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

THOMAS MARTIN

Interviewed by: Mark Tauber
Initial interview date: November 11, 2021

INTERVIEW

Q: *Tom, where and when were you born?*

MARTIN: I was born February 28, 1937, in Clarksville, Tennessee.

Q: *And is that where your family stayed, or did you move shortly after you were born?*

MARTIN: About two years later, my parents separated and moved. We moved back to my mother's home with her parents... my grandparents on the maternal side in Northport, Alabama. I was basically raised there in that home.

Q: *Did you have brothers and sisters there as well?*

MARTIN: I have an older brother, who was nine and a half years older than I was. And that's only... Well, I had a half-brother later when my father remarried. I never lived with him. He was about 10 years younger than I was, so my father had children for over three decades.

Early Life and Education

Q: *What was the town like? What was the economic driver?*

MARTIN: It was a small town, Northport is on the north bank of the Black Warrior River, which separates Northport from a larger town, Tuscaloosa, Alabama. So, basically, they were one in the same as far as communities. They had separate school systems. Tuscaloosa was much larger. I suppose Northport when I was growing up was perhaps 5,000. There was one bridge across the river and it's in west central Alabama.

Q: *And was your mother working? Or how did the home economy work for you?*

MARTIN: My mother was a schoolteacher. She taught high school English, but never in a school that I attended. She traveled out in the county, some years as far as 20-30 miles each way, to other high schools and then later became an English instructor at the University of Alabama and even later, a University Librarian.

Q: *Were your grandparents still working?*

MARTIN: My grandfather was. My grandmother did not work, she stayed at home and kept the home. My grandfather was from a rather well-known local family... the Rice's. They worked in real estate and in several local businesses in town. The larger Rice family of which my grandfather was a part of, owned a lot of land and cotton gins. One of his cousins lived next door to us who was more involved in that than my grandfather was.

The county high school served everyone except for the city of Tuscaloosa and one other small town on the other side of Tuscaloosa, which had its own high school. The town, I think, was about 5,000 at that time.

Q: *And I imagined that it must have been a relatively rural area?*

MARTIN: Overall yes. But Tuscaloosa had the University of Alabama. There was a very large paper mill that manufactured Kraft paper which is used in the manufacture of wrapping paper and paper bags. It had a B F Goodrich tire plant and a foundry. Northport had lumber yards and two cotton gins in the town itself. It also had a commercial district. There were, you know, several grocery stores downtown, as well as cleaning establishments, two pharmacies, a hardware store, a post office and a clothing store, so it still had a small-town feel. Tuscaloosa, just across the river, was much larger.

Q: *Was there a historic district or elements dating from before the Civil War?*

MARTIN: Not really. Some of the houses in Northport may date back to the Reconstruction period, but I don't believe any were pre Civil War. My grandparents' house, the one we lived in, was built around the 1900s, I think. It was a large two-story house on Main Street. The house has since become the Tuscaloosa County Historical Center.

Q: *Did your county have a large either African American population or any other non-white population?*

MARTIN:There was a large African American population in the county and in Northport as well. I don't know what the percentages were, possibly 30 percent black. We lived on Main Street a block north of the downtown business district. We were on the corner of Main Street, which was all white, and 9th Street. If you went down 9th Street from Main Street, before you reached the next street... the next intersection... it transformed from white to African American.

We lived within six or seven houses of the beginning of the African American section of town. And it was sort of that way throughout you know. All of the schools were segregated. It was just basic segregation, Jim Crow laws in full effect.

Q: *What was school life like, including extra-curricular activities?*

MARTIN: I was in the high school band. I was in plays and drama things. I could walk to the elementary school from where I lived, which was about four or five blocks.

I rode a bicycle or walked to high school which was about ten blocks north of the elementary school. As I had started school when I was five years old, I was smaller than almost all the boys in my classes until about the time I was senior in high school. As a senior I was only about 5' 6"or 7". Within the next year, I grew to six feet.

Q: *That's remarkable.*

Q: *During this period of elementary school and high school, did you have any opportunity to travel either in the US or outside?*

MARTIN: Well, I traveled every summer, I would go visit my paternal grandparents who lived in South Alabama or South-Central Alabama. I would do that by train from my town to near their town. I would go to Florida in the summer, to the beaches. We would go fairly often, two or three times a year to Birmingham, Alabama. As I reached high school level, I remember I went... took a trip to New York City with my mother. I never did leave the country however.

Q: *How about foreign languages or interest in foreign culture? Was that a part of your high school experience?*

MARTIN: I did not study languages until I got to university where I took two years of Spanish and that was the only language I ever took until I entered the Foreign Service.

Q: *What kind of media did you have to help you understand the wider world?*

MARTIN: I followed the news fairly closely. I just always had an interest in that. There was a newspaper in Tuscaloosa... daily. There were weeklies. The Birmingham newspaper was also available. I listened to the radio a lot in the late '40s and I can't remember when we first got a television. I suppose I was in high school... black and white television in the late '40s, early '50s as I remember it, but I mean, there was always a sort of political conversation going on. My grandfather was interested in politics and my mother was also and so there were always sort of political conversations going on. Not much international.

Q: *And did church life or faith community play a role in your upbringing?*

MARTIN: Yes. The family was Baptist, and the Baptist Church was almost directly across the street from our house... at an angle across from my house and my mother expected me to be there every Sunday and to participate in various youth groups and stuff, which I did through grade school and high school. After that, I pretty much dropped it.

Q: *Okay. As you're going through high school, were there any teachers or any other memories you have that began to spur your curiosity about the wider world?*

MARTIN: Not so much in high school. I mean, I had several good teachers. My mother knew them all and... even though she wasn't teaching there, they were all colleagues. So, they kept a pretty close eye on me and let her know when I was doing well or not doing well, by their standards. There were two sisters... one an English teacher and one a history teacher... who I suppose I was closest to and took as many of their courses as I could in high school.

Q: *All right, now, as you're approaching the end of high school, is your family talking to you about college or do you have college aspirations? How did that work?*

MARTIN: Well, it was just sort of assumed that I would go to university and that I would go to the University of Alabama. By that time, my mother was a librarian at the university. She had taught for a number of years in the English department, and then moved into the library, and was one of the assistant librarians.

My brother had gone there as well before he went to Vanderbilt... to medical school. There was never any talk of going away to university. We really did not have much money because we were basically living on her teaching salary. We got no support from my father. I don't know whether it would have been welcomed if he had offered it or if he did offer it. My mother really held a strong grudge against him and the fact that they were separated. I don't know the circumstances of why they initially separated. She would send me to visit his parents but I seldom saw him.

Q: *When do you arrive at the University of Alabama?*

MARTIN: 1954. As soon as I finished high school in ’54, about three months after I turned seventeen... practically the next week... I started summer school at the University of Alabama.

Q: *And this is just at the beginning of implementation of the Brown v. Board of Education decision that ended “separate but equal.”*

MARTIN: That's right.

Q: *How was that taken in the area you were living and in the University of Alabama if you recall?*

MARTIN: Well, it was not taken well at all. There was not much pressure at that point from the federal government and Alabama was not going to participate in integration unless forced to do so. People just sort of avoided any consideration of the issue at first. It was some years in the future before that became, you know, a real hot button issue I mean. Right at first, in '54, Brown vs. Board of Education did not have a direct effect on the local schools or the university.

Q: *Did you live on campus or were you commuting from home?*

MARTIN: I did both during my time there. First year, I lived at home. I was in school there for one year but when I turned eighteen, I volunteered for the draft. The draft was still an active thing in those days so you could volunteer, and they would put your name ahead of others on the draft list.

After my freshman year, I did that because I thought, well, I'm awfully young... you know, in university, I didn't really know what I wanted to do... take a couple of years out, go to the Army and come back and I will know better what I wanted to do. So, that's what I did after that first year. I turned eighteen in February. In the summer of 1955 I was drafted and went away for two years.

Entry into U.S. Army

Q: *And you mentioned you were in the Army.*

MARTIN: I was in the Army, yes. If you wanted to go into one or the other services, you had to commit to more than two years.

Q: *Where did you go for your training?*

MARTIN: I went first to Fort Jackson, South Carolina for eight weeks, then I went to Fort Benning, Georgia for an additional eight weeks. Then I went to Fort Sam Houston outside of San Antonio, Texas for... sixteen weeks I believe, for medic training. Next, I was assigned as a medic to an infantry unit at Schofield Barracks in Hawaii and that's where I spent the rest of my term. If you've ever seen *From Here to Eternity*, it was filmed there.

Q: *So that's the first time you traveled outside the "lower 48."*

MARTIN: That's right.

Q: *How was that experience for you? Did you acquire talents and skills that served you in your later career?*

U.S. Army Public Diplomacy Work

MARTIN: Well, it did spike my interest in foreign travel. Hawaii wasn't quite yet a state. It entered in 1959. My orders were to be a medic in an infantry battalion, but when I arrived, they looked through my CV, as short as it was at that time and they said, "Oh, I see you are studying journalism at the University of Alabama. We will put you to work in the Public Affairs Section." It was much more interesting to me than being a medic. We wrote articles for the hometown newspapers of all the soldiers in the infantry division and sent them off to their newspapers. Whenever someone had done something interesting or

noteworthy in some way, or whether their unit had done something, some sort of specialized training or going on maneuvers for example, we would cover that, sending stories off to the hometown papers, to the wire services or the local Honolulu papers.

You know, newspapers are always looking for human interest stories and filler material on local individuals, so many of those would be run. We would also take press releases that we had written down to the offices of the Honolulu Advertiser and the Honolulu Star-Bulletin, the two major Hawaii newspapers of the day. In fact, I would drive a Jeep about twenty-five miles down to the newspaper on a daily basis, almost, carrying material and come back and churn out some more.

Q: *Was it the kind of thing that allowed you to go to other islands?*

MARTIN: I did go to Maui, on military maneuvers to cover those and then I went to Hawaii, the Big Island on vacation with some friends. We saw Hilo and climbed Mauna Kea and saw the volcano Kilauea.

Q: *Did the skills that you acquired in journalism turn out to be valuable for you later?*

MARTIN: Well, I think so. I was always a pretty good writer and a good editor, and those skills are... were certainly valued in the Foreign Service later. When I went back to university, I took some more journalism classes. I eventually got a degree in history and a minor in biology. But I had nearly enough credits in journalism for a minor.

Q: *Before we follow you to graduation, you served two years in the Army?*

MARTIN: That's right.

Q: *And then they allowed you just simply to return to university or did they want you to stay?*

MARTIN: Well, they did want me to stay. They wanted to send me to Officer Candidate School. I was twenty... but I would have had to stay in the military for another two and a half years if I had done that and I just opted not to do that. I didn't think I was ready to do that. I was still very young. I was a very young twenty, I'll say that. I just couldn't quite imagine going into the military and I didn't even think of it as a career. I mean, I just thought I had to go back and finish university.

Q: *So, now at this point, going back to university, it puts you back in the University of Alabama in 1957?*

MARTIN: I thought when I went off to the military I would just spend two years and I would know what I wanted to do. I came back and I was still floundering. I dabbled in pre-med for a while because I had so many doctors in our family. I was interested, but not interested enough to stick it out. I did some more journalism. I studied a lot of history because I found it very interesting.

Marriage and Later University Life

So, I was floundering, I would go from one to the other and I must have changed majors two or three times... and didn't really decide on what the final major would be until I needed to, after getting married at the end in 1960.

Q: *During this period from '57 to '60, were you on campus? Were you working? How would you describe that period?*

MARTIN: Okay, I lived part of the time on campus, part of the time at home. When I lived on campus, I lived in a fraternity house... when I was an officer in that fraternity. Then I worked at the main university information desk... for many years of part time work. I worked in the university library; I worked in the Tuscaloosa County Library. In Tuscaloosa, I always had something because, as I said earlier, we really did not have much money to spare. My mother was not making much money. If I wanted money to do anything, I had to earn it myself.

Q: *Now, how did you meet your wife?*

MARTIN: Our families knew each other, not well, but we knew each other. Her grandparents were from outside of Northport, Alabama... but we didn't meet each other until I came back from the Army. We met on a double date. I had a date with her sister, and she had a date with a friend of mine.

We dated off and on for a year or so. At first, she was a year and a half behind me in school, but since I had been away for two years, she graduated in 1960 and I still needed some credits to get a major. At that point, I quickly decided I better get a major in history where I had more credits. So I graduated six months later than she did. After that, we were married.

Q: *Now that you're married, is your wife thinking about a career of her own? Or what were your plans in that, in that early period?*

MARTIN: She got her degree in biology, and she had several job offers to do biological research in Birmingham, at the university medical school. I was just trying to get a degree and then... we discovered that she was pregnant. But before I go on, I do want to mention another introduction to international service that piqued my curiosity in a Foreign Service career.

When my future wife, Laura (whom everyone called Lolly), and I were dating, her parents were living in West Africa. I became interested in Africa at that time, a little more than I would have normally by just reading the newspapers. Her father was a mining engineer and her parents, and her three younger brothers were living in Sierra Leone. She went to Sierra Leone in early summer of 1960 after she finished university. She returned and we married in September. Her mother wrote wonderful letters to Lolly and her sister

during their university years. They saved Sue Spencer's letters which were later compiled in the first of several books (*African Creeks I Have Been Up*). She even sold the movie rights to a Hollywood studio.

Early Professional Life – Social Security Administration

Okay, so with a child on the way, I figured I should get out of school quickly and start work. So, I did. I got a degree in history. I had always been interested in government but hadn't even thought of the Foreign Service. I took the civil service entrance examination which offered entrance into most agencies except foreign affairs and national security, I think. I passed and was offered a position with the Social Security Administration which I took. I was appointed as a claims examiner with the Social Security Administration.

We moved to Birmingham for training and I guess I was there for three or four months before being transferred to the Tampa, Florida office where I was to work as a claims examiner for Social Security. Before starting that, one of my university history professors, when I told him I didn't really know what I was going to do... suggested that I consider the Foreign Service. That was the first time I had ever really thought of it.

I don't know how it hadn't occurred to me before in some way or another, but it hadn't. So, then I applied for the Foreign Service examination after learning how one went about this. I took the written examination and passed. Now, comes the difficult part. The orals.

The Foreign Service Exam and Entry into the Foreign Service

I didn't really want to describe this first experience with the oral exam, but when I was talking to Lolly about recording this oral history, she said to me, "You are going to mention your first experience with taking the Foreign Service exam, aren't you?" And I said, "Well, yes, a little bit." But she had something in mind, and I might as well come clean. My first experience with the oral exam was a bit embarrassing.

I first took the examination in about 1960 or '61. We were living in Birmingham, Alabama by then. I took the written examination and passed it. Then I had to take the oral examination in Atlanta, Georgia. That was the closest spot.

So, I went to Atlanta and sat the oral examination, at least about half of it. Then I got so nervous that I almost fainted. The examiners saw that I was not well. I became very pale, and they said, "Martin, you look like you're not feeling very well. Would you like to take a break?" Yes, I said. "Well, you could step out for a little bit. In fact, we have a cot in the next room. You could even lie it in if you'd like to." So, I did and after ten or fifteen minutes, I got back up and went back into the examination room and they said, "Do you feel like continuing? And I said, "You know, really, I don't." I was just about to blackout, I think, just from nerves. It was shortly thereafter. They said, "Well, we won't fail you, but we certainly can't use your results at this stage, you only got halfway through, you know and if you ever want to take the exam again, you will have to sit the written part again too

and start all over." I said, "Well, thank you very much." I went home with my intention never to go through that again. And I really meant it.

Later, I found out that my wife had started the application process to enroll me for another examination. This was no more than a year later. I built up my courage and took the written exam and passed it again. This time, the orals were in Miami, Florida.

So, I was going to take a bus from Tampa to Miami. And just before I left to get on the bus, Lolly went to our next-door neighbor who was a nurse and said, "This is what happened to Tom last time he took this examination, you don't have any tranquilizers, anything you could give him, do you?" And she came up with something like Ambien or whatever the "tranq" of the, you know, mild thing was of the day. I put that in my pocket and got on the bus by myself and went off to Miami. I had a very bad cold that day and was feeling terrible, quite likely because I faced an upcoming examination about which I had little confidence.

The examiners were all new which made me feel somewhat better until one of them said, "But Martin, when you take this examination, you always seem to be a little ill". I thought, "Oh my God, they know all about my ridiculous performance that time before. I'm done for". This time, I did have a bad cold. I said, "No, it's just a bad cold. I'm okay. Let's get on with this thing." At the end of the oral examination--before asking me to leave the room after which I would hear the results, the chief examiner... I don't remember the ambassador's name, said, "Mr. Martin, should you not pass, what do you think you would do?" With a lot of false bravado, I said, "Well, I would take this examination again." So I waited on pins and needles and discovered that I passed. Alright, I've got that off my chest and my family wanted me to tell that story because they've laughed about it for years. I told my boss at the Social Security Administration that I had passed but I did not know what my place was on the hiring roster.

And then... three or four months later– still not knowing whether I had been officially accepted, I arrived home from work and called my wife, Lolly, from the front yard, "Hey, have you seen any people sneaking around the house, security clearance officers are in town interviewing people." Just at that moment, an officer exited my neighbor's house.

Q: *What year did you complete the Foreign Service Exam and get on the roster for selection?*

MARTIN: It would have been in the... I may have done the exam in the fall of 1962... or perhaps the spring of 1962, and then the background checks were in '63. When we were in Tampa... the spring of '63, I got word that I could be appointed if I was still prepared to go into the Foreign Service. I got this news while I was taking an eight-week Social Security course at the head office in Baltimore.

While I was in Baltimore, in October of 1962, the Cuban Missile Crisis took place. Our house in Florida was about a mile from the gates to MacDill Air Force Base in Tampa,

which was the center of the U.S. military observation of things that were going on in Cuba at that time. But when the crisis occurred, I was in Baltimore and my wife and young son were in Tampa. It was a very tense period for all of us. Because we thought, you know, at any moment, a missile might come in aimed at that Air Force Base. It never did but there was a worry at that time. I mean, we were right in the middle of a tense period with the Soviet Union.

Enters the Foreign Service in 1963. Introduction to Labor Union Reporting

MARTIN: We went to Washington in the summer of '63 for induction into the Foreign Service. At that time, you entered as a generalist, not in a specific cone or area of expertise. It was only many years later that people were either recruited for a specialty or had to indicate a particular interest even, early on. So, I came as a generalist. When I entered in June of 1963, there was no A-100 course available for Foreign Service Officers scheduled until the fall. So, I was sworn in as a FSO grade 8 and temporarily detailed to the Bureau of American Republic Affairs (later changed to Bureau of InterAmerican Affairs) as a labor officer. The regional labor officer was the back-up office for labor attachés overseas. All labor reporting came into this office, and you read it and flagged anything you thought would be of interest for the front office, for the assistant secretary's office. You maintained liaison with the AFL-CIO [American Federation of Labor and Congress of Industrial Organizations] representatives in Washington, and with the various labor training arms that AFL-CIO supported such as one for Latin America... the American Free Labor Institute... so, we would, I would go to meetings with them or talk to those people, many of whom had served abroad.

Q: *Was there concern in the Bureau for the potential of Latin American labor unions coming under the control of communists?*
MARTIN: Well, it was a period, yes. For sure... but the United States labor unions had close ties with those unions in Latin America. Some were much more to the left of the AFL-CIO leadership, but others were supported by the U.S. labor movement. They provided a lot of support for those because there was concern. I was in this Labor Office until the end of that summer. I was assigned to the first available A-100 course for young foreign service officers. It may have been September or October when I started the A-100 course because I was in that course when the Kennedy assassination occurred.

A-100 Orientation Class, and a Detail to the Passport Office

Our class numbered about forty or so... mostly men, mostly white men. There were half a dozen or so young women in the class. I was one of the younger members and only had a bachelor's degree. I had completed my military service but most of the others in the class were older than I. Some of them had advanced degrees and some had entered as commissioned officers in the military. I was not the youngest... but I was twenty-six, I believe. I think I even took a pay cut from my job in the Social Security Administration.

Q: Certainly, but before we move forward on that, a little more on the A-100 orientation class. In terms of geographic diversity, was the class mostly from the East Coast? Or was it more representative of the whole country?

MARTIN: They came from all over, I think. It was a broad-based representation of the United States, except there were not many African Americans or Asian Americans in the group... but the State Department was making an effort at that point to recruit a more geographically diverse group than had been the pattern.

Earlier, when I applied to the Foreign Service, I had assumed that it would mainly be Ivy League college graduates from the Northeast. In fact, the history of the department did lean in that direction. But by the late '50s or early '60s, they had tried to diversify, geographically at least, and the exam was being given in every state capital.

Q: Was the A-100 orientation useful for you?

MARTIN: Normally, it was just an intro to the diplomatic service in the State Department and to the U.S. government. For a lot of people, it was important because they didn't know much about the U.S. government. At least I had a year with the Social Security Administration and knew how bureaucracy and government offices worked.

Q: *Often, people make friends in an A-100 course that remain valuable to them later, as mentors or networks and so on?*

MARTIN: Yes, you are right, but most of our long-term friends in the Foreign Service came after the A-100 course, from our first three or four posts. We did maintain friendships with one or two from the A-100, but we didn't serve... never served with any of them closely. Again, they went off in one direction and I went another and our career paths just didn't cross. And so, we fell out of touch.

Paul Taylor was a close friend during that period. My wife and I had several nice encounters with them outside of the office, or outside of the training course. He later became ambassador in Latin America and was a deputy assistant secretary in the Latin American division. There was a woman in our class who got assigned to the same passport agency that I did in Los Angeles, California.

One more thing about the A-100 course— you may remember that when you first asked me about my A-100 class and women, I commented that women had to resign if they got married... that was still in effect then. In addition, wives were mentioned in officer's efficiency reports.

The practice of commenting on an officer's wife in his efficiency report ended sometime in the late 1960's. Even without a copy of an evaluation report from that time, I do remember that my wife was mentioned in my reports for the first five or six years of my employment with the State Department. And then that was stopped. I just wanted to

throw that in for the record. It was never a problem for us. Lolly was glad to be mentioned and the comments were always favorable.

The Kennedy Assassination

A-100 classes were held in a sub-basement of an old building in Roslyn called Arlington Towers. There were windows that opened out, but all one could see were legs passing on a sidewalk. One day, we saw people running back and forth and didn't know what was going on. Eventually, the director of the class got frustrated and went outside. He came back in quickly and said the President's been shot. Then he said, "Now, as young foreign service officers, you will have to live with unexpected things. So, we're going to continue the class." That didn't go over very well with the class. He tried for about ten or twenty minutes more but there was just too much movement and nervousness in the class. Eventually, he let us go... and that, I mean, he was trying his best, but he didn't know what to do either.

So, we were in Washington during that time. We stood at the Capitol, outside in the cold on the day that President Kennedy's body was carried into the rotunda. We were standing beneath television cameramen when suddenly everyone became excited and one yelled down to us below, "Oswald has been shot in Dallas."

I mean, it just was one thing after another. The Cuban Missile Crisis, Martin Luther King and the March on Washington, the Kennedy assassination, then Jack Ruby kills Oswald… it was just an unbelievable period of events... so devastating to those of us at that age. I mean, we were caught up I think in the Kennedy Mystique... saw it as a turning point for the United States, him being so young and energetic to have been elected president. So, it really was a... a devastating blow and it was the first of many over the next four or five years.

Assignment to Passport Office to Fill Staffing Gap

Q: The Passport Agency, did that interrupt the A-100 Class?

MARTIN: Yes. During the spring of every year, all passport agencies normally ramp up with new hires... temporary employees... to issue passports for the summer travel season. At the end of the A-100 course, just at the point that all of us expected to get news of our first overseas assignments, the A-100 instructors walked in and announced that Congress had not granted full funding for these temporary hires. So we were to be sent to passport agencies around the country. They assured us that they would try to send us where we would like to go but, if it wasn't possible, we would just have to make the best of it. We were one stunned A-100 class at that point. I was assigned to the office in Los Angeles.

My wife and I drove to Los Angeles in a Volkswagen bug with our two-year-old son. We found a very small apartment in Los Angeles, just off the Pasadena freeway. My office was right downtown, if there is a downtown Los Angeles, on Figueroa Street. It had been there for years and was headed by a longtime Passport Agency employee. So me and

Gwendolyn Coronway from the same A-100 class, went to work there every day interviewing applicants, swearing them in, deciding on their eligibility, assembling passports, typing them out, gluing pictures in... you did the whole thing by hand, really. We became pretty good at doing the job. My Social Security training helped out as I already knew about documents... which ones were valid and which ones were not... but it was not what I wanted to do for a career. After about six months I came back to Washington. Gwen had to resign as she married a Yugoslav. Fortunately, she was able to reenter the Foreign Service years later.

Looking back, this experience did give us the opportunity to become acquainted with a part of the country that we didn't know. While that was a plus, it was a major financial strain. In later years, when the Department detailed you somewhere, and you already had a home in the Washington area, you were given temporary duty pay to help offset the cost. At the time I entered, we did not get that. During the A-100, we had a lease on an apartment in Arlington on Wilson Boulevard which we couldn't get out of. So, we sublet it to a U.S. Information Agency officer and his wife who were going through their initial training. For reasons unknown, the couple stopped paying us rent. We were stuck with paying rent on two apartments. It was a strain for us. We never did get our money out of that renter, but I don't remember his name anyway.

Consular Training and First Assignment: Rio de Janeiro

Finally, after the A-100 course was completed, I was put into the consular course for about eight-weeks. I knew the passport part of consulate work and now I learned the nonimmigrant and immigrant visa stuff along with protection and welfare services, for Americans. After training, my first post was to the U.S. Embassy in Rio de Janeiro in 1964. Brazil's capital had not yet moved to Brasilia. There was an embassy office in Brasilia, but the embassy itself, the ambassador and much of his staff was in Rio... and would be for another two or three years at least.

Q: *All right, in Rio, what were your first impressions?*

MARTIN**:** Well, I was just tickled to death with it. I thought it was a great city. Glad to be in Brazil. My first passport was a diplomatic passport. I had never left the U.S. except to cross the border into Mexico. Lolly had had a passport because she had that trip to see her family in Africa. When we got to Rio they put us in a hotel on Copacabana beach but then we had to find our own housing. So we started looking. The embassy would give you a list of places that they knew about but that was about all. There was no assigned housing. It was somewhat furnished for you once you found something that the embassy approved. We had a hard time finding anything that we could afford within our allowance. After a couple of weeks, the embassy moved us into an apartment in the Copacabana Palace Hotel, the grand old hotel right on the beach with a view of Sugarloaf Mountain. It had a series of apartments on the back side of the hotel... part of the hotel proper... but separate from the actual hotel rooms. So we lived at the Copacabana Palace for about three months until we found permanent housing.

The Foreign Service Institute's Portuguese language training program was at the embassy in Rio in the 1960's. My first job was to learn Portuguese so I immediately embarked on language study for six hours a day. Lolly went to the Embassy for language classes also.

While we were studying Portuguese, we found a very small house on an extremely steep winding street leading up to the Christ the Redeemer statue on Corcovado mountain. It was a charming house, very modern with a lot of exposed Brazilian wood. It had a small garden and looked out over Botafogo Bay.

We would walk down the hill about a quarter of a mile to catch a bus and then rode to the embassy for language training and then we would return home. Later, as Lolly got more and more pregnant, she couldn't manage to walk back up from where the buses ended, so she didn't quite finish the language training but she must have done three months of it. I also would take the *bonde*, a small cable car, down the hill.

Q: *At the end of the Portuguese training, did you feel confident in being able to conduct business in the local language?*

MARTIN: Yes, yes, I did. On a first assignment to a large Embassy, you were assigned as a rotational officer and were supposed to do rotations through all four of the major sections of the embassy... economic, political, consular and administrative. My first assignment was to the economic/commercial section, and I did that for about five or six months. Most of my work was of the "trade opportunity" type.

Mainly, I spent a lot of time following up on commercial compliance, reading newspapers looking for trade opportunities, talking to people in the section, or sitting in with more senior officers in the section on meetings they were having. Occasionally, I would answer questions from Washington based on information we had in the files or that I could get by dropping in at the Ministry of Trade.

Q: *Now, you mentioned that it was more commercial work than typical economic work. Do you recall what sort of commercial work was being done at that time? Were we promoting particular sectors or just trying to create trade shows?*

MARTIN: Trade opportunities, that sort of thing. There were some trade shows... Brazil had, as you might know, gone through a revolutionary period. In April of 1964, the Brazilian military seized control of the government from the elected leftist government of President João Goulart. This was at the height of the Cold War and there was fear throughout the western world that communism was advancing on all fronts, in Europe, in Latin America and in Africa. Castro was doing well in Cuba. The Cuban revolution had taken place in 1958, only six years before. So, Brazil was under the beginning rule of the military government. Generals were in charge. Nobody knew how long they would be there. Turned out it was 20 years.

I got there late in 1964. So, this was all very new for me. Military officers had been placed in government ministries, but they weren't running everything. They didn't arrest everybody from the previous civilian government, but they were keeping a sharp eye on everyone.

Q: *Did you have opportunities to talk with contacts in any of the Brazilian government offices?*

MARTIN: A little but I don't remember much about it. I think I may have gone once to the Ministry of Trade and Development to meet some people. I was pretty much in the embassy all day except for meeting outside on my own. And you know, these assignments were so short, they were six months at most before you were rotated into another section.

Q: From the economic section, where did you go next?

MARTIN: I went to the administrative section, to the personnel section of the embassy. It was a big administrative section there... general services staff and a large personnel staff. There were consulates in a lot of places in Brazil. Most of the administrative work for the entire country was handled at the Embassy in Rio. We had consulate generals in Recife and in São Paulo, consulates in Salvador do Bahia, in Porto Alegre and in Curitiba at that time as well as an embassy office in Brasilia. My position there was in the personnel office, as I remember it. That was a long time ago.

Q: *Occasionally, when you're working in personnel, you remember a particular issue or problem. Did that happen on this first tour?*

MARTIN: Oh, not that I remember except for me.

Q: *You?*

MARTIN: I was called in to the chief of personnel's office one day, about halfway through my six months there. “The administrative counselor got a call from Washington today, you're going to be transferred. You might not know it yet, but there have been major changes to the immigration and naturalization law and there is going to be a lot of work in the Caribbean for all of our posts. The Department has asked us to release you and you're going to Port of Spain, Trinidad in two or three months." I said, "Well, I'd really rather not. I like it here." His response was, "Well, I'm afraid Washington has decided and you're set to go and you're not the only one.” I was the only one from our staff, but embassies all over were asked to release people. Junior officers had to go and handle what was expected to be a big increase in visa applications throughout the Caribbean." As I remember, I said something like, "Well, okay. I know we're worldwide available and I have to go, but I sure would like to maybe go there and do my consular rotation and then go to do my political affairs rotation somewhere else." He answered, “Well, we'll throw that out to Washington and see what they say, but don't hold your breath." [laughter]

But, that's what happened. I was assigned to Port of Spain, Trinidad and Tobago at the end of 1965. We had been in Brazil for maybe fourteen or sixteen months. In January of 1966, off we went to Port of Spain, Trinidad. By now we were a family of four as our first daughter, Anne, had been born in Rio in August of 1965. I was assigned to the consular section in Port of Spain, only for a year. Despite what the orders read, I had grave doubts that we were going to be moved to a new post that quickly. It just did not seem to be cost effective to ship a family and household effects so frequently.

Continued Visa and Political Work in Second Assignment: Port of Spain, Trinidad

Anyway, we wound up in Port of Spain. I joined two or three other visa officers in the non-immigrant visa section. I did get to do some political reporting; the embassy had me cover elections and a few other things. But the main part of my job was adjudicating visas. I interviewed countless applicants and issued a lot of visas, but I said no to many, many more visa applicants than you could ever say yes to. The presumption being that any non-immigrant from the Caribbean was not coming back. They were asking for non-immigrant visas, but they were really all "intending" immigrants. Therefore, they were disqualified. There was also some protection and welfare for American citizens in Trinidad who got in trouble or needed help or some passport work.

Q: *You mentioned political reporting around the time of elections. What was your beat?*

MARTIN: These were national parliamentary elections. I followed some of the candidates running for office. I attended speeches... big political speeches downtown on the square where thousands of people would gather. I went to several of those rallies and reported back to the political section and wrote memos as to what they were saying and what the mood was.

I also interviewed some candidates who were running... but most of our information was coming from other political officers. We were always vigilant about the possibility of a left-wing government being elected that was hostile to the U.S. At that time there was an American naval base just outside of Port of Spain. There were talks of kicking the Americans out of the base and off the island. None of that happened during my time.

Q: *Since you had an opportunity to learn something about labor reporting, did you do any of that?*

MARTIN: I followed it somewhat, yes. The unions were very active. The labor unions came from the British Trade Union Congress mold. They were involved with all political parties. But Trinidad politics were pretty much divided along racial lines. Large African, Trinidadian-African contingents controlled the government. Trinidad also had a very large ethnic Indian community (subcontinent Indian).

Q: *So, one other question about the political scene in Trinidad at this point, it is a member of the Commonwealth. Was the British High Commission active in a major way down there?*

MARTIN: Yes, yes. We-talked to their diplomats frequently. There was a large presence in their embassy, the High Commission. Overall, Trinidad was an interesting place to be. We were there through one carnival and had been through one in Rio. We enjoyed the one in Trinidad more than Rio... which was huge, much larger... but they both were a lot of fun.

Q: *Sometimes visa officers have to provide to local stars or celebrities. Did you get any of that work?*

MARTIN: Well, yes, we did. There was a very well-known Trinidadian calypso singer known as the Mighty Sparrow. He would frequently go to the United States to perform. He always needed a waiver as he had been arrested as a young man for stealing a bicycle. He had a criminal record and had to get a visa waiver every time he got ready to travel. So I had to interview him and do all of the paperwork to get his waiver so he could perform in the U.S. He was quite a character and very popular.

One night, my wife and I were attending a show that he put on in the basement of the Hilton Hotel. I say the basement because the Hilton Hotel in Trinidad was built upside down, you entered at the top of the hotel on the side of a mountain and progressed to the rooms down below. So, it was like one to nine floors, going down the elevator where you ate dinner. At the bottom was a big nightclub and one night we were there... we didn't go there very often... but we were there and Mighty Sparrow was performing and a fire broke out in the kitchen. Smoke was filling up the room and Mighty Sparrow was on stage. To keep everybody calm, he quickly switched from singing calypso to singing *Smoke Gets In Your Eyes*. [laughter] "Do not rush but please walk out calmly." And everybody did.

Q: *One other thing about the local scene is the discovery of oil and the pumping of oil and the interest of international oil investors. Did that have an effect on any of your work?*

MARTIN: Well, it certainly had an effect on the country's economy. Texaco at that time, was a big oil producer in Trinidad and Tobago, in the southern part of Trinidad... around the second town on the island, San Fernando. I don't know how much they were pumping, not a lot by Venezuelan standards. Trinidad still had significant quantities of oil and it has provided income and employment for the people in Trinidad.

Q: *Did the public diplomacy office tap you for any public speaking or public events?*

MARTIN: I remember going and speaking at things like rotary meetings.

Q: *And then this, this leads up to one last question. What was your sense of the average Trinidadian's view of the U.S. at that time?*

MARTIN: Well, like most in the Caribbean, people wanted to move to the United States where the opportunities were so much greater. And there were then and still are large numbers of people from all over the Caribbean in the United States. It was fairly positive.

Q: *Okay. Your wife and now two small children, how did they integrate themselves? Were they more or less happy with the, you know, the living situation there?*

MARTIN: Yes, we lived in a place called Federation Park, which was a new modern housing development near downtown Port of Spain. We lived next door to one of the justices on the Trinidadian High Court and became very close friends with them. Dennis Malone was a native of St. Kitts and had served in various judicial positions throughout the Caribbean. His wife was English. They had no children and we saw them often. We continued with that relationship until they passed away.

My wife worked in a family planning clinic as a volunteer in Trinidad. She would later discover that she was pregnant with our third child after we had left Trinidad and had to write back to her fellow workers in the clinic saying, "Whoops, perhaps she had not followed her own advice." [laughter]

Q: *Well, that's all the questions that I have for Trinidad. Have I overlooked something important that you recall from that tour?*

MARTIN: I don't think so. I was given a... I had more contact with senior officers of the embassy there as a very junior officer than I had had in Rio. In Rio, I was so far down the pecking order that I seldom saw the ambassador. The Deputy Chief of Mission (DCM) Gordon Mein was more accessible and did have us to his house. In Trinidad, it was a smaller post and the ambassador in Rio was Lincoln Gordon--sort of the father of the Alliance for Progress at that time... Kennedy's Alliance for Progress. He was a professor from Johns Hopkins University, I did not see him very much at all. But in Trinidad, the ambassador was a career foreign service officer, Robert Miner, and the DCM was, Park Wollam, both were very accessible. They made sure that I had interesting work to do besides just routine consular section duties. I appreciated that. Park Wollam had been an officer in Havana at the time of the Cuban Revolution and had gone up into the mountains to meet Fidel at one point before he reached Havana. So he had a lot of stories to tell and Ambassador Miner had a long Foreign Service career. He was an interesting and nice man also.

Q: *Interesting. Did they give you advice on career or on your next assignment or any other mentoring?*

Assignment Three: Maputo, Mozambique and Political Work

MARTIN: Well, I think they did. I had hoped that I was going to get a political assignment next, just so I would have the experience in that field as well and I could make some sort of reasonable choice as to what I wanted to do in the Foreign Service, for the long term. So I bid, if that was the right word at the time, I can't quite remember how we did it, but I indicated that I would like to go to Africa... to a Southern African... to a Portuguese speaking post, rather than say to Mozambique for a particular position or to Angola for a particular position. That was sort of the way you did it in those days. You gave general indications of what you might like to do should such a position become available. You weren't given a bid list. That came later where you had to make bids on so many numbers of places in different parts of the world.

So, we were delighted when we got orders to go to Mozambique... to a consulate general, the embassy being in Lisbon. Mozambique was still a Portuguese possession. The Portuguese described it as an overseas territory and not a colony. We went on home leave first to the United States and got ready to go off for two years in Mozambique. In fact, it turned out to be two and a half years after having spent the year 1966 in Port of Spain, Trinidad. We arrived in January 1967 in Lourenço Marques, which was the name of the capital city, now called Maputo.

We flew to Lisbon for consultations at the embassy as I was going off as the political officer in Mozambique. I was taken in tow by the political section in Lisbon and met the ambassador. At that time, it was Tapley Bennett. He wound up being ambassador in at least four places.

I went to dinner with him at his house. One night, his car picked us up. My wife and our two young children, we all had dinner with him. I don't believe Mrs. Bennett was there at that time. It was a very nice evening with Ambassador Bennett. We went home, back to the hotel in his car, when our son, Glenn informed me as I got out of the car, "I think I've lost my frog that I found in the ambassador's garden and I think I left it in the ambassador's car."[laughter]

Q: *Wonderful. [laughter] Well, fortunately, you would be leaving that location relatively quickly.*

MARTIN: We left Lisbon the next day and went to London where we took an airplane to Nairobi and then from Nairobi to Salisbury in Southern Rhodesia. Southern Rhodesia had declared what they called a Unilateral Declaration of Independence from Great Britain. It had broken away from the Commonwealth and was under sanctions by Commonwealth countries and the United States at that time, for its breakaway status. My trip was not so much related to the status of Southern Rhodesia and I was told by the State Department not to draw any attention to myself. Since we did not approve of the government in Southern Rhodesia, I went there to meet with the leader of a Mozambique liberation movement. It was one of two... a minor one... called COREMO [Mozambique Revolutionary Committee].

I met with this person outside of the embassy, at my hotel or I may have gone to his headquarters. I'm sure the Portuguese knew that I was there. They would have watched him all the time and watched his office. I talked to him for a bit about the liberation struggle for Mozambique's independence and then we flew on from Salisbury... which is now Harare in Zimbabwe... we flew to Lourenço Marques.

Again, my assignment there was for two years as a political officer. That turned into two and a half so that I could leave in the summer – the typical time to end one assignment and start a new one. In State Departmentese, it's called the "on cycle" as opposed to leaving in winter or spring, which is the "off cycle." Most jobs become available in the summer because people traveling with children need to leave in order to prepare for their next academic year in the fall. Of course, this gets slightly out of whack in the Southern Hemisphere, where seasons are reversed, but the majority are in Northern Hemisphere summer.

Q: *What was the size of the consulate general there? I ask because size is usually commensurate with the interest Washington takes in a given country or region.*

MARTIN: It's interesting. As an overseas territory of Portugal, much like the French had in Réunion and Martinique, where people actually had seats in the French National Assembly, the Portuguese tried to emulate that a bit. I don't think anybody was sitting in the Portuguese National Assembly, but Mozambicans did go to Lisbon for training, for higher education and such. Anyway, the size of the consulate general? Not very large. There was a consular officer, admin officer, political officer and economic officer... the political and economic sections of one-person each and a consul general. And the secretaries – one or two Americans, the communications section of three or four, that was about it on the American side. And then there were foreign service nationals all Portuguese... some were African and some were white.

Q: *Now, as you arrive there, what was the U.S. view of the situation there? How did it view the nascent liberation struggle?*

MARTIN: The liberation struggle had been going on for a number of years. There were two African liberation groups; the one I mentioned earlier headquartered in Lusaka, Zambia (COREMO) and FRELIMO, the Front for the Liberation of Mozambique, which was the main one in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania.

The U.S view was mixed. This was the tail end of the wave of African liberation or independence movements, which the United States favored. The United States favored a peaceful move to independence, liberation granted by the colonizing power to the native peoples... that had basically worked in the British and French colonies throughout Africa. But the Portuguese were determined to hang on to theirs, which they called overseas territories. It was complicated for the United States because Portugal was a charter member of NATO. The United States had a military base in the Azores and a small NATO headquarters in Lisbon which further complicated the relationship.

The consulate general reported directly back to the State Department, to the Bureau of African Affairs. At the same time, it didn't do anything without informing the embassy in Lisbon and the Department's Bureau of European Affairs. We sent all of our cables and airgrams... airgrams were still being used at that time, to the State Department with copies to the Embassy. They were long written reports, longer than telegrams and, of course, there was no internet along with poor telephone service. We had to make copies of everything and it was all very laborious. We were mindful of the dichotomy of the United States' position. Everyone was walking a tightrope trying to balance the issue of independence and standing up for U.S. political and democratic values while taking a realpolitik view of the world during the Cold War. The Portuguese were staunch allies of the U.S. They were "fighting communism." We had a very useful base in the Azores for tracking Soviet submarines in the Atlantic. This was our situation and we needed to be nice to the Portuguese. The African Bureau at State was supportive of independence while the European Bureau and the Defense Department were extremely cautious and afraid to offend our allies.

Q: *Now, did we have commercial interests at that time in Mozambique that we were concerned about?*

MARTIN: Our commercial interests were more directed to Angola than Mozambique. Oil had already been found in the Cabinda exclave of Angola – a small part of Angola separated from it by the Republic of the Congo. Gulf Oil had been active in extraction, so we were following developments there.

There had been some oil exploration in Mozambique, but nothing had been found. Right now, they're finding a lot of oil in northern Mozambique but at that time, nothing. There was some agricultural trade between Mozambique and the United States. Seafood and cashews were exported to the U.S.; shipped from Mozambique. There really weren't any large scale commercial operations... most of that was in Angola, oil and later, diamonds. Most of Mozambique's commercial trade was with Portugal and South Africa.

Q: *How did your family adapt to living in Maputo?*

MARTIN: We liked it a lot. For the first time, we did not have to find a house to live in. We took over a house that had been rented by my predecessor in a residential section of downtown Lourenço Marques. It was a very modern house designed by a famous Portuguese architect, Pancho Guedes. The house appears in *Famous Modern Houses of the World* and it really was a striking place with a huge garden and lots of room. We liked Mozambique a lot and had wonderful friends and enjoyed using our Portuguese again. Our third child was born there, about eight months after we arrived.

Q: *So, your wife gave birth to your third child in Mozambique. Was there access to decent medical care?*

MARTIN: Well, there was decent medical care, but in fact, this daughter was born across the border in South Africa. My wife was Rh negative. She already had two children.

When you have a third pregnancy, there is a heightened danger that something will go wrong so, halfway through her pregnancy, the doctors in Mozambique recommended that we get in touch with an obstetrician in the town of Nelspruit, South Africa which was about a four-hour drive from Lourenço Marques. When it was time for the baby to be born, we went there early. Thus, our daughter was born in a hospital in Nelspruit, South Africa.

About a week after her birth in August 1967, I drove over to get Lolly and our new baby daughter from the hospital. Driving back to Mozambique, it dawned on me, just as I got to the border, that the baby had no passport. I just hadn't thought of it. We had to go through South African immigration to leave the country and Portuguese immigration to enter Mozambique. We threw a blanket over the baby and presented our passports and got them stamped and went through. We just smuggled her into Mozambique. Later when we were ready to depart post, I had to explain to the Portuguese how this baby came to be in Mozambique.

Q: *Okay. [Laughter.] Let's turn to the work in the political section. What were you charged with doing, what were your areas of responsibility?*

Monitoring Liberation Movements in and Around Mozambique

MARTIN: Basically, I was trying to figure out what the Portuguese were doing, how they were doing in their war, defending themselves against FRELIMO and COREMO... watching their relations with the Republic of South Africa... the apartheid Republic of South Africa at that time--and Southern Rhodesia. Watching trade, as much as we could, passing to and from Rhodesia. which was under United Nations sanctions. Most of Rhodesia's exports flowed out of the country through the ports of Beira and Lourenço Marques, today's Maputo. Southern Rhodesia's primary exports were minerals, copper in particular. Most of its agricultural exports went to South Africa and to Portugal. We tried to keep an eye on these shipments but unless you had shipping documents you couldn't tell what was going anywhere.

One interesting thing we followed was a Portuguese agricultural settlement scheme in the Limpopo River Valley. Portuguese colonists were encouraged to settle in an area that had been drained and irrigated from the Limpopo River... trying to increase their presence there. But Portugal was a very small country that didn't have a lot of people to send abroad or many who wanted to go so far away to Africa. They were trying to do similar things in Angola and Portuguese Guinea as well. All three of these territories were facing liberation movements. Portuguese Guinea, now known as Guinea-Bissau was smaller and totally surrounded by African countries that had already gained independence. The liberation movement in Portuguese Guinea and the Cape Verde islands was the PAIGC [African Party for the Independence of Guinea and Cape Verde]. It was the most threatening one to Portugal. Two separate liberation movements were operating in Angola, as in Mozambique.

Angola was a larger territory, richer than Mozambique. These territories were a net drain on metropolitan Portugal, but the Portuguese were determined to hold on to them and were managing to do it, throughout my time there. The liberation movements were restricted to the extreme north and northeast of Mozambique... mainly in the province of Cabo Delgado, south of Tanzania, and in Niassa, which ran along the Malawi border and Lake Nyasa, Mozambique's rift lake. There was also some liberation movement presence in the province of Tete, in the northwest of Mozambique, bordering Zambia and Southern Rhodesia.Tete was important because the Portuguese were building a massive hydroelectric dam to supply future electricity for Mozambique and transport over high tension wires to South Africa. This dam, called Cabora Bassa or Cahora Bassa, is on the Zambezi River. It's spelled two different ways. I visited that project twice while it was being built.

I also flew up to the northern border two or three times to visit civilian and military outposts, where FRELIMO guerillas were operating. FRELIMO eventually came to power in the mid-1970s but, again, I was there in 1967 to '69.

The basic job of the political officer was to report on what we could learn from trips and talking to as many people as possible. It was difficult to find Africans who would admit to having any sort of contact with liberation movements. We did know some Portuguese who had second and third hand ties to the movements and the Portuguese secret police... PIDE, the International Police for the Defense of the State, also provided input. They were efficient as they controlled the borders. They had responsibility for both immigration and state security, sort of a combination of FBI [Federal Bureau of Investigation], CIA [Central Intelligence Agency], and Homeland Security.

Q: *Now, they would not succeed until after you leave Mozambique. Were there other countries also interested in what was going on there besides Portugal and U.S.? Were you in contact with European powers, the South Africans and so on?*

MARTIN: Yes, all of those. We talked to the British, the French, the Dutch, and South Africans. All of us were following these developments closely. We all hoped that the Portuguese would follow the example of the British and French and find a way to give up their territories peacefully, ensuring stability and continued access for the West. Everyone was concerned about the possible influence of communism from the Russians, but also the Chinese.

Some Eastern European countries were supplying weapons to liberation groups. South Africa did not want to see the Portuguese fail. They wanted them to succeed although they never really trusted the Portuguese because of their racial policies. There really was no segregation in Portuguese territories. Mixed marriages were fairly common; schools were open to blacks and whites and business opportunities also. So, this was all rather unsettling for South Africa where apartheid was in ascendancy.

Q: *This is a bit ahead of your assignment, but the Salazar regime in Portugal would fall and with it a right-wing political scene in Portugal that would be rejected as well. Were*

you beginning to hear things from the Europeans, or even the local Portuguese that Portugal was going to change very soon... the Salazar regime would fall?

MARTIN: Not really, didn't hear it from Portuguese contacts and friends, that's for sure. The Salazar regime eventually did fall after we left Mozambique. Salazar, who had been in power in Portugal since World War II, finally suffered a pulmonary embolism and was replaced by Marcello Caetano, from his own government. The wars continued as before but, as I said earlier, while the Portuguese were not eliminating the rebels, they were not losing the wars. Fighting to hold back these liberation movements was straining Portugal's economy and Portuguese soldiers, sailors and airmen were getting tired of pulling repeat tours in African provinces. There weren't huge battles, just guerrilla raids. So, some people got killed, some died of disease in these places but it was not a "Vietnam situation".

Q: *Let me ask you then, in carrying out your duties or in living in the capital, did you ever feel that you were under personal threat?*

MARTIN: No, the fighting was a thousand miles to the north. It is a long country. It's like the East Coast of the United States, from Florida to New England. And there were not even any major highways that ran that distance. The paved road outside of Lourenço Marques ran out after 50 miles. John Gossett was the second consul general that I served with in Mozambique. We and our wives took possibly one of the wildest and most foolish trips together in his own personal Mercury. He and his wife were in the front seat and Lolly and I in the back for two-weeks. We drove from Lourenço Marques through central Mozambique, up to Beira, then over to the Tete province on the border of Zambia and Rhodesia and then up to Blantyre, Malawi. The roads were paved for only a short distance outside of the major cities. Most of the time we were on sandy tracks or no track. American sedans did not drive over roads such as those, then or now. The only vehicles we saw were trucks or Land Rovers. Often we could not tell which way to go, having to guess from many tracks leading off in different directions through the bush. We would follow sand tracks straight ahead and then, all of a sudden, we would hit a huge mud puddle that we knew we could not get through, so we would back out and try another direction. It was wild, wild country. This was along the border with South Africa... where Kruger National Park is located.

We stopped by every provincial capital to speak with all Portuguese appointees as well as Catholic Church and Episcopalian officials. It's a Catholic country, but because of its relationship with North and South Rhodesia and South Africa, there was also a fairly substantial presence of the Anglican Church, proselytizing Africans. There were also American missionaries of various sorts scattered about. So we stopped to see all of these people and went to see the Portuguese governors in half a dozen provinces. I would translate for the Consul General, who came there without much prior Portuguese training. I mean, he spoke some Portuguese because he had a quickie course. He'd been the chargé d'affaires in The Gambia before Mozambique.

I served under two consul generals. When Lolly and I first arrived in early 1967, the Consul General was Harry Reed, a longtime Foreign Service Officer who was approaching the end of his career. He had served throughout Latin America, in Angola and in Mozambique as consul general. At the end of his career, he was a Class 1 officer. At that time, foreign service officer grades ran from FSO 8 up to FSO 1, and then career minister and career ambassador. Later, we switched to our current system, which I think is still in existence, from FSO 6 up to FSO 1. Six steps, I guess and then minister counselor, career minister, and then career ambassador, is that correct?

Q: *Yes. Both of those titles are accurate.*

MARTIN: Okay. Anyway, Harry Reed had been in the foreign service for a long time. He was there I guess, seven or eight months before he had to retire. He retired to Rome with his secretary. Well, we didn't know they were an item. [laughter] I guess, I wasn't such a good observer.

Q: *What I did want to ask you in that since you had gone out and toured in the hinterland is. Did we have Peace Corps or USAID (United States Agency for International Development) there and were you able to learn anything from them?*

MARTIN: We did not have either. They were in Malawi, Tanzania, and Zambia but not in the Portuguese territories. At one point, someone called the consulate to say, "There's a Peace Corps volunteer"... this is a Saturday morning... "here at the entrance to the consulate and it's closed. I think you should come down and see him, something doesn't seem quite right." He was a young fellow who had come on holiday leave from the Peace Corps in Malawi. He was vacationing on his own and looked a little distraught so we took him home with us. It just happened that we were getting ready to go on an excursion and we had to leave ourselves.

So we just told him to stay in the house. No problem. "There's a maid around and she'll take care of you. So just stay at our house. You go visit whatever's around and sorry, but we gotta go." We got home and found out that the maid was just terrified. The poor Peace Corps guy had woken up in the middle of the night and knocked on her door. She thought she was about to be raped. He was totally confused and stressed out from his time in the Peace Corps... isolated. He'd been on an island in Lake Nyasa probably by himself most of his tour and he just needed to talk. She panicked and locked herself in her room.

In the hinterland, there was no other American presence except for a businessman or two and some scattered missionaries. American naval ships would make port calls in Lourenço Marques, every now and then, maybe once a year.

Q: *Were there any other significant recollections that I've failed to ask you about?*

MARTIN: Well, to continue with that car trip through the African bush with Consul General Gossett, we went through Mozambique National Wildlife Park or the Gorongosa, which is a tremendous nature preserve--huge. It has all of the animals that Kruger has...

and has come into some fame in recent years. It was nearly wiped out following Mozambique's independence. People have discovered it and it is being brought back from near total devastation.

I broke off after we got to Malawi and called on the British High Commissioner and some Malawian government officials. Lolly and I flew back to Lourenço Marques. The Consul General John Gossett and his wife continued on up into far northern Mozambique. How in the world they made it, I don't know. The roads up north may have been even worse than those we had come over.

Anyway, I took that trip and three or four others during my time there. The Portuguese were using a tactic that the British had employed in Malaysia... the fortified hamlets. The United States also did a lot of that in Vietnam. The Portuguese were building a lot of hamlets in the border areas that were under threat from FRELIMO. Mainly from FRELIMO because COREMO didn't amount to very much as it turned out. So, I would go visit them and see how they were doing. I mean, they would corral Africans and lure them into these villages with the promise of schools and protection from FRELIMO bandits as the Portuguese called them. Let them go out during the day to tend their fields nearby but bring them back inside these stockades at night.

During my time there, FRELIMO forces never really got below Cabo Delgado Province, which is the northernmost province on the coast except for a very occasional excursion beyond that. So, you know, if you looked at it one way, the Portuguese could have just held on as they had been doing. They weren't making any progress in expelling them or in stopping the insurgency, but they weren't losing territory either. Not in Mozambique, a little more in Angola but not in Mozambique.

And that's about all I can think of, that's what I did throughout two and a half years there. I enjoyed it. It was interesting. One of my trips up north, I was under the escort of the Portuguese Navy. They were taking me to the airport, perhaps in Nampula, one of the provincial capitals. We were in a Land Rover. I was sitting in front, in the right side passenger seat and there were a couple of Navy security personnel sitting behind us. We were driving on a gravel road out to the airport and the driver was going too fast. He lost control of the vehicle, ran off the road and couldn't bring the Land Rover to a stop until he slammed into the end of a concrete culvert in a ditch, head on. I hit the front windshield with my head and face and fell out through the door senseless. There were no seatbelts. Everyone else was thrown out also.

I didn't have any broken bones. I did have a pretty severely cut forehead and head from breaking the windshield. When I arrived at the Lourenço Marques Airport [Maputo International Airport is its current name], I looked up at the arrivals observation deck and my wife was standing there with a friend of ours, a Portuguese naval officer who was chief of naval intelligence for the governor. Lolly had no idea that I had been hurt, but the naval officer did. I was okay, but it was a close call.

Q: When did you end the Mozambique assignment?

I went back to Washington after my service in Mozambique in 1969. I went to the State Department where I followed these same issues in the Bureau of Intelligence and Research(INR) for two years and then went into the European Bureau in the State Department as Portuguese desk officer for two years more. The wars were still going on--four years after I left Mozambique.

Q: The other people I've interviewed who were working at that time and also had their wives mentioned in their efficiency report are often... the wives are often referred to as how well they helped the ambassador's wife entertain. I don't... was that something you recall?

MARTIN: Ah, I don't remember that. I just remembered she was mentioned as having been very good in representational affairs, which she was. She was often asked to handle representational affairs that would normally have fallen to more senior wives. Once she was asked to give a luncheon for a team of foreign service inspectors on very short notice (two hours or so) because a toy poodle owned by the Consul General's wife was ill and shouldn't be disturbed by door bells.

Q: Okay, yeah, that...

MARTIN: Also during those early days of my service, as you probably know, there was a part of the officer's own efficiency report that the officer saw and a part that the officer did not see.

Q: Ah, no, I didn't remember that.

MARTIN: You were told that, at a later date, you could see those hidden parts and that rating officers were not to use the hidden part to take a shot that they would not have been willing to put to the officer's face. I'm not sure how well that worked overall but, in my case, I had no complaints with what was said privately, because later I did have access to my full ER's and I saw them to be fair.

Q: Very good. Was there anything unique about, you know, we're still talking about a time before internet and so on. Was there anything unique about leaving Africa and getting back to the United States?

MARTIN: Not that I remember. I might have to start here with where I was going. I was assigned back to INR (Bureau of Intelligence and Research), the African division... to the Southern African division. And on leaving Mozambique, it was decided that I should go to Angola for consultation and then go to Lisbon for end of tour discussions. In Angola I did more than consultation. I spent a week traveling around Angola doing much of the same thing that I had done in Mozambique. I flew throughout the country, up near the war zones along the Congo border, over to the far east on the borders with the Congo and Namibia and Botswana to the south.

Q: I'll take a quick look in the atlas because I don't remember every single country that borders either. And just one second... that's Europe... here we go. So yes, you're right. What was Congo now is Zaire, of course, with its Cabinda exclave. It also borders Congo Brazzaville.

MARTIN: Right. I did not go to Cabinda.

Q: Zambia, Botswana, and what was then South West Africa.

MARTIN: South West Africa is now Namibia, yes. And I went over to the borders with Zambia, the Congo, and perhaps Botswana. I remember the names of some of the towns, but I'm certain they all have changed. I do remember Carmona Lobito, Benguela, and Nova Lisboa, but I expect they have new names these days...

Q: Yeah.

MARTIN: ... and consulted and talked to Portuguese civilians and officials, contacts that the consulate in Angola had with people... non-Portuguese. And I got much the same picture that I had gotten in Mozambique. And I then went on to Lisbon where I met up with my wife who had had to fly home from Mozambique via Johannesburg, up to Lisbon and she told me, that's the last time you'll ever do that. I'm not traveling with three kids alone again. And it turned out it was the last time she had to do that... not because of that threat, it just didn't work out that way. Then we went to the UK to come home aboard the steamship United States from Southampton to New York. It was fairly common for foreign service personnel to travel by ship in those days. I knew or knew of officers and their families who traveled all the way to Mozambique by ship taking, you know, two or three weeks to get there from Europe. But this was a five-day passage from Southampton to New York. That was the only time we ever traveled that way for the rest of my career. I doubt anybody has been allowed to travel that way for years.

Q: Yeah, especially after the advent of COVID, sure. Alright.

MARTIN: Then we got back... we did home leave and then I reported to Washington sometime in the summer of 1969. I don't remember exactly when.

Q: Now, I just want to double check on the year. Again, my notes may be incorrect but it shows that you... just one second. I thought we were into the early '70s by now that...

MARTIN: Well, I started in '63 in the State Department.

Q: Yes, you arrived in Maputo in '67,

MARTIN: January of '67.

Q: And that, so that would bring you to about 1970 in the return.

MARTIN: No, Lourenco Marques, Mozambique was a two-year assignment and I stretched it for six months to get into the summer cycle for transfers... easier for families with school-age children. It was somewhere in the summer of '69.

Q: Okay.

MARTIN: We arrived in Washington, for a two-year assignment to INR, '69 to '71, and then moved to the Portuguese desk for another two year assignment.

Q: Very good. Alright, where did you end up living? Or how did you establish your quarters when you got back to Washington?

MARTIN: We rented a house south of Alexandria for the first year that we were back , in a subdivision called Waynewood, just off the George Washington Parkway. And we weren't very happy there. It was perfectly nice... the house and rental community but there wasn't much for my wife to do during the day. And she decided…, *We* decided later on that we would move into the District if we could. After living there for one year, we started looking for a house in the District, looking somewhere where public schools were fairly acceptable, where scores were fairly high. We found a rowhouse in Kalorama Triangle, now known as the Adams Morgan neighborhood on Biltmore Street. We bought that in 1970, roughly $31,000. We kept it for the next thirty years and sold it for more than that.

Q: Yeah, I imagine. Very wise purchase.

MARTIN: Well, sometimes you wondered. In 1968, after the assassination of Martin Luther King, there were riots in Washington. Adams Morgan wasn't too far removed from some of that and in fact, the realtor through whom we bought the house said, “you don't really want to live on this side of Rock Creek Park. Diplomats live on the other side of Rock Creek Park”. Well, we couldn't afford to live on the other side of Rock Creek Park and we actually loved the neighborhood. We liked it enough to stay there for thirty some years.

Q: Yeah, yeah. Just out of curiosity as you came in and went from Adams Morgan during that time, what were the main changes that you saw?

MARTIN: Well, one thing that did not change very much was the number or the makeup of the people on the two blocks that make up Biltmore Street, curving off to the right just after the Calvert Street Bridge continuing up to Columbia Road. Many of the same people were there the entire time we owned the house. We would come and go abroad on assignment, but they remained. There were lawyers, doctors, teachers, civil servants and foreign service colleagues. There were some African Americans, but the short street was mainly white. I think it's probably still like that. Some of our close friends still live there-an educated group of people, community-oriented. During the first years of our residence, the neighborhood had direct input into the selection of the principal of the public elementary school. We were very active in the process, holding meetings in our

house, interviewing candidates, including some from out of the area, and finally making a recommendation accepted by the DC School Board. The process went on over a period of several months. It must have been around ‘71 that we selected a principal from New York who came down to be interviewed along with several others. We selected Frank Mieli who eventually moved on to our same street. The school was by the Shoreham Hotel... Oyster School, Washington’s first bilingual school –English-Spanish. Classes were taught in both languages for all children starting in kindergarten. It was a good choice for us and for our children.

Q: Yeah, lovely. Okay, how before the metro and after the riots of '68. How did you get to the State Department from Adams Morgan?

MARTIN: I either walked, it was about a forty-five minute walk... easy downhill but not so easy coming back up where the Hilton Hotel is on Connecticut Avenue... or I took the bus. And it was a new experience for me, it was a good commute. Several years later when I got assigned to the operations center and was doing shift work, I had parking in the State Department basement garage. On Biltmore street we did not have parking so when I got home in the middle of the night, I had to search and search. I would sometimes park five or six blocks away. We always refused to put in a parking place as it would have taken away our very small back garden.
Q: So, even back then that's...

MARTIN: It was doable.

Q: That's remarkable. Of course now, I can assure you, it's even more difficult to find parking in the District.

MARTIN: Yes, I am certain of that.

Q: Alright, well then, let's turn to the INR office where you began in the State Department. What were you following? What issues were you responsible for?

MARTIN: I was basically responsible for all of Portuguese Africa, which was Angola, Mozambique and Portuguese Guinea and Cape Verde, the Indian Ocean... not including the island of Madagascar– the Malagasy Republic... not including that. But, I did do Réunion, Mauritius and Diego Garcia. And then I did Rhodesia, Southern Rhodesia... now Zimbabwe. So, I had a number of countries, big territories. There was another officer of my grade who was responsible for South Africa, Republic of South Africa and we would backstop each other. We had an office... Director for Southern African Affairs, a career civil servant Tom Thorne (C. Thomas Thorne). We were all in the office of African Affairs which was headed at that time by Bill Harrop (William C. Harrop) who was later ambassador in several places... very active in Foreign Service. His deputy was a longtime career civil servant and... the office staff and the bureau as a whole was a mix of Foreign Service and civil service employees. The director of INR at that time was Ray Cline.

Q: He also had a long and successful career.

MARTIN: Yes, he did. I basically did the Portuguese territories. It was my real beat. But, you know, you read traffic from all the others too, all of them.

Q: Now, also, at that time, I believe the negotiations on Rhodesia had begun... the Chatham [Lancaster] House negotiations.

MARTIN: I think so. I just remembered that sanctions were still in place. Yeah, I'm sure you're right, but I don't remember much about that. Sorry.

Q: No, that's fine. I just mentioned it as a context, you know, historical context to an issue. No, please, please go ahead.

MARTIN: Well, I was still doing basically what I had done as a reporting officer in the field out in Mozambique, but with more contact with other intelligence agencies from INR. You are reading cables and writing morning briefs for the seventh floor and for your principals in INR and the African Bureau and for the seventh floor. I wrote a long paper on the Portuguese African liberation movements which was used later as the basis for the national intelligence estimate on Portuguese Africa. You worked with the CIA, Director of Intelligence staff as well as others.

Q: I apologize. It was not Chatham House, it was Lancaster House negotiations. But in any case, it was background to some of the work you were doing, not directly related to what you were working on.

MARTIN: That's what I did for two years. I mentioned earlier that there was a tightrope that the Department was walking--balancing interests in African independence and NATO (North Atlantic Treaty Organization) affairs along with demands from the Portuguese, so we always had to be aware. We were free to express ourselves and able to send things forward that we thought were relevant and of interest. I don't remember having to run things by the European part of INR... I mean, that was not a problem. You knew that your readership was both EUR (Bureau of European Affairs) and the African Bureau. At the end of my two years in INR, I went to the Office of Spanish and Portuguese Affairs as the Portuguese desk officer in EUR.

Q: And that would be 1971.

MARTIN: That would be 1971.

Q: Okay, okay, good. Alright, was there anything during the time you were in INR that really sticks out in your mind, either in terms of the work or in terms of the skills and the network that you created during that time because it's the first real desk job you had in the Department.

MARTIN: I think, it was primarily the absorption of the culture of working at State, getting to know the building and government. I knew basically how things worked but it was the first time that I had been put into that situation. This understanding was useful throughout my career. You learned how to work with people, you learned how to get clearances for this, that and the other. You learned who were good sources of information, who could be of assistance and how you could make yourself valuable to the Bureau. However, I was ready to go at the end of two years. I had worked hard. I felt I had done enough of that and was glad to move on.

Q: Okay.

MARTIN: I can't remember whether there were promotions involved or not during that period. I was moving up at a reasonable pace, I think.

Q: And these were regular hours in the Intelligence and Research Bureau. You were not on the twenty-four hour watch there?

MARTIN: I was not.

Q: Okay. All right. So, you moved over to a different bureau now. Did it have its own separate building culture?

MARTIN: Yes, well the office that I went into certainly did. At the time I became Portuguese desk officer, EUR/SPP was probably the smallest office in the European bureau. There were only four officers in a division headed by George Landau, who later became ambassador in a couple of places in Latin America. He ran a very, very tight ship. He was a good person to watch if you wanted to see the consummate operational bureaucrat in action. He let nothing slip by him, especially policy wise. He supervised the Spanish desk officer, the Portuguese desk officer, and an economic officer who covered both countries. The economic officer was Landau's deputy. I succeeded Ted Briggs on the Portuguese desk. Every day for two years, as far as I can remember, George Landau worked late. He expected you to backstop him, no matter how late to the end of "his" workday. Everybody was scrambling to get cables cleared and sent all over the building every afternoon with instructions to this person or that. At the end of the day, George would sail out of his office, yelling to all that he was going upstairs. He would then head up to the sixth floor, we were on the fifth, to get face time with our deputy assistant secretary in EUR, Wells Stabler, or Martin Hillenbrand, the assistant secretary. If he was lucky, somebody on the seventh floor. He did it every day. You were expected to be there when he came back down to report. And so, seven o'clock would come and you would still be there. We would call home saying, well, it's going to be a little late. He always worked late and he got you into that habit of working long days also.

Our relationship with the African Bureau was tense. We had different interests because of where we sat. George drove the hardest bargains imaginable. He could not accept anything that came out of the Office of Southern African Affairs without his pencil out, sharpened and making changes. I mean, they did the same thing to us but I think,

anybody who had worked opposite him would realize that they had a very skilled bureaucrat to contend with. Sometimes, it would seem he was marking up African Bureau cables or memoranda to irritate them just because he could. I don't know whether he did or not but he really was a very skillful bureaucrat.

He saw his job as protecting the EUR front office, protecting the embassies in Madrid and Lisbon, protecting the U.S. interests in NATO. Salazar had died and had been succeeded by Marcelo Caetano, but basic policies in Portugal had not changed. The wars continued in Africa. Our need for the Azores Lajes base, both as a key component for anti-submarine patrols over the Atlantic and as a stopover on transAtlantic military flights to north Africa and the Middle East continued. Sometimes, they became more important than at other times but the issues were always there. For about a year and a half, my job as Portuguese desk officer was as an active participant in the almost daily skirmishes with the office of Southern African Affairs. EUR/SPP came out on top the majority of the time since we could always threaten to take issues "upstairs," i.e., to our conservative political masters.

Early in my tenure, I had taken a trip to Portugal, where I'd been before but just passing through for consultations. This time, I went to the Azores where I had never been. I spent time at the consulate in Ponta Delgada, then flew over to the island of Terceira where the large Lajes base was located. I had briefings there with the U.S and Portuguese Air Force commanders. After a week in the Azores, Lolly and I flew on to Lisbon where I had briefings in the embassy. Then we went up to Oporto and visited the consulate which was then in existence.

On October 6, 1973, Yom Kippur, Arab armies attacked Israeli forces on several fronts. After several weeks of fighting with mixed results, it became clear that the Soviet Union was resupplying its Arab allies. As a consequence, the Azores became increasingly important to the United States which needed a mid-Atlantic stopping point to resupply Israel. Our need to use the Azores put the Portuguese in a bad situation. Because of their need for oil, for votes in the UN (United Nations) in defense of their African policies... they did not want to aggravate anyone and the Arabs, especially. A lot of pressure was brought on Portugal. Some very tough telephone calls from Henry Kissinger to the Portuguese foreign minister followed and access was granted.

I enjoyed work on the Portuguese desk for nearly two years. We didn't have any real problems, it was just a matter of staying on top of the issues. Good relations generally existed between the Lisbon embassy and EUR and my bosses generally left oversight to me. Portugal certainly was not George Landau's principal brief. Spain was much more important to the United States. We had large Air Force and Naval bases in Spain, and Landau was deeply involved in negotiations for their extensions. That took a lot of his time but he never turned his eye away from Portugal, nor from me.

Q: Just one other question, given that you were also looking at what was then still Portugal's overseas territories, was there any interaction over Brazil? Given you know, just the general Portuguese interest in Brazil?

MARTIN: Not really.

Q: Okay, no, that's fine. And the desk officer positions are usually two years so at some point early in the second year, you're beginning to think of where you're going next?

MARTIN: Yes. I didn't really have any idea what I might bid on until I heard from someone in the office next door, the Office of Benelux Affairs, that there was going to be a position available in The Hague. I let people know I was interested in that. I can't remember whether there was anything else that I had put ahead of that bid. Perhaps there was something in Iceland. I probably bid on something in Spanish speaking Latin America but I got the number two job in the political section in The Hague via Dutch language training.

Q: Wow, okay. So, then that means you must have begun that language training in the summer of '73.

MARTIN: Well, actually it was early spring of 1974 I believe.

Q: Okay.

MARTIN: I was about a month out of the Portuguese desk when the Portuguese revolution occurred. Now, I've lost my date on this, I will look it up and fix it when we resume later on. But my point being that... we did not see that coming.

Q: Wow, interesting.

MARTIN: The Portuguese revolution, a revolution of left-leaning military officers took place on April 25, 1974. The United States did not see it coming. Embassy Lisbon did not see it coming. The Portuguese were hanging on... not hanging on... they were doing about as well in southern Africa, as they had been when I had gone to Mozambique back in 1967. As they had been for a couple of years before that. Their worst place was Portuguese Guinea, which, however, was a very small territory. They had been fighting a real war throughout that territory for years, with lots of casualties. But in Angola and Mozambique there were not many casualties. As observers, we thought they were hanging on for the long term, you know. It was a surprise to us, as it was a surprise to all but those in the know who were involved in the coup, the "carnation revolution", in Portugal. I can't claim that I told anybody... watch out for this, it's going to happen. I certainly did not.

Q: Fascinating.

MARTIN: Not aware that anybody else was aware of it either.

Q: But now of course you're looking at that, at those events from, I guess, Dutch language training.

MARTIN: Well, Dutch language training was much like Portuguese language training except the latter had been in Rio. Dutch was in Washington at FSI. There were people going to The Netherlands, to Suriname and to Curacao. We had consulates in Amsterdam and Rotterdam and an embassy in The Hague so there were three posts there to fill with language officers. I don't think I had any other sorts of consultations or preparations for going to The Hague. I must have done the usual trotting around Washington to other agencies and up on the hill, but nothing stands out. So, we then went to The Hague in early summer, 1974. Sorry, I'm not concise on that.

Q: Well, that's no... but that's fine. But then when you reach The Hague, was that a furnished post or unfurnished post? How did you find your lodgings?

MARTIN: That was a furnished post. We were assigned to a house... a duplex house in the suburb of Wassenaar. One side of the house was occupied by the embassy's chief commercial officer, and the other side by our family. It was a nice three bedroom house, two stories under one roof... the Dutch call duplexes "two under one roof." Just down the street was the U.S. military attaché to The Hague. Wassenaar was a desirable residential suburb, sort of the Chevy Chase or Bethesda of Washington D.C. to The Hague. Big houses, some old comfortable houses, some very large and grand, others rather ordinary but comfortable. We were in one of the latter. Commuting to the embassy was either by bicycle, with excellent bicycle paths all the way to the embassy, or by bus... electric buses.

Q: And even back then the buses were electrified?

MARTIN: Yes with overhead cables, like a tram, but a bus. And there were trams as well, so commuting was no problem. Shopping was no problem... a very enjoyable place to be and live. American international schools in another neighborhood nearby, closer to the beach for our children.

Q: Now, at that time how large was the political... you're going to the political section. How large a section was it?

MARTIN: Three, political counselor, first secretary (me) and a new junior officer third secretary.

Q: Now, what so then, what were your specific responsibilities?

MARTIN: Most of it was internal politics but I backed up the political counselor at the Foreign Ministry. I was in the Foreign Ministry several times every week, but I guess I spent more time probably on internal political work... the Dutch had a labor government at that time... a socialist government. The Dutch parliament was just across the way from our embassy... a ten-minute walk, and the Foreign Ministry was about the same distance down a side street.

Q: One thing I'm curious about is after your training in Dutch, did you use it very much or was most of your business in English?

MARTIN: Most was in English because the Dutch, sort of like the Swiss, will speak two or three languages... English, certainly one of them, and very well. They appreciate you speaking Dutch but if you are getting down to business, fairly soon, they will switch over into English without even batting an eye and you find yourself doing the same thing. No point in trying to compete with that.

Q: Yeah, that was also my experience in working with Dutch diplomats. But...

MARTIN: And they generally know your brief as well as you know it. They're talented and they run a good Foreign Service.

Q: In the background, during these years, North Sea oil is beginning to be found and plans for its exploitation. Did that have an effect on your work?

MARTIN: I don't think so. I don't think it did. Royal Dutch Shell is still "British/Dutch" with headquarters in two countries. That's coming to an end now. I just read this week that they're going to consolidate and no longer have two headquarters. But Shell and some of the other big Dutch multinationals do play an outsized role in the world compared to the size of the country. Oil, I don't think played a big role. I don't remember it doing that, not North Sea oil. They were wherever oil was to be found, the Dutch were there in some form. I don't really remember that being a big issue.

One of the bigger issues during my time there was the issue of intermediate range nuclear weapons... the United States wanted to place them in Europe. And the Dutch were not eager to have them on their soil. So this was something that went on for a good part of my time there with, you know... daily, it seemed, daily or at least weekly, cables from Washington telling us to get into the Foreign Ministry with a demarche on the subject. More often than not you would go to the ministry and be told that the same demarche had been made to the Dutch in Washington, and at NATO. As I said, you would often walk in and find they knew your brief better than you did [laughter] and were prepared to give you the company line which they had been giving in three other places. But they would listen and be very polite, and you would make your pitch, hand over a white paper perhaps, then walk back down the street to the Embassy and report back to Washington. We did this two or three times a week for years it seemed.

Q: In your recollection, did U.S. ever actually based Pershings in the Netherlands?

MARTIN: I don't remember. I should, but I don't.

Q: I don't... I don't recall either.

Q: Interesting, alright. Now, the other side you mentioned was the internal... covering the internal politics. Were there any important developments there that you recall?

MARTIN: Well, the so-called Lockheed scandal involving Prince Bernhard, the Queen's husband, who, it turned out, had received gifts and money to further Lockheed's business, that neither the Dutch people nor the government knew about. Bernhard was a very influential active prince consort in business with the military. When the story broke, there were hearings in the Dutch parliament and I was there for those. They were rather heated and embarrassing for all parties, I think and he was reprimanded. He was forced to step back from some of his activities. They didn't remove him from his position but it was very embarrassing for the royal family.

Q: The Netherlands had good relations with Israel. Was there anything related to Israel that we worked on with the Netherlands at this time?

MARTIN: They did have good relations with Israel. They were not as staunch defenders as the United States. But they were there, they're good. But they also had to be careful about their position in the world and in the EU. They had investments throughout the Arab world and did not follow Israel's line slavishly but they were always willing to consult.

Q: Now, during this time, was there an opportunity for your wife to work if she wanted to?

MARTIN: Yes, part of her time there she worked as the community liaison officer in the embassy... arranging things for wives and families, trips, excursions and things and she enjoyed that... and she also did it later in Turkey. She also took Archaeology Courses at Leiden University. She was especially interested in the Etrucscans.

Q: And I imagine education was good for your children?

MARTIN: It was, they enjoyed the schools and we traveled quite a bit.

Q: Was there...

MARTIN: ... 1976 was the bicentennial of the United States. We had two ambassadors when I was at the Hague– Bob McCloskey (Robert J. McCloskey) was the first. He had been the State Department spokesman during the Kennedy administration, later was ambassador in Cyprus and Greece in addition to the Netherlands. He was replaced by Kingdon Gould, Jr. who had been ambassador to Luxembourg. McCloskey was a career diplomat, Gould was a political appointee.
They were both excellent Ambassadors.

Q: Interesting.

MARTIN: Gould was there for the lead up to the celebration of the U.S. bicentennial. He decided it was going to be a big one in the Netherlands, and it was. He designed the celebration every step of the way. He raised the money for it among American and Dutch companies. He got us all involved in the program and it was a big success, I might say. The Dutch enjoyed the show and the celebrations and the Americans who were there did also.

Q: Alright. Were there any other major, other than the intermediate range nuclear missiles, were there any other major issues that we had with the Dutch during the time you were there?

MARTIN: I don't think any other major issues... the Dutch were facing some terrorism issues at that time. The Moluccans and the Japanese Red Army.

Q: Right.

MARTIN: There was a Moluccan hi-jack of a train and accompanying hostage situation at a school in the Netherlands, and there was an attack on the French Embassy, right behind our embassy. The embassy was taken over and held for five days. It was a very tense period, eventually resolved through negotiations, getting the hostages released and the people out of the country. So, those were some tense issues for the Dutch during that period. There was something else... something just slipped my mind that didn't relate to this but something I also wanted to tell you– it will come back ten years from now, I suppose.

Q: [Laughter] That's alright. Of course, you can add it later, as you're editing so, no worries there. So now, this is a three-year tour.

MARTIN: Yes.

Q: And that the bicentennial would be towards the end of your tour. But you needed to get on to the summer cycle for bidding purposes. Did you stay a bit longer in order to make sure that, you know, you were on a regular cycle?

MARTIN: No, I don't remember ever doing that. So, I think something has slipped out of this throughout. I don't remember ever doing it except in Mozambique, which I know I did, extended by six months to get on that cycle. I thought we would stay abroad... we'd been in Washington for four years before coming out for a three-year assignment. I bid on jobs like political counselor or head or chief of a political section or very small DCM (Deputy Chief of Mission) jobs. I did not get any of those and was disappointed to learn that I was going back to the operations center as a senior watch officer. But, that's where we went.

Q: So, that would have been then in '76 to '77.

MARTIN: No, it was '77 when I went back. We were in the Netherlands from '74 to '77.

Q: Okay

Q: Yeah. Often when they... when you're taking language training, they'll put you on the desk or, you know, a related desk for a few months and then...

MARTIN: Actually, I did do that before going to The Hague. Whether it was that long, I don't remember but I did do that.

Q: Alright. So, we find you then back in the operation center in 1977.

MARTIN: Yes, in the summer.

Q: Well, it's a new administration and a totally different sort of job.

MARTIN: It was. The shift work changed every two days through a six-day cycle, and then you had three days off and did another six days of shift work. Everybody wandered around kind of bleary eyed, because you never got used to a general lack of sleep. It wears you out yet the officers holding those jobs, including me, didn't want to get away from it because you wanted to be able to be in touch with colleagues and others doing Foreign Affairs work, who were working a normal day shift.

Q: Right.

MARTIN: So, from time to time, the issue would come up, you know, well, we could make this big change and have an early shift and an evening shift and a midnight to seven shift ... We could do that and put you on each for a week at a time. No, we don't think so. And so... I don't know what they do these days. I haven't known for twenty years but...

Q: Well, I can tell you certainly in the late '80s and early '90s when I served in the ops center, it was the exact same thing. Two days of early shift, two days of evening shift and two days of midnight shift, and then three days off.

MARTIN: Okay. So, you know the business and I was there as a senior watch officer and had some very good junior officers pass through and other good senior watch officers. At that time, both senior officer and junior watch officer would sit at the desk in the center of the ops center, manning telephones and having cables coming through a window to you to be distributed to boxes, that staff assistants from all the bureaus would come for several times a day to get their... the cables for their principals. And if something was really hot, you would call and tell them to come up right away and get it or occasionally, you would walk it down to them. It was entirely the day of paper operations.We were still dealing with IBM (International Business Machines Corporation) Selectric typewriters. That was modern for us in those days. You know, they were just... it's a total change, I assume for the better. Hello, I have computer problems, I sometimes wonder.

Q: You know, I vividly remember the IBM Selectrics because it's what I used in college. I was going to college in Georgetown while you were in the ops center. In order to write papers, it was the IBM Selectrics.

MARTIN: Yeah, we were writing outgoing cables on those. The embassies were using them to write their cables. The typed material would go into the communication center where communicators would scan it to tape, then run the tapes through encoding machines to encode and then send it out. And on the other end, same sort of operation. There was no internet, not even email. It was Western Union, perhaps a bit on steroids, but far removed from what evolved in a few years.

[Laughter] Yeah, if...

MARTIN: The system worked well enough, I suppose. But, since we were still dealing with paper, and only paper, there was a lot of running around distributing messages.

Q: Take a moment to explain what a NODIS cable is.

MARTIN: The Department had several designators which described how restricted many cables should be: These designators were put on cables or other reports by the sending organization. LIMDIS, limited distribution, for example restricted cable distribution somewhat, i.e., cut distribution back from the very wide distribution of most cables which were printed out in those days in the hundreds of copies which went all over the building to practically everybody in a sense. EXDIS, exclusive distribution was the next most restrictive designation. It generally resulted in far fewer copies being printed out and circulated. Individual bureaus getting EXDIS cables determined who in their own bureaus need to see such reports. At the time that I was there, NODIS cables, meaning no distribution, were printed in, I believe fifteen copies.. They came through a window to the senior watch officer who decided who should get them. Obviously, the Secretary of State got all of these, as did the Deputy Secretary. The regional bureau involved almost always got all of those.

Of those fifteen, I would guess, usually seven or eight got distributed around the building. Now, White House, CIA (Central Intelligence Agency), NSA (National Security Agency), Defense Department, got the incoming messages as well, but they got them electronically, and they did their own restricted distribution.

Q: Now, at least later when I was there, the senior watch officer did have one very important job, which was to brief the executive secretary at the end of each shift.

MARTIN: No, not during my time.

Q: Okay.

MARTIN: There was a junior watch officer on the desk and another one who was the editor in the back who was writing for the secretary's daily brief... which they would

write during the night and maybe, include some items from the day shifts and the senior watch officer would go over that before it was printed and taken around to the department principals early in the morning.

Q: There was one other job that I recall junior watch officers did which was put together the newspaper clippings overnight because they would get in some newspapers, you know from the first printing early in the morning and they would clip stories of interest to the seventh floor and put them together and Xerox them for the top officials.

MARTIN: Right. Yeah, they did that. You know, you were pretty well informed being in the op center and you were supposed to alert people to things that were happening. Both the junior officers and senior officers did that. Well, I've had to call and wake up the secretary in the middle of the night to tell him that this is something that just came, that we know you've been following. You know, you just use your judgment about making those calls.

Q: At the very top of urgency were two types of cables at that time... one was a NIACT immediate and the other was a FLASH. And NIACT immediate meant the post, the embassy believed that Washington needed to act, even overnight. And FLASH was something where the post essentially believed either the secretary or the deputy needed to be informed immediately.

MARTIN: I got some of those, NIACT's generally. I don't know about you, but I seldom saw FLASH messages on the watch.

Q: It was very infrequent but...

MARTIN: I think during the Jonestown incident, we did get FLASH cables, which happened far from the Embassy - way out in the Amazonian jungle.The Embassy was getting word that people out there were dead. There was a Congressional delegation out there at Jonestown, a hundred twenty miles into the Amazon. I was on duty the night that the news started dribbling in and by the time I came back in for another shift, three hundred more bodies had been found. And it went on for two or three days like that. I don't remember seeing other actual FLASH cables. There could have been, but I don't remember.

Q: That was... I had mentioned that only because I meant to lead into a question about the crises that occurred that are on your watch that you had to deal with. And certainly Jonestown is one, were there others?

MARTIN: I'm afraid, I don't remember any right now. No, I just...

Q: No, that's fine. It's often the luck of the draw, because it, you know, a crisis may occur but not on your period of duty. And then, you know, you're not the one who has to make the midnight calls or the 3 am calls.

MARTIN: There were two or three task forces that were set up in rooms inside the Operations Center to handle particular ongoing crises. We did not sit on the task forces, but were responsible to provide space and general backup. That was always an ongoing thing and I expect there are more and more these days or even during your period there. It was a system that worked fairly well, I thought. You know, they brought in the people from various areas who were likely to have to play a role. We dealt back and forth with them a little bit but we weren't part of the task force.

Q: Yeah, sure. And that I can, you know, assure you that continued well into the '80s and '90s. And even I think, by now has become a regular part of the operation center through a couple of offices even... there's AID's Office of Transition Assistance and a separate secretary office on crisis management, and so on. So over time, the ability to respond to crises quickly grew into an organ, a more organized form. But the other question I wondered was, during the time you are a senior watch officer, you're also being considered for secretary staff or for other seventh floor staff positions. Were you interested in that?

MARTIN: I was, but didn't pursue one. I was interested but I think that I was more interested in going out to post again. We had just come back from a tour in the Hague and I think that I, and the family also, were hoping to resume the foreign experience.

Q: No, I mean, sure it's not a requirement but, you know...

MARTIN: It is, you are right and...

Q: But the other thing that happens when you're a senior watch officer, is that you get to know the building pretty well.

MARTIN: Yeah, you do. All of it. And you get to know which parts of it work better than other parts, you know. There always are parts, bureaus if you will, that, you know, seem to perform better than others. During my time, EUR and NEA seemed to be the more outstanding bureaus.

Q: Yes.

MARTIN: And I'll just sort of leave it there.
Q: Yeah.

MARTIN: Everybody's working hard but there are some parts which almost always seem to be operating at a higher level you know.

Q: What, so then, what were you thinking about as a follow-on after the senior watch officer position?

MARTIN: I wound up going into Turkish language training and off to Turkey as a labor attaché. As a political officer, I had always been interested in labor affairs and had

followed left wing politics in a couple of places, and labor parties' influences on political systems. I really don't remember even putting in a bid out of the Op Center or whether it was just all word of mouth. I guess I had to put in a bid list. I don't know that we wanted to go abroad immediately after that because we'd just been back for eighteen months.

Q: Right.

MARTIN: But, I was assigned as labor attaché to Ankara via Turkish language training at FSI. You want to go on into this one?

Q: Actually, I would recommend we pause here because this is going to be a big discussion. But I do want to find out... so you left the watch office in 1979. Did it go all the way to '79 for you?

MARTIN; I think it must have been, perhaps early '79?

Q: That would make sense for 18 months from when you arrived in '77.

MARTIN: Okay, yeah.

Assignment to Turkey as Labor Attaché

I don't exactly remember how I got assigned to Turkey as a labor attaché. I was to take the ten-month Turkish language training at the Foreign Service Institute, but before that training started, EUR, in conjunction with the person who oversaw the State Department's labor attaché program, decided that I needed some real indoctrination into the role of labor unions in a free society.

They sent me to the George Meany Training Center which, as I remember, was out in Silver Spring or somewhere near there, north of D.C. (District of Columbia). I went for a week or two and stayed in the company of a lot of labor people from all around the United States who had been brought in for labor organizing training.

As an introduction to the AFL-CIO (American Federation of Labor and Congress of Industrial Organization) and to international labor affairs, some of it was useful and some was not, but I didn't mind. In fact, I found it interesting, sort of an academic exercise, a broadening exercise. After the labor training program, I think I started learning Turkish. Part of the way through the ten month language training, I got word that we were to go to Turkey early after only six months of Turkish, not ten... I was disappointed because I was doing well in the course but I certainly had not gotten up to a good level of language competency in Turkish. The story was that they wanted me in Ankara sooner because they didn't have anyone to fill the position of labor attaché and hadn't had for many months. They also claimed that they wanted to start a language program that had been under discussion for some time, i.e., to have people finish language training in-country. I was told that the embassy had set up training for me somewhere outside of Ankara, one on one with a Turkish speaker and a language teacher.

That didn’t work quite as well as they had thought and certainly not as well as I thought. When I got to Ankara, I discovered the embassy had not done very much at all. They had had some conversations with either a language school or an individual in the city of Bursa, which was the old Ottoman capital of Turkey before they took Constantinople and so they said, they were sending me there to meet up with so and so and he will be your language teacher and you two work it out.

He was a young fellow, university graduate. He was not a language teacher. He was very friendly and very helpful, but he didn't quite know where to begin. Neither did I. I had my FSI (Foreign Service Institute) Turkish textbooks which he had never seen. He apparently had answered an ad for a job teaching Turkish to a foreigner, thinking that he was to be an instructor of Turkish in some institute. I never figured out what the Embassy people had in mind.

It was a bit awkward and probably a waste of time for the three or four months they had me there. I got something out of it, I'm sure, but it was not rigorous like FSI’s six hours a day of language with a trained instructor following a text. We would sit and talk and read newspapers together, but I don't think I ever got much above the two plus level that I had reached in training at FSI.

It was a shame because I liked learning Turkish and was interested in that type of language, which I had never studied before. So, I did that in Bursa for about three or four months. There were some interesting aspects to the experience. Once he arranged a dinner with two Turkish couples. One was a cardiologist and his wife and the other was a university person and his wife. We had a social evening together, chatting in my limited Turkish.

The only reason I mentioned this is that, late in the evening, one of them said, trying to stimulate conversation, "Tell us how you think the problem in Cyprus will be solved?" Sort of grasping for words in dealing with something like this, I came up with not the best phraseology. Thinking to myself, and trying to get the sentence structure arranged, I said something like, "Well, it's very difficult, it's going to take a long time. One of the main problems is, Greeks are afraid of Turks and Turks are afraid of Greeks." And there was a long pause and one of them said, "Turks are not afraid of Greeks." It was sort of an introduction to the feeling of Turks toward Greeks that ran deep. I suppose I could have gotten a similar reaction if I'd been somewhere in the Greek countryside and said the same thing.

Q: *Right. It was just an invitation to the briar patch.*

MARTIN: Yes, it was and I was in it. It was all very pleasant and interesting. Then on another occasion which was an introduction to local Turkish life, the language instructor took me to his village, somewhere outside of Bursa to attend a wedding. I spent a night or two with his family joining in the wedding celebration.

They were glad to see him back for the festivities and, for me, it was an opportunity to observe age-old traditions. I mean, the women were all in one house, the men were all in another. The bride and groom did not see each other until time for the wedding parades through the village. There was a lot of drinking.

The guests were all Turkish Muslims. All the men drank *raki*, which is like ouzo. It's an anise flavored liquor. It was one boozy wedding party that went on for a day and a half, so that was interesting, the little I can remember of it.

Q: *Learning a bit of cross-cultural communication.*

MARTIN: So, then I went back to Ankara to start work. Ths would have been, I suppose, the Fall of 1979. I went into the political section in Ankara, with titles of both labor attaché and political officer. My job was to follow Turkish trade union affairs and internal political affairs and get to know as many people involved in those areas as I could. We had a good Foreign Service national employee working with us. He had done this for years with various labor attachés.

He had good connections and arranged calls on all labor leaders who were interested in talking to us. I was also instructed to follow Turkish politics so I got him to set up calls with a broad swath of political leaders. At that time, Turkey was under the rule of the Justice Party. The prime minister was Süleyman Demirel, a veteran conservative Turkish party leader. The main opposition party was the left-center Republican People's Party led by Bulent Ecevit, who, like Demirel, had himself been prime minister on three or four occasions. A conservative Islamist party led by Necmettin Erbakkan was also active and contributed somewhat to the political stalemate which was a distinctive feature of the day. This was a predecessor of Erdogan's current party. The Turkish government and the military were both following, to a certain extent, Ataturk's westernization. They were all Muslims but they did not want the *Imams* nor the mosques to interfere in political affairs.

The government could not get anything through parliament. I would occasionally go to parliament and listen as best I could to understand debates. It was not easy but I could follow, if not thoroughly understand, all the nuances. I had met several parliamentarians on both sides. I don't remember ever meeting anyone from the Islamist party. Things were just not getting done and terrorism was on the rise... mainly leftist Kurdish inspired.

There was an American Air Force base just outside of Ankara. The American school was located there which our children attended. Incirlik was a large U.S. military base, located near Adana in the southeast. American military personnel were frequent targets of terrorist attacks, bombings, drive-by shootings. Several officers in Ankara were shot while waiting for their government vehicle to pick them up in the morning; standing on the street in uniform. They were unfortunately visible targets.

Things were happening elsewhere in the country. Our embassy personnel really could not travel to Eastern Turkey, which has a big Kurdish population. So, during my two years

there, we never got over to Lake Van or the Iraqi or Syrian borders. We did a lot of travel in Central and Southern Anatolia.

Q: *As you're sketching this out, were there restrictions on U.S. Embassy personnel meeting with Islamist party members. Were they considered to be sort of outside of the legitimate party system?*

MARTIN: I don't think so. I don't remember that. In fact, I'm sure I would remember it if there were restrictions. And perhaps somebody in the embassy did have contacts with them. I probably had more contacts within parliament and with the two main parties than anyone else in the political section.

Well, let me just back up a bit and add something. I was only there for two years. We had two ambassadors and just one deputy chief of mission (DCM), as I remember. Both foreign service ambassadors were outstanding. The first was Ronald Spiers who was there from 1977 to 1980. He was followed by Jim Spain who had previously served in Turkey. The DCM was Bob Dillon, also an outstanding foreign service officer and later ambassador to Lebanon. He had had previous Turkey tours.
We had two political counselors, Daniel Newberry and Dennis Kux, also both very good officers. Dan had considerable Turkish experience, Dennis did not. There was a big political military section and we were all on the same floor of the embassy. Both our political office and the political military section each had a counselor. We all worked very closely with one another.

We lived in two different apartments while there. The first was on the corner with a fish restaurant and had maybe three embassy apartments in it. Someone moved out of a larger apartment building with embassy housing. It was nearby and above the air pollution level so we requested to move into it.

Perhaps halfway through my tour, I arranged a dinner at my house to introduce Ambassador Spain to two of my political contacts. One was the political adviser to the prime minister and the other was an adviser to the head of the opposition. I don't know if they socialized very much together, but they came to dinner. It was just the four of us. My wife was in the apartment but sort of in and out of the kitchen and the children were around, but in and out as well.

Ambassador Spain came and we all talked until after midnight. He really enjoyed conversing with these two political advisors. He finally left and they did as well. They stayed as long as Spain did. Everyone was talking and, you know, they were trying to explain why the government wasn't getting anywhere and why they couldn't get anything done; blaming each other for this and that but, you know, in a civilized way. I finally got to bed and at about four in the morning, my telephone rang from the embassy duty officer, "You have to come in now, if you want to get in. There's been a coup and a curfew has been imposed starting at six."

Q: *Wow.*

MARTIN: So, I got dressed quickly. It just happened that the Turkish president lived in the apartment building right next door to our building. I went downstairs and there were soldiers everywhere, purportedly guarding him to keep him from interfering in any way.

They saw me come out of the apartment building and said, “No, no, no. Back in, you know, you can't go". I said to them, "You know, I'm an American diplomat. I'm just going to my embassy." And then I said, "And besides, the curfew is not supposed to start until six A.M. They responded, “It makes no difference, you go back in." I managed to get down to the embassy by eight or nine o'clock in the morning.

Anyway, it was crazy that the night before the coup these two senior political advisors to the prime minister and head of the opposition had been at my house for dinner with Ambassador Spain. I learned quickly that they had been arrested. The parliament was closed down. All major political leaders were confined to military camps on the Turkish coast. For the rest of my tour there, Turkey was under military rule and we had a nightly curfew.

Q: *Can you recall what the senior military leaders said about why they undertook the coup and what their plan was?*

MARTIN: They basically said that the country was in a stalemate. The politicians could not run the country. They were encroaching on Ataturk's vision for the country. The military saw itself as the guardian of the way set forward by the founding father of the Republic, Ataturk, who had wanted Turkey to be more like the West. The military really revered him as a leader of the country. He was the George Washington of Turkey as far as they were concerned.

The military claimed that the politicians were just squabbling and wasting time, not getting things done and not giving proper attention to the military establishment which they thought had answers. In fact, they didn't have any better answers than anybody else. But, the military coup finished any labor attaché role for me because the labor unions were pushed aside, even though trade unions played a strong role in western democracies. The Turkish military did not want outside agencies interfering with their role.

Q: *Given these circumstances, what was the view of labor unions?*

MARTIN: Well, a lot of it was modeled on the U.S. labor movement. Many of the unions had close ties with their counterparts in the United States. There were some that were probably much farther to the left than I knew. Our Foreign Service national employee had good contacts with all of the unions and if I said I'd like to see somebody in a particular union, he was always able to get in touch with someone.

The American Institute for Free Labor Development had people in the country. They had been there for many years. They were running assistance programs, labor training programs, education programs. So, it was a Western oriented trade union.

Q: *Was child labor a problem that you covered?*

MARTIN: I don't remember it being a particular issue. There certainly was a lot of child labor in the countryside. Young girls were brought up making rugs and carpets at home and in workshops.

Q: *And then, was there much labor unrest? Did labor unions take to the streets often and so on?*

MARTIN: They did. There were strikes and protest demonstrations, especially in Istanbul, not so much in Ankara. The unrest grated on the military. They didn't like to see that happen, you know, business, government-business, being stopped. Their activities being hindered. The Turkish military had interests in a number of businesses and industries throughout the country which funneled money into military retirement and recreation systems.

Q: *How did your tour change then after the coup? Were you still reporting? What restrictions did you face?*

MARTIN: Well, there wasn't any parliament. It was closed down. Political activity of any sort was restricted. Newspapers were watched and censored to a certain extent. Some were closed down, so there wasn't much political activity or labor activity going on. The trade unions were closed for a while.

Frankly, I don't remember how we occupied our time there. There was not really much going on other than contacts with the military. We had a big political military section in the Embassy. Most of us strictly on the political side did not have those contacts.

Q: *Did we, did the U.S. government have a view or a statement that you were expected to advocate whenever you did have contact with anyone in authority?*

MARTIN: We wanted the military out of power and back into the barracks, a return to democracy.

Q: *Were the heads of the political parties ever released while you were there?*

MARTIN: No, not while I was there. I don't know how much longer they were in custody, a couple of years certainly.

Q: *From, well, let me turn for a moment to how your family adapted. You were down in Bursa first, then up in Ankara, and you mentioned travel. How did your family adapt to being in Turkey?*

MARTIN: Very well. It was one of our favorite posts. People always ask you, "Where was your favorite post?" Well, we liked them all, you know. Your family is growing, your children are at different stages in their lives, you do different things.

We've often said to ourselves that Turkey was the one place we did not get to see as much of as we would have liked. We traveled a lot. My wife has an interest in archaeology. In The Hague, she audited courses at Leiden University in archaeology. So, this was, you know, of great interest to her and to all of us. We hit all of the major archaeological sites, including some that had active archeological digs. These were mainly uncovering Greek, Roman and Hittite antiquities.

I regret that we never did get to far eastern Turkey. Even before the military coup, travel there was restricted by the Embassy for safety reasons. But other than that, we could travel throughout Turkey and we did.

We happened to have a Volkswagen camper van which carries a lot of people. Such vans were often used by the Turks as what they call a *dolmuş* (shared taxis). A small bus for travel in and around cities. They would travel on set routes, stopping for anyone who flagged them down.

We were once at some place near Konya doing some shopping. When we got ready to drive off we heard the back door open and a Turkish woman, loaded down with bags, just piled into the back, thinking we were a *dolmuş*. Once she looked around and saw nothing but foreigners she panicked and got out of the van in a hurry. We would have taken her down the road, of course. But anyway, we traveled a lot.

We once took Ambassador Spain's wife and a house guest out to an archaeological site near Ankara for a day's excursion. It did not turn out well since we had not one but two flat tires on our *van.* As the vehicle only carried one spare tire, we all wound up riding back on a commercial bus carrying a flat tire to have it fixed in the city. Nevertheless, we had a great time.

The only time in our foreign service life that anyone in the family did not want to go on an assignment was when our son, who was about to be a senior in high school, did not want to go to Turkey. He did not want to leave his friends in Washington, DC, nor his high school and go to Turkey.

But we persuaded him with great difficulty to go and he loved it. He had never played football, but wound up playing as a starter on the high school team and enjoyed it. He graduated there and went on to university after one year. Our two daughters attended the American military school for the two years and also enjoyed the experience.

Q: *Since this was a different kind of tour in so many ways, did you learn things as a result that helped you later? Methods of interacting with the public and cross-cultural communication? All—*

MARTIN: I think I did but I...

MRS. MARTIN: Tell him about Ilhan.

MARTIN: That's my wife piping up from the backseat. She has sneaked into the room.

MRS. MARTIN: Because we had countless friends.

MARTIN: Just before we left Washington to go to Ankara, we met a Turkish couple. He was a nuclear physicist who was about to return home after graduate studies at the University of Maryland. He and his wife and two children actually met us when we arrived, and we were very close to them throughout our time there. He headed up the Turkish Atomic Energy Agency.

So, we saw him both as a friend and as someone who could shed some light on what was going on there. His wife was a charming teacher. We traveled with them to places all over Turkey, including a weekend with his family on the Black Sea. So it was a fortuitous introduction in Washington and one that we delighted in. Later, he got an appointment to MIT (Massachusetts Institute of Technology) and his own lab. He really was an accomplished physicist. Unfortunately, the wife and the daughter later died very young of cancer. He eventually went back to Turkey.

Q: O*ne other institution in Turkey that I think many people might not know is very strong is their foreign ministry and their diplomatic service. While you were there, did you get to know any Turkish diplomats?*

MARTIN: I did. Not as many as I did in some of my other posts, but some certainly. You are right, Turkish diplomats are an impressive group, very professional. I did not have a brief in Turkey that took me into the foreign ministry often, as I had done in the Hague.

Q: *That concludes the questions that I have for you but are we missing any other important events that occurred that you want to share?*

MARTIN: I think there's... I don't believe we did a recording of it but earlier, I recounted some of my work in The Hague in nominating future leaders for the International Visitors Program.

Q: *Right.*

MARTIN: I'll just go back and do that on the record here, now, if I might.

Q: *Sure.*

MARTIN: I nominated a lot of candidates for the International Visitor Program. In The Hague, one of my close contacts there was the head of the socialist trade union. I think I mentioned to you, Dutch society was, to a large extent, formed in pillars and a person

stayed in his pillar or silo if you will. A person's "pillar" was generally based on his or her church, Catholic or protestant, or their political group, socialist or liberal.

In general, they had their own newspapers, their own clubs, and their own political parties. There was a Catholic People's Party and a couple of Protestant parties, a Socialist Party, and a Liberal Party. People stayed in their pillars pretty much. But that was just about to start breaking down. When I was there, for instance, there was a Protestant trade union, a Catholic trade union and a socialist trade union.

The leader of the socialist trade union was a young man named Wim Kok. Once they broke down and formed a single trade union nationwide, he became the head of that. And after doing that, for many years, he became the head of the socialist political party and the prime minister. He served as prime minister for perhaps ten years and was an outstanding Dutch prime minister.

Anyway, when he was the head of the socialist trade union, he was one of the people I nominated for a leader grant. He was a young guy who had never been to the United States. He was not particularly radical. He accepted on a couple of occasions, but business always interfered and he was never able to make the trip but after we were transferred back to Washington, he did make the trip and we hosted him in Washington. These travel grants were marvelous chances for people to broaden their horizons and understand more about the United States. So I nominated people every year for grants, politicians, journalists, labor leaders, etc. I took a group of Dutch parliamentarians myself on a NATO Leader Program.

We went to NATO, up in Norway, there's a headquarters there... the Northern Command. Took them to NATO headquarters in Mons, Belgium, for briefings and took them to Berlin. I did the same thing in Turkey before the coup. I organized and escorted a group of Turkish parliamentarians to go on another NATO oriented tour.

Q: *Interesting, alright. Now, you mentioned that it was just a two-year tour. Typically, it would have been a three-year tour but what happened to cause it to be a bit foreshortened?*

MARTIN: No, I don't... I was puzzling over that also.

MRS. MARTIN: It was a hardship.

MARTIN: Yes, that is right. As it was a hardship post, assignments were often only two years. At my grade it normally would have been three. Because of the rather frequent terrorist attacks, bombings and ambushes, it was considered a hardship.

Q: *Well, there was one thing that Ankara was known for at that time when I was in the Foreign Service, which was terrible air pollution.*

MARTIN: It was awful. Air pollution was just terrible. We lived above the business section of the city up on a hill. It was a very steep hill. Most of the Embassy personnel had their residences up there as did the ambassador and the DCM. The embassy had taken over a number of apartment buildings for staff members plus a few individual houses. Not very many individual houses.

In the morning, you would go down to the embassy, and I often told people that I would take one big breath as I went into this hole of black smoke that covered the downtown area. The smoke came mostly from heating fires of soft coal and vehicle pollution. The city was surrounded by mountains and air inversions just trapped all this pollution for most of each day. You were right, pollution was a big problem, It would be all over your clothes and in your hair. Yeah, I think even today, you know, they may have taken steps to reduce the amount of pollution but in a lot of those countries in Eastern Europe and so on, coal burning is still going on.

Ankara was the worst I have ever seen. As you will remember, my first Foreign Service assignment was to Los Angeles, California, in the early '60s. This was when Los Angeles had a huge smog problem caused mainly by automobiles.

In Turkey the pollution was a combination of soft coal and automobile pollution. There were no catalytic converters in the '70s. Cars and trucks belched smoke and stayed on the roads much too long. The worst part of it came from coal fired power plants and heating. It was a toxic mix. The combination of pollution and terrorism was the main reason for the hardship.

Q: *As you're approaching the end of the tour, do you recall what you were thinking of as a follow-on assignment?*

Back to Brazil. This time to São Paulo

MARTIN: Again, I don't specifically remember anything that I bid on. The State Department had adopted a program in which personnel had to submit bids on various posts at different levels of hardship in different geographic sections of the world. I just don't remember what I bid on. I'm sure I was probably looking for a political section to head up or a small embassy as DCM and must have been disappointed in not getting one. I don't really remember that too much.

And I don't know why we wound up going back to Brazil. I don't think I bid on a position in São Paulo originally. Anyway, you're always looking for a place where you can take your children. So that's something to take into consideration as well.

So we wound up going to Brazil. I was the head of the political section in São Paulo and deputy consul general. We liked Brazil from the first and, as you remember, I got transferred out of Rio after only one year there, over to Trinidad and Tobago. We didn't want to leave Brazil because we liked it. We liked the language and we liked the tropics. So here we were going back to Brazil. This would have been 1981, about eighteen years

after we had first gone to Rio. When we were in Rio a military government was in power and when we returned, the military was still in power. There had been talk of returning to democracy but they hadn't quite managed it. São Paulo was quite different from Rio. It is Brazil's big industrial city, a huge city in population and surface area. It takes well over an hour to drive out of the city.

We first lived in a section called Morumbi, which is where one of the American high schools is located, so that was convenient. We were assigned to a house with a garden and swimming pool and tropical banana trees growing in the yard. It was very pleasant.

MRS. MARTIN: But there were robbers. There were reports of home break-ins.

MARTIN: It was close to the school for our two girls and relatively close of a commute to work. We did have to drive or take a bus but that was no problem. There was a lot of crime in São Paulo, but there's even more today. Robbers tried to break into the house a couple of times. Once, after a trip outside the city, we came home to a panic stricken maid who lived in part of the house. Apparently, a robber had gotten up on the roof and attempted to pry off the tiles. Staff in housing usually had security guards and later the guards were issued guns. Another time, the guard told us that his gun had been taken away by robbers trying to get inside. We kind of doubted that... he may have sold it... But anyway, crime was worrisome. About halfway through our tour in São Paulo, we moved into the city proper, to a building that had a big spacious apartment on an upper floor. We did that basically so as not to worry so much about crime.

The consulate general was in an office building downtown. Its main business was consular affairs as there is a lot of business travel between São Paulo and the United States. The political section was only me plus one junior officer who rotated through the section. I had several rotating junior officers during my tour. They also rotated to the consular section. There was an economic officer and an administrative officer and the consul general. I think that was basically the staff. Oh, and a couple of communications people as well.

Two people from the Foreign Commercial Service ran the U.S. Trade Center which was located in a building several blocks away on Avenida Paulista. The Foreign Agricultural Service also had a representative whose office was in that building. There was a cultural officer and there may have been some other parts of the U.S government scattered around that did not really report us, but may have gotten some support, I've forgotten.

When we first went to Rio, there was a consulate in Curitiba, south of São Paulo, and another one in Porto Alegre. The one in Porto Alegre was still there but the very small one in Curitiba had been closed. So, the consular district for São Paulo was quite large. It included the state of São Paulo, a good part of the state of Minas Gerais, Parana and Santa Catarina. So, it covered the industrial heart of Brazil.

My job was basically to follow internal politics again, act as deputy consul general, and train junior officers. Fairly routine I would say. We enjoyed being in Brazil again, but I

don't think it was a very challenging job. The consul general was a superb guy. Jack Leary and his wife were very supportive and very nice people.

We traveled around Brazil again; I saw a lot of the places that we have not seen before. We went back to Rio and to Salvador do Bahia, to Recife, Fortaleza, through the Pantanal, through Minas Gerais, to Brasilia. In fact, I went for a month to Brasilia to fill in for the Political Counselor, who was away on leave. When I had worked in Rio earlier, we still didn't have the embassy in Brasilia. By now it was fully staffed as an embassy.

Q: *You also mentioned you stood in for the deputy consul general in São Paulo. Did you also go out and do representation for the consulate?*

MARTIN: Yes, I did that. I went to practically all of the cities in the consular district and met with mayors and governors in various state capitals. I did that fairly frequently. I gave talks in various places, went to university classes and made myself available to professors for seminars. At that time, the future president of Brazil, Luis Inacio da Silva, known by everyone by his nickname, Lula, was still a trade unionist in our consular district. When he moved into the political sphere, he added the name Lula to his legal name becoming Luis Inacio Lula da Silva. He was from the autoworker's industry, and his union was just north of São Paulo. He had just left the presidency of his union of automobile workers. The Brazilian automobile industry was one of the largest in Latin America. Ford, General Motors, and Volkswagen were there, all with big plants, all in our consular district. So, he was an important figure. He had stepped down from the union about a year or so before we got there and had formed the Workers' Party. Political parties were allowed to operate but they did not hold real power anywhere. They could run people for state offices, but not for president, for example.

I would go to see Lula several times a year, taking along any visiting congressman, trade union person or political figure from the United States who happened to be in town. They all wanted to meet this fellow, Lula, who was beginning to attract attention worldwide. He was very open and would talk to anybody. After we left Sao Paulo, Lula really launched his political career which took him to the presidency, to jail, and now to a new run for president (January 1 2023, again to the presidency).

Q: *By now, in 1981, the Foreign Commercial Service was taken out of the State Department and placed under the Commerce Department. How would you describe the relationship between your consulate that was part of the State Department and the Foreign Commercial Service office that had a separate location in the city?*

MARTIN: Those relations were good. It was a bit of a fraught time for the Foreign Commercial Service itself. Some people had left the State Department and gone across to Commerce. Others had been recruited from the business community by Commerce. The two officials who were in São Paulo at that time were recent recruits to Commerce, both to the Department of Commerce and to the Foreign Commercial Service. The head of the office was a businessman who had been involved in a number of small businesses and

retail sales. He headed the office and his deputy... who was the best Portuguese speaker around... was a former Foreign Service officer who had been out of the Foreign Service, but had come back into the Foreign Commercial Service. We had a good relationship with both of them, but it was a difficult period for the new Foreign Commercial Service.

They were trying to feel their way with the new structure and had to take a more aggressive commercial posture than had been the case under State. There was a big push for them to get out there and get more business and they were trying to do it but it was a little awkward. The relationship between these two Foreign Commercial Service officers was not great but that was just a personnel matter. They both managed to both serve out their tours but they were not happy, either one with the other.

Q: *Do you remember if trade was growing between the U.S. and Brazil in any particular sector? Were you beginning to see increases?*

MARTIN: Well, the big thing was, Brazil was turning on the agricultural side to soybeans and had become one of the world's big producers of soybeans, most of it in our consular district. São Paulo was a big industrial state but it was also a big agricultural state. In addition to the stepped up production of soybeans, there was also a huge increase in the production of sugarcane in Sao Paulo and nearby states. The explosion in sugarcane production led to a surge in the production of ethanol for the automobile industry in Brazil.

This was not just ten or twenty percent ethanol. Brazilian automobile manufacturers started building cars that ran on pure ethanol from sugarcane. In those days Brazil did not produce much oil, but it could grow sugarcane, and it did. I drove a Ford for three years there and later had it converted to run on gasoline so I could take it to my next post.

Q: *Interesting. I don't think that any U.S. car was run purely on ethanol.*

MARTIN: No, they were never made. We don't produce that much sugar... it's not all that economical. We subsidize sugar production in the United States heavily already. It's cheaper to grow cane in the tropics than it is here.

Q: *Since this was a consulate and you were dealing with consular issues, did you notice that emigration from Brazil to the U.S. was beginning to pick up?*

MARTIN: Unlike some of the Spanish-speaking populations in Latin America, Brazilians do not have a history of emigrating out of their country. Brazilians like to travel, however and we did much more nonimmigrant visa work than we did immigrant visa work.

Q: *And as the deputy consul general, what were the other responsibilities?*

MARTIN:

I supervised the consular and the political sections. We had a contingent of junior officers who were on rotational assignments. I can't remember how many were assigned to us at any one time, but we always had three or four new officers going through such a rotation. When I was first assigned to Rio, all the people going on a first assignment to large embassies rotated. They rotated through all four major sections of an embassy. We had gotten away from that but in São Paulo, we still had a rotational program between the consular section and the political section. I usually had one under my direct supervision in the political section and then I supervised the head of the consular section who supervised whatever junior officers she/he might have at that time.

Q: *And since you were a consulate, you had to clear recommendations for exchange programs through the embassy.*

MARTIN: Yes, but I had a pretty good relationship with the embassy. The chief of the political section would come down once or twice a year. The DCM would come down once or twice a year. The ambassador came occasionally as well. There was a political appointee as ambassador to Brazil at that time, Tony Motley. He later served as assistant secretary for the Latin American bureau. He was from Alaska, but he spoke Portuguese. He had been raised as a young man in Brazil.

Q: *São Paulo was a business-oriented city. Was the U.S,-Brazilian Chamber of Commerce a big player in the local economic and business scene?*

MARTIN: There was a big Chamber of Commerce. A lot of American companies did business in Brazil, shipping lines, agricultural companies, automobile companies, chemical and pharmaceutical companies. Sao Paulo is the Chicago of Brazil. We did have a lot of interactions with the Chamber of Commerce. We went to their meetings and talked to those people a lot.

Q: *Other than Lula, were there other up and coming Brazilian leaders that you found while you were there?*

MARTIN: I don't think so. I saw the governor of São Paulo frequently. He later ran for president a couple of times, but was not elected. I dealt with the Catholic archbishop of São Paulo a lot. He was an outspoken leader of the church on human rights issues, liberation theology issues. He was somebody that I saw much more than the consul general did. He was also somebody that visiting congressmen also wanted to go see.

Q: *Was São Paulo a destination for many congressional delegations?*

MARTIN: Members of the House Foreign Affairs Committee and the Senate Foreign Relations Committee came fairly often and I took them to see all these people. You did your CODEL (congressional delegation) bit. It was a little far for a lot of them to come, but carnival was in Rio and if you came to carnival, you might as well come on to São Paulo and see something more.

Q: *There's a famous saying that's ascribed to De Gaulle, "Brazil, always the country of tomorrow". While you were there, did you see trends that would become important in the years following?*

MARTIN: Well, another thing is that, on its flag, it says Order and Progress... and the Brazilians would say" neither one nor the other." It's always the country of tomorrow, it always has been and still is. Brazil is far and away the most important economic country in South America... the largest in population, income, business, industrialization, agriculture. Argentina used to give it a run, but Brazil left Argentina far behind many years ago. Today Mexico is its real competitor in Latin America.

Q: *One thing that I think a lot of people don't know is that Brazil has a large African-Brazilian population originally brought over as slaves or indentured servants. Today, many of these people suffer discrimination. Did you observe that? Were there any efforts at that time to correct that historical imbalance?*

MARTIN: Well, Brazilians like to tell themselves that they don't have a race problem at all. They certainly don't have the race problems that we have even though slavery continued longer there than it did in the United States. But there was always more intermarriage there than we have had. Yet, unfortunately, economic and social imbalances are still present there.

If you just look around, look at the Brazilian parliament or the universities or professions, it's more a white society than it is a black society. If you're looking at it from an economic perspective, it's not much different than it was when I first went there.

***

Q: Yeah. Okay, today is December 20, 2021, we're resuming our interview with Thomas Martin. Thomas, you're on your way to Guyana in what year again?

MARTIN: 1984. Summer of 1984.

Q: Now before you go, do you do any consultations? Does anyone in Washington tell what they expect of you when you get down there?

MARTIN: Not that I remember. When we left São Paulo, our youngest daughter had just finished her junior year in high school, our older daughter, her sister, had finished her freshman year at university and our son was just out of university. Anyway, we had agreed to go to Guyana and needed to find a school for the younger daughter. In fact, we debated not taking the assignment because there was not a school there. We discussed it with the soon-to-be high school senior and she said, "no, you go to Guyana, I can go away to school."

We got into a crash search for schools, and used the Department's resources to help. As it was so late in the year for applying, she could not get into a number of schools that popped up in the Department's list of schools that are often used by Foreign Service people in the same circumstances. We eventually landed on one in New Jersey called Blair Academy. She did her senior year there and then went into university the following year. So we turned up in Georgetown, Guyana around August 1, 1984, just before the new ambassador showed up.

Q: I'm sorry- you went there as DCM?

MARTIN: I went there as DCM, yes.

Q: But there was no DCM course or other sort of management course that they expected you to take?

MARTIN: I really hate to be so vague about this. I think there was a DCM course, but I don't remember much about it. As I've said before, I should have done this oral history earlier. Here I am, almost twenty-five years after retirement before getting back to this and that was fifteen years before that, so we're talking forty years ago.

Q: No, that's fine. Alright. So, now you're arriving there with your wife and one younger child?

MARTIN: No, one child left in the U.S. to finish high school, and one at university. No children in our household on a full time basis anymore. Two in school and one out of university.

Q: Okay. When you arrived, what state was the embassy in? Were there any physical structural concerns that you faced when you arrived?

MARTIN: Throughout our time there, the embassy was in a terrible wooden building... an absolute fire trap. A big storm looked like it could blow it down, although there were lots of structures all over the city of Georgetown that looked like they could be blown away in any big storm. It was probably the worst United States government owned facility I had ever been in. You know, those I've served in, those I've visited in other places—this was a relic. And not a very pretty relic at that. Georgetown did have some rather attractive old houses and buildings, usually all made of wood. They had plenty of wood in Guyana to build things with. They had used wood as the principal building material for centuries, the British had used it, the Dutch had used it when they were there. There were big white wooden buildings all over the city.

Q: Did they at least during your time, select property or have authorized the funding?

MARTIN: I think the funding had been authorized. As it turned out, they eventually built the new embassy on the grounds of the ambassador's residence. The Ambassadorial

residence was a huge house that was also outdated. Both of them needed to be replaced. Plans were underfoot but nothing got started during my time there.

Q: Now, Guyana is also a hardship tour and hardship differential and pay varies with the country. Do you recall what the hardship pay was for in Guyana?

MARTIN: Basically, it was for the fact that almost nothing existed there. The country was, in general terms, pretty much bankrupt. It could not pay its bills internationally, had no foreign currency reserves, and exported whatever it could produce. Its main production was sugar and rice, bauxite, lumber products, some shrimp from off the coast—but it exported all of them. If you walked into any Guyanese store during my time there, the shelves were practically empty—and I mean, empty empty. You might see where rice might have been or sugar might have been, one or two small brown paper bags with rice or sugar in them, if you were lucky.

People going on assignment got a consumables allowance to ship foodstuffs, paper products, and things that would be needed on a daily basis. You had to try to figure that out in advance. As we were coming out of Sao Paulo, Brazil where things were plentiful, We chose to shop there for most of what we guessed we might need for the next two years and packed huge barrels... cardboard barrels about the size of an oil drum with consumables. You try to estimate what you're going to need in a two year period. Although once you were at post, you could bring in things also. I don't think we had to do that very much. We seem to have figured that out fairly well. We even took sugar to a country that grew sugarcane and made sugar. Since they needed foreign currency so desperately, they tried to export as much sugar as they could. They did turn some of it into rum and they processed some demerara sugar, i.e., brown sugar. That was the major hardship, things just were not available. There was not much to do except work and enjoy people and nature. Although it's on the coast, the waters are not good for swimming because the Orinoco River flows into the Atlantic just to the north turning the coastline into mud flats and mangrove. So, you don't go to the beach there, for example.

Q: What about healthcare? How did that work?

MARTIN: I don't remember getting many extra shots, although we did for yellow fever and things like that. You had to be careful about malaria and take chloroquine. The Embassy had a health unit staffed by an Irish nurse. Guyana had a good relationship with Cuba and the Cuban aid program furnished a lot of doctors. The hospitals were pretty much staffed with Cuban and Guyanese doctors. But, many Guyanese doctors and nurses had emigrated to the United States or Canada.

Q: How large was the embassy? What was the basic breakdown?

MARTIN: The basic staff was a big consular section headed by an experienced consular officer. At any one time, he probably had four or five junior (first tour) consular officers working for him. Guyanese lined up every morning outside the embassy for visas. It was said that more Guyanese lived in New York and Toronto than lived in the whole country

of Guyana and that was probably true. You know, there wasn't much for them there either so they immigrated. The rest of the staff there was a political officer or two, an economic officer, an AID (United States Agency for International Development)... very small AID mission.

Q: Did we have Peace Corps?

MARTIN: I don't think we did. Relations with Guyana were a bit strained. They tended to be very critical of the United States. President Burnham was active in the third world movement and frequently criticized the United States. Possibly, they did not want the Peace Corps or perhaps, we didn't think there was a role for them, I don't know.

Q: Now, you mentioned that the president was sort of, well, critical of the U.S. Other than that, what were the major concerns in our relationship when you arrived?

MARTIN: Our major concern was that Guyana might slip somehow from just being a critical country to one that was outright hostile to U.S. interests. The Cubans, Russians, Chinese and North Koreans all had very large embassies in Georgetown. In fact, Guyana emulated the North Koreans somewhat in that they adopted mass games to build enthusiasm for the government. We were concerned that Guyana might become more than just an impoverished third world country, but slide even farther to the left. It was still a capitalist country, although it had nationalized a number of industries.

Q: Now, you mentioned the major areas that they could export. To what extent, if we could measure it, were any remittances from Guyanese living in the U.S. or elsewhere?

MARTIN: They were very important. As I said, there were supposedly more Guyanese living in New York City and in Toronto than in Guyana itself. And the government depended heavily upon remittances. I expect they still do. In recent years, petroleum has been discovered, but that's only a few years ago. Anyway, flights would come in loaded with people coming back to see their relatives. Both Afro-Guyanese and Indo-Guyanese have very strong family ties there and they do support their families and relatives back home.

Q: Now you had mentioned the president was pretty far left of center. What was the political scene like? Was it pluralistic or was it more or less a one party system?

MARTIN: No, it was pluralistic. There were two or three political parties, Afro-Guyanese were generally behind the president's party. The Indian Guyanese... Guyanese whose parents or grandparents were from India... were often in the opposition party. By census numbers, there were more Indian Guyanese than there were Afro-Guyanese. The Indian Guyanese party had elected a president some twenty years before but he was only a one term president and was tossed out. Guyanese elections had been suspected that they were not free and fair ever since.

It was always difficult to tell that... the numbers there for the president Forbes Burnham, the Afro-Guyanese. The leader of the opposition was Cheddi Jagan, a Guyanese Marxist. All Afro-Guyanese did not vote for Burnham, all Indian Guyanese did not vote for Jagan. So, you couldn't be sure just on census numbers whether elections were stolen or not. It was always suspected that there could have been some finagling. There were reports that we had been involved to an extent, years earlier, in helping Burnham into power and keeping Jagan out. Jagan certainly believed it.

Q: Interesting. Did we have significant human rights concerns while you were there?

MARTIN: Some but not big ones, I don't think. There were complaints, not to us directly or that the government was not playing fair with the population and was favoring their group over another. It was that sort of thing... not torture, not arrest.

Q: And during your time there did commerce with the U.S. change in any significant way.

MARTIN: There wasn't much the Guyanese had to trade except sugar. Most of that went to Great Britain. Rum... they didn't sell much of that in the United States either. Some of the shrimp did come into the United States, an American company had some interest in this shrimp fishing off the coast. Bauxite at one time had been an American interest but that had been nationalized by the time we were there. So, trade wasn't a big thing. It was a sleepy little backwater, interesting in its way as all places are, but still a sleepy little backwater. We did not want it to swing anymore to the left than it had. Remember, this was during the Cold War period.

Q: Were its two big neighbors, Brazil and Venezuela, a visible presence or in any way significantly active with the country?

MARTIN: Both had big embassies in the country. Venezuela had a claim to the northern part of Guyana that had never been resolved or not to their satisfaction. They claimed probably the northern third of Guyana, mainly Amazonian forest, but still it was significant for both parties and that was always an issue for the Venezuelans and the Guyanese. They always watched Guyana in relation to that, Brazil not so much. There was a lot of gold mining in Guyana and across the border in Brazil. Guyanese mined gold illegally and shipped it across the Brazilian border. The Brazilians didn't mind that but the Guyanese did not like having their gold smuggled out of the country.

Lolly and I, accompanied by the Embassy's AID Director Alex Dickie and his wife Marilyn, once flew over toward the Brazilian border west of Guyana in a small airplane with a fifty-five-gallon drum of aviation gas strapped into the seat in front of me because the pilot would need that to fly back. We landed near the small town of Lethem where there was an airport on the Guyanese side planning to cross the river there into Brazil to do some shopping in the city of Boa Vista, the capital of the state of Roraima. I might add parenthetically, that no self respecting person from the populated centers of Brazil would ever have dreamed of "shopping in Boa Vista" far up into the heart of the Amazon. It was something out of the wild West.

To get from Lethem, Guyana to Boa Vista, Brazil in those days you would walk down a dirt track to the river bank and call out "Boat, Boat" and wait for a small boat with an outboard motor to appear from the other side. Carried across, you would walk up a hill to a Brazilian customs/immigration office and find a "taxi" to take you the twenty or thirty miles into Boa Vista. The taxis were pickup trucks and passengers climbed into the beds. As you came into the town of Lethem, there were signs everywhere in English, "We buy gold. We sell gold." They were there for the Guyanese market in smuggled gold. Guyanese traders were piling into this town of Boa Vista to buy all sorts of goods to take back into Guyana to sell. From telephones to electric fans to water purifiers to cosmetics... anything. These traders came over from Guyana to hit the shops in Boa Vista or even deeper into Brazil, some all the way down to Manaus on the Amazon River, some 500 miles south. Guyanese traders did this on a regular basis. It was easier than going to the United States, for example, and easier than going to Venezuela.

Q: Interesting, which leads me to ask, to what extent was smuggling and the gray market an important part of the Guyanese economy?

MARTIN: It was fairly large. Some of it, the Brazilian customs authorities would just sort of turn a blind eye to things coming in. Smuggling was a problem and this was a form of smuggling also. I mean, there was a Brazilian customs post on the Brazilian side, there was one on the Guyanese side but it was easy to cross that river and to avoid customs.

Q: Right, wow. Did that create a security concern? Or to what extent did it?

MARTIN: They didn't seem to be all that concerned about it because you had a long stretch of Amazonian jungle between that border and any place where any Guyanese lived. There were Amerindians out in the jungle scattered around. There were occasional gold miners out there mining gold on their own. There were the occasional traders coming in, but they didn't seem to be terribly concerned about that. The Venezuelan border to the north was also like that, perhaps even more so and to the south was Suriname. I mean it's just, except for the coastal settlements, it was Amazonian jungle. There were no roads. Guyana supposedly had a road that went from Georgetown to this town of Letham, that we had flown to, but any pavement would have stopped twenty miles outside of Georgetown and the rest of it would have been a jungle track when that was available.

Q: Now, you would mention native Guyanese. Were native tribes significant in society or were they pretty much out in the bush, you know, subsistence farming and so on?

MARTIN: They were out in the jungle, the Amazonian jungle and rainforest. You seldom ever saw any in Georgetown itself. There was a small European community in town, there were some Chinese merchants who had shown up there, years earlier. They were around. There was a small Portuguese colony that had been there, some Brazilians had been there and then the others were the Afro-Guyanese and the Indo-Guyanese who formed the ninety-five percent of the total population.

Q: So as DCM, you're managing the... you have overall management authority for the embassy and its grounds. Was there anything, any long term programs or projects that you oversaw while you were there?

MARTIN: No, we just sort of kept an eye on the possibilities that someday they were going to build us the embassy that had been promised. I don't think so. I learned quite a bit from the ambassador who was a longtime Foreign Service officer with a very good background in management. I had not had much exposure to that so it was useful. I hope I was of some use to him but probably not so much, but he did let me handle things.

Q: What did the ambassador take an interest in? Well, it was a man?

MARTIN: Clint Lauderdale had been director of personnel in the State Department. He had been deputy assistant secretary in the admin bureau, so he had a lot of experience. He'd been an admin counselor in big embassies (Madrid, Bonn), so he had a lot of experience. He worked at maintaining the best relationship possible with the president and prime minister and senior officials in the government. He was active in reaching out to the small Guyanese business community and was also alert to the well-being of everyone on the embassy staff including even the most junior personnel; for example, including them in events at his house with the goal to elevate spirits at a hardship post. He had done a good job, I think, everywhere he'd been on the admin side of it. He let me manage the embassy and have people report through me to him, which in a small place like that, it would have been easy for him to take over everything, but he didn't do that.

Q: Now, in a small, remote and challenging environment. How did you maintain morale?

MARTIN: Well. You try to include everybody and to do everything so as not to spring surprises on them. And it was fairly easy to include people in everything because there wasn't a lot of other company around. We would go off often into the interior. The AID director had good contacts with people who ran logging operations in the interior, who ran rice operations and sugarcane. We also knew people who had some conservation projects going. So if we could, we tried to include as many people wanting to get out and take advantage of the nature that was there. We had movie nights and that sort of thing but there really wasn't a whole lot to do. So you had to do this sort of thing and we didn't have anybody, as far as I know, who was just terribly disgruntled with being there.

The Junior officers were busy. Here they were in Guyana, and they were making the best of it. They were the biggest group so it was those ones you were trying to really keep happy and keep in the Foreign Service. We had some very good ones and they stayed with it, I think. As far as I know, all of them stayed with it thereafter. It was an eye opener into consular work, you know. They worked very hard, not much American citizens' protection because there weren't that many Americans there, but an awful lot of visa - immigrant and nonimmigrant work.

Q: Wow, yes of course. Now, were there any urgent events that you had to deal with, you know, natural disasters or evacuations or things like that?

MARTIN: No, not really . The president of the country did die. Forbes Burnham died while we were there... unexpectedly. He had an operation, a throat operation... a vocal cord operation and he had it done in-country by these Cuban doctors. Actually, I think maybe even two were brought in from Cuba to do this. Unfortunately, he did not come through the anesthesia and died unexpectedly. His health was not great. Likely a life of rum, cigars and not a lot of exercise; anything could have taken him out. But in the hospitals that were available there, the lack of qualified anesthesiologists perhaps, he did not come through. So that was a surprise, a big surprise.

Q: Did we send a major delegation for the funeral?

MARTIN: The assistant secretary for Latin American affairs, American Republic Affairs at that time. Elliott Abrams came with three or four other people. They were there for the general ceremony. It was a rather strange ceremony and nobody knew quite what had happened to him. Besides the announcement that the president was dead, there weren't many announcements as to what was happening next or when the funeral would be. Turns out, Forbes Burnham's body had been flown out of the country to the Soviet Union, to be embalmed so that he could be on view for his populace forever, like Lenin or Mao. There was just no announcement of this. I mean, there were rumors around that this had happened, and then he did come back and a date was scheduled for the funeral. It was held at the National Stadium, which had been used for a lot of these coordinated national games that the Guyanese had copied from the North Koreans. The stadium was paved with asphalt and the casket was placed there under a broiling tropical sun for four or five hours as we all sat in grandstands around watching. It could not have been good for his earthly remains. Anyway, he was not put into a mausoleum for the populace to see.

Q: After his death, was there some kind of scramble for succession, or was it just whoever was next in line?

MARTIN: There was a vice president and he took office for a while. There was some talk that another member of his party might elbow him aside, but in the end the vice president, a man named Desmond Hoyte, did take over. He eased up on some of the anti-American rhetoric that had appeared in limited press that was available there... limited radio, television and written press that was available in the country. I mean, the main newspaper was owned by Burnham's political party, so it only printed news favorable to him and to the government's point of view. Hoyte eased up a little bit on that, and it was a little more pleasant, a little less worrisome on our part that things might go the wrong way. They seemed to be trending in the right way.

Q: While you were there, there had been no indication that there was oil to be found in their territorial waters?

MARTIN: There was some exploration going on. There had been both before I got there and during the time... it was all offshore. There was offshore exploration by the Brazilians. There was some by Total, a French company, and perhaps Gulf Oil Corporation. They were finding some promising traces, but no production had been scheduled... not for a number of years thereafter. I don't know yet today if any income is really flowing to Guyana. It's just about now that it's supposed to take off for better or worse.

Q: Were there concerns in the U.S. embassy about any drug trafficking?

MARTIN: Yes, and we occasionally got visits from DEA (Drug Enforcement Agency) agents coming up from Brazil or coming down from the States. We would have meetings with local police officials. But I think it was on a small scale, there were reports that occasionally a plane would come in from Colombia or somewhere with cocaine and land on an interior airport. I don't think that was their preferred route to be taking, but there were some others going on and the DEA watched that, but they did not have a permanent presence in Guyana.

Q: And similarly, we didn't really... We weren't really worried that terrorists were using Guyana as a base?

MARTIN: Not really. Sometimes we thought that migrants might be coming through. There were reports some might be but it was a very difficult passage for them to be taking through there. Brazil and Venezuela surrounded Guyana so no nationals from there would be coming that way. Also, it was out of the way for people from the rest of Latin America to be passing through.

Q: While you were there, did we have any significant activities in cooperation with any of the other embassies?

MARTIN: Well, we talked to all of them all the time. There was a big British High Commission. There was a Canadian and an Indian High Commission, the French embassy and the ones I've mentioned earlier... the Russians, Chinese, Korean, and Cuban. We consulted with them, but we didn't have any big problems with them.

Q: My last question is then, as you think back on the tour, what were the highlights for you?

MARTIN: Well, I don't know. My wife and I sort of enjoyed being there. We made some friends there through the embassy that we kept. We met a lot of very nice junior officers. We enjoyed their company. I learned a little bit about management, I think, from the ambassador. We enjoyed going into the Guyanese interior, there was good bird watching, swimming in the black water creeks and rivers where you would be swimming and seeing people on the shore fishing with a cane pole on a fishing line catching piranhas, and we would be in there swimming... literally.

Q: Whoa, wow.

MARTIN: Never heard of anybody getting bitten by one, which dispels some of the things that you fear.

Q: I feel like the chapter in your book on Guyana is "Swimming with Piranha".

MARTIN: We literally did do that.

Q: Oh my. Alright. It's a two-year tour, did you extend?

MARTIN: No, two years was about enough. We weren't unhappy but it was not a place with much room for growth. So, it came time to try to decide where we're going next. As I've mentioned before, I can't quite remember the bidding process... how I managed to get the next onward assignment. I suppose it was on a bidding list that I submitted but I don't remember whether it was or not. I mean, it's possible that it wasn't and I didn't get anything but I don't quite think so. I think it must have been on a list but probably not at the top of the list. But, I was assigned to go from Guyana back to a Dutch speaking post... Flemish speaking as consul general... principal officer in Antwerp, in Belgium.

We liked our tour in The Hague in the Netherlands. So, we were certainly not opposed to going back to that part of the world. It came via a refresher course in Dutch because it had been ten years I guess at least, since I had had any Dutch. It's not a language that one goes around speaking with just everybody. So, we went back to Washington. A former Dutch teacher came out of retirement and gave us, I think, maybe a six-week or a month refresher which we enjoyed and then we went to Antwerp.

Antwerp is in the Flemish part of Belgium, where the majority of the population is Flemish speaking. The majority of the income for the country comes from Flanders and Brussels. Brussels is sort of the divided part of the country so it was an interesting place. We had a United States Consulate... a consulate general... in Antwerp for a long time... for eons. By this time, the consulate general was really very small.. There were probably no more than four or five Americans and probably that many FSNs (Foreign Service Nationals).

Q: So now you are going as the consul general position.

MARTIN: Yes.

Q: My first curiosity is when you arrived, although they are essentially speaking Dutch, was there a distinctiveness that made it a little more difficult for you to understand?

MARTIN: A bit. It's not exactly the same language but it is very close... possibly not as close as between people from England and the United States... perhaps more like Scotland to the United States. That's not an exact corollary but something to that degree. I mean, we didn't really have any trouble but again, sort of like the Netherlands, there are

so many English speakers. Not as many as in the Netherlands but most of those who do speak English are Flemings or Flamands. The Walloons tend to be more just French speakers. They don't learn Dutch and there aren't as many English speakers among them.

Q: Interesting.

MARTIN: Because the Flemish speakers were more... well, to a certain extent, were closer geographically to the UK along the channel. Trade had gone on back and forth there forever. They were very much into trade. They were the trading part and the industrial part... the commercial part of Belgium. They tend to speak English more than the Walloons do. So that again, is a bit of a hindrance, but it was not as much as in the Netherlands. When we went into the interior of the Flemish part of Belgium, I would wind up speaking more Flemish, more Dutch than I ever did in and out of The Hague.

Q: Now Antwerp is known as being a commercial hub, a portal, a port city and so on. Did we have a big commercial presence?

MARTIN: Fairly large. There were a number of big American companies that manufactured in Flanders... automobile companies, General Motors and Ford both had manufacturing plants. I don't know if they still do. Shipping companies in the port of Antwerp, and other ports as well as some chemical companies. There was a Belgian American club in Antwerp that had been there for seventy-five, eighty years. The Belgian American Club was still very active and the consul general was honorary chair of that.

Q: Now, what about the foreign commercial service?

MARTIN: Foreign commercial service did not have an office in Antwerp, it did in Brussels.
The State Department has an office also for shipment of household effects... and storage of household effects... for Europe, Africa, the Middle East in Antwerp. It did not directly come under my control. It did not directly come under the embassy's control either. It was a warehousing operation that basically reported directly to the Department. They did come occasionally to staff meetings and we dealt with each other but I did not supervise them.

Q: Now, then what were the major activities of the consulate that you were responsible for?

MARTIN: Just basically overseeing the management of the consulate general. One of the things I found slightly disagreeable was that Antwerp is too damn close to Brussels. So you are a principal officer but as far as the ambassador was concerned, we were just part of his staff.

Q: Right.

MARTIN: He expected you to come to his staff meetings once a week. You know, not as an objectionable thing... you want to be included and I did it throughout my tour. But it was a little too close. It was only a thirty to forty-five-minute drive you know. Nobody interfered with you running your consular district, I don't mean to imply that, but it was just a little too close I think. Of course, being a port city, a lot of things go in and come out.

Q: Now of course, being a port city, a lot of things go in and come out. Were we concerned with any kind of illegal activities going in and out of Antwerp?

MARTIN: Drugs were a concern there and the Drug Enforcement Agency was often down from Brussels coming by to see us in the consulate general... coordinating with us, talking to port officials, talking to the Antwerp police, to the Belgian *gendarmerie* (military force) as we did. So, we were concerned about that more than commercial smuggling.

Antwerp, as you know, is also a big diamond center with some American ties to it. We stayed in contact with the leaders of the diamond industry there and they were big supporters of the consulate general. The diamond district was not far from where our consulate general was located. The head of the diamond industry did not live far from where I lived. It's a very tightly regulated business, done often on a handshake or a nod between people who know each other. A big Jewish community there, and increasingly, an Indian community. They also cut diamonds in India but Antwerp maintains a certain reputation and one that they're proud of.

You don't think of diamonds as an American industry, but they have close ties to the American diamond industry... to jewelers, to brokers. So they liked to keep in touch with the American government and we did that. People from the embassy did not come very much for that. The economic section had an interest in it but they pretty much left that to us in Antwerp.

Q: Another thing, at least within the consular cone, within the consular bureau, Belgium is also known as a place for third country visas. Did you run into a lot of those in Antwerp?

MARTIN: No, I'm not even sure that I know what the term means.

Q: In other words, people from Africa or Asia coming to Brussels trying to get a visa to the United States?

MARTIN: Oh, yes we did. Yes, we did. They would often turn up in the consulate in Antwerp, mainly from Africa, because I think Africans have come to Belgium for years and have long experience with the Belgian Congo, Rwanda and Burundi... they have Belgian ties there. Yeah, so that was a problem for the consulate section. They were always on the lookout for people who were just turning up there and acquiring either another passport in Belgium, or trying to somehow establish ties that would bring them

back to Belgium or to their own country. I mean, it's very difficult for a consulate like Antwerp to determine whether they have ties to their home country when they're looking for their visa in your consular district. So, I suppose we did not issue too many visas to them, but no, they were in our waiting room daily.

Q: Two other major organizations are headquartered in Brussels... the EU (European Union) and NATO. Did your work involve any of that?

MARTIN: Not really. I often saw people who were on those delegations or in the U.S. mission to those entities. Some of them I've known from other posts, but we really didn't have much to do with that at all. I sort of went back to, in certain respect to my earlier life as a political officer and did internal politics. We had a political officer, but we often did as much as he or she did on that score. As said earlier, I think, the Flemish... or the biggest population segment of the country... the Prime Minister was from the area. Leaders of the main opposition parties were from the area. And Belgium has a very strange structure. I mean, they have devolved a lot of government powers to the regions. There's a region for Wallonia, a region for the Flemish area and a region for the Brussels area. Those areas control government functions that would normally be done by the national government in the sort of unitary state. Well, Belgium is not quite a unitary state. Foreign affairs, finance, defense or national issues, education, health, social services…, many of those are devolved to the regions that have their own premier, their own parliament. There's politics at the local level that is of interest to the national government and to the embassy but it was pretty much left to us in the consulate to do all of that. So we would maintain contact with those people... all of the different parties both national or Flemish. I continued to work with USIS (United States Information Service) to identify the up and coming, people coming up through the ranks. I would persuade or convince the political officer and consular officers to keep an eye out for people like that also, and talk to USIS about this.

I would travel quite a bit throughout the region, sort of showing the flag. There are a lot of national cemeteries in Flanders from World War I and World War II.

Q: Interesting.

MARTIN: I would represent the United States in ceremonies in all of those, and often go to three different ones in different parts of the district on Memorial Day, for example. Speaking at some of them and just being there at others. Sometimes, we would go even with the embassy to some in Wallonia because they're all over Belgium.

Q: Did you identify any exchange students or exchange personnel who then did move up in national politics?

MARTIN: Yes, I did. Not as many as I had in some other places but I did and mainly through the Christian Democratic Party... the Flemish branch of that. Identified several who became parliamentarians in the national government out of the Flemish parliament.

The Leader of the Belgian Liberal Party was a young man from Ghent, which was in our district. I used to see him frequently. He later became prime minister of Belgium.

Q: Belgium, historically, has been known for luxury goods... tapestries, lace, silk, diamonds, and art. Did we have any issues with them in any of those areas?

MARTIN: We didn't have any real issues with them. They are still involved in all of those things... and in chocolate. Many of those are headquartered in the Flemish part of Belgium. Lacemaking is sort of throughout Belgium, although it's a dying trade but certainly everywhere. Tapestries are also getting less and less... they make them by machines instead of by hand as they used to but they're still ongoing and they take pride in their handiwork and their machine work.

Q: While you were there, did you have to assist in any major visits, sports or cultural events?

MARTIN: Oh well, let's see. We did have a visit of the United States Tall Ship to the Antwerp port which coincided with July 4. I hosted our July 4 reception on board the tall ship in the Antwerp harbor, which was very nice. It came with a full crew of cadets through the U.S. Maritime Academy. So, that was a big, big event and brought... really everybody. The ambassador usually came to my 4th of July as well as we went to the one in Brussels. The ambassadors in Brussels would come down and that was about the only sort of social thing that they ever would come to, but they would come to that and I would host it and be there.

On sports, on the tennis circuit, there's something called the Antwerp Diamond Cup which was... I don't know if it still is... It was on the pro tennis circuit. I was sort of an honorary chairman for that as well and I would go see and be seen and shake some hands and present a trophy at the end. I gave a diamond racket to the winner and if a player won the tournament three times, he got to keep it.

Q: Wow.

MARTIN: It was a lot of diamonds, I must say, and very heavy.

Q: Otherwise, Antwerp would tend to be a relatively quiet post. Were there surprises that you had to deal with?

MARTIN: Nothing, really. Nothing too much. You're getting up into the mid '80s, late '80s... there's more terrorism in the world. There's more concern for that sort of thing. We had some occasional bomb go off in a U.S. owned or U.S. named installation somewhere. Nobody was ever hurt, but security had to be tightened up.

Oh, well, there was one surprise during my tenure there. A large car ferry capsized leaving the port of Zeebrugge one night and cost a lot of lives. I don't remember the numbers now but I do remember that (193 perished). The first call came in to me rather

than to the embassy or to the duty officer and so I jumped in my car and went down to Zeebrugge. I was there for a couple of days just sort of trying to figure out how many Americans were on board and how many might have been lost. It turned out in the end that there was not a single American on board which was almost unheard of. It just happened that on this fully loaded ferry making the crossing from Zeebrugge over to Dover... not one American passport holder had been on board. It could have been... in a normal crossing, that could have been ten to twenty or more.

Q: Now, because this is a European tour, I imagine it's a three-year assignment?

MARTIN: It was.

Q: If I'm remembering it right, it takes you from then '86 to '89?

MARTIN: That's right, I think. Now, I'm trying to think ahead as to what I'm going to be doing next and whether all of that will fit.

Q: Well, before you do, there is one more question. From where you were in Antwerp, as we get into '88 and '89, were you feeling in any way the changes going on in Eastern Europe? Did that affect you?

MARTIN: It didn't really affect us. I mean, yes, of course, we felt it. I mean, it was all amazing. We watched it but no more than we would have been in Washington, I think watching it. We did not have any refugees coming through to us who had been... save from '86 from Hungary or anywhere, you know.

Q: Or you mean '56?

MARTIN: '56, I mean. Yes.

Q: Okay, no, then please go ahead. You were saying it's '88 or so and you're now thinking about where you're gonna go next.

MARTIN: Yes, and as I remember it... someone I had met, but only briefly... a woman DAS in IO (Bureau of Internal Organization Affairs), a deputy assistant secretary in IO called during the bidding process and asked if I would bid on a position in her bureau.

Q: Interesting.

MARTIN: Perhaps because she called, I did bid on an office director position in the IO bureau and we went back to Washington to that position.

Q: All right. Do you want to go ahead and discuss that or we could break now and pick that up at the next session?

MARTIN: Let's do it next time.

Q: Very good.

***

Q: Okay, today is December 28, 2021, and we're resuming our interview with Tom Martin, who, in our last session, was in Antwerp. Before we move on Tom, I think there was one last thing you wanted to mention about Antwerp.

MARTIN: About three years after I left Antwerp, I believe the consulate general closed. There had been talk of doing that for, I don't know, I suppose ten or twelve years and the embassy had been successful in arguing against it up to that time, but during the tenure of the next consul general, the decision was taken to close it and it must have closed sometime in the early or late '80s or early '90s.

Q: Did you get the impression that this was one of the, sort of peace dividends, that we were rationalizing the size of our presence? Based on the fact that, you know, the Berlin Wall had fallen, the Soviet Union had collapsed at that moment?

MARTIN: I don't think it was that. I think it was just, you know, another look to see where the Department could make some savings with the posts abroad. I think it was more that.

Q: Okay, okay. Alright.

MARTIN: If you want to move on, I had been called by a DAS (Deputy Assistant Secretary) in the IO Bureau who I had met but didn't know very well. She asked me to bid on an office director position under her in the IO Bureau, the Office of Specialized International Technical Organizations, which included, the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) in Vienna, the World Health Organization (WHO), the International Labor Organization (ILO), the International Telecommunications Union in Geneva, the International Civil Aviation Organization in Montreal, the Universal Postal Union in Bern and a handful of others… some large, some very small. I agreed to bid on that, and was assigned to the position. Sometime in the summer of 1987 it would have been, and we went back to Washington to take up my new position.

MARTIN: Okay, well anyway, the DAS who had asked that I bid on the position had left, and another deputy assistant secretary, Jane Becker, had her position. The assistant secretary in IO at that point was John Bolton. So I took up that job in the summer of '87.

Q: In terms of size, about how many people were in your office?

MARTIN: There were five or six officers and one secretary, as I remember it. And the officers were a mix of foreign service officers and civil servants. Some of the civil servants had in fact been foreign service officers, but had decided to stay stateside and converted to civil service. So it was an interesting mix.

Q: Okay. As you arrived, what were the key issues that you had to deal with?

MARTIN: Well, basically in my case, I was trying to get familiar with some of these organizations that I only knew of tangentially. Getting to meet the people around Washington, in other agencies... who dealt with them on a technical level. State had responsibility for the U.S. contribution to their budgets which came through a State Department appropriation, and getting up to date on political issues that might affect these international organizations. We tried to keep political issues out of these organizations but sometimes they were often there.

The first order of business for me was to rush around Washington to meet all of these people, many of whom had been following their organizations for years, and were really experts on the technical side. Many of them were also very familiar with political issues which would come up from year to year or every time an annual general meeting of the organization was about to be held. So, those were things I had to come up to speed on. Probably, the most active organizations would have been those first three I mentioned... the International Atomic Energy Agency, the World Health Organization, and the International Labor Organization... ILO.

Q: And all three were in Geneva?

MARTIN: No, IAEA is in Vienna. Those other two are in Geneva and the Universal Postal Union is in Berne, Switzerland and the International Civil Aviation Association is in Montreal, Canada...

Q: Yes, that's right. How could I have forgotten? Sorry.

Q: Was part of your orientation, to go out to meet the U.S. reps in these places?

MARTIN: Yes, I did that. I went to Geneva and I went to Vienna. I never went up to Montreal. So, I did that, I made visits there.

Q: And were they... did they have their own year in terms of when they met or were they essentially on the UN calendar?

MARTIN: Well they were in business year round. All of them. They would all have an annual general meeting, on their own calendars. I mean, the annual meetings weren't all at one time, and it was not particularly the UN calendar.

Q: Now, though, the one that probably got the most attention from the assistant secretary was the IAEA because of concerns of various adversary countries acquiring nuclear materials or doing research toward having nuclear weapons, I imagine.

MARTIN: That's true, but all the organizations got a considerable amount of attention from the front office for one reason or another. The United States' interest in playing a

leading role in organizations... in staffing the organizations to make sure that someone of our liking got to particular positions of leadership, particularly in the director general positions in these organizations. The front office and the "Seventh Floor" would take an active interest in those. The United States tried to mobilize votes around the world to make sure that people that we were happy with or not terribly dissatisfied with got put into positions of leadership.

We were also interested in making sure that American citizens held an equitable number of jobs in these organizations. Getting Americans assigned to the organizations was always a difficult fight. Even though the United States has always been the largest financial contributor to the organizations, we never had as many people in the organizations themselves as we would have been entitled to, either based on financial contributions or expertise, or what have you. So that was always an uphill fight. The front office took a leading role, and John Bolton was particularly active in trying to be sure that we got better representation, got our positions across, and could carry the day on political issues. So equitable representation was always an issue that we followed, but IAEA was particularly... of particular importance for the reasons you mentioned.

Q: Was there a particular country or countries in here, of course, I'm thinking of Iran, North Korea?

MARTIN: The IAEA was the eyes of the world on nuclear facilities in those countries and in Iraq as well. The United States inspectors or personnel could not get access to those countries too, but countries had agreed that their facilities would be "open" to IAEA inspectors. On our part, we were interested in providing agency inspectors with information that would enable them to find and inspect or request inspections of places that we suspected might be used for undeclared atomic energy purposes. There were regular channels for this through the US Mission to the IAEA. Sometimes, we managed to give them leads that turned out to be useful for their inspectors. Sometimes, some of the things that we suspected did not turn out to show anything. This had been going on for years before I got there. It intensified during the time I was there and intensified even more in subsequent years.

Q: One thing I'm curious about, in the period of time that you were there as head of this office, was Russia's role or its attitude toward the organization changing? As you know, the Soviet Union is collapsing, and we began to see the end of communism.

MARTIN: Well, the Soviet Union had always played an active role in international organizations and Russia still did. I suppose, we might have been changing to some extent but they were very active in all of these organizations as were we.

Q: One thing about the International Labor Organization I'm also curious about. As time goes by in the foreign service, the specialization of labor officers begins to go away. Over time, it just evaporates. Were we still relying on labor officers in the field for reporting and, you know, integrating those reports with our activities of the ILO?

MARTIN: Well, you're right that they were disappearing, and eventually, the labor specialty basically disappeared. But there was still labor reporting coming out of embassies, but just not done by labor attachés anymore, so much as political or economic officers in embassies. We did keep up on active presence in ILO. We sent large delegations to the ILO meetings every year... mainly from the Department of Labor, but with some State officers involved also.

Q: And with regard to the WHO, had it integrated with our National Public Health Administration, with CDC (Center for Disease Control and Prevention) and so on. Were there regular ties between the two?

MARTIN: There were and some of the leading directors of various departments in the WHO had come out of either CDC, FDA or Health and Human Services. There were very close working relationships there, and these people have followed the organization for years, literally years. We tried to keep up those ties and were pretty successful. The WHO did depend on information we got from our health officials to a great extent. There was an interchange back and forth all the time.

Q: Can you recall a particular issue that just sort of... that you followed throughout the time you were there?

MARTIN: Well basically it was IAEA. I spent a lot of time on that. I happened to have a very good officer who covered that on a day-to-day basis. He was a former FSO. He knew the people in Washington and in Vienna. He had contacts with the Department of Energy, the Nuclear Regulatory Commission, and so he was of great use. We have particular issues that were just... the main issues were the growing issue of other countries getting the bomb so to speak. It was Iraq, North Korea, and Iran that we were mainly interested in, but there were others as well. South Africa had been a problem but at the end of apartheid, the South African government revealed its nuclear holdings and got out of the clandestine business of proceeding toward nuclear weapons. Always the issue of Pakistan... Pakistan and India both had nuclear weapons by this time. The Pakistanis in particular were active in helping others around the world, move closer toward nuclear weapons with undeclared delivery of supplies there. So that was always something that was under watch by all U.S. agencies.

Q: Was the issue of Israel being a non-declared nuclear country a problem while you were there?

MARTIN: It was a fact. It was clear that Israel had nuclear weapons, they just did not admit to it, and the United States was not pushing overly hard for them to do any more than they were doing.

Q: I imagine that the Civil Aviation Organization in Montreal, you didn't actually visit but I bet you got many visitors from the U.S. airline industry about what our position should be.

MARTIN: You know, not very many that I remember. It was always a matter of, you know, do we have good representation there, you know, at the organization. But I don't remember any real issues that we had with the industry.

Q: Then the only other question I had is, as you mentioned, a number of other federal agencies had a dog in the fight. Were there difficulties for you in the interest in forming a common inter-agency review?

MARTIN: Not really. Things went pretty well. We and they sort of knew where we fit in the scheme of things. We had meetings on almost a weekly basis with these other organizations... telephone calls or meetings. We were reading the same materials, we pretty much all stayed in our lanes. There was really pretty good collaboration, I think, for something that had so many fingers in the pie, so to speak. They had worked these things out over the years and the system pretty much seemed to work. We occasionally had little squabbles over this or that, but nothing major that I remember.

Q: Okay. That concludes the questions I have for you for the office. But is there something I've overlooked?

MARTIN: Not that I know of. During my occupancy of that job, the three years I was there, we did happen to have a big meeting of one of the organizations in Washington, which was a little unusual. The Universal Postal Union held one of its big congresses there, this thing came up every ten years or so, and it happened to be hosted in Washington by the Post Office Department and the Department of State. It was quite a show. I mean, countries came from all over the globe with delegations of the people in the postal business. And there were stamp collectors from all over the world that showed up to see what was new coming out of various countries, and the countries were passing out commemorative stamps left and right. So, that was really the only thing sort of like that, that occurred. Think it was pretty quiet during that period. We were often involved in campaigns for candidates seeking high offices in international organizations. We would throw the strength of the U.S. behind these candidates and have our embassies make demarches to governments around the world looking for votes for a new head of the WHO or the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) or whatever. We all got involved in those. The FAO, for example, did not fall under our office.

Q: ah. Well, during this time then, back in Washington... did the fact that you were there and have networks among a variety of agencies, a variety of other offices. Did that assist you in finding a follow on job or what were you thinking about as your next step after this, after this office?

MARTIN: As I said, I subbed for the Deputy Assistant Secretary in the Bureau of International Organizations on many occasions when she was traveling or on leave. I would move up to the front office and be the acting DAS. Then she was appointed as ambassador to the US Mission to the UN organizations in Vienna. She asked me to come as her DCM (Deputy Chief of Mission).

So, that was my follow on assignment. I think she went, maybe six months before I did. I sat in for her as the acting DAS on many occasions. Then in the summer of '92, I believe 1992, we transferred to Vienna. This would be my second job as DCM, but the first at a mission to international organizations.

Q: Now, in Vienna the combination of international organizations that are represented there changed somewhat. So, which ones were you responsible for once you got to Vienna?

MARTIN: Well, the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), UNRWA (United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees), United Nations Women's Program, United Nations Narcotics Programs. I believe that was all of them there. Some were much bigger than others. Some did not occupy much of our time at all, but IAEA was the really big organization in Vienna and took up most of the mission's time, although we had officers who were assigned to all of these other organizations and functions that I mentioned... women, narcotics, UNRWA.

Q: At this point, there is a change of administration. The George H. W. Bush administration ends, Clinton comes in. Did you notice any significant changes in our approach to these organizations?

MARTIN: Not so much for the International Atomic Energy Agency, that was our big one. But some of the others got more attention from Washington... the women's program of the UN for example did, and also narcotics became more of a focus.

Q: Okay, let me just ask you about Narcotics first then. To what extent were we involved with that organization? In other words, did we have actual activities in, you know, preventing illegal narcotics from crossing borders and so on?

MARTIN: Yes, I spent quite a bit of time with the organization. We provided information that we had on drug smuggling to officials with the program and they shared some information with us. I mean, at an international organization, you can only do so much. Americans tend to get frustrated that international organizations don't act at our behest totally... it's always been a problem, I suppose always will. We had good contacts with the organization at the time I was there. I believe the whole time I was there, it was headed by an Italian who had had a long career dealing with international narcotics... both, you know, licit and illicit narcotics. So he knew the situation very well and we saw each other frequently.

Q: Had counterfeit medicines become a significant problem at that point?

MARTIN: Well, certainly not to the extent that they have become today. In recent years, things like opioids and fentanyl have just taken over. While they have good uses in legitimate medicine, they are too easy to manufacture. Methamphetamines, opioids, and fentanyl have exploded throughout the world.

Q: Yeah. Now, we were also one of the, if not the largest donor to the UN Refugee and Works Administration (United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East, (UNRWA)), or in essence supporting the West Bank and the Gaza Strip?

MARTIN: Right. We were the largest supporters of it. Probably, still are, unless we gave it up under the last administration. I don't remember that, but at the time, we contributed a lot of money, food, and relief supplies to UNRWA for the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. The head of the organization in Vienna was an American, a retired ambassador so we had good relations with him.

Q: Now, the Israelis were there, I imagine and other Arab and Muslim countries that did not recognize Israel. Did that create problems just in terms of the management of our activities with UNRWA?

MARTIN: Not really. We managed that, it was not that much of a problem.

Q: Also present in Vienna were, of course, some of the countries that we don't have or where we didn't have diplomatic relations with and they were active. Did countries like Iran, North Korea, and so on, create noteworthy problems for us?

MARTIN: Not really, I mean, they had their interests which were at odds with our interests relating to them. They saw people in the organization. We all saw the same people, we just didn't deal with each other. That was true for my whole time there.

Q: Now, this is... I have to admit, the UN Industrial Development Organization. It's one that I have never really looked into at all. Was there anything noteworthy going on with them? From the U.S. point of view?

MARTIN: Well, we again supplied a good part of their budget. UNIDO provided technical expertise to developing countries... industrial technical expertise to developing countries, and we didn't really have any issues with them. The United States was sort of losing interest in it. We had USAID missions in many countries that were doing similar things and UNIDO sometimes coordinated with their people in the field. We just tried to keep the organization from becoming too political and passing resolutions that got outside the scope of what we saw was the business of the organization, which was strictly a technical industrial information organization. I don't think we had any direct programs that we pushed. Things would come up in meetings, but as I said, we were tending to lose interest in the organization. Many of the programs that they had run had not fared too well over time. Some USAID programs over time had not fared too well either as governments changed and corruption crept into governments. UNIDO (United Nations Industrial Development Organization) was faced with many of those same problems.

Q: During this time, as we get into the mid '90s, the new chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee becomes Jesse Helms. And those who study the period know that he was not very confident in the ability of the UN and its organizations to accomplish very

much of value for the U.S. and he certainly believed that it had become bloated and needed to be reduced and rationalized and so on. Did that pressure begin to have an effect on you in Vienna?

MARTIN: Well indeed, Jesse Helms was particularly outspoken on that. But as I mentioned earlier, John Bolton was the assistant secretary in IO and his views were much the same.

Q: Yeah.

MARTIN: He believed that the United States State Department and IO Bureau should be the tip of the spear in cutting back on waste in the UN... making sure that any UN agency didn't do anything to get outside its mandate; that U.S. views were front and center in the organization. He was very active on that front. As a result, those were the instructions we were basically getting from the State Department... the same instructions that our office had been sending out before I moved to Vienna. The position of the United States government - Helms was the leader in Congress... Bolton and Jim Baker and the State Department were fully on board there. The United States threat to not pay its dues to organizations which strayed, in our view, from their mandate was anathema to many, probably the majority of UN members. We often delayed paying dues in organizations and got farther and farther behind. Generally we avoided losing our vote in any organization, but we often came right up to the cutoff line.

Q: The negotiation of the Chemical Weapons Treaty begins and begins to go to countries for ratification around this time. Did that have any effect on your work?

MARTIN: No, I don't think it did. Well, that's basically a Geneva operation isn't it?

Q: Yes, absolutely. But just because, you know, chemical weapons were also delivered using missile delivery systems and IAEA is also concerned about that. I just wondered if there had been some overlap.

MARTIN: I don't really think so.

Q: Okay, one thing about Vienna, it's certainly a lovely place to live, but it has a reputation for being also an entrepot of counter intelligence and spies and so on. Did any of that have an effect on what you were doing at the international organizations?

MARTIN: Well, yes probably. It is an entrepot for spies and has been for a long time. Countries took advantage of the fact that international organizations were there, possibly placing some intelligence people in organizations, or on delegations to the organizations' meetings. You mentioned earlier, countries that we did not have active relationships with, like Iran and Iraq, North Korea, countries that were trying to get access to weapons of mass destruction. We had people from various national security agencies coming in frequently from Washington to provide information to the International Atomic Energy

Agency to get their inspectors up to date on things that the United States knew about or had suspicions about.

Washington didn't have total confidence in the IAEA to follow up, as sometimes we thought they should. Sometimes, Washington intelligence organizations had their own suspicions about people who were charged by the IAEA to do inspections... that they weren't doing them as well as they might, or might have agendas of their own based on their own countries. So, it was a bit of a dance. From our perspective in Vienna, we were pretty sure that the people IAEA was sending out to do inspections were doing those inspections to the absolute best of their ability. I might have mentioned that our staff in the Vienna mission, particularly as it related to the IAEA, was composed of people from the U.S. Department of Energy, the Nuclear Regulatory Commission, and the US National Laboratories, experts in various phases of the nuclear fuel cycle. So, we had excellent contacts within the IAEA, on the technical side...

Q: I see.

MARTIN: So from our perspective, we felt that IAEA was doing a first rate job. At that time, the director general of the IAEA was Hans Blix, a former Swedish foreign minister and diplomat. Inspectors who went to North Korea, Iran, or Iraq came from various countries. We depended on these inspectors and thought they did a good job, and had a very good feel for what was going on. The countries that they had a right to inspect, did not make it particularly easy for them, i.e, they did not declare everything but the IAEA inspectors were really pretty good at following up on suggestions they got from countries providing tips as to places they might look and what they might look for. So, we had these very close relationships with them. One member of our staff on the U.S. Mission to the IAEA, for example, had headed up nuclear facilities at Hanford, Washington. He literally knew his subject, as well as anybody in the U.S. government and was able to talk to these people on a technical basis.

Q: Now, the other thing, with the fall of communism and the entry into government of pluralistic parties in Europe, did that change the nature of the work that you were doing?

MARTIN: No, not really. I don't think so. We sort of continued on as the way that our mission operated prior to my arrival and throughout my time there.

Q: The other thing that a DCM is responsible for is just managing the organization of our mission. Did that present any challenges for you?

MARTIN: I really think you should know from your own service there in Vienna that our mission, the U.S. Mission to the United Nations organizations in Vienna, occupied the same building as the U.S. Mission to the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE). We had an ambassador, a DCM, and staff. The mission to the CSCE had an ambassador, a DCM, and staff. While across town, there was the U.S. embassy to Austria, with an ambassador, a DCM, and staff.

Q: Sure

MARTIN: And the three operated pretty much on their own. The embassy to Austria handled some common things for all of us but not much really. They handled some housing assignments and things like that, but the three missions went their own way and didn't really see very much of each other. The ambassadors would meet occasionally to coordinate things... Basically, it was to keep friendly relationships between them and make sure that nobody stepped on the other's toes.

As far as I know, things went along pretty well. It could have been fraught with problems depending on personalities. I think relationships between the three missions were pretty good. The DCMs met occasionally. I think at one point we were having monthly luncheons, but the months stretched into two months or three months eventually. Just because we did not really have much to negotiate out between ourselves.

Q: One other thing that also occurs is the beginning of the use of email, much more regularly. The use of laptop or desktop computers, did that change the nature of the work for you?

MARTIN: Well, you were certainly in instant contact with the Department and other agencies back in Washington because of this. I don't think that during my time that I was there, that it changed all that much for us. I was there from 1992 to 1995. I don't remember us changing much in those years.

Q: That's fine. What begins to happen, at least in the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, the U.S delegation there is that there's a, you know, a great deal of inter-agency interest in that organization. Also, Congress had a representative in that organization and had for some time... had it all the way back to the Helsinki Accords. So, there was a great deal of every agency... Defense Department, CIA, everybody who had any interest at all in what was going on at the OSCE (Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe)... whether it was human rights or vote. You know, free and fair voting and military confidence building measures and so on. It was a constant inter-agency brew going on.

Often, other agencies that did not have as much requirement to go through channels would know things more quickly than the State Department would, because all of our reporting had to go through our DCM and our ambassador, whereas they didn't have DCMs and ambassadors. They simply send emails directly to their home agencies and those home agencies read them and might be more aware of what's going on more quickly than the State Department that was supposedly leading the delegation.

MARTIN: Thank goodness we didn't have that problem.

Q: That was what was driving my question. I wondered if you've suffered as much.

MARTIN: Well, as I said, the mission to the International Atomic Energy Agency, our embassy, did have people from the Department of Energy, the Nuclear Regulatory Commission, and the national laboratories. Actually, we had four or five full time people from those bodies. In addition, we had visitors coming in from those agencies all the time, and also from Defense and intelligence agencies. There were phone calls going back and forth... phone calls and emails... but we were really pretty small and I don't really remember one agency getting ahead of the other too often.

Q: The three years you were there, Austria itself is moving towards entry into the European Union. I'm just curious if you saw changes in the country as well, as they were moving towards the end of '95 beginning of '96, entry into the European Union?

MARTIN: No, not really. I didn't. I was just going to mention one thing. I suppose I should. I had two ambassadors while I was there. One was a career officer and the second was a political appointee.

The career officer was the one I had served under in IO, Jane Becker. She had been Chief of Mission at UNVIE for about two years when she got word that someone had been picked to replace her and would be replacing her in about six months. She was very upset about that. She enjoyed her embassy, the job, and thought that she'd been doing a good job. This was during the beginning of the Clinton administration and she thought she could block this from happening and continue to serve out her term there. She thought that the Clinton administration and Madeleine Albright, who was Secretary of State, would not curtail a career woman doing a good job so easily. I tried to caution my ambassador, telling her that there were some things that were not worth the effort. Don't blot your copybook with the people who count in the Administration. But, she fought it rather openly in the State Department and did not win.

The incoming ambassador, as I said, was political... not a political donor... It turned out that he was from the Senate Foreign Relations Committee staff. He'd been one of Joe Biden's men on the Senate Foreign Relations Committee staff and his appointment to replace Ambassador Becker was already in motion in Washington. Commitments had been made and there was no turning back. And so she eventually left for Washington. She was replaced by John Ritch, who had been a long time Senate staffer. He was still a young man. So, she left post and I stayed on as Chargé until Ambassador Ritch came a few months later. At that point I had about a year left in my assignment. Ambassador Becker would have had a bit less than a year to go on her assignment when she was replaced. Ambassador Ritch did not want to move into the residence the previous ambassador had occupied. He spent a good part of his first six months in Vienna concentrating on finding a suitable house and on the International Atomic Energy Agency. He correctly saw the IAEA as the major agency to focus on and did not pay much attention to the others in Vienna. I had those almost to myself.

Q: The last thing I am curious about is the location of our delegation in Vienna was not particularly convenient for any of our international delegations, where they actually did

work? Had the State Department begun to look for accommodations closer to the locations of the negotiations?

MARTIN: I don't think so. Not while I was there. It was very inconvenient, wasn't a great building to be in and it was chopped up into bits and pieces... it was really very inconvenient. It took us a long time to get out to the UN buildings, where all of our international organizations were located in one complex.

Q: Yup, the same thing was true for the OSCE delegation. It was about a forty-five-minute commute for me to go up to where our delegation offices were, and then simply one hour later after checking in and having whatever staff meeting, turn around and go forty-five minutes all the way back downtown. Then at the end of the session at around noon, go forty-five minutes back up and go forty-five minutes back down every day. It really was a waste of time, and did affect, you know, how efficient you can be about reporting on your activities.

MARTIN: Well, the organizations that we were covering were all located in the UN complex. Our staff was all in the mission building. Some of our staff would go out every day depending on what they were doing. I would go out every day or so to spend at least part of the day. I didn't spend all day out usually so that all of us would not be out there at one time. But several times a year when one or the other of the international organizations were having board meetings we really did have to be there constantly. It was a lousy situation really, it really was. I guess they've gotten that rectified somewhat.

Q: Yeah. Alright.

MARTIN: I should also mention that during my tenure in Vienna, my wife and I did change residences at one point. The first part of my tour there, we were located in an apartment down inside the ring on Albertinaplatz, right in the heart of Vienna. We could look out from our apartment and see the back of the *Staatsoper* (State opera) and front of the Albertina Museum. Half a block in the other direction was Kärntner *strasse* (street). The apartment had been used by the DCM to the UN agencies in Vienna for many years. Prior to that, I think the DCM at the MBFR (Mutual and Balanced Force Reductions) talks occupied the apartment. To a certain extent, that apartment was much more suitable than the ambassador's residence for hosting representational events and so we often did that for the mission. Luncheons or big receptions for delegations coming to town would be in our apartment rather than the ambassador's residence.

Partway through our tour we heard that the embassy, which managed the buildings for all three missions, was preparing to sell some of its properties. One of which was a very nice residence, out near Schönbrunn Palace and which had been the residence of the embassy administrative counselor for a long time. They decided to sell that, and we got word of it and offered to give up our apartment which was a rental, probably costing the USG some $100,000 a year at that point, if we could move into this other house. All agreed, so we moved.

Q: But now that's reasonably far out as well.

MARTIN: It was far out. Yes, I don't know if we made a good decision or not, but it just seemed ridiculous to me that the USG was paying such a rent when it owned a perfectly good property.

Q: Alright. Well, as you're approaching the end of this tour, what are you thinking about?

MARTIN: Well, as I got towards the end, I was thinking about retirement. Partway through my tour, Ambassador Becker had gone back to Washington for consultations, and she came back. A month or two later, she called me and said, "This is something that nobody ever does." She said, "You're going to be on the next promotion list." I was a counselor, an OC at that time and I said, "You can't know that", because she had not gone back to be on the panels.

Q: Right.

MARTIN: She said, "Well, no, but I talked to 'blank' who was on the panels and he guarantees me that you are on the list".

Q: Wow, that you're right. That is a very rare occurrence to be able to learn that in advance.

MARTIN: It did not happen. I mean, people are often disappointed when the lists come out... happens to all of us. I had not wanted that news in advance, and when I did not get promoted, it was like a kick in the stomach, you know. She shouldn't have told me, he shouldn't have told her that, she shouldn't have believed him when he told her. In fact, I didn't really believe it either. But, you know, the seed had been planted so it was a great disappointment when that happened.

Q: Yeah.

MARTIN: So, I did not get promoted up to the MC (Minister Counselor) rank. At the time of my departure or scheduled departure, I only had one more year left in my time in class. I went back to Washington, well, without an assignment.

Q: Yeah.

MARTIN: I went to personnel to see what I might do. I have a year left, I don't think there's any chance of promotion at this stage, with only a year left in the class. My reports were good. They were all good, we all know that. They didn't really have an assignment for me. Then one day, I had been back for maybe a couple of weeks or a month, sort of holding down an office in IO but really without an assignment, when personnel said, "We have an opening at the Air Force War College, would you be interested in that? It's in Montgomery, Alabama and you're from Alabama. Would you be interested in that?". The position had been vacant for two years. The job was as senior advisor to the commandant

of the Air Force University and the Air War College. So I said “Okay, you know, we're from Alabama, let’s go back and see”. I didn't say it to the Department. I'll see if I want to retire there, I’ll just... but my wife and I decided we would go back and see what it's like to live back in Alabama. So, we went back. There was really no job there.

Q: Yeah.

MARTIN: Nobody had been there for two years from the State. Nobody on the staff of the War College knew what to do with the person holding that job down. I literally had nothing to do for a year. I sort of cleaned out the office that had been there, just, you know, had a few manuals in a closet. You know, I had good relationships with the commandant of the Air Force University... he was a three-star Air Force general, and the two-star general who was the head of the Air War College. I didn't have any classes assigned to me to teach. I didn't really have much to do. It was probably the most boring year of my life and we were ready to get out of there when my time came up.

Q: Well, while—

MARTIN: No back up from Washington at all, from the State Department.

Q: And this is 1996 now.

MARTIN: ‘95, like September ‘95 to probably May ‘96, I guess. May or June ‘96.

Q: But were you able to use the time? I mean, were you thinking of post-retirement work? Were you able to use the time to, you know, make inquiries about the post-State Department?

MARTIN: Well, I could. I didn't do that because we'd planned to move back to Shepherdstown, West Virginia, where I may have said earlier that we had owned a house for a number of years, but that we had never actually lived in.

Q: Oh, I see.

MARTIN: We still owned a house in Washington and we had this one in West Virginia, which we used as a rental. So we decided we would go to Shepherdstown, West Virginia and, you know, fix the house up, spend a while getting the house in shape to be lived in properly, get to know the town and do some travel. And that's what we did. I retired in the summer of ‘96. I had thirty-three years with the State Department, two in the military, one with Social Security and another year and a half of accumulated sick leave, so I was up to seventy-five percent of my high three, you know, creditable years of service times two. So, we moved out to West Virginia and spent time there fixing up the house and traveling. We were involved in some house exchanges... had done that before, exchanging our property in Washington or in West Virginia four or five times with others abroad. So we did that, we did three or four of those over the next couple of years. I was also the head of the Friends of the Shepherdstown Library, and had been elected to the town

council, spending four years (two terms) on the council. And then we decided to sell the Washington, D.C. house which we had not lived in for about five years. For capital gains tax purposes, we needed to live in it for two of the last five years. So, we moved back into the Washington house, and I immediately got selected for a federal grand jury in Washington for a year and a half—

Q: My heavens.

MARTIN: ... which was the term of the federal grand jury. Met twice a week. There were several federal grand juries meeting in different courtrooms all the time. Down the hall was one handling political cases and more interesting things. Ours only handled arrests in the District of Columbia, mainly for drug offenses or weapons offenses. Well, I had a year and a half to do. Just before the end of the year and a half, my two years of residence in D.C. that we were fulfilling for tax purposes came to an end. Those two years were up before the grand jury's time was up and I was able to tell the judge that I was no longer a resident of D.C., and he said, "Oh, well, you cannot sit on my grand jury. Sorry". So I got excused a little early.

Q: Did you indict anyone famous?

MARTIN: No. These were mainly drug offenders and people... mainly former felons who were caught in possession of a firearm, which is a federal offense. A former felon cannot have a firearm ever. Lots of cars in D.C. have both drugs and firearms in them so we had plenty of cases. We would do five or six a day.

Q: My heavens, wow. Alright. Well.

MARTIN: That sort of brings it to a close, I think.

Q: Yeah. Now, how did you end up in South Carolina though?

MARTIN: My wife's sister was living with us out in Shepherdstown. She had Parkinson's disease... she still has, and we needed a first floor bedroom to be able to keep her at home. We looked around the Washington area, around the Shepherdstown area... put in bids on houses that met our criteria, but on which we were outbid. We then decided we did not want to take on another mortgage. So, as we had already sold the Washington house we decided to sell the Shepherdstown house also. Now. Cheraw, South Carolina happened to be about halfway between Shepherdstown, West Virginia and Jacksonville, Florida, where my wife's family lived. Driving between the two, we would often stop in Cheraw to spend the night. It was a charming town and we decided we would look here... found a house and sold the Shepherdstown house... and what we got for the Shepherdstown house, we were easily able to buy a much larger house in South Carolina and have money left over.

Q: Okay.

MARTIN: Then my wife's sister's illness got worse. She was able to live with us for about a year or two and then had to go into an assisted living facility.

Q: Yeah.

MARTIN: So, we're here. Very nice place.

Q: Now, since we've reached the end of your career, at this point I always ask my interviewees as you look back on your time in the Foreign Service, are there recommendations you would make to improve its efficiency or improve training or recruitment and retention. As an organization, what sort of recommendations would you make?

MARTIN: Well, I don't think the State Department does as well by training as the Department of Defense for example, which sort of has training throughout an officer's career in the military. State basically has A-100 introduction to government/introduction to the Foreign Service course. It has some university training for some people in earlier or mid grades and some senior training in the War Colleges and senior seminar. At least, that was the system when I was still working.

Q: Right.

MARTIN: I would think that perhaps more training would be useful.

Q: Speaking of training, what about language training and use of languages over the time you were in the Foreign Service?

MARTIN: Well, I guess I mentioned throughout, I had exposure to the Foreign Service Institute and language training on three occasions... for Portuguese, Dutch and for Turkish. I thought the system in my case was very good. I both enjoyed it and got into the languages. I thought it was a good system... intensive language training with native speakers in every case in which I had training. Occasional linguist at hand to give advice in the sort of whys and wherefores of the systems in the language. I thought that was very good. I didn't do any other training at the Foreign Service Institute, except for the A-100 course.

Q: While you were in the Foreign Service, did they have the senior seminar?

MARTIN: They did, throughout.

Q: But you were never assigned there?

MARTIN: I was never assigned there. I would have liked to have been. I mean, it's not something you apply to, really it just comes up. I think you're identified and off you go. From my discussions with people who have gone through the War Colleges and who had gone through the senior seminar, I think without exception those who had gone through

the senior seminar, thought it was the best of all of them. That they got better training and interchanges with other organizations, opportunities for travel... I think all of them thoroughly enjoyed the senior seminar.

Q: Did the Department ever contact you for temporary work afterwards? Were you interested?

MARTIN: They never contacted me and I really wasn't interested. I certainly could have, I think, done some but we didn't really need the money. We're pretty frugal. We had moved out of Washington and didn't particularly want to move back into Washington. We loved living there but we've moved on. We were doing a lot of travel abroad. We did some long term rentals abroad. We rented a place in Granada, Spain for a year. We did several other house exchanges. We were visiting our children in various places and had one daughter married to a USAID officer, and so we spent long times with them in Manila, Cairo and Frankfurt. So, we've been enjoying the good life in our frugal way.

Q: Yeah. Alright. Then, at the conclusion then, are there any other thoughts or recommendations you'd like to share before we close?

MARTIN: I don't think so. I wish I had done this a little earlier when my memory was better. I wish you know, it's one of these things you keep telling yourself you should do and I would have liked to have done it twenty years ago.

Q: Well, that's fine. What I'll do at this point then is we'll conclude the recording and I'll thank you on behalf of ADST (Association for Diplomatic Studies and Training) for sharing your oral history with us. At the end of the recording now, we'll talk about the next step in terms of your transcript and editing.

End of interview