

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

PATRICK MORRIS

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INTERVIEW

Q: Mr. Morris, could you just tell me your position at the time of these incidents that we're going to begin talking about.

MORRIS: I was office director for Bolivia-Chile, a State Department position in the Latin American Bureau.

Q: I'd like to start the discussion of the Che Guevara events with your observations on the Bolivian revolution of 1952 and our policy toward it and our reaction to it.

MORRIS: There's no doubt that the revolution of 1952, which brought the MNR (Movimiento Nacionalista Revolucionario) to power, was probably the most profound revolution that took place in South America. That party at the time was led by Paz Estenssoro and Hernando Siles Zuazo. Siles actually led the MNR at the time of the revolution; Paz was in Buenos Aires. He was the nominal head of the party and also certainly the intellectual head of the party. And it was Paz who came back as soon as the party had overthrown the old government and established himself in the leadership role and became the first MNR president of Bolivia.

That revolution was not only profound, but it was quite violent. The atrocities committed in the name of the revolution drove a very strong wedge between what had been the governing elite and the MNR and all of the people who had benefited as a result of the MNR revolution.

Now the primary beneficiaries of the revolution were the miners and the campesinos. And it was from those two groups, which were quite large, that the MNR drew its strength.

Q: Excuse me, is it a proper interpretation of "campesino" to say "small farmer?"

MORRIS: Small farmer. Small farmer. Some people use the word "peon," and that is close to "peasant," but "campesino" means more than just farmer, it really means "Indian farmer." So I have always preferred using the word "campesino." Just as "macho" has been accepted now in English usage, I would like to see "campesino" become accepted as a way of describing most of the small-farmer population throughout most of Latin America.

Q: Does the campesino own his land or does he rent it?

MORRIS: Well, in Bolivia, before the revolution of 1952, he neither owned it nor rented it -- he was considered a chattel on the land. Even though there was nothing in the laws which substantiated this particular role, the campesinos in both Peru and Bolivia were effectively chattels on the land, and when the land was sold, they were sold with the land. There were lots of traditional means of relationships between the landowners and the campesinos on the land, but in the ultimate analysis, they really were considered as belonging to the landowners. So that when the revolution of 1952 took place, it was almost as though slavery had been abolished, in terms of the freedom of action which was given to the campesino.

Now the situation of the miners was always better, in terms of their control of their own destiny, than the campesinos, but nevertheless the miners I also had very little independence of movement prior to the revolution.

What happened as a result of the revolution was, first of all, there was a general philosophy of freedom that was broadcast through the party channels and so forth, upon which great emphasis was put, to the point where both the Indians and the miners became

very arrogant. Because of this tremendous change and a great deal of violence that took place during the fighting and immediately thereafter, when the MNR was wreaking vengeance on all of its opponents and enemies...

Q: Would they have been landowners?

MORRIS: Mostly landowners. The mine owners were all absentee. And interestingly enough, unlike most of the situations in Latin America where these absentee mine owners might have been foreigners, in the Bolivian case they were Bolivian, but they were still absentee owners. And of course they spent most of their time away from Bolivia, so that the justification for Bolivia taking over its own mines did not set up the kind of hue and cry from the international community that you found when the Mexicans took over the petroleum companies, under Cardenas, in the late '30s.

Immediately after the revolution in Bolivia, they started a land reform program and immediately began to provide plots for individual campesinos. Ownership of those plots was always up in the air. They never did, during my time, satisfactorily devise a system whereby titles to that land became free and clear. There was a system that they had begun to work out to provide titles to the land, but it was so cumbersome and so slow that during the time that I served in Bolivia... I served in Bolivia, by the way, from 1958 to 1961.

Q: In what capacity?

MORRIS: I was the program officer and then deputy director of the AID program, the economic assistance program.

Q: Program officer for AID, which means running the AID program.

MORRIS: Yes, well, program officer really was a planning function, where we made projections about the kinds of projects that we would be financing, and then budgeted for them and justified them to Washington and so forth and so on. That was the Program Office, and then later on I was the deputy director of the AID mission in Bolivia.

At that time, the land distribution program was in full swing, but the titling of that land to the campesinos was much slower. I don't know, I've sort of lost track, but I'm not sure that even today that the titling has ever kept up or even ever approached the actual division of land.

But the interesting thing, I think, from a political point of view, is that during the first ten, twelve years of the MNR domination of the government, the national government per se never had effective control beyond the national capital, beyond La Paz. It governed the rest of the country through a series of alliances with strongmen who were all members of the MNR but who had complete control over their own areas.

Now these were the militias. The MNR formed militias, and the militias were the ones that defeated the armed forces in the revolution. The armed forces were dismantled, and then afterwards they set up a skeleton army, but I which never had very much power. The real power in the country was in the hands of the militias and the militia leaders. And you could not travel from La Paz to Santa Cruz without running into endless roadblocks. Every time you left one area of militia control and got into another area controlled by a different militia group, there would be a roadblock and they would charge you for passage.

Q:· It sounds like medieval Europe.

MORRIS: Of course.

Q: Or China.

MORRIS: Exactly. I thought of the warlords in China. And this was Bolivia in the '50s and into the '60s. I left in 1961, but that's the way it was in those years. Of course, I came back when I was the office director for Bolivian- Chilean Affairs, '66, '67, '68. I made trips during all of those years, and the situation was changing. Well, there was a major change. Paz built up the army. And of course there was a transition. They got into terrible economic problems, and we were working with them all the time.

Now I don't know how much in depth you want to get into in all of this, because I could go on for days.

Q:· Well, if you're willing.

MORRIS: As I talk, a lot of things occur to me. They don't come in any particular sequence, but one thing recalls another.

And one of the things, it seems to me, with regard to the whole U.S. involvement in Bolivia, it's quite ironic, when you think about it, that the MNR revolution was not only very profound, but in many respects it had lots of the » earmarks of a Marxist revolution. And the members of the MNR spoke in dialectic, although they were all over the lot ideologically. There was as much fascism, I think, in the early MNR as there was Marxism. But there certainly was an awful lot of Marxist rhetoric connected with that movement, especially in their early days.

Yet a Republican administration in Washington, Eisenhower's administration, decided that the United States would provide assistance to this Marxist revolution. And this is something that has never ever really been appreciated in the United States. It's never caught anybody's attention.

You know, the left roundly lambastes U.S. policy toward Latin America, indiscriminately, lumping everything we do into the imperialist mode. Yet here was a case where a...I think the only way you can characterize it is a far-left movement, came

into power, nationalized the mines, confiscated all of the large haciendas, divided up the land for the peasants, and turned the mines over to the miners. Now in those years you couldn't get very much closer to a Marxist revolution than that. And yet here was the Eisenhower administration deciding that we would provide assistance to that government.

And we did. We supported the MNR through thick and thin, through bad management and through very difficult times of hyperinflation, caused to a great extent by their lack of understanding of governing, but also by their lack of understanding of how economics function. So that you had printing presses just `I working overtime turning out useless currency, and contraband flowing out of the country because they could get real money for it in other countries. So that Bolivia just became a funnel for bringing in commodities and then shipping them back out. There were fortunes made by a lot of people operating contraband during a time of hyperinflation in the country. The United States government held the MNR's hand through all of these crises and helped them out of it.

They had set up the constitution so that nobody could hold two consecutive terms in the presidential office, so after four years, Siles came in. Siles immediately tried to bring order out of this chaos. We worked with him and brought in an economist, a financial expert, who was an advisor to the president and who set up one of the first stabilization programs in the '50s in Latin America, and helped tie them into the IMF, and provided what came to be called program assistance, as distinct from project assistance, which really was financing the budget deficit but also providing foreign exchange. In other words, we were bringing in dollars, we were converting them to local currency, and assigning that local currency to specific budget items to carry out projects.

Q: The program assistance is really the financial assistance to be given to the government.

MORRIS: That's right, exactly. As distinct from project assistance, which is based on individual projects that are worked out ahead of time and then funds are sought for those specific projects. And once the projects are approved and the money is provided, those projects must be carried out as they were originally planned. Program assistance, of course, is a much easier and faster way to disburse a lot of money in a hurry, and also it can have a more salutary effect in the short run on difficult financial situations.

So during the four years of the Siles administration, we were providing program assistance and working with them on stabilizing their currency. Which we did. Which we did.

When the stabilization program began, the exchange rate between the dollar and the boliviano was about eighteen thousand to one. And after the stabilization program was introduced, that was reduced first to fifteen thousand and then to twelve, where it stayed at twelve thousand to one. And so Bolivia had, for the last two and a half years of the Siles administration, one of the most stable currencies in Latin America; there was practically no change from twelve thousand to one.

Of course the largest single boliviano bill was ten thousand. That was eighty cents. A ten thousand boliviano bill was worth eighty cents, so if you had to pay a bill of five or six hundred dollars, you really had to take a suitcase full of bolivianos. So even though you had a stable currency for those two and a half years, you still were dealing in the thousands. There was finally monetary reform, and they just took the last three zeroes off, and I guess they changed the name. I think they changed it to the bolivar, but maybe it was something else.

Q: Could I just get some chronology in my mind here and get it straight. You began in Bolivian Affairs at Latin American Affairs, in 1951, did you say?

MORRIS: In 1951, yes, in Peru.

Q: And when did you become involved in Bolivian Affairs?

MORRIS: At the end of 1958.

Q: And that was at the embassy.

MORRIS: Exactly, but it was with the AID mission.

Q: And the revolution that brought the MNR to power was in 1952. Eisenhower was elected in 1952 and took office, of course, in 1953. Did the policy of American support for the MNR begin right away?

MORRIS: Pretty quickly. Pretty quickly. Milton Eisenhower, Ike's brother, went on a trip to Latin America in 1955. So the Eisenhower administration, I guess, didn't know what to do with Bolivia in the first few years. But the situation was fast deteriorating. We were providing some assistance before Milton Eisenhower went down there, but the stabilization program and all the rest of it came as a result of the decisions made after Milton Eisenhower visited them. That was in 1955, I think it was probably in the fall of 1955.

Q: Was Zuazo, or Estenssoro, in the office at the time?

MORRIS: Paz was in office at that time; it was 1956 when Siles came in.

We provided P.L. 480 and food assistance beginning in 1953. That was before the Milton Eisenhower visit. But it was mostly emergency, almost disaster, assistance (although this was not a natural disaster). But there was a lot of surplus grain available, and the P.L. 480 law had, just by coincidence, passed the Congress in 1953, I think. And even before that P.L. 480 law, there was a Section 402 of the Foreign Assistance Act that also provided for surplus grain to be provided for, to give support to foreign policy objectives I think is what it was generally for. So that even before the Milton Eisenhower visit, the Eisenhower administration was giving assistance to the MNR. But it was sort of stopgap assistance. And it wasn't until Milton Eisenhower visited in 1955, I think the fall of 1955,

that there was a rationale created for that assistance. And it was greatly expanded after that, too. Most of the assistance given before 1955 was, as I say, food assistance. Some of that food was converted into local currency and used for projects. But the program assistance, the financial assistance for the budget, came after the Milton Eisenhower visit in 1955. And I would say that it probably started the early part of 1956.

By the time I arrived in Bolivia at the end of 1958, that program was about two years old, but it already had had a profound effect on the financial and fiscal situation in the country. It had already had a good effect on the financial and fiscal situation in the country.

Q: When you arrived, then you began in '58 working with this program.

MORRIS: At the end of '58, that's right, working with it intimately, first in the Program Office and then as deputy director. I left in '61 and went to Venezuela, and by the time I left, Siles had completed his term and Paz was elected again. So there was Paz, then there was Siles, then there was Paz again.

Now what happened when Paz was reelected? First of all, we were scared to death that Paz would repeat his first term, which led to economic and monetary chaos. We were afraid that he would repeat that. He assured us, O however, that he would continue Siles's stabilization program. And he did.

But he had terrible problems with Juan Lechín and the miners. And, as I said earlier, the whole country was governed by the militia, these local strongmen. Well, the miner strongman was Juan Lechín. All the time I was there, we wouldn't give any money to the miners or Juan Lechín. Comibol, the national mining organization, was broke, but we resisted. And the ambassador kept getting these pleas from the president, when Siles was in and then when Paz was in, that we needed to do something for the mining industry.

Well, from our point of view, the Comibol was a bottomless pit and it would have made no sense at all to be providing any kind of assistance for the miners. If they had to close the mines...the sooner the better. If this caused unemployment, then we would have to figure out other ways to create new jobs. But we could see that the only thing that assistance to Comibol would do would be to strengthen Juan Lechín and his miners in posing challenges to the central government.

Q: Tell me, this organization...Comibol?

MORRIS: Comibol, that was the national mining company formed by the government out of the independent mines, the tin mines primarily, in Oruro and Potosi, the two places primarily where the tin mines were.

Q: It's a national company or a private company?

MORRIS: No, a national company. This was a governmental company. This was the expropriated mines of the Hochschilds and the Patiños.

Paz was having more and more trouble with the miners. He decided that he would build up the armed forces. I think, to some extent, he thought that if a showdown came, he needed more strength. Because the only military strength (if you can call it military), armed strength that Paz had was the La Paz police force. The army per se was very weak and would not have been able to stand up against the miners, who were all armed. I mean, they had the regular drills and all the rest of them. They used to come to town two or three times a year for parades, and they would parade down the street with dynamite strung around their necks -- necklaces of dynamite! And they all had arms, and they were in their miners' caps, and these big parades of Indians in full mine regalia and dynamite hanging around their necks. And the armed forces looked paltry alongside of them. And Juan Lachine used that force whenever he wanted to make a point. There were all kinds of inter-factional battles, intrigue, murders among the different factions and so forth and so on, which the central government had no way of controlling or bringing justice to bear in these situations. I remember, I think his name was Federico Alvarez, who was Paz's vice president. Federico Alvarez's brother was murdered by members of a campesino union. The national government didn't lift one finger to try to bring the fellow to justice who killed the vice president's brother. That's how helpless they were.

Q:· Amazing.

MORRIS: So I think that Paz, when he came in, decided that he had to build up the army so that he would be able to enforce his will or the will of his government. And so he began to build up the armed forces.

Q: I've seen it said (leftist sources probably) that it was the United States that made the decision to build up the armed forces, rather than Paz Estenssoro. Was that an indigenous decision?

MORRIS: I think it was indigenous. Now I am really not in a position to refute that remark, because the decision was made after I left La Paz. Not long. You know, I remember vividly, but I was in Venezuela when that decision was made, and I was not privy to any of the conversations leading up to that decision. But my own feeling for the way events were developing leads me to believe that the United States may very well have been in favor of this, because the situation was very close to chaos all the time without some kind of a military presence. And certainly we had a large military mission in the country that was working with this very weak Bolivian armed force. And I'm sure that they, just as professionals, probably would have liked to see a stronger, more professional armed force than they were working with. So that I suspect that certainly there were elements in the U.S. presence in the country which were favorable to this. But I think that the dynamic of the decision was probably more local than anything else.

Q:· When did we begin a military mission in Bolivia?

MORRIS: Gee, World War II.

Q: It had been there right through. ·

MORRIS: Oh, yes, right through. Right through. I don't think that there was ever a time that we didn't have somebody there.

Q: · What size would it be?

MORRIS: Well, it changed off and on. The revolution destroyed the armed forces, and I suspect at that time the Paz government probably asked our military mission to leave. I'm not sure about this, but I assume that we probably were asked to leave. And we probably did leave, the mission per se left, but we probably always had our attachés there. And as soon as they began to think about having any kind of an army, they probably welcomed our assistance.

We were already providing food assistance to them; we provided it right from the beginning. Because with the land reform, production plummeted, and it took a while to come back. And so there was justification on humanitarian grounds to provide food assistance.

And so I suspect that we probably began to have military people in some I kind of a mission back in '53 maybe.

Q: And what size was it when you were there?

MORRIS: Well, by the time I arrived at the end of '58, there must have been ten or twelve people. There were probably about six or seven officers and then six or seven noncoms.

Q: And what was the size of the AID program in dollars and cents?

MORRIS: I'm going to give you some general figures, because a lot of the specifics have sort of escaped me now.

First of all, it was the largest assistance program in Latin America. From 1952 on, Bolivia was getting more overall assistance than any other country in the hemisphere.

Q: In dollar terms.

MORRIS: In dollar terms.

Q: Larger than Brazil?

MORRIS: We didn't even have anything in Brazil at that time. Practically nothing. The Brazil program, we had the old Institute of Inter-American Affairs. In fact, we had the

Institute of Inter-American Affairs in a lot of the countries in Latin America at that time, and everything was going through the Institute of Inter-American Affairs, even the economic assistance to the MNR.

But Bolivia was the only country which was getting what we called at the time economic assistance. Everything else was technical assistance. All over the rest of the hemisphere was technical assistance. And Bolivia was getting technical assistance plus economic assistance. And it was the economic assistance that was significant in dollar terms.

Do you realize that in 1953 the budget for the Institute of Inter-American Affairs, for the whole hemisphere, was about fifteen million dollars? And I think that at that time, of that fifteen million dollars, Bolivia might have been getting a million in technical assistance, but then it was getting three or four million in economic assistance. So it was getting about five million dollars -- one million out of the technical assistance pot, and the rest coming in as food aid. So it was in the neighborhood of three or four million dollars.

Q: Are you saying the Institute of Inter-American Affairs, that's the government?

MORRIS: That was the U.S. government. The U.S. government Institute of Inter-American Affairs was the...

Q: AID operation.

MORRIS: That's right, it was the predecessor of AID.

I'm just pulling these figures out of my memory, and you have to think in terms of magnitude rather than in precise amounts. So three or four million dollars is what Bolivia was getting from 1953 on. By the time I arrived in 1958, they were getting twelve million dollars a year. Five million of that, or maybe more, seven million of it was budgetary assistance, program assistance, and then the rest was technical assistance and food aid. That stayed that way until 1961 when I left.

But 1961 marked the beginning of the Alliance for Progress and the I Kennedy administration, where the amount of assistance going to Latin America n was increased significantly. That was when Brazil began to figure big; that was when Chile began to figure big; that was when Colombia began to figure big. And so the Bolivia program, which probably was not reduced very much, was no longer the largest program in Latin America. And the program assistance going to Colombia, Brazil, and Chile began to occupy the attention of the people in Washington to a much greater extent than what was happening in Bolivia, in dollar terms.

Now I left La Paz in 1961 and didn't return to Bolivian Affairs then until October of 1965, when I came back from Venezuela and headed up the Office of Bolivian-Chilean Affairs in the Department of State. The assistance program in Bolivia had continued, and the situation had not seemed to change fundamentally from the time that I left it. The

problems that I had had to deal with while I was in La Paz were the same problems that the people were dealing with when I came into the office in Washington.

The size of the AID program had increased, and the nature of the AID program had proliferated. Decisions were made soon after my departure from La Paz that the United States government would invest in the national mining company, Comibol. Huge sums of money were spent on Comibol, but not very much was changed in the way of the effectiveness of Comibol to increase tin production and thereby increase Bolivia's capacity to earn foreign exchange.

Q: Was Comibol less political and less of a challenge to the presidency?

MORRIS: No, it continued pretty much the same.

Q: So in a way we were giving aid to both sides.

MORRIS: To a rival. But I don't think it was ever seen, even by the central government, even by Paz, as helping a rivalry. Because it was a problem for them: if Comibol fell apart, they were afraid that the miners would take over. So that it was sort of helping the government pay a bribe to a rival. And that was the way you controlled the rival, by continuing to bribe them. That was what we felt when I was there, and it was one of reasons that we never agreed to put any money into Comibol, because we considered it outright bribery and we didn't think Comibol would ever come to anything as an organization.

One thing had occurred, and it was beginning to occur before I left, in terms of Bolivia improving its economic situation. And that was that the petroleum corporation had found large reserves of natural gas and enough new petroleum to build a pipeline to Argentina. And that provided a shot in the arm to the economy for those years.

The AID program, the continued infusion of U.S. assistance, certainly helped in terms of agricultural production. There were large increases in sugar production, for example, there were large increases in rice production, the country becoming self-sufficient in both of those areas. When I first arrived in La Paz, they were importing sugar. Soon after I left, they were exporting sugar. That was quite an achievement. Agricultural production generally began to improve the economic situation of the country as a whole, and a lot of this has to be credited to U.S. assistance in these areas. We provided the transportation sector assistance through a road-building organization. There were a lot of new roads built during that time. So that there were some improvements.

And of course the revolution itself, I mentioned before, was the most profound of any of the revolutions in South America up to that time. It was profound because it really did change the way the Indians lived. And it may have provided a marginally better income for the miners. I don't know, because the mines were already worked out by the time the revolution took place, so that keeping those mines open and keeping miners employed

was a losing proposition. So that I don't know whether the lot of the miners in material terms changed very much. But the lot of the campesinos was greatly improved.

I'll never forget, before I went to Bolivia, I worked in Peru and I was quite familiar with the situation of the Peruvian campesino. In the areas bordering Bolivia, around Lake Titicaca and all up in the highlands, I knew the situation of those Indians, and I was really struck, almost from the beginning when I arrived in La Paz at the end of 1958, that the lot of the Indians, even at that time, oh, it was only five years after the revolution, even at that time, was much better than those in Peru. And all the time that I had anything to do with Bolivia, I saw improvements in the highland campesinos year after year after year, in their clothes, in their living quarters. You could see the changes in housing. From huts made out of fieldstone and so forth they began to make frame doors and frame windows and have windowpanes in. And you even began to see two-story houses on the Altiplano. All of these things over time. The lot of the campesino as a result of the revolution improved dramatically.

Q:· How would you evaluate our AID program? I gather favorably, but what do you think of the whole scope of it? You were kind of watching it one way and another from '51 to '68. What kind of marks would you give it?

MORRIS: Well, first of all, I think that the decision of the Eisenhower administration to support this kind of profound revolutionary change was not only admirable but very courageous. I think that our AID program, even though there was waste connected with it, in general terms was fairly effective.

I, to this day, would not have ever approved any money going to Comibol. I don't know what the magnitudes are there. They were quite large, and as far as I'm concerned, that was an erroneous investment. I don't know what we got out of it. Henderson was part of all of that and maybe he can tell you what we got out of it. Of course the decision had been made before Henderson got there, but he didn't reverse that decision. It was Ben Stephansky. By the way, you should call Ben.

Q:· Yes, I do intend to.

MORRIS: You know, Ben and I have never ever talked about this. He's a good friend of mine and I have a lot of admiration for his intellectual capacity and so forth and so on.

Q:· He was the ambassador before Henderson.

MORRIS: That's right, exactly. He was the ambassador before Henderson, and it was Ben who made the decision. Carl Strom was the ambassador before Ben, and Carl Strom would have made the decision had we not given him so much static every time he tried to push it through. He didn't want to go up against the AID mission, our absolute resistance to any kind of help to Comibol.

Well, there was a big turnover. When I left, the AID director at that time was Ray Hill, and he left a couple of months before I did. But there was a complete turnover in the leadership at the AID mission, so that Ben Stephansky came in, and then Alex... Well, there was Bill Hughes for a short time. Bill Hughes had never had anything to do with foreign assistance before he was put in that job. I don't think he really knew what he was supposed to do. He was out of the administrative apparatus in State, and he was very politically oriented. He was the head of the FBO, Foreign Buildings Operation. He got in bad with John Rooney, and so they decided to send him to "Siberia" -- he came to La Paz as AID director. So Bill Hughes really didn't have the background to understand a lot of what was going on. And then Ben Stephansky, who was very politically oriented, wanted to please the MNR.

So, the combination of the two, they were overwhelmed by the pleas for help to Comibol. And they put a lot of money into it; I don't know how much. But I would say in the general overall AID program I think that whole area was a mistake, that we probably didn't get very much as a result of the investment we put in there.

But other than that, I think that overall the AID program was a good investment for the United States in terms of helping keep the Bolivian government on the democratic track, and in helping try to improve the general standard of living of the people of the country.

Q: And you feel it did that.

MORRIS: I think so. I think so. But I continue to believe that the most effective thing that ever happened in Bolivia was the revolution itself. That really made a change.

Now you see the Shining Path in Peru today -- that was because of a failure of the revolution in Peru. I mean, there is really no comparison, but what happened with the Velasco coup in Peru...

Q: What year are we talking about?

MORRIS: We're talking about '68, when the army took over in Peru from Belaúnde. You know, this had a lot of Marxist overtones to it. And it came through the armed forces; the armed forces were interested in profound social change in their country. But it was never as effective as what happened in Bolivia, and it was so disruptive. I mean, what happened in Peru was a complete destruction of everything that had gone before. And most of the problems that Peru has today are the result of the failed revolution of 1968.

Q: Coming back to Bolivia for a moment, and moving back into the '60s, which is now the period when you were on the desk in Washington, there then was a reaction against the revolution. Am I right that now Paz Estenssoro is elected again following Siles and, as I understand it, was elected yet a third time?

MORRIS: Yes, a fourth time, too.

Q: A fourth time, I didn't realize that.

MORRIS: He just left office recently, and that was the fourth time.

Q: The third time was one term following another. Now is that constitutional?

MORRIS: Well, evidently they must have changed the constitution, because it was not. It was not.

Q: And he was overthrown then by the military.

MORRIS: That's right, exactly.

Q: Did the military see themselves defending the constitution in preventing him from succeeding himself without having another president in between?

MORRIS: I don't know, that may have very well been the pretext for what happened.

I understand that Paz is here now, by the way. Somebody told me the other day that he's in town. His wife is quite sick. I don't know where she is, but somebody told me that he was in town. You know, he's in his eighties now.

Q: What was the year that the military overthrew Estenssoro?

MORRIS: It was 1964. I came back to Washington in October '65, and Barrientos was already president of Bolivia.

Q: And when you came back you were beginning the job as country director. What was our policy then toward the Barrientos government and toward the change?

MORRIS: Well, it was pretty much the same as it had been before; we continued to support the government of Bolivia with substantial economic assistance.

Q: Were we particularly pleased or displeased at the change in government?

MORRIS: Since it happened before I arrived, I did not note any displeasure. I think it was just sort of accepted as a matter of course that the military had thrown a democratically elected government out. But there was every expectation that Barrientos would submit himself to the electorate and become a democratically elected leader.

Q: Then he had the partnership with Ovando, and then Ovando went back to being chief of the military and Barrientos continued in office.

MORRIS: That's right.

Q: Did that permanently or in any important way affect the revolution?

MORRIS: I don't think so. When the armed forces finally became strong enough, all of these little potentates throughout the country lost a great deal of power, and so essentially I think you had, in terms of law and order, a much more stable situation as a result of the military being able to control the entire country and the gangs of MNR militia not having the power that they had had prior to that.

Q: During your period we were encouraging the Bolivians to develop some Ranger battalions, were we not?

MORRIS: We were, but I don't think that we were very active prior to the appearance of Che Guevara. I think that probably the military mission... Which brings up another name for you, if you haven't got it, and I'm sure maybe Broderick has mentioned it: Paul Reimart. He lives out here in Virginia. He was military attaché and he had a lot to do with influencing the Bolivian military in terms of what they were doing with us. Obviously, we had our missions there besides. I mean, he was the military attaché and we had our missions there besides, but Reimart was fairly influential with them.

Q: How did you first hear of the Guevara incident?

MORRIS: Well, I think it was March 17, 1966. That was St. Patrick's Day. That, I think, was our first hint that something strange was happening in Bolivia. We began to get reports, and I guess these were coming through CIA, of a band of armed men roaming around in Santa Cruz and having some superficial encounters with the armed forces -- firefights of not very much consequence, maybe one or two casualties in each encounter. At first it appeared it was not anything of any particular noteworthiness, since it could have been just an isolated incident.

Q: This was probably '67.

MORRIS: I guess that's right, I guess it was '67. Because the whole thing, from beginning to end, didn't last over six or seven months, that was the total. Because I think it was in November that he was finally killed, and this was in March. But this band was sort of almost roaming around aimlessly, it looked like to us, because you'd hear about them here, and then you'd hear about them further south, and then you'd hear about them further west. I'm forgetting the place names now, but it was south and a little bit west of Santa Cruz. I think it was about May before we really knew that it was Che Guevara and that this was a Cuban-inspired and -financed operation and that the group was trying to actively recruit Bolivians to foment a general insurgency. And they were having no luck whatsoever. I don't know, but I don't think that they ever had over sixty people, and I don't think that it ever grew. I think that it began to splinter and lose people rather than expand. They may have gotten up to a hundred at some point. At the time, of course, we were not sure what was happening and whether it was getting any bigger and whether there was more than one band and so forth and so on and where exactly they were at all times. But the Bolivian army was persistent in following. And it was, I guess, around

May that we brought in the Rangers from Panama and sent them down to Santa Cruz to begin an intensive training program for the Bolivian army.

Q: US. military.

MORRIS: Yes, U.S. military from Panama. But the number of people that we had in Santa Cruz couldn't have been over twenty or thirty people.

Q: Twenty or thirty US. military Rangers.

MORRIS: Right, right. And probably less, probably less. I made one visit I down there, but that was later on. I guess that was about in September that I went down. But the Bolivian army was tracking these people, and they didn't know, either, who they were. The campesinos that this band came in contact with were very apathetic about the whole thing; they just couldn't understand what these people were all about. And it must have been very discouraging for Che Guevara, who thought that the Andes would become the Sierra Maestra of South America.

You can speculate as to why this was, and I think that certainly in my own mind it was how effective the MNR revolution of 1952 was in making people believe that things were getting better for them. You know, the level of poverty in Bolivia was still stark, but there had been, almost from the beginning, improvements in the way the common Indian lived, throughout the country, as a result of the revolution.

Q: What do you think Guevara's objectives were? Why did he pick Bolivia?

MORRIS: Because it was next to Argentina and he was an Argentinean. And they were all dreamers, you know, they really thought that they were going to set South America on fire with revolution. They talked about the Andes being the Sierra Maestra of South America, and that they would start in the Andes, and that would spread throughout the continent -- big dreams. And Bolivia particularly appealed to Che Guevara because it was next to Argentina. He knew that he couldn't start anything in Argentina, but that if he got something or going in Bolivia, they could immediately move into Argentina.

The Argentine military also was following this very closely. The Argentine military was frightened to death and they had no confidence whatsoever in the Bolivian military forces being able to contain this. Once it became known, through intelligence channels, that this was Che Guevara, the Argentine military was almost panic-stricken.

The American ambassador in Argentina at the time was Ed Martin. He was wiring Washington to get as much information as he could. And of course we were trying to calm the Argentine military that we already had this Ranger battalion training unit in Santa Cruz. And the Bolivian army wasn't really doing badly. They kept these people moving; they just couldn't establish themselves anywhere because the Bolivian army was just tenaciously following them and having these sporadic battles with them. But the

Argentines had no confidence at all in the Bolivian army, and they wanted to send in their own contingents.

Ed Martin was under instructions from Washington to cool the Argentinean military. And he was saying, "How the hell can I cool them? They're absolutely convinced that this thing is just going to get out of hand and that the Bolivians don't know how to handle it." And so forth and so on.

And so it was then that I had to go to La Paz and Santa Cruz to see I what was happening and then personally bring that information to Ed Martin in Buenos Aires, to let him know what was going on. So I visited Santa Cruz, and I talked to the trainers and so forth and so on, and I tried to get as much of a feel as I could for what the situation was and what they knew about what was happening. They showed me their training schedules and how many people they had in the field that had gone through this training program. They were building up these battalions to move into the area where these groups were operating. I spent two days in Santa Cruz, and then, with that information, I flew to Buenos Aires and had a long session with Ed Martin and explained to him what was going on. I think I gave him sufficient information that he could use in convincing the Argentineans that the Bolivians had things well in hand.

Q: Now what was the attitude among the Bolivian government when they knew it was Che Guevara? What was their attitude about Che Guevara and about Che Guevara being in their country?

MORRIS: I don't know. I don't know. Walter Guevara was the Bolivian foreign minister at that time, and I don't know what Barrientos's attitude was. I may be cynical, or maybe just having spent so much time dealing with the Bolivians, it seems to me their reaction was: "Gee, this is another way so we can get more money out of the United States. Here we've got Che Guevara in our country, that ought to be worth something." Because they were always looking for an angle to get more money from us.

Q: You don't think they were particularly frightened then, unlike the Argentines.

MORRIS: That's right, I just thought that they looked at it as an opportunity.

Q: And what did they ask for?

MORRIS: Well, they didn't ask for much. I think it was probably our people that insisted that we get these Rangers in there. And of course they said, "Okay, that's a good idea." But I don't think that they ever figured that they couldn't handle it.

Q: That's interesting.

MORRIS: I think that there were these people roaming around, but I don't think there was ever any panic in the Bolivian armed forces about this little group that they couldn't really make contact with.

Q: Do you have any feeling that they tried to frighten us about it?

MORRIS: No, not really, but they used it. They used it in terms of well, you know, here we've got another problem and all this stuff costs money.

Here's a little anecdote that I had almost forgotten about. You know, we had a big meeting in the OAS to announce that Che Guevara was in Bolivia. The Bolivian foreign minister came up, with all kinds of slides and so forth and so on. Now I'm trying to remember exactly when this was and what the sequence was, but I think it was shortly before they killed Che. But here was another example of Cuban aggression in the hemisphere. You know, it was a big deal, and so Walter Guevara came up. And he wanted to present a slide show at the OAS. They had taken all of these pictures and so forth, but he didn't have them in slides, he just had pictures. And the Bolivian ambassador came in and said, "The foreign minister is here and he's got all of these things." And so we called up CIA and we told them, "You're going to have to help us get this stuff into some kind of shape." They weren't very enthusiastic about it. So we sent a lot of it over to them. I can't remember now, but I think maybe the embassy was sending some of this stuff up. They finally put together a slide show for the OAS, but it was not very professional. But they certainly had enough evidence: there were all kinds of pictures of Tanya and all of these people. I mean, they'd had people they'd gotten in, infiltrated them or something, I guess that was it.

Q: Well, I understand that one time they overran a camp when Che was away and picked up some materials. Which, in fact I'm told, touched off an interagency row of some heat between DIA and CIA. Do you remember this?

MORRIS: No, I don't remember it. But anyway we had this big slide show at the OAS -- all the ambassadors from all the Latin American countries and so forth and so on, and Walter Guevara in all his glory, up there as the center of attention. And some of these slides, the CIA had forgotten to even take their identification off them. You know, if anybody examined them closely... I was looking and I was thinking, "Ah, damn it." I mean, here it was, "The CIA" was written right on the edges of some of the slides. Of course, I don't think that any of the people who saw the slide show were interested enough to examine any of the details. Nothing ever came of it, but I thought to myself, "Boy, if somebody ever wanted to say that this was a setup, they would have enough evidence to show that none of this stuff came from Bolivia, it all came from the CIA.

Q: In other words, CIA added its own stuff to the Bolivian stuff.

MORRIS: No, it didn't, but in using the Bolivian stuff, they used their own stock and so forth and so on, and a lot of it was clearly identified as to where it came from, you know. I mean, the edges of the photos and so forth and so on, it was clearly identified. We had paper cutters and we were cutting it off of some of them.

Q: So wait the Bolivians sent their materials to...

MORRIS: To us, to the State Department. And we needed the CIA help or we never would have gotten this stuff into shape so that it could be projected and so forth.

Q: And the help that they were giving you was help in just putting the show together or were they adding materials?

MORRIS: No, they didn't add any materials.

Q: Then how did they get their name on it?

MORRIS: Well, because they were using their stock. Wherever there were reproductions or anything, it was on their paper, and evidently it had their identification on it. But anyway, that was a big event when the Bolivians went public that Che Guevara was in Bolivia, and they had this big meeting at the OAS. And of course there were resolutions to condemn Cuba and so forth and so on. But the Bolivian army kept at it.

Q: How would you characterize our government's reaction to the whole thing, and particularly in terms of the degree of concern or the feeling about the need to take more action or less action compared to Bolivian requests?

MORRIS: I think that there was concern, all right, but there was also a knowledge that we had overwhelming military capability. I was not party to any of it, but I suspect that there were conversations about which Ranger battalions could be available to help the Bolivians and so forth and so on. I think a little bit of those kinds of discussions did go on with the Bolivians that I probably am forgetting now that I was aware of. But it was never very serious, in the sense that I don't think that either we or the Bolivians believed at that time that we had to go that for.

Q: To send in American forces.

MORRIS: Exactly, to send in American forces. I don't think that it ever came to that. I think we were always thinking in terms that there were about sixty people. Now what was the most intriguing to me was how they got into the country in the first place and how they began operating and who they saw and where they were getting the support from and so forth and so on. That was rather interesting and we were sort of admiring how resourceful they were to get started in the first place, to get those sixty people in. Because most of them were non-Bolivian. They used subterfuge, they used disguises, and they paid a few people off, too. They paid a few people off.

Q: Bolivians. Government officials.

MORRIS: Yes, Bolivian government officials. And I think Tanya was sleeping around, too. And there were a couple of people fairly high up in the armed forces that she had some ins with.

Q: Was she Bolivian?

MORRIS: No, I don't think so, I don't think she was Bolivian. I think she was Chilean, but I'm not sure. But she lived in East Germany, or she was married to an East German for a while. I think she was Chilean, though. And I don't know whatever became of all of that in terms of whether anybody tried to pin anything on anybody in Bolivia as a result. I think everybody was just sort of happy that it was all over.

Q: I understand also that we had... [tape ended] You were saying that there were four Cubans with the Bolivian forces.

MORRIS: I think that the agency had put them there. And I guess most of the intelligence that we were getting was coming from them. I think one of them was present at the time, or maybe two of them were present at the time that Che was actually captured and killed. But I didn't ever know very much about how those guys operated. I would see their reports, but I didn't have any knowledge of how they were reporting or who they were working with in the Bolivian armed forces.

Q: Did you ever hear about the five million that the Bolivians asked us for; as sort of a fee for having done-in Che Guevara?

MORRIS: You know, this doesn't stand out in my memory, but it seems to me that someplace in the background there, yes. But the very fact that it doesn't stand out in my memory, I think, indicates how little attention we paid to it. I don't know how that was handled, and of course maybe it was always supposed to be on the hush-hush side. But whatever, whatever. I mean, as I had said to you before, this was just another good way that they could get some more money out of us.

Q: Do you have any feeling about Washington's reaction to how the embassy in Bolivia was handling the crisis?

MORRIS: I think that, for the most part, we thought that they were doing a good job. I know that there was a lot of real friction between SOUTHCOM and the ambassador. The ambassador was always on the military mission. If it wasn't one thing, it was another. And the military mission was always complaining to SOUTHCOM about the ambassador. Every time I made a trip to La Paz, I always had to stop at SOUTHCOM on my way down and hear all their complaints about both Bolivia and Chile.

Q: They were in Panama.

MORRIS: In Panama, that's right. And General Robert Porter, I used to have a session with. And Bob Corrigan was his political officer. Bob Corrigan's around here, too. He might be able to tell you some interesting things about that period. He was later ambassador in Africa someplace.

Q: And this SOUTHCOM was General Robert Porter? He was the commander?

MORRIS: Yes, he was commander of SOUTHCOM at that time. And I used to always have to spend one day in Panama on my way to Bolivia and Chile to hear all of the complaints from Porter and his people about our ambassadors in both countries, because both of the ambassadors had given the military a hard time.

Q: Why?

MORRIS: I don't know why exactly. To me, for the most part, it was all detailed. I never thought there was a lot of real substance to it. I could tell you more about Chile, which we're not talking about, than I could tell you about Bolivia in that regard. But I think there was turf involved to some extent. We didn't even get into Régis Debray and his visit and all of this stuff. I don't know if you've talked to other people about it. Henderson forbade the military mission to go down into the area where the Bolivian army was operating against Che. And he was probably right. Maybe if I had been the ambassador, I would have come to the same conclusion. I think that our general position at the time was that we didn't want to be charged with carrying on any kind of a military operation in a Latin American country. And Henderson, I guess, figured that the only way to keep the military out of there was to just forbid any of them to even go on a visit down there.

Q: But in fact, you said, some were down there.

MORRIS: Well, the people out of Panama were in Santa Cruz, but that was as close as they were. This area that the guerrillas were operating in was about 40 miles southwest of Santa Cruz (I can't remember the name of the area now), and that was the closest that our military ever got to the operation. And of course the people from the military mission were obviously in contact with the Rangers; they went back and forth to Santa Cruz. But that was it, that was it, Henderson wouldn't let them. So I guess, in that regard, there were some disagreements.

But in terms of the State Department view of what was happening in Bolivia at the time, I think that we had no problems with what the embassy was doing. I certainly don't remember that we were ever concerned that the embassy was not on top of it.

Q: And how were Henderson's relations with people in State? I mean, it seems to me that he did not go on to bigger and better things after that. Which seems to me that rather successfully containing what could have been a much larger crisis should have perhaps gotten him a larger reward.

MORRIS: Well, it's hard to say, it's hard to say. I don't really know. Personally, personally, I was never impressed with Henderson's style. But it had nothing to do with the Che Guevara thing. I just thought that he was too damn preachy with the Bolivians. He was always giving the Bolivians lectures about what they should do and what they shouldn't do and so forth and so on. And since we were really their lifeline, they couldn't

protest. But it all seemed to me to be completely unnecessary. I don't think that he endeared himself to any Bolivians.

But, overall, I think that we were carrying out our objectives there. I'm not sure what happened. But you know there was a rumor for awhile that he was going to replace Ed Martin in Buenos Aires, and I don't know whatever happened on that one.

You know, from having lived in State, that there are so many factors and there is so much luck, or bad luck, connected with getting a top position or not getting one that I really don't know.

I understand that it was just luck that Henderson got the ambassador's job in the first place in Bolivia. I mean, Jack Kennedy happened to visit Peru when he was acting. I mean, he was the economic counselor, and there was no ambassador, and the DCM was sick or something, and all of a sudden here was Henderson dealing with the president of the United States who was on a visit. Henderson made a good impression, especially on some of Kennedy's aides, and of course Henderson made a lot of the fact that he was from Massachusetts and so forth and so on. And all of a sudden Henderson was named ambassador to Bolivia. It was the White House that pushed that one.

And so I guess what I'm trying to say is that, within the career system, Henderson had not made a name for himself, at least to the point where he would have been named ambassador if it had not been for the push from the White House. And so maybe he was still viewed, on the career side, as not really deserving another ambassadorship.

Q: You mentioned the Régis Debray thing. What did you remember of that?

MORRIS: Well, only that there was a big flap over it, and that had to do with the military going down. And I can't remember the name of the town where he ended up.

Q: Vallegrande figures in there with Tibereon.

MORRIS: That wasn't the one. There was another town, I just can't remember. He went there, and I guess he did have contact with those people. But then the Bolivians captured him and put him in jail. I just remember that it was during that time that Henderson had forbidden any of the military to go down into that area. There's an awful lot of this I forget now. [Editors note: Debray was arrested in Muyupampa.]

Q: The only other thing that comes to my mind, my last question on the Che Guevara events, is to ask whether from your point of view, the US. government agencies were pretty much in accord on a policy.

MORRIS: As far as I know, yes. You mean in terms of the way we would handle the Che Guevara thing?

Q: Yes, I'm thinking of maybe one saying "Let's put in some troops and clean it up right away," and another saying "Let's keep the involvement very, very small."

MORRIS: I don't think so. I don't think there was any really major disagreement in this regard. I think that everybody came to the conclusion that this was a small group, that it had the potential of great danger, but that certainly the situation as it was developing was not clear enough for us to be coming to any kind of conclusion. Now that didn't mean that we were not getting ready, and I think that there were Rangers training in Panama at the time, and the possibility of us intervening certainly was not discarded. But I think that the agency and the ambassador were working very closely together, and we felt that we had a good enough feel for what was happening, and we were hopeful that the training of the Bolivian Rangers would be sufficient.

Q: So everybody really wanted to keep it small.

MORRIS: As far as I know, I think so. I don't think that there was any push from any quarter. I certainly don't remember that there was a push from any quarter to blow it up.

Q: This is part two of an interview with Patrick Morris. It is now November 12, 1990. I'd like to ask you about your background: your parents, your hometown, your education, and your early days in general.

MORRIS: As I mentioned to you, right now I'm writing a history of my hometown. And one of the reasons -- not the only reason -- but one of the reasons I'm doing it is because my grandfather was a founder, or one of the first residents of Anaconda, Montana, from whence I come.

I'm interested in it for a number of reasons, because I think in many ways it epitomizes the United States in the twentieth century.

My hometown was founded in 1883. It's a copper town. It's a copper-smelting town. My grandfather was an Irish immigrant, who arrived in Philadelphia in about 1874 or '75, and found his way to the West via Nevada and Colorado, and arrived in Butte, Montana, in 1882. The Butte mines at that time were primarily silver mines, but they had struck large, very high-grade veins of copper. There was a mining syndicate in the process of expanding, and they decided that they needed to build smelters. They looked for a spot where there was sufficient water to treat the ores. They decided on the Warm Springs Creek in the Upper Deer Lodge Valley, which was about 25, 26 miles from Butte. My grandfather, I'm not sure exactly when in this process he arrived in Butte, but he was working for a stonemason who had a contract to help lay the foundations and build the smokestacks for the new smelter. And so, in 1883, he was one of the beginning migration of working people to Anaconda. And he participated in building the smelter. He built and opened a boardinghouse. He married a single Irish woman who had arrived with her brothers, also looking for work, and they ran the boardinghouse in Anaconda, I guess probably starting in 1885.

Q: Now in 1885, that's pretty much what we call Wild West these days, isn't it?

MORRIS: Well, you know that area and the Rockies in general was considered the last frontier. And Montana was pretty much Indian and buffalo country and trapping country right into the mid-1880s, 1885, 1886. I think that the time that they use for the end of the buffalo era was about 1883, and that was exactly the year that Anaconda was founded. And another interesting fact was that the Northern Pacific Railroad, the line from the West and the line from the East met about, oh, 40 miles from Anaconda.

Q: Really. That's the golden spike.

MORRIS: That's the golden spike, except that they didn't drive a golden spike. The golden spike, of course, was driven on the Union Pacific, at Promontory Point in Utah, when the two met. But they drove a spike. They took the first spike that had been driven in St. Paul, Minnesota, when they began to build the line, they pulled out that spike and they brought it with them for the ceremony.

Interestingly enough, Anaconda was founded in June 1883, and that last spike was driven in September 1883. The railroad provided free transportation for anybody in the area who wanted to come and witness -- they needed a crowd, of course. And so they nailed benches on flatcars and loaded them on with the citizens of Butte and Helena and the town of Deer Lodge, and drove them to Gold Creek, which was the point where the two lines met up. Among those who were at the celebration was ex-President Grant and the English historian, Bryce, and Sitting Bull was there. So it was quite a crowd.

Henry Villard was the financial wizard who put together the financing for the Northern Pacific. Of course, like most of these railroads did, it went through a number of top managements. It reminds me a bit of what we see on all of these leveraged buyouts in the financial world today. That's what happened in many of the railroad deals, so that there were a lot of different general managements before they finally ended. And Henry Villard was the last for the Northern Pacific.

Q: Was your grandfather a stonemason, was that his trade?

MORRIS: No, he was not. That's what he was doing when he went to Anaconda. I'm not sure, but in Ireland he was a drover. I think that he, until he got to Butte, had teams of horses, and I think he was probably in the freighting business.

Q: What about your father then, it was second-generation in...?

MORRIS: Second-generation, born in Anaconda. Born in 1888. He grew up there. My grandfather left Anaconda in the '90s and lost a lot of money in silver. He had a silver mine in another town west of Anaconda, Granite, and then there was the silver panic of 1896 and he lost his shirt. And then he homesteaded in the Flathead country in Montana.

Then my grandmother died, and my father and his sister were put in boarding schools. My father went to Gonzaga, in Spokane. At that time, it was just a Jesuit school and they took people of all ages. And of course he was just eight or ten years old, and so he was in a Jesuit boarding school for a number of years. And my aunt was put in another mission school in Montana, at St. Ignatius.

And then I guess my father came back to Anaconda in his teens and was a local baseball star. And so when he graduated from high school, he became a professional baseball player in the minor leagues. I guess this was probably around 1908, 1909. Since he was born in 1888, he would have been twenty years old in 1908. I imagine it was about that time that he began playing minor-league ball. He went to the Chicago White Sox, in those years, and he only lasted a season. He was a left-handed pitcher and he threw his arm out, and he went back to the minors. I think his baseball career ended shortly after that.

And then he just knocked around for a number of years. He had bad eyesight, and so he didn't get into the army in World War I, but he was in the Merchant Marine. And then after the war, he worked on the coaching staff for baseball players at West Point. From there, he went to Florida and so forth and so on. He got word that my grandfather was ailing, and so he went back to Anaconda in 1923.

He had met my mother in Florida. My mother was from England, born and raised in England. They were both working in Florida, in Palm Beach.

But he left Florida to go back because of his father's bad health. I think that my grandfather lasted about a year after he came back. My grandfather had built a lot of houses in Anaconda. That was what he did, he built houses and then rented them or sold them. He was a small-time construction man. And then my father just took over the properties when he went back. When my grandfather died, the properties were divided between my aunt and my father.

Q: And what about your school days? Did you go to school, then, in Anaconda?

MORRIS: I went to school in Anaconda, all through high school. I went to parochial schools through the fourth grade, and then I went to public schools after that.

Then, right out of high school, I went into the Army. I graduated in 1943. I don't know whether you're familiar with the Army Specialized Training Program. This was a program that the Army had for people who reached certain academic standards, and the idea was that if the war dragged on, that they would need people with certain kinds of skills and academic achievement to do certain kinds of military jobs. So I was put into engineering. Then the program was terminated in 1944, and I was put into the infantry. So I went into an infantry division.

Q: Were you an enlisted man?

MORRIS: Yes, right. I was a private and I never got above a PFC. We were shipped overseas. After joining an infantry division, we went to Europe.

I was captured by the Germans in the Battle of the Bulge, and so I spent about five months as a prisoner of war. Then after the war, I was discharged. I was discharged with a medical discharge. I came back from that prison camp experience suffering malnutrition and I had a lot of intestinal problems, so I was discharged early.

I got out in September 1945, and I came back here to Washington in January 1946 to go to Georgetown. So I went to Georgetown.

Q: School of Foreign Service?

MORRIS: School of Foreign Service. I had had some academic credits from my time in the Army Specialized Training Program, which I used, and they had an accelerated program at Georgetown at that time -- all the universities in the United States, in fact, went on the quarter system and they taught the year around, so that it was an accelerated degree program. So I got my degree in two and a half years. I graduated in September of 1948.

And I went to Mexico. I had taken Spanish at Georgetown, and I passed the oral. I didn't have any trouble passing the oral examination, but I knew that I couldn't speak a word of Spanish. And I thought, you know, I really have to learn the language. And so I decided to go to Mexico. I went to Georgetown, of course, on the G.I. Bill, and I still had some time left on the bill, so I decided that I'd do some graduate work in Mexico City and learn Spanish. And that's what I did.

And while I was there, I got a job with the U.S. Department of Agriculture that had a program there to eradicate hoof and mouth disease. It had already been functioning about two years when I arrived in Mexico, and, at that time, it rivaled the Marshall Plan in terms of expenditures. This program was spending the huge sum, at that time, of two million dollars a month, and that was considered an awful lot of money in those days. The Marshall Plan had begun about the same time and obviously, when it got cranked up, it spent a lot more than two million dollars a month, but the Agriculture Department's hoof and mouth program was a large foreign assistance effort at the time.

I worked on that program for a year, and I spent the entire time outside of Mexico City, out in the rural areas, because it had become a vaccination program and we were vaccinating all cloven-hoofed animals. That, theoretically, included deer and elk and anything else, but obviously we were not vaccinating any of those. But all of the sheep, all of the cattle, all of the pigs, all of the goats. There was a zone which stretched across Mexico, and all animals within that zone had to be vaccinated. So it was a very extensive program and we had a very large payroll. And I was hired as an administrative clerk.

Q: What was the United States' interest in this? Was it simply an aid effort; or was it because we import...?

MORRIS: No, no, there was one hundred percent self-interest in this, in that the United States is one of the few countries in the world that has never had a problem with hoof and mouth disease. There have been several small outbreaks in the United States, but the remedy that was always used in the United States was slaughter. It's a drastic remedy because animals, whether they have the disease or not, are slaughtered. All cloven-hoofed animals within a certain area are slaughtered in a slaughter program. And it was always believed that such drastic methods were necessary because the disease, if it becomes widespread, will, while not killing the animals, put them in such bad physical condition that they don't serve either for meat or for milk or for anything else. And so there was great fear in the United States that, with Mexico being so close, the hoof and mouth disease would eventually find its way into the United States. So our motive was to keep the disease out of the United States. And we succeeded and, in the process, invented a vaccine which could stem the spread of the disease. I don't know what the situation is today in Mexico, but I have not heard that anybody considers Mexico a threat anymore in terms of hoof and mouth disease in the United States.

Q: And how long were you with the program?

MORRIS: Just one year. One year. I was interested in going to South America, and I didn't see any possibility of doing that with that program, so after a year, I quit. I still had some G.I. Bill left, and so I went to San Marcos University in Lima, on the G.I. Bill, to finish up. My thought was that it would give me a good opportunity to see South America, and also I thought that I might be able to get a job while I was there. I got a degree from San Marcos. By that time, I had learned to speak Spanish.

Q: What kind? Was it a bachelors degree?

MORRIS: A bachelor's degree from San Marcos.

Q: You also had a bachelors degree from Georgetown, so you have two bachelors.

MORRIS: I have two bachelor's degrees, exactly. There was no such thing as a master's program at that time in Peru, and so I got another bachelor's. And I wrote a thesis, in Spanish, as part of the requirements for the degree.

And while I was there, I got a job with the old Institute of Inter-American Affairs, which was a wartime creation and was first headed by Nelson Rockefeller and had to do with providing technical assistance in the areas of health, agriculture, and education. I went to work in Lima for the Institute of Inter-American Affairs agriculture program.

Q: Before we go on, let me just clarify a couple of things in my own mind about the Institute of Inter-American Affairs. Was it a federal program and was it linked to the State Department or to some other part of the federal government?

MORRIS: Yes. The Institute of Inter-American Affairs was a very ingenious organizational arrangement. In a way, it was sort of typical of the New Deal approach to government. It was a Delaware corporation, wholly owned by the United States government. As a corporation, it had a freedom of action which gave it a great deal of flexibility. Before the Institute was set up, its predecessor was the Office for the Coordinator of Inter-American Affairs, and the coordinator of Inter-American Affairs at that time was Nelson Rockefeller. And Nelson Rockefeller had some of their corporate lawyers devise an instrument to undertake a program in Latin America that would help the Latin American countries increase their food production. Because, with the German blockade of international shipping and their submarine warfare, the trade between North and South America had become fairly precarious. So U.S. interest was, first of all, to exploit the natural resources of Latin America and channel them into the war effort, and, at the same time, help these nations improve their ability to survive the war, through improved food production, improved sanitary conditions, and, later, actually toward the war's end, they added the third area which was improving general education in these countries. So that program had been underway since 1942.

I arrived in Lima in 1950 and was hired in 1951. I worked for the old agricultural servicio, and then the Point Four Program was instituted, the old Worldwide Technical Assistance Program was instituted. And the Institute of Inter-American Affairs, which had of course been operating in technical assistance before the Point Four Program, was included, was sort of folded-in to the Point Four Program. The Institute then became the regional arm in Latin America of the Point Four Program. And, at that time, I was made administrative assistant to the director of Point Four in Peru. From there, I was transferred to Ecuador as program officer for the program there.

Now, organizationally, what had happened, the Point Four Program became part of the State Department. But it had a separate personnel system, so I was blanketed-in under the State Department at that time. And the rest of my career was as part of this organization, which changed names regularly over the years but had a continuity going all the way back to 1942.

Q: Now this organization would eventually become AID, would it not, the Agency for International Development?

MORRIS: That's correct. I might interject here that I've written a history of technical assistance in Peru. And, as part of the background for that, I give fairly extensive treatment to the Institute of Inter-American Affairs and how it came into being and so forth and so on.

Q: What is the title of the book?

MORRIS: It's called Technical Assistance in Peru: 1943-1953. And obviously it was after 1953 that the Institute of Inter-American Affairs metamorphosed itself three or four times to become eventually AID in 1961. And then, at that time, the Kennedy administration changed the name and the organization of the organization that was

already in place, which was ICA. And ICA, of course, was the offspring of FOA, which came out of the Marshall Plan. So what happened was that the economic assistance programs in Europe after World War II finally absorbed the technical assistance programs, President Truman's old Point Four Program, which had earlier absorbed the Institute of Inter-American Affairs, and they together became FOA and then ICA and finally AID in 1961.

Q: Which is the organization that remains today. I mean, the same name and general objectives.

MORRIS: That's right, and it's been in and out of the State Department over the years.

Q: What were the Institute's objectives in Peru?

MORRIS: The objectives in Peru were to increase food production as much as possible, to the point of self-sufficiency. This, during the war. And, after the war, it was still to help the Peruvians have an efficient agricultural system, primarily for food products. And, in the area of health, it was to bring the standards of public health and sanitation up to contemporary standards. And, in the area of education, it was rather general, but it was to improve primary and secondary education in the country.

Q: During the time that you were there, what kind of marks would you give it for its accomplishments?

MORRIS: Well, in agriculture, it was an outstanding program. By any measurement, the agricultural program in Peru did an outstanding job. It was responsible for helping the Peruvians establish a Ministry of Agriculture. And it helped them increase potato production fivefold. It helped introduce modern agricultural methods: the use of pesticides, the use of heavy machinery and so forth and so on, which allowed them to increase their cotton production, although cotton per se was not a food crop. After the end of the war, the emphasis was just on general agricultural production, although cottonseed itself was used for cattle feed. And the organizational structure that was developed in Peru was used as a model for many years in other Latin American countries, especially the extension service and the tie-in between extension and research.

In health, it was also a very good program. It may not have reached the same high levels to be considered outstanding, but it was a very good and a very effective program. The health service carried out some functions that made it indispensable for the Peruvian government. For example, they had an industrial hygiene program that took care of all of the worker compensation programs. The industrial hygiene program, I think, was probably the outstanding program of the health servicio. But it did other first-rate work in anti-malaria programs and cysticercosis and some of the tropical diseases along the Amazon. And it also helped the Peruvian government set up a system of regional health centers and a regional administrative structure for providing public health care throughout the country, which, before the health servicio existed, was absent.

I think, of the three programs, the education was the least successful. There was some good work done in the highlands, in the Altiplano in Peru among the Indians, but that was not given the priority and the emphasis that it deserved over the years. There was a series of directors of that education program who had differing views on how to set priorities and so forth. And the Peruvian government itself never made up its mind as to where it wanted to put its emphasis in education. And, with the changes in government and so forth, you didn't have the continuity of priority and emphasis in the education program that you had in both the agriculture and the health programs. But, overall, those programs were very, very successful.

Unfortunately, today there's not a vestige of any of them. That is because of the state of Peru today and the turmoil that it's gone through ever since the military dictatorship of General Velasco, which wiped out all vestiges of the past -- the good and the bad. You know, that was the government that nationalized most of the mines, that nationalized most of the large corporate agricultural enterprises. For example, the Grayson Company sugar plantations and so forth and so on. It was a Marxist-oriented government, and in the process it destroyed all of the administrative and governmental infrastructure that had been set up to support farming, for example. And I don't know how the health services survived that period, but I suspect that they were as badly hit as all of the agricultural services were.

Q: When did it come to power and was it a military government?

MORRIS: It was a coup, and I think that it was 1968 that it came to power.

Q: Sounds right. I mean, I was in Brazil when it happened.

MORRIS: Yes, I think it was 1968 when it came to power, and it was a military coup, but they had very definite Marxist leanings.

Now there is somebody in the State Department who knows that government very well, and in fact he got his prominence by writing some very, very complimentary things about that particular government, that's Luigi Einaudi. I'm not sure whether he was a graduate student or whether he was already a professor at some university, but he wrote very complimentary things. In fact, I think he probably wrote a book about that period of Peru, and he gained some prominence at the time as a result of it. On the basis of the prominence that he got from that book, he went into the State Department in INR. '

Q: What were the conditions in Peru when you were there -- social and political and economic?

MORRIS: Well, they were typical of the whole Andean region. There was a small, wealthy elite, a growing middle class, and a very large Indian population which was in abject poverty. Nevertheless, the country had lots of natural resources, especially mineral resources, and was increasing annual production at a fairly rapid rate. So that you had an acceleration in the growth of the middle class and a great improvement in standards of

living of the middle class, but you always had a tremendous drag of this very large, poor Indian population, primarily in the highland areas. And that was a problem which came to be too much for successive governments. And of course the Velasco government decided to take radical steps to try to change that, and they succeeded not in improving the situation but probably worsening it.

Q:· What kind of life did the Indians lead? I presume it was subsistence agriculture?

MORRIS: Subsistence agriculture.

Q:· Did they own their own land?

MORRIS: No, most of them were tenants on large haciendas. And of course the thought always was that you had this tremendous, unexploited Amazon Basin, and that rather than emphasizing land reform per se, the idea would be to open up these lands and then encourage migration from the highlands to the subtropics, the area that is now the big coca-growing area in Peru. But the Tingo Maria area and the Ucayali River Valley, all of this actually was opened up for agricultural exploitation in the years that I had something to do with the country. This was where we were helping them build new roads into these areas and where we were helping them with developing agricultural techniques, and we were helping them do research on the kinds of crops that would go into these areas. But, for the most part, the life of the Indian was one of a subsistence farmer.

Q:· Were they involved in the political process at all?

MORRIS: Only very marginally. In most places, they didn't vote. No, I would say that only as they migrated to the cities did they begin to have some influence -- only through sheer numbers of course -- and as problems for the cities, primarily Lima, because that was where the largest migration moved to.

Q:· Were they mostly Spanish-speaking?

MORRIS: No. In the sierra, I think most of them didn't speak Spanish. When they moved to the coast, they learned Spanish.

Q:· And what about the government at the time, was it popularly elected, was it stable?

MORRIS: Yes. As in most of these Latin American countries, there was sort of a trade-off changeover between military governments and popularly elected governments. Most of the time that I was there, there was a military dictatorship under Manuel Odria. That government was not repressive, but there was no functioning legislative process during that time. Odria had been preceded by popularly elected presidents and he was succeeded by popularly elected presidents. Then after two or three turns -- after Odria, came Prado; and after Prado, came Belaúnde; and after Belaúnde, came Velasco -- there was a military coup and Velasco took over and so your democratic processes were interrupted.

Q: What was the size of the program?

MORRIS: You know, they were ridiculously tiny. For all of Latin America, we had twenty-two million dollars. I remember the figures. For Peru, let's say, we had nine hundred thousand dollars. The agricultural servicio got the largest amount, it got two hundred thousand dollars. We used to make grants to the servicio, and those grants were matched by the Peruvian government. This was the servicio system. The grants were matched by the local government usually at two to one or three to one. In the case of the agricultural servicio, it was at three to one. The health servicio was at two and a half to one. The education servicio was at two to one. The agricultural servicio got two hundred thousand dollars; the health servicio got a hundred and fifty thousand, maybe; and the education servicio got a hundred thousand. Then the local government matched these figures and, on the basis of that, they hired staff and bought commodities and so forth to run their programs. But these programs, for the really tiny sums of money, were very, very effective, and they had a tremendous influence on the Peruvian governmental officials in these particular areas. The servicio was really a pioneering organization which helped break new ground for new ideas and so forth in the areas that they were operating.

Q: Why, in your opinion, did the United States do it at all?

MORRIS: I think, in all of our programs, there was always a good deal of self-interest, but there was also sort of a missionary spirit there, which was to share what we had in the United States, to help other countries, I think a general philanthropic spirit as well as the spirit of self-interest.

Q: And self-interest, to what does that translate in this case?

MORRIS: Well, you know, I used to write these congressional presentations every year in which we had to justify our programs. Right after the war, in the early years, we used to emphasize the continuing strategic importance of Latin America to the United States. And then the other thing was the need for stability and prosperity in these countries, so that stability in the United States would not be threatened. So those were the general areas of self-interest that we emphasized.

Q: From there you went on to Ecuador that was the next post.

MORRIS: This was more of the same. I mean, the old Institute of Inter-American Affairs had had an active program in Ecuador as well.

Q: In what years?

MORRIS: Well, I arrived in 1953, from Peru, and I was there '53 to '55. And we were doing the same kind of work in Ecuador that we had done in Peru, in the same general areas: education, health, and agriculture. And pretty much with the same effect. Actually, the health program in Ecuador was the star, was the outstanding program. They had a potable water program that was very effective in providing drinking water and sanitary

sewerage to innumerable towns throughout Ecuador that wouldn't have gotten them otherwise because the government had no set-up to help these towns. So that particular segment of the health program was tremendously effective. And the health program was also involved in improving the hospitals and nursing and nutrition and so forth and so on.

And then, from Ecuador, I came back to the States. I was Ecuador-Peru desk officer for what at that time had become ICA, which of course was still the same organization, but we were now part of the combined Marshall Plan/Worldwide Technical Assistance Programs under ICA. And I was in Washington from 1955 until 1958. Most of the time, I was Peru-Ecuador desk officer. About the last six months, I moved on to another job working on a special assignment for the deputy administrator of the Worldwide Program.

And, from there, I went to Bolivia as program officer.

Q: Now we've done your Bolivian career in good detail. Let me just go back. I'd like to talk about the last job that you mentioned, but before we do, tell me a little bit about Ecuador and particularly Ecuador vis-a-vis Peru. And, again, in terms of politics, social conditions, economic conditions.

MORRIS: Right. Well, Ecuador, socio-economically, was quite similar to Peru -- a large Indian population with some of the same problems. But there was one major difference: Ecuador was not a mineral producer. There was no mineral exportation out of Ecuador, and so you didn't have quite the industrial base in Ecuador that you did in Peru. But, by the same token, you had a much richer agriculture in Ecuador than in Peru. The highlands in Ecuador produced practically everything that the country needed for self-sufficiency, and then the coast provided the other things, such as rice. So I think that, overall, the conditions of the poor in Ecuador were probably better than they were in Peru.

In fact, of the three Andean countries that I lived in and served in, I think that the poverty in Peru was the most acute. I think that the poverty in Bolivia probably was more acute than Peru before the revolution of 1952, but, afterwards, I think that the poverty in Bolivia was alleviated by that revolution.

There was never any basic upswelling in Ecuador, any real revolutionary change in Ecuador. And I suspect that because, for the most part, the large, glaring differences in wealth were not quite so obvious, I don't think that you had the kinds of resentments that made Bolivia explode, for example, and finally tore Peru apart. Ecuador was always a little bit more stable.

And one of the things that characterized Ecuador, from before the time that I arrived, and was one of its hallmarks was its very sound financial situation. Ecuador, for some reason or other, had a fairly sound fiscal management over the years, so that you had limited inflation at a time when inflation in many other Latin American countries was soaring. You had some inflation and consequent devaluation of money, but much less in Ecuador than either Peru or Bolivia.

Q: And what about the government?

MORRIS: Ecuador, like both Peru and Bolivia, had traded off between elected governments and military governments. When I arrived, it was in a period when there were elected governments.

Galo Plaza was elected in 1948, and he was the first elected president since before the Second World War. He was in office one term and was succeeded by Velasco, who had been president twice before, I think, but he was thrown out by the military the earlier time that he was in. But he was elected in 1952, and when I arrived in 1953, he had been president a year. He served out his term and was succeeded by Camilo Ponce, who also served out his term and was succeeded by Carlos Julio Arosemena, who was thrown out after about three years, I guess, by the military.

So that you had a period there, in the '50s, when Ecuador was being governed by popularly elected governments. But obviously the amount of popular participation was really limited to the middle and upper classes, for the most part. Although, on the coast, there was a lot of participation among the lower economic groups, primarily because the organization of the political parties were utilizing those groups to swell their ranks, and they were doing it very effectively. It wasn't until much later in Ecuador that you saw that kind of organization in the sierra among the Indians. It did come, but it was at least fifteen years later than on the coast.

Q: In the time that you were involved in the affairs of both Peru and Ecuador (which is sort of three tours as I gather one in each country and one in Washington), were our relations cordial, easy with the governments involved?

MORRIS: For the most part, they were very good. But in 1955 or maybe late 1954, we began to have trouble with both Peru and Ecuador over the limitations on international waters. The United States, of course, continued to insist that international waters did not extend beyond three miles. And the Peruvians and the Ecuadorians and the Chileans got together and declared a two-hundred-mile territorial water limit. And I guess, of the three countries, Ecuador was the most fierce in enforcing it, primarily because they had just started a small tuna industry and the tuna boats from the United States were fishing off of their coast within what they considered their territorial waters. So that there were very serious problems with Ecuador over this continuing violation, as far as Ecuador was concerned, of U.S. fishermen in their territorial waters. There was some of that in Peru, but I think much less than in Ecuador. And that problem continued to fester for twenty years, and it put an edge on our good relations, although I would say that it did not hinder too much the work that we were involved in. I'm talking about the technical assistance and, later, the economic assistance programs that we had in those countries.

Q: Were there issues with American companies?

MORRIS: Yes, in Peru, of course, the IPC (International Petroleum Company) was always a terrible problem and whether or not they had really the rights to take petroleum

out of those fields. And, of course, again, it was the Velasco government, but the IPC problem had been festering for years and it had caused some fairly serious strains in our relations with Peru at various times.

Q: In other words, would some factions in the government or the population say, "Yes, it's a good thing," and others say, "No, its Yankee exploitation," this kind of argument?

MORRIS: No, it was almost unanimous that IPC was exploiting Peruvian natural resources and that Peru was not being compensated sufficiently for the great earnings that IPC was taking out of Peru.

Q: And so, when you were there, it no longer had many, if any, friends, in other words.

MORRIS: That's correct. That's correct, and IPC was doing everything that it possibly could to improve its image in the eyes of the Peruvian populace, and they were paying the government handsomely to try to keep title to those properties. They finally lost them. They finally lost them, but the bad blood that was created by this long difference was certainly a major problem in U.S.-Peruvian relations.

There was nothing like that in Ecuador, I think, other than the fisheries problem. There were no big U.S. private company... Actually, there were a number. You had the electric company in Guayaquil, which was a privately owned American company, and the brewery was American-owned. And I think that the cement company was owned by the same company that owned the brewery. But, as far as I know, there were never any real problems with those. There may have been small ones, but they never became national problems.

Q: Now I'd like to go back to the last position that you mentioned, after you were the desk officer for these two countries. Could you tell me, again, what the title of that was?

MORRIS: I was a special assistant to the deputy administrator of ICA, but a special assistant to undertake a specific task. That was to aid the regional directors in answering the evaluation reports that had been made of various ICA activities and missions in various countries throughout the world.

Q: Tell me the years, before we go any further`

MORRIS: It was the latter part of 1957 until about June 1958. ICA had undertaken to evaluate its programs throughout the world. Then, of course, once these evaluations were made, there was a need for the regional directors to focus on these evaluations and to make determinations as to the validity of the recommendations made and indicate the actions that they would take as a result of these evaluations. And it turned out, of course, that, in most cases, the evaluations were made and then there was no follow-up by the regional directors. So the deputy administrator decided that he had to do something about this. And his answer was to get a couple of assistants. I was one, and there was one other, and we were to work with the regional directors on whatever evaluations reports were in

existence and to help them do a systematic follow-up on the evaluations and indicate the kinds of actions that were being taken as a result of the evaluations. I was on that job for about eight months, I guess, and then, from there, I went to Bolivia.

Q: So then, after your Bolivian tour which we've talked about, where did you go?

MORRIS: I went to Venezuela. I was named AID director in Venezuela. During my tour in Bolivia, I went as program officer and then I became deputy director of the program. And then I left and I was named director of the program in Venezuela. In fact, at the time, we didn't have a program in Venezuela, so I was named director to initiate an AID program. Because, by this time, AID had come into existence and the Alliance for Progress was just beginning, and it was decided that Venezuela should participate in this program, so I was named director and went to Venezuela.

Q: Had there been no program, no Inter-American...?

MORRIS: No. Well, the Institute of Inter-American Affairs had, from time to time, provided some assistance in health in Venezuela, but it was always very limited.

Q: Point Four type thing? Sporadic?

MORRIS: That's right. But it was always very limited because of the connections between the Rockefeller family and Venezuela. There was an organization called AIA, which was a Rockefeller organization.

Q: Private, you mean.

MORRIS: A private organization, which was doing many of the same things that the Institute of Inter-American Affairs was doing. Because of the Rockefeller holdings in Venezuela, and because of Nelson Rockefeller's personal interests in Venezuela, AIA had programs similar to the kinds that the Institute of Inter-American Affairs had in other countries. And, also, because Venezuela was very prosperous as a result of its petroleum exports, it was never felt that we could justify a technical assistance program in Venezuela. So that it was only with the advent of the Alliance for Progress that we initiated activity there.

Venezuela...I spent five years there, almost five, and it was, I guess, the highlight of my career. It was very satisfying for me. There was lots of money available from Washington. There was a great deal of interest in helping the new democratically elected government of Romulo Betancourt. The relations between the two countries couldn't have been better.

The Alliance for Progress was of assistance symbolically as much as it was of assistance economically. The full support of the United States government for the newly elected administration of Betancourt and his AD Party (Acción Democrática) was crucial to his staying in power.

Before he came to power, as you probably remember, there had been the Pérez Jiménez military dictatorship for the previous ten years. It was overthrown. There was an interim government set up for about eight or nine months while elections were organized and held.

But, during that time, there was practically chaos in the country, because the military was dismantled, destroyed. The police force, which really had been an internal security mechanism of the Pérez Jiménez government, was destroyed. So that, for a time, the Boy Scouts were directing traffic in Caracas, because there was no organization to handle these kinds of things.

Even though the high commanders in the military had all been either exiled or put in jail or driven out of the country, the military itself was still a factor, and there were large numbers in the military who had no like whatsoever for the AD government. And there were plenty of people who remembered that Betancourt at one time had been a member of the Communist Party, and were very suspicious that he was going to nationalize private property. So that there were all kinds of right-wing plots to get rid of him. Also, there were other dictators in the area who were aiding in some of these plots, primarily Rafael Trujillo in the Dominican Republic.

And so you had a situation where Betancourt and his government were threatened from the right, but they were also equally threatened from the left. Because you had Fidel Castro in Cuba, and he had his eyes on this wonderful prize of unlimited access to petroleum. So he was aiding and abetting the left and leftist elements in Venezuela, and in Betancourt's own party, to take action which would align Venezuela with Cuba.

So that, from the U.S. point of view, it was crucial that this democratically elected government maintain itself and maintain itself friendly to the United States. So I think that the Kennedy administration read the situation exactly right and made the decision to publicly embrace the Betancourt government and to do everything possible to make sure that everybody knew that we were going to support it.

So that the AID program was a symbol of that support. It was not the only symbol of the support, but it was one. We also had large military missions there. But the reason for those military missions, as much as providing the kinds of military assistance that we usually do, was to send the very negative message to the military people that under no circumstances would we stand by and see the military take over the government.

I sat in many a staff meeting in which the ambassador lectured the chiefs of the various military missions there to make sure that the people that they were working with understood what the policy was.

Q:· What would we have done? Would we have intervened with force?

MORRIS: I don't think that we would have intervened, but we would not have recognized a military government.

Q: We would have withheld recognition.

MORRIS: That's right, we would not have recognized a military government, and we would have made it very, very difficult. We would have withdrawn any assistance that we were providing, and we would have made it very difficult for them to operate.

Q: Were there any efforts by Fidel Castro and the Cubans to overthrow Betancourt?

MORRIS: Oh, yes, there were, and they were very serious ones. These efforts were continuing. There were a number of specific instances. In fact, it was the Venezuelans, under Betancourt, that had Cuba thrown out of the Organization of American States on the basis of a large arms cache that was found on the beach in Venezuela and was traced directly to Castro. That arms cache was to go to guerrillas already operating in the highlands both east and west of Caracas.

So the entire time that Betancourt was in power he was threatened -- first from the right and then from the left.

Right after he was inaugurated, he was on his way to make a speech at the *Círculo Militar* and his car was firebombed. His military aide was killed. The minister of defense, who was sitting next to him in the back seat, was injured. And Betancourt himself suffered very serious burns on his hands, which he, to the time of his death, never really got over. He always had to have some kind of treatment for the burns on his hands. That was the work of Trujillo, but it was part of a larger effort within Venezuela to get rid of Betancourt.

And then, after Betancourt really stamped out for all practical purposes the scheming from the right, in terms of any effective threat from the right of taking over the government, he still, throughout his period in office, had to work against very active guerrilla and urban terrorist efforts to take over the government.

Q: Were these mostly right wing?

MORRIS: No, this was all from the left. All of the time that I lived in Venezuela, there was guerrilla activity in the rural areas and there was terrorism in the cities being financed by money from the Italian Communist Party and from Russia, coming through Cuba. These were serious, these were very serious attempts to get control of the tremendous petroleum resources in Venezuela.

Q: It piques my curiosity -- why the Italian Communist Party particularly?

MORRIS: I don't really know. I don't really know. It may very well have been that the Russians were using the Italian Communist Party at that time as a conduit. But I don't

know. The only thing that I ever knew was that the Italian Communist Party was very active in financing an awful lot of the activities that were going on in Venezuela.

Q: In general what was the scope of our program there? It was large apparently.

MORRIS: Yes, in dollar terms, in the years that I was there, I was able to obligate more resources in Venezuela than we had obligated in any country in the hemisphere. I was up to something like twenty-five million dollars before I left Venezuela, in terms of programs that we had gotten underway. Large housing projects. It was primarily in the area of urban development that we put in vast amounts of money. I left before you could really see very much result from those programs, but we helped get them underway. They were all moving along very well when I left. But, yes, I think it was in the neighborhood of twenty-three to twenty-eight million dollars that we had obligated for mostly housing projects.

Q: And in Venezuela there surely were American business interests.

MORRIS: Oh, yes, large businesses. But, again, mostly petroleum. You know, at that time there was Standard Oil of New Jersey, there was Gulf, there was Mobil, there was ARCO, all, of course, large petroleum companies with large staffs in Caracas.

Q: What was the feeling in the country toward them?

MORRIS: Well, it was interesting. I think the petroleum companies had fairly good relations with the Venezuelans. And, since they were such a large element, there were so many Venezuelans employed by the petroleum companies, who made good money, that I never ever sensed the kind of resentment against the petroleum companies in Venezuela that I did against IPC in Peru.

That was a strange situation, really, the IPC situation in Peru. You know, that was another Standard Oil company. It was not owned directly, it was owned through a Canadian company, but it was common knowledge that it was part of the Standard Oil empire. The Rockefellers recognized it and were very concerned about it, and I think Nelson Rockefeller made efforts at various times to make sure that IPC did everything it could to try to improve its image in Peru.

You know, Betancourt had been a member of the Communist Party in his student days, and certainly AD was a leftist party. But the attitude toward the oil companies was that they would eventually be nationalized, but it would be done in a way which would be acceptable to the international community. And that was through just compensation and so forth and so on, and that was the way it happened. That was the way it happened.

Q: When did it happen?

MORRIS: Let's see.

Q: Not while you were there.

MORRIS: No, I guess about 1970 or so. I'm not exactly sure, but it didn't happen while I was there. [It was 1976]

Q: What was the degree of political participation in the population? We've talked about the other countries, class structures and various economic divisions.

MORRIS: Well, you know, Venezuela was quite different than the other Andean countries that I had worked in. First of all, it had a large land mass but a fairly small population. Most of the Venezuelans had, in one way or another, benefited to some extent from their petroleum wealth. You didn't find the grinding poverty in Venezuela that you found in the Andes, even though there was tremendous poverty, in judging it from a U.S. point of view.

One of the things that the Betancourt government did that we gave very enthusiastic support to was funding programs in the rural areas. First of all, he instituted a land reform program. He encouraged small-town municipal development activities, which meant improved water supplies and road building and agricultural credits and so forth and so on. We supported all of these things and worked with them in these areas.

There was a tremendous movement, a rural-to-urban migration in Venezuela, which had started prior to the Betancourt years but accelerated during the time that he was in power and later as well, which turned Caracas into the same kind of thing that you saw in Rio -- the shanty towns all around the city. On all the hillsides above the city were the shanty towns. But, nevertheless, the poverty in those shanty towns was not as suffocating as it was in the Andean countries.

Q: And, despite the petroleum industry, it was basically an agricultural country, is that correct? In terms of population?

MORRIS: Yes, well, right. But, actually, of the countries that I had served in, it had a smaller proportion of its total population on the land than the others. There were a lot more city dwellers in Venezuela than there were in any of the other countries that I had worked in. Of course, more and more, there were people moving into the cities. The fact is that Venezuela was mostly cattle country. They raised sugar cane and a few other tropical crops, like coffee in the Andes, some cacao, but the vast Llanos was really cattle country. And from the time that petroleum began to have importance for it, they imported most of their food. So that it was not considered an agricultural country and you had a different kind of a population.

And then, of course, during the dictatorship of Pérez Jiménez, you had large migrations, especially from Portugal and Italy and, to some extent, Spain. But I think, in terms of numbers, it was, first, Portugal, then it was Italy, and then it was Spain. So large segments of the population were immigrants.

Q: And they immigrated to the cities, I presume?

MORRIS: That's right. That's right. You know, just an interesting observation to get a feel for differences, you couldn't find a Venezuelan to be a servant in Caracas. There were no Venezuelans who looked for jobs as servants in houses, they were all foreigners. They were the Spaniards, Italians, Portuguese, or Jamaican, Trinidadian, but never a Venezuelan. Which is indicative that income levels among native Venezuelans was such that they didn't have to do that kind of work.

Q: On the land reform of Betancourt, this was agricultural land, so I presume that means it was large holdings by comparatively few people and probably a lot of hired help working on those holdings.

MORRIS: Probably. Probably. Yes.

Q: What was the pattern after the land reforms?

MORRIS: Well, I must confess that I'm not too familiar with the consequences of Betancourt's, or the AD Party's land reform, because it went on when Leoni took over from Betancourt. But in terms of numbers settled and titles given and so forth and so on, I'm not sure how successful it was. But, at the time, it was an effort which gave some hope to a lot of people who were on the land. Now how effective it was in the final analysis I really don't know.

Q: And then, after Venezuela, where did your career take you?

MORRIS: Well, I came back to the States and I was the office director for Bolivia-Chile. That was 1965 to 1968. So, once again, I was back on Bolivian Affairs. And then, from there, I was given a sabbatical. I went to Johns Hopkins for a year and got a master's in international finance.

Q: At Johns Hopkins in Baltimore?

MORRIS: In SAIS.

Q: In SAIS, School of International Studies, here in Washington.

MORRIS: Right. And then, when I came back, I was working in Central AID in Policy Planning and working in International Organizations.

I spent about ten months, I guess, working as the principal AID officer on the reform of the U.N. Development Assistance Program (UNDP). Paul Hoffman, of course, had been the head of it since its inception. Times were changing and governments were asking for changes in that program. They hired an Australian consultant by the name of Jackson. Governments were asked to react to the Jackson Report, and I became the AID spokesman for our positions on all of the questions raised by the Jackson Report, in terms

of how the United States government wanted UNDP to change, taking into account the Jackson Report. And so, for about ten months, I spent a lot of time in New York at UNDP headquarters and conferring with other governments as to what their positions were. And then I spent two months in Geneva working at a session on the reform of UNDP.

After that, I took over an office that was charged with coordinating U.S. interest in international agencies. That was AID function. In other words, it was a coordination of AID interests in international organizations. You know, primarily international organizations providing economic or technical assistance of one kind -- FAO, UNESCO, UNICEF, etc., etc.

I was in that job for about six or eight months, and then I went to Paris with our delegation to the OECD. I was the number two guy in our office in Paris, our delegation to the DAC.

Q: What is DAC?

MORRIS: DAC is Development Assistance Committee. It's one of the committees of the OECD. And then I was acting director of the U.S. DAC delegation for a year. This was a time of transition in Washington and they couldn't make up their mind on how they wanted to handle that office.

So I was acting for a year, and then I came back to Washington in 1973 and was deputy director of Panamanian Affairs.

That was in July or August of 1973, and Nixon was about to say goodbye to the nation as president of the United States, and Jerry Ford was about to become the new president. And Henry Kissinger was about to become the secretary of state. He, of course, had been the national security advisor under Nixon and became secretary of state under Jerry Ford. And Ellsworth Bunker had just come back from Saigon and was named the chief negotiator on the Panama Canal treaties. So the office director for Panama was spending full time on the treaty negotiations.

And so, in effect, I became the office director for Panama Affairs, although I was in the number two job at that time. But on a daily basis I was handling all of the State Department, military, AID, etc, Panama Canal affairs in that office. I had responsibility for it.

Q: Was this in the State Department?

MORRIS: In the State Department, yes. See, during these years, from about 1963 on... You probably remember the reorganization under Crocker. There was a reorganization in the State Department, and they were trying to integrate AID more effectively into State Department operations. And the Latin American Bureau went all the way. AID personnel occupied State jobs and State personnel occupied AID jobs. There were a number of

State people, FSOs, who became AID directors in the field, and there were a number of AID officers who took over State Department functions in Washington. In my job on Bolivia-Chile Affairs, I was in a State Department position, and when I came back from Paris again, in Panama Affairs, it was a State Department position.

I was on Panama Affairs for two years. I guess by that time there was again a separation between AID and State. I don't know whether it was a formal or whether it was just an informal change within the Latin American Bureau, but they changed the back-to-back arrangement that we'd had. But, anyway, I moved into a strictly AID job. I was deputy assistant administrator for program for all of Latin America. We had responsibility for budgeting, and for program conceptualization and definition, and writing the congressional justifications for the program, defending the size of the AID allocations by country and so forth.

I had that job for two years, and at the beginning of 1977, I went to the Dominican Republic as the AID director. I was there until June 1979.

I came back here and was briefly assigned to the Near East office of AID as office director. I guess I was there for about six or eight months, and I retired in March of 1980.

Q: Now, in the Dominican Republic, when you were the director of the program there, the program then in Latin America generally, and maybe worldwide too, had declined had it not?

MORRIS: By the time I arrived?

Q: Yes, and, by the '70s, was it not beginning to be reduced in most of the Latin American countries?

MORRIS: It was, but you remember that we had an occupation by U.S. forces of the Dominican Republic that took place about '65. So, in about 1968, we instituted a very large AID program in the Dominican Republic. Even when I was there -- I arrived in '77 -- the program was still a fairly substantial program. It had decreased from the late '60s and early '70s, but it was still a fairly substantial program. I guess we had about twenty million dollars a year when I was there, depending on the year, but from thirteen to twenty million dollars a year. But that included, of course, PL 480 as well as direct economic assistance. We had some fairly substantial PL 480 programs.

Q: I don't want to keep you too long, but I would like to ask you about the thrust of aid in Latin America generally, particularly the Alliance for Progress. It was my impression that part of the Kennedy plan was to offer a third way. In other words, it was worried that Latin America was going to seesaw between the far left or the far right, and he was trying to offer assistance, with reforms, to provide a third path, which was sort of the democratic center I guess you could call it. Is that accurate at all or am I reading too much into it?

MORRIS: Well, I have never heard it stated that way before. My understanding of the Alliance for Progress was that the Latin American countries had had independence for almost a hundred years, but had never had very much political stability, and that there really was a need for a major increase in economic activity to bring about large increases in production to raise living standards. And presumably that would also stimulate democratic governments and bring about long-term stability in the region.

In Venezuela, to a large extent, we were successful. To me, you know, it's very ironic that when I went to Venezuela it had had, in the twentieth century, thirty years of dictatorship under Gomez, a very brief flirtation with democratic government under Rómulo Gallegos and Rómulo Betancourt, and then another ten years of dictatorship under Pérez Jiménez. And so, in 1960 let's say, the Betancourt government was really the first time that the Venezuelans were experiencing any kind of democratic government. In the '80s, you were looking around the hemisphere and people were talking about Venezuela as the oldest democratic country in the hemisphere. Well, the Alliance for Progress has to take some of the credit for that. I mean, it started at that time. And there's no doubt in my mind that if it had not been for the strong, very visible support of the United States of the Betancourt government, it never would have survived. And there were plenty of Venezuelans who used to tell us that every day.

Q: In your opinion, would there have been a program like that found in Venezuela, or indeed the whole Alliance for Progress in Latin America, if Castro had not successfully concluded the revolution in Cuba? In other words, was it a response to a perceived threat?

MORRIS: Yes, I think that it was. And I think it was the only way that you could sell that kind of a program to the American public. In response to a threat. I think that there were all kinds of good reasons, in the U.S. interest, to do what we did in Venezuela. But I think that none of those reasons in and of themselves would have been sufficient to get the kind of money that Kennedy got for the Alliance for Progress if he hadn't had Castro as a threat.

Q: One person indicated that he felt that there was a lot made of the switch from Point Four to the Alliance for Progress, and that really much of it was a continuation. He felt that too much was made of the change. Was there really a major substantive change, besides the change in the size of the programs?

MORRIS: Well, you know, I had talked to you earlier about how effective the programs in Peru and Ecuador were, and the minuscule amount of money that was involved in those programs. From my point of view, there was a tremendous change -- and it was for the worse. There was a tremendous increase in the amount of money, and there was a tremendous decrease in our effectiveness. And that happened not because of the political objectives that we were pursuing, because I think that those were right. And, as I pointed out, I think that Venezuela is an example of a success as a result of the political objectives we pursued, utilizing large-scale assistance. But, organizationally, the very effective Institute of Inter-American Affairs programs were taken over by Marshall Plan

bureaucrats who did not understand technical assistance, who thought only in macroeconomic terms, and who didn't know how to utilize the programs that were there.

Q: Is this pre-Kennedy now that you're speaking about?

MORRIS: No, I'm talking about the Alliance for Progress. The Marshall Plan mentality preceded the Alliance for Progress, but it was the Alliance for Progress that initiated the wholesale organizational changes that took place and really just drowned the earlier programs out. The old servicios in Latin America were very effective instruments.

Q: I want you to continue that answer; but am I following you correctly that you felt that the bureaucratic structure was overwhelming? I mean, why do you feel the Marshall Plan people were worse than the other people?

MORRIS: There was really not a good understanding of how the servicios worked and how the technical assistance programs had influenced the economic and technical progress in these countries. While there was a need for a substantial increase in economic assistance throughout the hemisphere, the organizational structure that finally evolved to provide this economic assistance completely obliterated the intimate relationships that had once existed on a technical level.

Today, I still do consulting work on AID programs, and I'm sorry to say that I'm not impressed. I was in Africa last year, and I go to Latin America with some frequency, and I'm not impressed at all with what I see. The AID programs today are funnels for resources, but the people who administer them have no feel, or very little feel, for how the money is being used, whether it's being effective or isn't being effective. Because the kinds of people that are administering these programs are managers, and they get their points by being able to account for the funds on paper. Most of the technical work is contracted out. And the managers are managing so many different projects that they have no understanding at all of the technical requirements of the projects. They leave this up to the contractors. The contractors, when they get into problems, can't get the support of the managers because the managers don't understand the problems. So that you have money aimed at real problems, but having very limited effectiveness.

Well, your original question was whether or not there really was that much of a change from the old Point Four to the first Alliance for Progress and then the programs that succeeded it.

From my point of view, the change was tremendous. Actually, the change had begun prior to the Alliance for Progress, but the Alliance for Progress made for a complete reorganization of the Latin American programs. And it put the emphasis on large balance-of-payments assistance efforts and neglected the technical assistance that the old Institute of Inter-American Affairs had been engaged in, and what Point Four had been engaged in around the world. I think that the Point Four program, except for Latin America, hadn't operated long enough to have become very effective. The emphasis in

Latin America under the Alliance for Progress, certainly all of the money, was going into the large balance-of-payments programs in Chile, Colombia, and Brazil.

And the other programs were tolerated. As I mentioned earlier, we put a lot of money into Venezuela, and it had good political consequences. As for the effectiveness of these programs in economic and technical terms, I am not so sure. I don't know really what the consequences were there. But the older technical assistance programs that the Institute had carried out made for fundamental improvements in the way those governments administered their activities in those areas.

Q: Now, with the Alliance for Progress, was there or was there not a political factor or a reform factor in which we were pressuring governments to reform?

MORRIS: There was. There was. Yes, there was. And that certainly was a welcome requirement, certainly from my point of view. And we worked very hard at it, really, we worked very hard at it in the countries where we had large macro programs. We worked very hard at trying to bring about structural reforms in those countries. But with very limited success. Very limited success.

Q: Those countries would be Brazil...

MORRIS: Brazil, Colombia, and Chile. Those were the three that got the lion's share of our program assistance. The other countries that were getting large sums of money were Bolivia and the Dominican Republic. After the initial program in Venezuela, the money just trickled down to nothing. But we had achieved our political objective because there was an election of Leoni, after Betancourt, and, since then, they've had popularly elected governments in Venezuela on a regular basis. After the first five years that I was there, the money began to diminish even before I left. So that what you had then were the three large program countries and then two large project-type countries.

Q: You're talking about the success of political reforms.

MORRIS: Well, in terms of structural changes. The condition on our assistance was to bring about fundamental structural changes in those countries. Now we were working with a democratically elected government in Chile, Eduardo Frei, and we were dealing with democratically elected governments in Brazil at that time and in Colombia. But the fact is that the structural reforms, I don't think, took in any of the three countries. The economic structural reforms, moving toward better systems of taxation and more equitable distribution of income and so forth and so on, really didn't happen.

Q: Did we continue to push for that right through? It's my impression, and it may be a false impression, that in the Johnson administration, with the advent of Vietnam, we settled for stability rather than pushing for these structural changes which could be unstable. But I'm not certain of this.

MORRIS: Well, it's hard to know whether or not there was a change of emphasis there. Certainly the rhetoric was the same. You were serving in Brazil at that time and you certainly must have been aware of how difficult it was to get these structural changes. Even though we pushed hard, we always settled for much less than we wanted. So that I'm not sure whether or not it was the Johnson administration settling for less because we were now engaged in the Vietnam War, or whether we were just being very practical in recognizing that it would be very difficult to get everything that we wanted in terms of change. I think that it's interesting to look at Chile and see what happened under Pinochet. A lot of the things that we were trying to do under Frei got done under Pinochet. And the cost was tremendous in terms of liberty and in terms of perpetuation of poverty. In other words, the economic changes were very costly.

Q: You're saying the changes that we'd hoped would be made were in fact made. What were some of those changes?

MORRIS: Well, you know, Chile was a democratic government, but economically the state was a major economic entity. I can't remember now, but, except for the foreign-owned copper company, the most large production in Chile was, in one way or another, state owned. During the Alliance for Progress, we were interested in trying to promote private ownership of a lot of the means of production. And we weren't getting very far. We weren't getting very far. We were trying to improve the efficiency of production, and one of the ways to improve the efficiency of production is to get the government out of business. But we were never able...well, to some extent, we had some effect on them.

You know, they still talk about the Chicago boys in Chile. And the fact is that it was our programs, even before the Alliance for Progress, that connected the University of Chicago with Central University in Chile. And that connection was made by Albion Patterson, who was an old Point Four director, an Institute of Inter-American Affairs director in Chile, who started a program with Central University and got Ted Schultz to come down from the University of Chicago. That was the beginning of the Chicago connection. And, even under Pinochet, they talk about all of the reforms as the Chicago reforms.

Q: And those reforms were to a large extent privatizing these various industries that were nationally run.

MORRIS: That's right. And, of course, before Pinochet, you have to remember that the direction was exactly the opposite. I mean, you had Allende. And the little that was left of the private sector was taken over by the government. All the copper mines were nationalized, any large estates were nationalized and so forth and so on. So that you had complete nationalization under Allende. And then, of course, you had Pinochet and a lot of the draconian measures that he took. But economically Chile is in better shape today probably than any other country in Latin America. And it had nothing to do with foreign assistance.

You know, I think that there's a lesson in that. I think that the Alliance for Progress was too ambitious. We tried to do things that were impossible. I think the intentions were great, but I think that we undertook, out of ignorance... There were plenty of people who knew that these things couldn't be done, but the people who put the program together and sold it didn't know. They were ignorant. They didn't know that they were really overreaching by far. I think a lot of the goals of the Alliance for Progress were commendable, and they're the kinds of goals that we ought to have in any kinds of programs that we have. But I think that we have to recognize that we are not, and never were, as mighty as we thought we were, in the sense that there are only a limited number of things that you, as an outside power, can accomplish, number one. And, number two, that a lot of the things that we set out to do were really evolutionary in nature, that they would take a lot longer to accomplish than we had the resources to help them do it with. I think that if there's any lesson, for me at least, it's that lesson.

I believe very much that the United States ought to continue to have foreign assistance programs, and that we ought to try to work in partnership with any government that wants help from us. But I think we ought to be realistic in the kinds of things that we think that we can accomplish -- much more modest in setting of goals and targets.

I think that one good thing that's come out of all these experiences is that we do have today the World Bank and the Inter-American Bank and so forth and so on. I think that we really probably should leave to those institutions the large-scale infusion of capital, and that the United States ought to concentrate on more intimate bilateral relationships with individual governments.

And we always have to be guided by our political interests. You know, I think that in this regard I'm maybe sort of a strange bird in the economic assistance business, because I have always believed that your political goals have to dominate, and that economic and technical assistance has to be compatible with those goals.

But, by the same token, I don't think that you can achieve very much in reaching your political goals through these very limited means that I'm mentioning.

I think, in the case of Venezuela, it was a very special circumstance, and it certainly was not the only thing that we did, and it may not have been the most important thing that we did. You know, I'm saying our economic assistance. I suspect it was just the very visible kind of massive support that we gave to Betancourt across the board that made the difference rather than the economic assistance that we provided him, or the military assistance, for that matter.

That's a good note to end on, isn't it?

Q:· That is a very good note to end on. We'll let you have a rest. But thank you very much, that's a very, very interesting interview. I appreciate it.

End of interview