [Bernie Sanders is a U.S. Senator from Vermont who identifies as a European-style Democratic Socialist. During the 2016 presidential election, he challenged Hillary Clinton for the Democratic nomination for president of the United States. Clinton then lost the general election to Republican nominee Donald Trump.]]

So, I went down to see Bill. He was married to a woman who had been part of the social set in New York and had been in the arts, and she had heard all about me from the arts. And Bill’s father was a banker. But they were both hippies at this point, having come that way totally on their own. Their families were well off, which I guess gave them money to survive.

You’ve got to know, when I left OMB, I didn’t really know how to use a computer. I had staff, and I used to mark up—when they wrote stuff, I would edit heavily. I did it all in red pen. I had lots of red pens!

I had a computer thing on my desk where I could access other people's papers, but I didn't know how to edit anything on a computer. I learned how to do that in Colorado. Actually, Bill Ferguson was helpful. I got myself a laptop and kind of figured it out.

Anyway, Ferguson totally agreed that a mapping system was needed. He said, "I think I can help you. Maybe we should start an operation that makes better maps."

I said, "Well, I am all for that. How much is that going to cost?" And he said, "Well, not that much. I have a couple of volunteers and I have a computer, and I kind of know how to do this. I am going to need some resources and help."

I said, "Well okay, I don't know where this ends up, Bill, and maybe you have a different view on how the land should be divided up when we are done. But I am in favor of coming up with true facts! What is going on, and who is doing what?"

Q: Yes!

HODSOLL: So, I tried to help. So, my role was not the computer side of it, it was then going around and knocking on doors and figuring out with friends that I had there, like Pete Decker, just a great guy, who had been [Colorado] commissioner of agriculture and former professor of political science at Duke, and some other people I'd met through the Wolfes. Pete was absolutely a Democrat. And then I got people from the far right wing up on Log Hill to join in because they thought the county was....

Q: Log Hill was a fancy area?

HODSOLL: Log Hill had a golf course, not that fancy but fancy enough.

And I got some of them to join in so we had some people from the right and left or middle who had some resources. We raised, you know, 50-60,000 dollars. It didn't take a whole lot. And we put together something called the Southwestern Colorado Data Center.

I said, "You know, we need to do more than just produce some maps. We need to also have an analysis of the maps, looking at the population of Ouray County and its two little incorporated cities, Ouray and Ridgway, where people are moving in and

moving out. In those days [Roy] Romer was the Democratic governor of Colorado. I didn't have any particular influence with him. [Romer was in office 1987-1999.]

Q: He was a fairly impressive guy.

HODSOLL: He was a very impressive guy, though I helped the Republican guy, Bill Owens, who succeeded him as governor. I chaired the Republican effort on the western slope, the rural area of Colorado. [William F. Owens was governor of Colorado 1999-2007.]

And that got me more into the political side of things. But in any event, we put together this little group, and my job in the group—Bill did all the mapping—but I wrote the analysis....

Q: Once again!

HODSOLL: What it meant and where the trends seemed to be and one thing and another. And I cleared it with all kinds of people including our board. And that became extremely popular. Before Romer left office as governor he gave us a smart growth award for that.

Q: Gave the NGO the smart growth award.

HODSOLL: Gave the NGO the smart growth award. Ouray County was amazing. There were only 4,000 souls in it, or thereabouts, and while it was only a small number of people we had every conceivable kind of person. When I eventually ran for county board, which I'll come back to later, I had one guy show up with a gun and threaten to shoot me if I ever showed up on his property again. He didn't want any government types ever to come within shooting range of his property. We had people like that. Then we had the aging hippies, and the white flight from southern California, who said it was getting too brown down there.

Ouray County was overwhelmingly white. I don't think I ever saw a black person there, maybe a few Hispanics.

We joined a church because we liked the pastor. We're not all that religious or churchgoing, but we liked the pastor, who was a former aerospace engineer. He was way too conservative for us. I mean, his views on homosexuals were absolutely

antediluvian. But he was a really sweet guy in many respects. So, we got to know him and some of the people on the church board.

What this taught me, because I put a name [to each person]. It was not because there were 20,000 of these and 50,000 of those and 50,000 of somebody else. It was Smith and Jones vs. McPherson and so on, whoever the other names were.

It came down to conversations over hamburgers. There were so few people you could do that.

Then you had the six or seven multimillion dollar ranchers who kept the place looking beautiful—Ralph Lauren, the Wolfes, and the principal benefactor at Stanford whose name I forget. There were six or seven of those people. They performed an enormous service, because they kept it pristine, and employed real cowboys and paid them decent wages. They weren't going to enter the day-to-day governance of Ouray County, but their hearts were in the right place.

So, one of the things I learned while I was out in Colorado, and it began with the Southwestern Colorado Data Center, was that there were all kinds of people there. There was a guy brought in by that actor Dennis Weaver, who had a house out there. Weaver brought out a guy named Joseph Lyons, who was a theater artist. He had been to Juilliard [the Juilliard School for Arts, Music, and Dance in New York City] and so forth. And Joseph started a theater group that I became a part of.

One of the things Lyons could do was to take people from our church, who were all extremely conservative. There was another church that was less conservative. There was no church that was Bill Ferguson style. But by getting people together to come in and be part of his [Joe Lyons'] shows, people who never talked to each other started talking to each other. I thought that was just terrific. And I went to all kinds of different shows.

Long story short, I had done this [helped create the Southwestern Colorado Data Center], and it was successful. It hadn't yet been recognized by the governor, but several Ouray County people thought that it was terrific. I didn't get paid for any of this, I just did it.

There was an election coming up for county commission. A retired three-star general named John Hay—a super guy—not hugely conservative, concerned about land use and that the land should stay beautiful. He came down to see me. He volunteered in the schools and did all sorts of great stuff.

He said, “How would you like to run for county commissioner?”

I said, “I have no idea, I’ve never been elected to anything.”

He said, “You’ve done this business with the data center. We need somebody from this part of the county.” There were three county commissioners, and the part of the county I was in was kind of up for grabs. There was another guy, who had been the mayor of Ridgway, who was a Republican.

John Hay after a period of three or four months persuaded me to run for county commission, and so I did. And a committee was put together.

Q: You run county-wide?

HODSOLL: You run county-wide although you come from the third of the county that is involved.

So, I agreed to do this. At that point, I didn’t have a full-time job, so I thought if I could still do my extracurricular stuff that would be fine by me, and it would be interesting.

John was kind of neat. He said, “Let me tell you something. I know what you’ve done because you have given me your resume. But you are not to say a word about your resume—not where you went to school, not what you did in the federal government. It would absolutely be a killer! You won’t be elected to anything. We’ll get you elected, and you just talk about the data center and your plans for Ouray County.”

I said, “Okay, I am not anxious to brag about what I did in the federal government.” And so that happened.

Q: So, all your years of experience in the White House, the arts, and OMB?

HODSOLL: Most people didn’t know anything about it. John Hay knew, but the others didn’t. And I won!

I was also at that point chairman of the Ouray County Republican Party. I put on a big shindig for Bill Owen, who was starting his big run [for governor; he served as governor of Colorado 1999-2007]. It was a multicounty affair that went off well, and

several thousand people came to it. This led to things with Owen later.

So, you know, the Democratic side, the more liberal side, including Bill Ferguson, thought it was an awful idea that this guy Don Batchelder, who was the mayor of Ridgway, nominally a Republican but not terribly conservative, become a commissioner. He was a decent guy; he's still a commissioner. After I left he became a commissioner and stayed on. They now pay them \$50,000 a year which is a little better than \$15,000.

There was a group called the Ridgway Ouray Community Council [ROCC, a non-profit organization still in existence] that was far left wing. They basically wanted to shut down all new development of any kind, which you couldn't do in Colorado at that time, because there are laws that give 35-acre development as a right. A whole bunch of 35-acre houses are not going to add to the beauty of the county. You had to figure out how to deal with things of that nature.

If the whole county were divided into 35-acre plots, it would be terrible. These areas would be seen from the main road. But it takes a bit of doing to get this right. It's not just a function of "there shall be no more development." I wasn't in favor of what this ROCC group was doing, just creating bureaucratic obstacles to everything.

I said, "That's not the way I operate. We do it on the merits, and we decide on a democratic basis in the county commission. We are not going to make exceptions and say we don't like this guy, we are going to toss him out. I'm not going to do that."

So, they were against me, and they put up somebody to run against me. [Don] Batchelder was known for having been a decent mayor, and personally I got along with him. He was kind of an aging hippie. Because Ferguson and I had been partners, Ferguson was for Batchelder.

They put up a Democratic candidate who didn't amount to much. That was easy and I eventually won, not overwhelmingly, but by a pretty solid majority, thanks to John Hay, who everybody loved. So, I became a county commissioner because of all of that, and spent four years at it.

Q: We came to visit you during that period. You took us on one of those breathtaking four-wheel jeep trails, where there was absolutely no space on the road to the right of your tires. And we went up these Billy goat trails with your extra-sized tires in some of the most breathtaking country I've ever seen! There was Hodsoll in his special off-road monster truck!

HODSOLL: It was a beautiful place, nothing like it.

And I got to even the people who were against me politically. At the end of the day a lot of those people kind of liked me. Something happened, where I didn't pull something I could have pulled to make sure Bill Ferguson never became a council member.

When I became a commissioner, we had three commissioners: Alan Staehle, a former deputy sheriff of Boulder who had a house in Ouray County. His father was a senior executive in Kodak. But Alan had become a law enforcement guy. He also was running for the first time at that time, as a Republican. And then the other guy was a Democrat who came from a very old mining family. His name was Joe Mattivi. We ended up with the three of us: one Democrat and two Republicans.

The wonderful thing about the three of us: None of us was partisan. We might have had slightly different views about x, y, or z, but there wasn't a partisan bone in our bodies. We wanted to work together to make the county work better, how do we do stuff properly.

Then what happened was—I'm leaping forward—I was in Glenwood Springs for a water commission meeting—I was put on a water commission, the Colorado River Water Conservation Commission. I got a call from our county commissioner administrative assistant, Judy Woford, who said, "Something terrible has happened. Joe Mattivi has been killed in a mining accident."

So, I immediately came back. Joe and Alan and I really worked together so well. We had some disagreements, but it wasn't partisan; it was always about the merits. And Joe was a friend, so I rushed back.

The next thing that happened was, the Democrats had the right under Colorado law to pick Joe's successor to serve until the next election. They picked Bill Ferguson. I didn't have a real problem with that, because we continued our relationship on maps and things of that nature.

But the Ouray County Democratic Committee had done something that wasn't approved of by Colorado state law. It had something to do with their composition, a technical matter. I forget the details.

Some of the more conservative Republicans came to me and said, "Go see Governor Bill Owen, you know him, and get this

nixed.”

I said, “I’m not going to do that.”

I thought about it a little bit. I said, “Bill and I don’t see eye to eye on a lot of stuff, but if that’s what the Democrats want I’m not going to try and call a technicality to have him dismissed.” Sometimes, later, I kind of wondered whether I had done the right thing.

The Democrats loved me for that. I was taken out to lunch by various left-wingers, and Bill joined us. That is another story for later.

Coming back into the county commission, my principal contribution was making the county a lot more transparent than it had been, fixing the books, and making sure we had a better way of figuring out how much we were spending for stuff and what we were getting for our money.

Q: So, management!

HODSOLL: It was management, but political management, too.

One of the first things I got the other commissioners to agree on. It was right at the beginning. I said, “Let’s create a citizen’s committee in each important area of the county. Not just have the county commissioners decide—even though they were open meetings and people could come. Let’s get people from different parts of the county to be part of it, and have them make recommendations to the county commissioner, along with whatever career bureaucrat oversaw the issue.”

Q: How many employees did the county have?

HODSOLL: We had 15 or 20, something like that, maybe 20 if you count the road crew. It was very small. Our budget was like three million or something like that a year.

So, they bought that, and then we worked together making sure we had conservatives and liberals, people for development, people against development, from different parts of the county. We had these meetings. I think it really improved stuff, because

we learned things. The road committee would get together, and then they would come in and report to the county commissioners and say, “We think x, y, and z,” and the commissioners would say, “We like x and y but we are not going to do z.”

It was received very favorably. The local newspaper, the Ouray County Plain Dealer, which has been in existence since the 19th century, opposed me. The editor then—the editor now is a different person—was heavily on the liberal side and thought I was something of a carpetbagger; I’m not quite sure. He opposed me.

But we got along after that, because he liked the idea of these committees getting all sorts of people involved, including him. He had opposed me in the election. They wrote a big editorial on how Batchelder should be elected. That is fine, it goes with the game.

The civic committees helped with all of that. It helped me in particular, because Joe Mattivi was a mine equipment operator, not a guy who did papers. Alan Staehle could do papers but he was a law enforcement guy, basically, and doing all sorts of volunteer work in emergency medical services. And I was the guy who brought the skills of putting down on the paper in wonkish fashion the pluses and the minuses, here’s how much it could cost and would cost.

So, I could take these committees and help them draft their reports in ways that covered maybe not all the bases but some of the bases.

I think that was number one. That was a process issue.

Q: And you were the initiator of that! That’s terrific!

I was also the initiator of a process to get our development of the budget into normal fashion, and using the committees as a part of that process.

The biggest issue in Ouray County was land use.

Q: Your decisions there made people millionaires.

HODSOLL: Well, yes and no. I mean, the six or seven very rich outsiders who bought thousands of acres were not a problem, because they were not going to put subdivisions on their pretty acres where they brought their rich friends to come see the view. They kept it beautifully, and they employed people.

Q: This was the Ralph Laurens.

HODSOLL: Yes, this was the Ralph Lauren type of people.

Q: What was he [Lauren] like?

HODSOLL: Terrific guy; he didn't want to spend time with the likes of me. He had taste, and he knew what he was doing. He had a foreman who was a bit of a curmudgeon but also was a terrific guy. They kept the county green and hired people, and I was all for them.

Q: I remember driving along his property and it was kind of like Kentucky with these gorgeous, freshly painted white gates and this green lush pasture and horses on the other side. It was right out of Lexington, Kentucky, horse country.

HODSOLL: It was right out of a Hollywood movie.

And interestingly, my friend Irving Wolfe and his wife—Lauren had a pretty fancy house, but the Wolfes managed to move a 1926 Sears Roebuck house out to their property, and that became their house, fixed up on the inside. Which I thought was unique. Anyway, that was a very small group of people who did what they did, and didn't cause trouble. Occasionally there was trouble when hunters wanted to go across their property to get an elk or whatever.

The issue primarily was that of the old-time ranchers, whose only nest egg was their land. To be honest with you, if you were going to cattle ranch, you would not go to Ouray County. It was too remote, too long a winter, too much physical labor to make it work. And they were not rich. The one thing they had going for them was that when they died, passed away, they could pass on to their kids their property, which could be sold and subdivided into 35-acre standards. We're not talking about making millions—well, in some cases millions—but this would make their families secure. And that's not unreasonable. So, you had to think about the implications].

This was not just about six rich ranchers who could afford anything they wanted to buy. It was also about these people who had gotten their land from their grandparents or parents, 200 acres or whatever, through the land-grants system going back to the 19th century. They were terribly worried about further restrictions on their ability to sell land. Not all of them, but some of them wanted to pass it on to the kids, and the kids could continue the ranching. That said, it surely had to be a matter of love, because you couldn't support yourself off cattle ranching in Ouray County. It was just too far to go to get the cattle to the feedlots and everything else.

What we came up with as part of a new land-use plan was, we created clusters of houses. I am making up numbers here. So, if somebody had 200 acres, they could develop on a quarter-acre or half-acre plots 10 houses, but they had to keep the rest permanently open land.

Q: So, you had easements.

HODSOLL: We had easements. We did an analysis that if we did this, they would get as much money as they would have had they just divided the property without regard to the county.

Did this work in all cases? Absolutely not, but it worked in some cases, and it certainly brought political peace to some degree. The other thing that we did was, we started to look at the issues in land use that caused the most problems. A good bit of the problem was people building on the edge of the Log Hill Escarpment, which you could see from the valley. You would see these modern houses up there. So, we put into the land use [regulations] that all future houses must be invisible, they must be screened, set back so that you don't automatically see them from the valley.

We made exceptions for barns. Your house couldn't be over a certain height, but a barn was okay because that was part of the ranching tradition. It could be a little higher, and if it was a barn it had to look like a barn was supposed to be there, not some fancy house. So, we did a lot of things like that.

We also created easements for wildlife to go across people's property, so we had lots of deer and elk who roamed around. That was a good thing; they had to have a place to go, so we made sure that remained possible.

We did some other things. We got a full-time planner who was qualified.

Q: As a county employee.

HODSOLL: As a county employee. We had a planning commission which was appointed by us, and we made it very clear. We didn't put any people on that commission who either thought you could build anything you like, or people who thought we needed to shut the whole place down [to development].

These were the accomplishments we had. When I left the county commission, the same newspaper editor [who had opposed Hodsoll's election] wrote a full-page editorial thanking me. I took him out to lunch. I said, "I have nothing to gain from this politically anymore!"

Anyhow, so that's what happened. While I was doing all of this, I also got the opportunity, through the county attorney, to be appointed to the Colorado River Commission. The Colorado River is on the western slope of the Rocky Mountains. Denver is over here; here are the Rocky Mountains. The river goes down from there and ends up in California.

Q: Was this a multi-state commission?

HODSOLL: Just Colorado. It has advisory power, not absolute but near-absolute, over the waters lying in Colorado. All the Colorado River is governed by the 1922 compact between the states. [The Colorado River Compact, signed by seven U.S. states lying in the river basin, governs the allocation of the water rights to the river's water among the parties of the interstate compact.] What the compact did was, so much for Colorado, so much for New Mexico, so much for California, Nevada, and all the others [Arizona, Wyoming, Utah].

We never used all the water allocated to Colorado in the compact. It would just flow downstream and end up in California.

It was interesting for me to be on this commission because the vast majority of people on the commission, one from each county, were old-time ranchers, or came from families of old-time ranchers. So, I was an odd person.

I even told the staff of the Colorado Commission, "I am really a suspicious character because I grew up in southern California, and a friend of the family was the guy who brought the water into Los Angeles, and you may view me as a friend of the guy who stole your water!" That didn't seem to bother them particularly.

But one of the things I discovered was that the head of the Denver water district was a Yale graduate, and he discovered that I was a Yale graduate. He called me up one time, and said, “We ought to have lunch when you are next in Denver.”

The conversation continued. He said, “We would like to buy some more of your water. We will give you multi millions of dollars. We will build the tunnel to get the water across the mountains to Denver.” There were already two tunnels.

Q: This was Ouray County water?

HODSOLL: No, this was western Colorado water. Ouray County didn’t have any water per se. It had a few rights, but the governance under the 1922 compact is all about the states. So, I thought, gee, this sounds pretty good, bring in multi millions of dollars to help ranchers. So, I came into one of the meetings and I said, “We have had this suggestion made, should we pursue it?”

And there was a silence. Then, leaving aside Paepcke County, where Aspen is, and San Miguel County, where Telluride is—leaving aside the two resort counties—

Q: They used a lot of water.

HODSOLL: That wasn’t the issue. Here was the issue, as explained by one guy who I really liked, who was an old-time rancher, a super guy in many ways. He said, “Frank, you are new here. I would rather have all the water go free to California. I don’t want a drop to go to those f----- [profanity] in Denver.”

Q: [Laughter.]

HODSOLL: [Laughing]. I said, “But is that really the best thing?!”

He said, “I feel strongly about it!”

Q: [Hearty laughter.]

HODSOLL: [Laughing] So that was the end of my idea. I didn’t go forward with that.

I still got along with all these folks, and some of the things they did were just fine. But I would have taken several million dollars that could have been used to improve access to water, if you were not going to use it, or keep some of it and let some of it go to Denver.

I ended up being chairman of their finance committee and helped them get some more money. We had some very good technical people who could analyze snowfall in relation to rainfall, in relation to the melt, and how much water was in the Colorado River.

The Colorado River is in real trouble now, and was in some trouble when I was there.

Q: It's desperate now.

HODSOLL: It's desperate, particularly when you get downstream.

Q: Salinity, the quality of the water is just terrible.

HODSOLL: There's too much usage for too little flow.

Back to Colorado, Ouray County: I mentioned some of the big things that we did on the county commission. Roads were a huge issue. We had all dirt roads; it was a big deal to put magnesium chloride on the roads because it cost so much money. We had hardly any money.

Q: What is magnesium chloride?

HODSOLL: It's a stabilizer that goes on top of the road so you don't get ruts right away. Don't ask any more because I can't remember.

Q: So, they spread it with a salt truck?

HODSOLL: Well yes, and then with a roller afterwards.

We paved one road going up Log Hill, but we couldn't afford paved roads. The roads were constantly needing repair. Particularly as you got into spring when the snow had melted and you had ruts, it was quite something.

Back to the county board: While I was on the county commission, Alan Staehle said, "You know, we ought to get you involved with Colorado Counties." This was the association of Colorado counties, including the big ones on the eastern slope. Because of what I had done on the Southwestern Colorado Data Center, I was asked by the National Association of Counties (NACO) to get involved with their IT (information technology) development.

To Bill Ferguson's great credit, he had established relationships with the federal government, the Interior Department and the Geological Survey, primarily, to get data out of them. Some of it is highly classified, because it is related to defense and comes from military satellites.

I was asked to go on a NACO committee for this effort and started making some trips back to Washington for NACO meetings. And then, Ferguson got me involved in a yearly meeting in Aspen of people who wanted to have rural internet connections at reasonable speeds. They were from around the country, not just Colorado. I don't know if it continues. Ferguson got me involved in that. I took that on.

I said, "You know, there has to be a way to make this better." I knew this was the fact in Ouray County because internet speeds were extremely slow, and we had gotten a guy, thanks to Ferguson, to start an inter-connect, which made it a little bit better. Then I got a satellite dish in my house, which made it very fast.

Incidentally, one of the six or seven rich ranchers in Ouray was Charlie Ergin, who started DirectTV. I went to see him to see how can we improve this, what's practical here.

Coming back to information technology, I was put on the NACO IT committee, and then the leadership of NACO decided I should oversee rural information technology. So, I was invited to come to a meeting in Santa Fe, and was made chairman of that committee. That resulted in a heavy phone bill, because I wasn't going to travel everywhere.

I think we have made a little bit of a difference; I don't want to overdo it. We sponsored some legislation that never got through.

Q: But you set some groundwork.

HODSOLL: We set some groundwork, and it got better in Ouray County. That guy had a role in educating people on the subject. There were some entrepreneurs who wanted to do this, so it wasn't just me.

It was a highly interesting thing, because as somebody pointed out to me, if you are a small town, forget being a beautiful small town in the mountains. If you are a small town, you are losing population, because people are moving to the cities, where the job opportunities are. You can't maintain businesses, even in the 1990s, if you can't have an internet connection to help with your inventory and decide whether your accounts are straight.

So, rural people are at a high disadvantage, also people in lower income parts of cities. Companies go where the money is. That's understandable, but there is an issue here that needs to be dealt with. It's better than it used to be, but it still has a long way to go to having equal access. So, I got involved in discussions over this.

Did we accomplish a whole lot? I don't know, but I have an anecdote that goes on from here. I became the head of the rural committee, but the lady who was the head of the whole of telecommunications for NACO was a county commissioner from Montgomery County, Maryland: Marilyn Praisner. She and I attended a whole bunch of meetings where we got together with lots of people from different areas.

Then I learned from Marilyn, who unfortunately has passed away—she got sick—that her last job in the federal government was as the person in the Reagan administration who wrote the presidential briefing books on intelligence for the CIA. I laughed and said, “If anybody in NACO knew that the two people heading their committees on telecommunications were one, a foreign Service Officer, and two, a CIA agent, we would both get fired!”

She said, “Absolutely!” [Laughs.]

Q: [Laughter.]

HODSOLL: It's a big issue that persists to this day; whether we made strides on it, I don't know.

Q: It's a worldwide problem, not just in the United States but everywhere.

HODSOLL: [Changing subject]: The governor. I had done this large—by other people's standards—gathering for Bill Owen, who was running for governor as a Republican after Romer decided he was leaving—maybe he had to leave, I can't remember—and there had not been a Republican in decades. [Roy Romer was elected three times as governor of Colorado; he was the last person in Colorado to serve three four-year terms, as the Colorado constitution was changed to limit the governor to two consecutive terms totaling no more than eight years.]

Today it's only Democrats in Colorado. In those days, the legislature was Republican and the governor had been a Democrat. [The gathering for Owen] was quite successful, and I got recognized for it, because I got all kinds of people [to attend].

Owen liked it. He had lunch with me and asked me, "What did you do before you became a county commissioner?" And I told him, and he said, "I can use some help." In Texas, he had been the senior partner of one of the major consulting firms, for information technology. And I said I had done a certain amount on IT.

He said, "Would you be willing to help on Colorado management?"

I said, "Sure, I will do what I can to help if you end up becoming governor." He became governor, and I was put on a committee, and I put together a briefing book.

[Also on the committee was] one of my former Inspector General colleagues, the guy who had been IG at Interior [U.S. Department of the Interior] and was a Coloradan. Jim—I can't remember his last name—had retired and was living in Grand Junction. And so, I wrote a paper, in my usual fashion. I wrote that you must get the legislature on board, establish relationships, and this sort of stuff. Anybody can come up with technical ideas, but they have to work!

I remember, Jim said to me, "I don't know about you. You need to be technical. You can't do this all politically."

I said, "Absolutely you can't do this all politically. You have to be technically sound and then you have to do it politically!"

I went to talk to people in the Colorado legislature; they were more or less all Republicans then. I talked to people on the budget committees and came up with all kinds of ideas, none of which were really implemented.

Owen thanked me and all that, but he said, “I know in the campaign I was all for better management, but we are going to have to do some smaller things.” Basically, I was then put on a committee to pick a major consulting company from the East to come in and advise the governor on what he should do. That was fine, and I went on to other things.

My briefing book got some good reviews by various people in the profession, but it didn’t proceed. I had a friendly relationship with Owen from then on. In fact, he would invite me to political stuff, like when George W. Bush came out to campaign. Whenever Owen needed something, I was referred to as his “western slope agent”!

Q: The same skill set!

HODSOLL: It’s the same skill set. It’s relationships, and it’s in thinking, what are the other people’s interest in this, and how can we accommodate?

Q: And putting it down on paper, and getting the technical ideas right. And then selling it door to door.

You mentioned before some story about Maya Lin, and you didn’t tell it, so now is the time to tell it.

HODSOLL: Okay, well it was at the beginning of my time at the arts endowment. [Hodsoll was Chairman of the National Endowment of the Arts during the administration of President Reagan, 1981-1989.] And this had happened at the arts endowment. A panel had been set up to choose the designer for the Vietnam Memorial.

Q: This was under the aegis of the arts endowment?

HODSOLL: Yes, the arts endowment sets up panels for the federal government on aesthetic things.

Q: Oh really, I didn’t know that! For example, the World War II monument?

HODSOLL: I think they may have had something to do with it. I don’t know about that monument specifically, but when I was there we did that. And the Interior Department Park Service was happy to have somebody else take the heat on the art side of it.

Before I got there, Livingston Biddle [Hodsoll's predecessor as head of the arts endowment] had set up the panel for the Vietnam Arts Memorial. When I got there, it had not completed its work.

They picked Maya Lin, and I saw a sketch of what she had in mind. I thought it was quite unusual. We had some feedback, because some people in Washington wanted statues of heroic soldiers fighting. Eventually we did put in another statue in there with heroic figures.

Q: Only eight feet tall.

HODSOLL: Only eight feet tall. Anyway, I thought [Lin's drawing] was a neat idea. We did persuade people while I was there to go along with Maya Lin's proposal. And to his great credit, President [Reagan] totally agreed.

Q: There is a World War I memorial now being discussed using similar ideas.

HODSOLL: Maya was very young when all this was going on. I didn't know her; I shook hands with her as part of the thing. She did her completed design. It became one of the great design elements of the Washington, D.C. area. I take no credit for it; I was just there.

Q: That was an interesting task you had in the arts endowment.

HODSOLL: Well, we did that in other areas as well. I mean, we would advise other departments. We advised the United States Information Agency (USIA) on what should be in their art exhibits, and I put together a special panel with the Rockefeller Foundation to raise money when I was at the arts endowment.

Reverting to something I said earlier: The endowment's influence is less in its grants, though those are highly important and people like the money, than in its influence in general, on the state of the arts and the kinds of things that get exhibited in different areas. The more that we could do in that area beyond grant review and giving out a grant to somebody, the better off we would be.

Q: Recently there was a television show sponsored by the endowments of the arts and humanities in the White House.

HODSOLL: Yes, that's right.

Q: Did that take place when you were there?

HODSOLL: No.

Q: Then that's new.

HODSOLL: Well, wait a minute, what are we talking about?

Q: I don't know what room in the White House it was in, but there was press.

HODSOLL: They have the performance series in the White House. That's done by the White House. At least when I was there, they asked the arts endowment whether we had some ideas, but no, that is a White House event.

Q: The way they're marketing it now...

HODSOLL: We invented the National Medal of the Arts, and that was done at the White House by the President and First Lady, and that continues.

Q: And that was invented in your term?

HODSOLL: That was invented in my term. I got legislation.

Q: Tell us about that, that's major!

HODSOLL: Didn't I already do that?

Q: I don't think so.

HODSOLL: One of my big things was to get recognition for the arts, not for the arts endowment, but for the arts. I thought to myself, how do you do that, beyond recognition of whatever is in the pop culture of the moment that is doing well?

One way is to have the President confer a medal every year on the best artist of that year, and they would be recommended—not chosen, but recommended—by the arts endowment and then the White House would decide whether to go forward with it or not. In my day, they always went forward with it.

We got legislation through the Congress. The President signed it, and we went on with that.

The other thing that I did to get recognition for the arts was, I also got the president to create a committee, the President's Committee on the Arts and Humanities, which continues to this day. The First Lady is the honorary chair of it. The President could put on the committee essentially people that he wanted politically on the committee, who would have access to him through staff and me, as to things that the arts endowment might do.

[Created in 1982 under President Reagan, the President's Committee on the Arts and the Humanities (PCAH) is an advisory committee to the White House on cultural issues. PCAH works directly with the three primary cultural agencies—National Endowment for the Arts, National Endowment for the Humanities, and Institute of Museum and Library Services—as well as other federal partners and the private sector, to address policy questions in the arts and humanities, to initiate and support key programs in those disciplines, and to recognize excellence in the field. Its core areas of focus are arts and humanities education and cultural exchange.]

Q: Was that the model for your Ouray County listening posts?

In addition, by statute there is a National Council on the Arts, which reviews grants before the chairman of NEA signs off on them. Part of my deal with the White House before I left was that the National Council of the Arts would be composed of people from the arts community, largely without regard to political affiliation, and the President's Committee on the Arts and Humanities could be totally political. And that was fine.

I wanted people on the President's Committee to have access to the President, but I didn't want the National Council trying to be political. I mean, nobody is not political to some degree. With one or two exceptions that's the way it went.

Even with the one or two exceptions, it was not a big deal. We were very fortunate with the head of presidential personnel—first Penn James [E. Pendleton James, first director of personnel for the Reagan administration] and then later, who was the guy who became ambassador to London? He was a very wealthy guy from Los Angeles. He was a big art collector. He was really good as director of personnel. He would always call me and say, “We are thinking of the following people for the National Council of the Arts. Tell me what you think. We’re not going to make any appointments until we hear what you think.” [This is a reference to Robert H. Tuttle, Reagan’s director of personnel for one year and later, Ambassador to the United Kingdom.]

I said, “Thank you very much.” Most of the time it was just fine. We would occasionally have a discussion about somebody. The recognition is extremely important.

Q: It may be that this is the anniversary of Lyndon Johnson’s signing into law the legislation [creating the National Endowments for the Arts and Humanities].

HODSOLL: That was the fiftieth anniversary thing. I was at that, made a little speech with the other chairmen who are still alive. That was just a month or so ago.

Q: Yes, it was on television. Fabulous!

HODSOLL: Oh, it was on television?

Q: Yes, fabulous! I looked for you in the audience, I didn’t see you.

HODSOLL: I wasn’t in the audience, I was on stage. There was something on television?

Q: This was a performance at the White House, and they had an array, just like going into a time machine, of singers, from all genres of music, from Broadway.

HODSOLL: Regarding the arts endowment?

Q: Yes! Bill Moyers [press secretary to President Lyndon B. Johnson, 1965-1967] was sitting in the front row with his wife,

and the Johnsons were there—the girls [the two daughters of the late President and Mrs. Johnson] were there. They were front and center.

HODSOLL: The current chairman gets credit for that. I didn't know about that. She had an event at the Smithsonian.

Q: Google it and see if you can get it.

Anyway, it was very well done and the performances were outstanding. The President and Michelle Obama as always were great, and there was a responsive audience. But they also had the Johnson girls and Bill Moyers and the usual array of senators and congressmen.

HODSOLL: That's great that the President did that. The arts community doesn't view this President as being terribly important.

Q: Now we are in the arts, so let's continue with the arts. We are now doing the last 23 years of the major events. I realize your telephone rings every day.

HODSOLL: Not anymore.

Q: Well, almost every day. For many, many years people have asked your advice. By the way I have given your name to Silverstone, the mural of time.

HODSOLL: Okay, starting early on, Alberta Arthurs, who was then the head of arts and humanities at Rockefeller Foundation, with whom I had collaborated, came out to Colorado in the time frame 1996 to 1997, and asked me to co-chair with her an American assembly on the Arts and the Public Purpose. It took place in 1997. Then she asked me to co-chair an American Assembly on Deals and Ideals, 1998 and 1999. Later, we co-chaired a third American Assembly on Art Technology and Intellectual Property, in 2002.

So basically, we gathered people at the Harriman estate—it's an NYU related thing—and then had lots of different views on this and then wrote reports that were widely circulated. They are sort of think tank kinds of things. I think that particularly on the first one, we made a kind of splash about what we did. That was the American Assembly part of it.

Q: So, you were the co-chair.

HODSOLL: I was the co-chair with Alberta. We lined up the people, raised money to fund it, and so on.

Q: And it was a long weekend?

HODSOLL: It was three days.

Q: Where is the Harriman estate?

HODSOLL: In New York. It's on the Hudson River. Fairly close to West Point.

And then annually, until very recently, I have been a participant in the Americans for the Arts seminar at Sundance. Five years doing that.

Q: And what is that?

HODSOLL: Basically, Bob Lynch, who heads Americans for the Arts, has established a relationship with Robert Redford the Hollywood actor and director. Lynch gathers people in the arts community, and others, out at Sundance.

Q: In the summer?

HODSOLL: In the summer. We have a variety of subject matter; international was the subject for one year. It is a talk fest. Then Bob, who is a fabulous lobbyist, uses that to get extra support for the arts endowments budget.

Q: But the focus changes every year?

The focus changes every year, and there is a report on the Americans for the Arts website—who was there, and who did what, and one thing and another.

Q: So, it's really a think tank brainstorming session with a lot of distinguished people in various components of the arts?

HODSOLL: Yes, and it includes people from foundations and corporations. I mean, we have the head of Gallup polling and a lot of different people who can be helpful in the arts. The “we” is Bob Lynch; it's his deal.

Okay. Then, also after I came back to Washington, I was put on the core group of the Pew Charitable Trusts' State Cultural Properties Initiative, and that again was a study for Pew. And then I was put on a group and wrote the final report for the James Irvine Foundation, which is a California foundation, and I did a report on the commercial arts.

Basically, I analyzed how the for-profit arts were proceeding, and how they inter-related with the not-for-profit arts. And one of the points I made in that report was that if you look back at those art products that have passed the test of time, the only test that really counts, they were all in a different way commercial at the time. And there are very few that weren't, or at last none that I could find. I did a certain amount of research on that. There are no ‘village Hampdens’—to go to Gray's Elegy.

[This sentence is a reference to the English poet Thomas Gray's Elegy Written in a Country Courtyard. Published in 1751, the Elegy is one of the most famous poems in English literature. A meditation on how human beings are remembered after death, it contains the line:

“A village-Hampden, that with dauntless breast
The little tyrant of his fields withstood;
Some mute inglorious Milton here may rest,
Some Cromwell guiltless of his country's blood.”]

So, this division between what the arts endowment supports—and it's natural, I'm not sure the arts endowment should support Twentieth Century Fox and the New York Symphony Orchestra, for example—is a kind of an artificial one vis-à-vis the arts. So. I wrote a report that said things like this, and made the point that is a long passion of mine, that we need to preserve the things that are commercially viable—or that were commercially viable at the time. We shouldn't just discard them, although of course some of them should be discarded. I wrote a paper about that for Irvine. What happened to that I don't know, but I got paid for it.

Then, starting in 2003, I chaired the Center for Arts and Culture; I was put on the board of that. This center was created by a

bunch of primarily New York foundations, to take the emphasis off the Mapplethorpe and Serrano grants, and all this stuff about the arts endowment funding things that people viewed as obscene, and taking it back more towards the arts themselves. [The Mapplethorpe and Serrano controversies are covered in an earlier portion of the interview dealing with Hodsoll's time at the National Endowment for the Arts.]

So, I ended up doing that. Our primary funding came from the Getty, and some others. Eventually we turned all that over to Americans for the Arts, because we couldn't raise money independently. Mapplethorpe and Serrano had become ancient history.

We also moved the emphasis to George Mason University for a while—we moved the Center for Arts and Culture to GMU [located in Fairfax, Virginia]. That's where I got to know an extremely talented economist of conservative background, a guy named Tyler Cowan. Cowan was very much for the arts endowment. He really knew the arts and had written a bunch of books on it. He was very helpful.

Then, in George W. Bush's administration, the executive director of the President's Committee on the Arts and Humanities—Daniel Henry Moran from Kansas, asked me to come over and be the producer of a President's Committee Symposium on Film, Television, Digital Media, and Popular Culture. And Moran asked me to be the developer of a film and television international exchange program after that.

I did these two projects at the University of Southern California. They were successful. We had all kinds of people there, including some famous people, and produced a report. But out of it I was asked to produce a film exchange program that would be international. It started at the American Film Institute (AFI); now it is being run by the Sundance Institute.

The idea was to put together a set of panels that would choose films, whether for-profit or not-for-profit, around the world and in the United States; pick the best of them, an equal number of U.S. and non-U.S.; bring them to Hollywood and showcase them; take them across the U.S. and to places that do film festivals; and then take them abroad, with the filmmakers.

Q: What a terrific boost for them!

HODSOLL: That turned out to be a pretty successful program.

I went to South Africa among other places with this project. I think it was a pretty darn good program. One of the reasons it

was a pretty darn good program was that in the first year, I was able to get Jafar Panahi, an Iranian filmmaker, who is now in jail, to the United States. He was reluctant because he had been put in a holding cell by the Immigration people on an earlier trip to the United States. I hired somebody to go there and meet him personally and bring him. That was a famous person where I made a particular effort to have an Iranian filmmaker! He had just won the Berlin Prize on something called Offsides, which was about girls in Tehran going to a championship soccer game.

We also had a South African filmmaker who had done a marvelous narrative film on the transition from the Apartheid regime to the post-Apartheid regime.

Q: Do you remember the name? Or the director's name?

HODSOLL: I can get it.

There was another marvelous one on Rwanda and Burundi.

What this did was, it helped establish relationships. We also had a Chinese filmmaker, who told us about the difficulties he had making films in China. He did a marvelous film from the exodus with Mao Tse Tung to the present period, and how different people reacted to that.

I am very proud of that program. To her credit, Dare Margo, who was chairman of George W. Bush's President's Committee on the Arts and Humanities, and who is a close, close friend of Laura Bush, and Laura Bush herself, supported us. We had a reception at the White House.

I think it's still going on with Sundance. Doesn't matter if it's AFI or Sundance.

Whether shown in movie theaters or on DVDs or on Netflix or on television, films reach a lot of people. So, if you can get the filmmakers to interact with each other, that's a good thing.

Q: You can use your phone to watch movies.

HODSOLL: You can use your phone and all of the above to watch movies.

I think I've done the arts side. Let's see: UNESCO.

Q: UNESCO [United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization] is the last topic to wind up this period.

HODSOLL: Incidentally, I left off some of the more recent ones on government. I will do that after I finish UNESCO.

Q: One other suggestion. Please put together someplace the top ten list of accomplishments that you've done, things that you would like to be remembered for, that may fall between the tracks. Clearly being chairman of the endowment is there.

HODSOLL: Okay. UNESCO. When George W. Bush—President Bush 43—with a big boost from his wife, decided we would go back into UNESCO, basically one of the things that had been part of UNESCO before, had been the National Commission on UNESCO. It is provided for by statute. First, the Bush administration had to pick an ambassador to UNESCO: a woman by the name of Louise Oliver, who was just fabulous---thought fabulous by people of all persuasions. Then they had to choose the commission.

[The United States in 1984 had withdrawn its support for, and membership in, UNESCO. The U.S. withdrawal was grounded in opposition to UNESCO's stance on media access in developing countries. The U.S. interpreted the UNESCO position as a barrier to freedom of the press. The U.S. rejoined the organization in 2003, during the George W. Bush administration.]

I got a call from one of Colin Powell's people at the State Department, which was in charge of putting this together, asking me to be on the commission. I said, "Sure! Sounds like fun! How much time is it going to take?"

I was put on the commission, and shortly after being put on the commission I was called by the executive director, who had been the public affairs assistant to Lynne Cheney at the humanities endowment. She called me up, and said, "I see you are going to be appointed; welcome to the commission. Would you be willing to chair the World Heritage Committee?"

I said, "I could do that. A former boss of mine, Russ Train, helped establish the World Heritage Committee. But I am not an expert on World Heritage."

She said, "It's UNESCO's most important program, and we need somebody good who can bring aboard people who are

supportive of it.”

Then what happened was, I was made vice chairman of the culture committee. When Dana Gioia, who was chairman of the arts endowment at the time, left, I was made chairman of the culture committee as well. But mostly I did World Heritage.

I was sent over to Paris, initially, with Louise Oliver. Basically, my first task was to get us appointed to the UNESCO World Heritage Committee.

Q: Was she based in Paris?

HODSOLL: She was resident in Paris. The Obama administration has an ambassador there now too, formerly of the Rockefeller Foundation.

Q: Is she at the embassy?

HODSOLL: No, she has her own residence and UNESCO office, not at the embassy. It's a tough job. You have all these nations and one thing and another. The big issue was not so much World Heritage, but it was that UNESCO had overwhelmingly passed a treaty that was designed to keep American movies out. It was a French-Canadian initiative. [This was the 2005 Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Protection.]

We were against that, although interestingly, I discovered that the major motion picture and television studios didn't care all that much. But the political side, particularly John Bolton [George W. Bush's ambassador to the United Nations], didn't want it. He saw it as censorship, and rightly so. But how high you raise this on the political side is another thing.

I was asked to help with this. I told Louise, “You know, if you want me to get us on the World Heritage Committee, with most of the other countries being for this convention on cultural diversity, it seems to me we should keep me out of this and let me just butter people up to get us on the World Heritage Committee.” And that's eventually what happened.

I went over there with a guy from the National Park Service, a wonderful guy named Steve Morris. We got us onto the World Heritage Committee. [Stephen Morris continues at this writing as the head of international programs at the National Park Service.]

And I got Russ Train [leading conservationist who helped found the Environmental Protection Agency and served as its second administrator] to come over with me and wander around and shake hands. He was terrific about it though I had to use my points on the plane to sit with him in the business section. I had to get myself upgraded to business class.

I then became heavily involved with World Heritage across the board, and accompanied the ambassador and others to lots of meetings.

Q: Those designations are golden—platinum!

HODSOLL: They are very helpful, and it's a good program. It needs to be less political and more on the merits. But it's basically a good program.

And so, I continued doing that, and because World Heritage is such a big part—not budgetarily such a big part—but it is a big part of what is recognized at UNESCO, that became a substantial job. I was constantly on emails to different people.

Q: And it was all volunteer work.

HODSOLL: I got my travel paid for the most part.

Q: But you got on the committee and then you and the Park Service were the reps?

HODSOLL: Well, Louise Oliver went to the meetings, too, and she was in the chair. We supported her in whatever she wanted to do. There were big issues regarding Israel and Jordan—sites that were in the disputed area of Israel. They had become World Heritage sites as Jordanian sites going back before the Six-Day War.

Probably the most difficult issue is that once you get on the World Heritage program, you are supposed to step up to the plate and take care of designated sites. That didn't happen, even in places like Saudi Arabia that had pots of money. So, we would have to go in there and raise a bit of hell here and there. Were we totally successful? No, but we may have helped in those instances.

I think we got some better guidelines into the World Heritage program. I should mention that the Park Service is extremely fortunate to have Steve Morris as head of their international programs. He is as good as it gets, and he's on the right side of things. And the Park Service in general.

When I became a fellow of NAPA [National Association of Public Administration], I chaired three reviews of the National Park Service. The reviews were on the arts side. They have an enormous museum collection. They don't take terribly good care of it. But they are a wonderful organization. They do what they are supposed to be doing, and they don't get paid that much.

So, I did all of that. To fast forward, we handled issues. We got American sites recognized, and we sidetracked some sites that shouldn't be recognized.

Interestingly, during getting us onto the World Heritage Committee, I discovered our best friends were the Africans, the sub-Saharan Africans. Part of that was George W. Bush's emphasis on HIV and getting medical aid out there. But it was also in part that we were viewed, more than the former colonial powers—the French and the British—as being on the right side of history.

Q: We were former colonies along with those guys!

HODSOLL: We were former colonies, and the first to leave the empire! I don't want to overemphasize that, but there was a feeling that we were more on the merits.

There was resentment of the French and Italians for getting multiple sites on the World Heritage list without a whole lot of attention to the African sites. It didn't hurt that I could still speak a little French, and so I could navigate some of that.

I was surprised. We got an overwhelming vote of yes, let's get the Americans in. We had money. But I had several African ambassadors tell me in various terms that America was a good place, which was nice to hear.

Q: That was another major area of contribution, Frank. And it just started a year ago.

HODSOLL: And it continues.

Q: You've got San Antonio.

HODSOLL: San Antonio is on the list [designated as a World Heritage site]. Which brings me to another UNESCO thing.

In 2011 or 2012, UNESCO with a pretty overwhelming majority voted Palestine on as a member. We have two laws in place, dating to the 1990, which say we can't fund any specialized agency, not just at the United Nations but any international agency, that votes Palestine in as a member, that is not a party to the negotiations with Israel. It's absolute; there is no provision as there is with regard to the economic aid we give to the Palestinian Authority, which the President can waive because it's in the national interest.

This happened. That was the end of UNESCO funding. We are three years in arrears now. We are 22 percent of the budget, so it is substantial. So, I was then asked if I could be helpful on the Hill to get a waiver. The Obama administration wanted a waiver of these 1990-era laws to allow us to fund UNESCO, and Obama put money in the budget to allow us to do this.

So, off I went to the Hill to talk to both principals and staff of both parties, and you know, discovered that it was an extremely mixed bag. Democrats for the most part but not wholly were for a waiver. The senior Senator from Vermont, Patrick Leahy, whom I know, complained to me about the Obama administration not trying to do anything to help with this.

Evidently, Secretary of State Kerry had had a long meeting with Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu, which was not very helpful, and we decided not to fight for it. Basically, we couldn't get the waiver. We were able to get some money to go forward to World Heritage, but it was very small. I don't know what happened since I left, but I wrote a report saying, it's just not going to work. We can't get the votes in Congress. Again, it wasn't partisan in the normal sense.

Who used to be the majority leader in the House who got defeated? He was open to the waiver. [Eric Cantor, a former U.S. representative from Virginia, served as House majority leader from 2011-2014.]

Q: He has a Jewish background.

HODSOLL: No, but the waiver cuts against the Jewish position.

Q: I understand that.

HODSOLL: He was cutting against the Jewish position. I went over and visited with AIPAC [the American Israel Public Affairs Committee, which describes itself as ‘America’s pro-Israel lobby’]. I visited with J Street [a lobbying organization that describes itself as the ‘political home for pro-Israel, pro-peace Americans who want Israel to be secure, democratic, and the national home for the Jewish people.’ As opposed to AIPAC, J Street favors peace negotiations with the Palestinians.] They were all for the waiver. Nothing could be done with AIPAC.

Senior U.S. Senator from Alaska Lisa Murkowski, who was chair of the full Appropriations Committee in the Senate, was against it because of the Jewish lobby, even though she wasn’t running again. It couldn’t be done.

Q: High cost, little gain.

HODSOLL: That’s right, and it wasn’t UNESCO. Nobody that I talked to—and I talked with principals as well as staff—nobody said, well we think it was dumb for George W. Bush [to have the U.S. rejoin UNESCO], and maybe we should be out of it. No one said that. Everyone said that UNESCO has a lot of merit going for it, but Israel is important. So that came to naught.

Q: Those discussions were taking place a year or so ago.

HODSOLL: Yes. I guess I ought to raise San Antonio. I was at a reunion of the George W. Bush President’s Committee on the Arts and Humanities two years ago. One of the members of the committee who is from a wealthy family in San Antonio asked me what I knew about the U.S. nomination of San Antonio to receive World Heritage designation.

I said, “Not a whole lot, but I hope San Antonio makes it. But I must tell you, when we are delinquent three years in a row in our dues, I can understand why they [the member states of the World Heritage Committee] would not want to vote for any more American sites.” In fact, they did in this case.

I did a certain amount of research. It was a done deal as far as I was concerned; we weren’t going to get any money out of the Congress. I said, what if we could raise private monies, enough to fund what we should be paying for World Heritage? Several people thought it was a great idea.

Q: What great out-of-the box thinking!

HODSOLL: It didn't work in the end, for the following reason. I began a set of discussions. There were some people in San Antonio who were afraid that if we did that we would be accused of bribing UNESCO. I said, "How is that possible? We are just paying our dues, we are just not paying through the government. As far as UNESCO is concerned, we are delinquent. We are deadbeats!"

But there were enough people in San Antonio who were afraid to take that risk. I had several people willing to pony up several millions of dollars. I had several people in San Antonio and Washington willing to do that. Even the people who had engaged me to do this ended up being against it [private funding]. Eventually I gave it up.

The good news is that San Antonio made it anyway! How long is that going to go along? I don't know. If I were the delegate from another country to UNESCO, I could see the point in buttering up the United States. But when we are delinquent—it isn't as though we have withdrawn, we still have an ambassador and staff there. The appropriations for ambassador and staff are not cut off, it's only the money that goes to the program.

There was worry on the Hill when I was doing this that the next shoe to fall would be Palestine becoming a member of the World Health Organization, where it would matter more in the hierarchy of U.S. interests. I'm not sure how that all parses.

Kerry got a deal that the Palestinians wouldn't try to go into other organizations. So far that has held. But given the state of Israel-Palestine relations, I don't know how long that is going to hold. I've learned that I'm Jewish, Tex, but I must say I'm not a big fan of the current Israeli government.

Q: As you discovered in J Street, there are plenty of people for the other side.

HODSOLL: That was the last thing. After that fell apart—having pushback on raising money for World Heritage—I kind of dropped out. I get invited to all sorts of stuff, but because of my illness I can't deal with it anymore.

Q: You have to take care of yourself. That is important.

Frank, I think we've covered it!

HODSOLL: I guess another thing is I was on the executive board of UNESCO, a small group of us.

I became a board member of the U.S. National Committee of the International Council on Monuments and Sites. That is the U.S. contributory committee of ICOMOS, the International Council on Monuments and Sites. ICOMOS does all the peer reviews of cultural sites that are to become World Heritage sites.

I was a board member and raised money for them, but I no longer have the energy to do that.

Q: And that's part of UNESCO?

HODSOLL: Yes, and I have a small anecdote. While I was still heavily involved, two or three years ago, Russ [Train] was still alive. I called him and said, we would like to honor you for your World Heritage program. I would like to make a slideshow of when you were there and all the way up to the present, and show how you made such a huge contribution to all of this.

He agreed, and gave me slides. I also had slides. I'm getting pretty good at the computer now. I didn't have a whole lot of help from the staff. You know, it's funny. Some people just don't have any idea of what's likely to sell. They get off on technical tangents. So I largely put this together on my own.

Russ shared with me some wonderful slides and videos of him and Eileen going to these World Heritage sites, including one in which she said she wasn't at all sure she wanted her husband going to this place because it looked like it might be dangerous!

We had a nice celebration, and Russ liked it a lot. And it was very good for the U.S. Committee to have somebody like Russ come and be part of this.

You know, World Heritage has natural and cultural sites. The natural sites are commented on by a group in Geneva called the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN). Both they and the cultural side have no money. They have to get people to go out and inspect these sites.

I said, "That is outrageous! We ought to raise enough money for UNESCO to pay these people some compensation. They have to write reports. We are talking about minor amounts of money, maybe a million at the tops."

Q: And the sites are invaluable!

HODSOLL: All of the above. Thanks to Steve Morris, we were able to get some of the big travel groups and cruise lines to make special cruises to World Heritage sites. Some of the airlines did that as well. But you know, I even had some sessions with the National Trust for Historic Preservation. They have money, certainly for the U.S. sites.

The natural sites are a bit easier than the cultural sites. Well, no, not really. If you go down to Sub-Saharan Africa, the Congo is just a mess. The natural sites are being overrun. You would have thought that raising money for this kind of thing is easier than it is. It isn't easy. How do you change that? We need to raise awareness in schools. Where we are today, these things are underfunded.

Q: You might want to raise this when you talk to Silverstone. He does graphic presentations in terms of environment to get people involved. He is an innovative, creative guy. He is a very serious, sparky intellectual.

HODSOLL: Well, you covered Hodsoll!

Q: This is your outline, sir!

End of interview