

MOROCCO

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A. DAVID FRITZLAN
Vice Consul
Tangier (1943-1948)

A. David Fritzlan was born in India in 1914 to American missionary parents. He received a bachelor's degree from Northwest Nazarene College in 1934 and a master's degree from the University of Kentucky in 1936. He joined the Foreign Service in 1938. Mr. Fritzlan's career included positions in Naples, Baghdad, Tehran, Basra, Tangier, Barcelona, Alexandria, Salonika, and Washington, DC. He was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy on May 29, 1990.

Q: Why don't we then move on because you went from Basra to Tangier, and you were there for four years from '44 to '48.

FRITZLAN: That's correct. I went there with Fraser Wilkins. He had been in Baghdad.

Q: That must have been a fascinating place...

FRITZLAN: Well, we drove you see.

Q: Oh, my God!

FRITZLAN: Oh, didn't you know that? Well Fraser Wilkins, with whom I believe you have talked, was in Baghdad, and I was in Basra, and we were both assigned to Tangier. He had a Ford coupe and he said, "Why don't we drive?" There was no other way of getting there except by a round about way by plane across central Africa, etc. We had to make elaborate plans. We got help from the British on the way everywhere we stopped. It took us about a week to get to Cairo by way of Damascus, Beirut, Jerusalem and Port Said. There was an air raid at Port Said the night we were there. This was our first experience with bombs, and guns; one of the last manifestations of hostility in the Near East during World War II.

We went on to Cairo and had about a week there. We got very good encouragement from the

British who, of course, manned the whole of North Africa right up to Tunisia. They gave us itinerary plans, and authority to draw on POL supplies, and informed people ahead of time that we were coming. We were treated royally by the British and made good progress. The roads were in terrible condition, bombed, mined, bridges were blown so we had to go into the wadis and hope to avoid being bogged down in sand. We never had any trouble until we got to Algiers. By this time we were in the American zone. Leaving Algiers we had a flat tire. It was 18 days from Alexandria to Tangier.

Q: Incredible. What was the situation in Tangier? Particularly at this time it must have been out of this world, wasn't it?

FRITZLAN: It was because we'd been living in a deprived state for so long, living on K-rations and God knows what. And if you ever got a drink, it would be some foul Cyprus brandy or something that was almost undrinkable. When we got to Tangier we went to the Minzah Hotel. Tangier then had been for many years a free port, and it had everything. On entering the hotel I felt rather like Muhammad must have felt when he saw Damascus from the hills coming in from Arabia -- saw this great city spread out before him. He literally thought he was in paradise. Well, I won't carry it up too far, but still Tangier was fascinating -- cosmopolitan, full of shady types, spies, gun runners, you name it.

Q: Remittance men?

FRITZLAN: ...remittance, yes, and it was a free exchange market, with a lot of shady business happening. The place was under the Spanish who had moved in after the fall of France in 1940, from their zone in Morocco. They moved in to this international zone of Tangier against all their engagements, treaties, and so on. We never recognized them, naturally, although we had to do business with them as the de facto authority. It was a very interesting period. I couldn't have asked for a better assignment at that time.

Q: Particularly after...

FRITZLAN: After all we'd been through, yes.

Q: The Spanish by this time certainly must have had the word who was going to win. I mean was this reflected in your dealings with the Spanish?

FRITZLAN: More and more it became reflected because at the beginning they were pretty certain the Germans were going to win, otherwise they wouldn't have moved in. But more and more they became concerned about their precarious position and became helpful and cooperative. Not as much as we would have liked, however. I'll tell you something interesting, a story which is rather amusing in a way. I was also vice consul at Ceuta where I operated with no staff at all really.

Q: Was Ceuta still under the Spanish? This is the last post.

FRITZLAN: One of what they call the places of sovereignty -- Plazas de Soberania. It had been

Spanish for three or four hundred years.

Q: *They just hung on.*

FRITZLAN: Yes, and they still hang on. Well, after World War I there was the Rif War and they carved out a zone for themselves in the hinterland. I went to Ceuta about once a month for four or five days mainly to spread some Allied propaganda, and they didn't like that a bit. The government told me to cease and desist. In this period -- now I'm talking about the beginning of 1945 at the time of the Yalta Conference. President Roosevelt passed by cruiser through the Straits of Gibraltar.

Q: *That's right. Yalta was slightly before he died.*

FRITZLAN: That's correct. It was a few months before the end of the war in Europe. In this period there was still quite a lot of danger from German submarines operating in and around the Straits, and we were very sensitive to this, had been for some time. And our Naval Attaché told Rives Childs, who was our Chargé d'Affaires, that he had good information that there was an agent operating out of an apartment, up in an attic room in Ceuta; using a radio device in communication with Axis agents across the Straits. He said he knew exactly where it was, and all the rest of it. So Childs then got in touch with the Spanish High Commissioner and said, "I know such and such is happening in a certain place." The High Commissioner said, "I'm very surprised if such a thing exists, but if you can kindly come with one of your officers then I will appoint somebody to go with them, and you take them to this place." So that happened in that way, and they got to this place and broke down the door and sure enough found a very surprised and nervous operator with his radio set, caught, seemingly, red-handed. Childs was full of his great triumph. Just about this time Roosevelt aboard his cruiser came through the Straits.

Q: *The Augusta, I think.*

FRITZLAN: So Childs sent along a dispatch to the Department detailing this episode and intimating that he and his staff had contributed to the safe passage of the President through the Straits. When the British learned about this, they were incensed because it turned out that this radio operator was a British double agent. Childs never reported that.

Q: *No, I know. Well, the British interned many of these people. What were your main jobs when you were in Tangier, during the war and after the war? And also, what was the setup? Was it a Consulate General then?*

FRITZLAN: It was a Legation, and our Chief of Mission had been a Diplomatic Agent comparable to Minister Resident. It's just one grade below Minister Plenipotentiary. We hadn't had a Diplomatic Agent there since John Campbell White had been there, and that was at the very beginning of the war. He didn't stay long. So Childs came out, he then had First Secretary rank. He'd been in the Department, and he came out in 1941 to be Chargé d'Affaires and Chief of Mission in anticipation of the landings about which he'd been thoroughly briefed.

Q: *You're referring to the landings in North Africa.*

FRITZLAN: That was '42. Childs came specifically to act as our representative in Morocco -- diplomatic representative -- in anticipation of these landings, and during the period that followed. I must say he was highly industrious, imaginative, and an extremely able representative. Not above taking undue credit for himself sometimes. He'd been a newspaperman. He wrote extremely well.

What was I doing? When I arrived -- that was April of '44, my job was information and consular officer. I edited and put out, with some help from the British, a weekly bulletin in French. We got it translated, my French wasn't quite good enough for that. This covered developments in the world with particular reference to America and what we were doing in pursuit of winning the war. It was meant to appeal to a fairly general readership, and it had considerable success, I would say, in affecting opinion among the Tangier populace. If we'd wanted to reach more people, we might have put it in Spanish but we didn't want to make this gesture to the Spanish occupying authorities. And actually Tangier was bilingual. But otherwise I was doing what little consular work there was; political work apart from what Childs did which was most of it. I had contacts with several political dissidents. Tangier was the abode of any Moroccan from the French zone, or the Spanish zone, who was out of favor. These people could come to Tangier, and there they were relatively safe. Wanting support for their cause, they'd come to the Legation and wind up in my office. The French representative complained strongly about my receiving these Moroccan nationalists but Childs, and later Paul Alling who succeeded him, made it plain that we were not closing our doors to anybody.

Well, the reports that I wrote on the basis of conversations with these people, who later became leaders in the Moroccan government after its independence in '55, were, I think, viewed as of little importance or interest in the Department. The feeling was that the French are there, and were going to stay there indefinitely. Nor were my reports received well by our Embassy in Paris.

Q: This was a straight battle of North Africa that took place in the Department of State...

FRITZLAN: This was after the war -- during the war nobody wanted to rock the boat naturally -- but after the war this thing began to heat up, and our despatches on the Moroccan nationalists' activities, their aims, their aspirations, their suppression by the French, were viewed with great hostility by the Embassy in Paris, as you can imagine. And Ridgway Knight, who was working on North Africa in the Political Section, used to draft despatches for Caffery to sign saying that we didn't know what we were talking about. That the French in the Quai d'Orsay had assured them this, that, and the other. And that this aspect of our reporting should be more or less trivialized. I found this very patronizing.

Then early in '47 the Sultan took it into his head to come to Tangier. He had not been there for many years. He had his palace, he used to go there in the summer and spend some time. LaBonne was the French Resident General -- High Commissioner -- he was not a military man. He informed LaBonne that he was planning to come to Tangier and he was going to receive the diplomatic corps ceremonially and that he was going to make a speech. Well, this was a big event. We didn't know what to expect, LaBonne didn't know what to expect either. Doubtless he

had written a speech for him. I'm not quite sure whether he had or not, but it would have been natural had he done so. The Sultan, however, gave his own speech, and his own speech came as a bombshell because he talked about an independent Morocco, about the riddance of the protectorate power, and moving into the era of enlightenment and that sort of thing. And the French were absolutely livid. It was enough of a time bomb for LaBonne to be summoned to Paris and dismissed from his job because he hadn't been firm enough toward the Sultan. They sent as his replacement one who would be firm -- General Juin.

I left in January of '48 for an assignment in the Department. Clearly things were in a state of flux and one could see that the days of French supremacy in Morocco was coming to an end. Eventually the Sultan, Mohammed V, was exiled to Reunion, I believe.

Q: Reunion, which they used as sort of an exile spot.

FRITZLAN: Yes. And didn't they send Abdel Krim there too? He escaped though, he got off the boat at Port Said and the Egyptians gave him sanctuary. The Sultan wasn't so lucky, but he wasn't there very long because they got their independence in '55 -- perhaps he was exiled about '49-'50, he might have been there four or five years. So he came back in triumph after '55. The poor fellow didn't live very much longer.

Q: One further question before we move away from Tangier. Did you get involved at all in consular courts?

FRITZLAN: No, I didn't. Consular courts were rarely used in that period that I was there. The person who acted as assessor, or judge, or whatever you might call him, was Consul John Goodyear. He was the number two man in the office. We had protégés there. You know how that system worked under the capitulations. They were practically all Moroccan Jews.

Q: That went back to the early years.

FRITZLAN: It went back about 100 years I'd say. These chaps got their protégé status for what was called Signal Services rendered to the United States. Our rights derived from the terms of treaties we concluded with the Ottoman Empire and the Sultan of Morocco. We could appoint so many Moroccan nationals who would then be under our jurisdiction, and not the local jurisdiction -- a most extraordinary state of affairs. They got this position by helping us mainly with land problems, though we didn't need land for the Legation, it had been given to us by the Sultan in 1820 or so.

Q: They may well have because there was a scandal back in around the 1870s where George Butler, the nephew of Benjamin Butler, a political general, had sold protégé status in Egypt. I'm not sure there wasn't some hanky-panky of this going to the early era.

FRITZLAN: I'm not positive whether they could inherit or not, but I have a feeling that somehow this passed father to son. It seemed to embrace the whole family. After the war we wanted some land on the Atlantic coast of Tangier in the International Zone for a big VOA station. Now the worst way to approach this was for us to go out and let it be known that we

wanted to buy land because you know what would have happened to prices. So we used one of our protégés, a Moroccan Jewish type, to get his hands on parcels of land through various devious means, and to get options and, of course, he got paid somehow or other -- plenty, you can be sure of that. And then finally a deal was struck, and then it emerged that he was doing this all for the US. He rendered us services, you see.

The other case that came to my mind in the Consular Court there, was a case involving two Jewish families who were protégés. The son of one family was accused of raping the daughter of another. So Jack Goodyear had his work cut out over that. The District of Columbia law had to apply. I think in the end the young man was declared guilty of rape, and of course, you can imagine, an awful row sprang up between the families. In effect, he had to be locked up. In the old days you'd lock him up in the cellar of the office, but we didn't have the facilities so somehow or other we came to an arrangement with the local authority whereby he'd be locked up for a few months in a local jail. I don't think he was locked up for more than two or three months, and then he was out.

ROBERT M. BEAUDRY
Public Affairs Officer
Casablanca (1948-1950)

Robert M. Beaudry was born in Maine. He graduated from the Catholic University in Washington, DC. He joined the Foreign Service in 1946 after serving in the Army during World War II. Mr. Beaudry served in Dublin, Casablanca, Koblenz, Suriname, Bern, Brussels, Rome, and Washington, DC. He was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy on October 5, 1992.

BEAUDRY: In FY 49, the budget was tight so some 40 or 50 of us were blanketed into the Information Program which was in State, of course, but which had its own budget. I was sent off to Casablanca to be the public affairs officer there.

Q: What was the situation in Casablanca? You were there from 1948-50.

BEAUDRY: Well, Morocco was a French Protectorate. The French ran it. There was a certain tentative rumblings about independence...the Istiqlal Party, as I remember, was active. The French were hostile to our information program. I think in the first place they thought it was an effort to meddle in the politics of Morocco. The use of the term "Service d'Information" didn't soothe their suspicions.

Q: Which in their terminology was intelligence.

BEAUDRY: So they weren't very friendly or helpful. We didn't have any equipment for goodness sake. We had the library stock that was left when the US military hospital pulled out. A balanced collection. We had a little money for slide shows and things like that. The French said we could put out almost anything we wanted in English and we could put out more things in

French, but nothing in Arabic. It was that kind of a situation.

It was not successful from a career point of view. My only training consisted of consulting for four days with Bill Tyler in Paris on my way down. I had never seen a PAO. I was backstopped by some very nice people who were not part of the Department really. They had been established by a kind of ad hoc arrangement. I survived it for a while.

ROBERT LYLE BROWN
Chief, Economic Section
Casablanca (1948-1950)

Robert Lyle Brown was born in Ohio and grew up in New Jersey. He received a bachelor's degree from Syracuse University and participated in the ROTC and in the Naval Reserves. Mr. Brown joined the Foreign Service in 1944. His career included positions in Noumea, Casablanca, Kobe, Brussels, Taipei, and Washington, DC. He was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy on February 5, 1990.

Q: You were in Morocco from 1948-50 as chief of the economic section. What was the situation in Casablanca in those days?

BROWN: Let me first describe our arrival. The Consul General invited my wife and me to the Villa Mirador on Anfa Hill to stay in his residence, which we considered very thoughtful. We had been taken from Gibraltar to Casablanca in a huge US military aircraft with our pitiful small baggage. Every morning when I suggested that I go to the office I was told that we had a long trip and should get more rest. I had never had a better trip in my life. We landed in Gibraltar after a cross-Atlantic sailing on an Italian ship. However, the Consul General insisted that we stay at the residence and enjoy ourselves and read up on the local situation. This went on for about eight days. We didn't meet anybody; we were totally isolated in a very nice environment. Our bedroom was the room that Churchill occupied during the Casablanca meeting. One day, the Consul General told me to go to work the next morning. His tone changed; everything changed. I got to the office and found out why I had been kept from the office. They didn't want me to meet my predecessor. When he left, all his contact files also left. Everything was gone and I had to start all over again. Apparently my predecessor had developed such good relations with the French, with Moroccan businessmen and other, that he was living better than the Consul General. He wanted that stopped. So I had to start from scratch. That was my introduction to Casablanca.

Q: Why had this situation developed?

BROWN: It would have been odd in most other countries, but there was a treaty of Algeiras in 1906 which provided for extra-territoriality. This was the last place where we had such privileges. It was therefore an interesting environment to live in. It meant that neither the laws of Morocco or the laws of a French protectorate were applicable to American citizens. The US Code of Federal Regulations was the law that governed American citizens. We had our own

court. The foreign exchange regulations did not apply. Import licenses did not apply. With this kind of freedom, American soldiers who had been through Morocco at one time or another and aware of this situation, came back when the war was over. They were canny, smart and were in the right place because Morocco needed everything. The French restrictions applied to all but the Americans, which made us unique. It gave them an outlet to take Moroccan francs for American goods. Americans could bring in merchandise, etc. and sell it at ten times the cost, even if it were francs. Those francs ended up, illegally in Tangier where there was a free exchange market. With these dollars, the Americans brought more goods from the US which they sold in Morocco at tremendous profits and so it went. Moroccan businessmen were willing to back up any American who came without money because the system was so good and the American could be the front. Americans got very wealthy in this way, but it irritated the French no end. The French were then the protecting power. Needless to add our relationships with the French government officials was somewhat less than cordial.

Q: Were you under any instructions either from the Department or the Consul General to see whether something could be done about this?

BROWN: In the first place, all the businessmen recognized the sensitivity. We understood the French position, but we also understood our Treaty rights. Some Americans moved to the extremes of the law, but always within the margin. The French were very irritated because they couldn't control it and therefore would sometimes do things that were illegal. We had legal rights, but if we couldn't handle it, then we get in touch with the Department and our Embassy in Paris to see if pressure couldn't be mounted against the Governor, who was appointed by France, to correct whatever French illegalities were occurring. Is it any wonder that American businessmen became so wealthy? It was like the chicken that laid the golden egg and they didn't want to have anything happen to the chicken. They would return to the US, and generate Congressional pressure on us. The pressure at times, was considerable. It was interesting how the Department in many respects was not always responsive. We were in the front lines, took much of the Congressional heat, but were not always provided the support we need to counteract French initiatives which were contrary to our legal rights.

Q: In many respects, that shows how the Department works. If the issue isn't of political moment, it wouldn't take a stance.

BROWN: It was also a sticky wicket. There wasn't anything in it for the Department and our Embassy in Paris saw some of these events in Morocco as adversely affecting broader US/French interests. On the other hand, we had legal rights. When matters got to extremes, the Department upheld them or tried to. In the meantime, there many days, weeks, months when we did not get the response we needed.

Q: I would have thought that the French would have tried to expel the Americans who were excessive.

BROWN: The French Protectorate authorities tried about everything, but they also tried to stay within certain boundaries. There was still an economic assistance program to France and still needed our help. France was not as independent as it would have liked to have been. The shadow

of de Gaulle continued to hang over the country.

Q: Did you feel that the Consul General was looking over your shoulder to make sure you didn't get in too deep?

BROWN: The first Consul General -- C. Paul Fletcher -- was a very nice, passive Officer. He didn't want to ruffle the waters. He was not a tiger and that is an understatement. The next one was a tiger by the name of John Maddon. He was a Texan. He had been at one time an honorary sheriff and was quite proud of that. He was more aggressive. Casablanca was a Consulate General; we had an Embassy in Rabat, but all the commercial work was in Casablanca. That is where things got hot and miserable. I had to be careful. I remember being offered things that I didn't want -- including very expensive watches. It was not unusual to be handed a small box with the donor saying "It is nothing but a token. It is not valuable." Someone offered me a lovely house. My wife and I had been living in a place down by the docks with no hot water, a straw mattress and a primus for cooking. People used the hallway as a bathroom. If we looked out of our window we looked down into a pissoir! When I was offered a lovely house by an American businessman, I told him I couldn't afford it. He asked me what my housing allowance was. When I told him, he said "You got it". I said I couldn't -- it was too nice and worth far more on the market. He said that he had build it for his mother. He had married a Moroccan Jew. His mother came from New York she said that she didn't like it and didn't want it. So he had an empty house. I had to be very careful and I discussed the matter with the Consul General and we agreed I could accept provided there was mutual understanding by all parties that there would be no special favors.

I want to add one other story. One night, an "Immediate" cable arrived from the Department. I was the duty officer at that time. We used the strip coding system. I had to go to the office to decode the message. This message began "Atomic bomb exploded today." I immediately called the cryptographic officer. For security reasons the Department drew an arbitrary line so that the cable began in the middle which on this occasion was the wrong spot. At 3 o'clock in the morning. It had quite an impact.

The other interesting event started when the Consul General called me to his office. He had a Russian cook with a head always shaved. He was a big man, nice, but big. The C.G. told me to go to the residence and fire him and get him out of the house before he came home for lunch. He gave me the cook's termination pay. He opened the drawer of his desk and gave me a gun to put in my pocket. He hoped that I didn't have to use it but he wanted the cook out of the house immediately -- one way or another. In those days, most officers did what they were told. I went to the house to talk to the cook, whom I knew. We talked and had coffee. I explained the situation to him and he left without any problems and I returned the gun to the C.G.

I remember an American who was in the French Legion coming into the lobby of the Consulate, and took his gun out of the holster, shot a clock on the wall in the lobby, then proceeded to shoot himself. He evidently had had a hard time in the Legion, which once having joined, you don't leave until your contract runs out. He couldn't get out and he knew it. So he came over from Marrakech down the mountains and committed suicide on American soil.

JOSEPH JOHN JOVA
Political Officer
Tangier (1949-1952)

Joseph John Jova was born in New York in 1916. He graduated from Dartmouth College and was in the U.S. Navy in World War II. He joined the Foreign Service in 1947 and served in Iraq, Tangier, Portugal, Chile as well as in Washington D.C. He was ambassador to Honduras, Mexico and the Organization of American States. He was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy in 1991 and 1992.

Q: You went to Tangier, did you go directly to Tangier?

JOVA: Home leave and hospital. First, I again had amoebas, and I left there very weak. That's the only thing I didn't like about the place. I was treated several times. In those days it was a bad treatment, retention enemas on a slanted bed. I remember that. But then I made that proposal, I said, "Look, I haven't had any real honeymoon. We're on our way back and I'm very ill, what about giving me permission to go to the American hospital in Beirut for treatment? They'll know more than they would at home, and then come home by sea." It was easier to come home by sea in those days. I think they hadn't woken up to the fact that it was probably more expensive by sea, but they said yes. And we did that. I entered the hospital, and Pamela entered two days later. I remember everybody saying, "What a devoted pair. She joins him in the hospital." She was analyzed as having "sand fly fever." Only after we got home in the U.S. did we realize that Pamela kept falling down from time to time and one leg was actually thinner than the other. My mother, who was a born hypochondriac -- I mean loved doctors -- said, "You must go to the doctor." And fortunately we did. It was analyzed as what she had had was polio. So we were so lucky. When I think of the people who are confined in wheelchairs, this was a mild case and she got therapy right then, massage and exercise. And she's playing tennis right now as we speak 48 years later.

Q: You got to Tangier...

JOVA: Thanksgiving Day.

Q: 1949 and you stayed there until 1952. In the first place, what was the American interest in Tangier; and then also what the situation was like at that time?

JOVA: We were on the up then. I mean, AID programs had just been invented -- it was called something else. Truman was President. We were the power, so we were interested in everywhere. And, of course, we came to have big interests in Morocco in general, and Tangier.

Q: This was later on because the bases came a little later.

JOVA: They came later. In Tangier while we were there we had Voice of America, or Radio Free Europe stations in Tangier, all directed against the Soviet Union. But we were also

important because we were a signatory power of the Pact of Algeciras.

Back again to Theodore Roosevelt who invented our interest in Europe, you might say. We participated in that Pact of Algeciras that was precisely to regularize relationships with the Kingdom of Morocco, or the Empire of Morocco. And, I guess, among other things to recognize the French Protectorate over most of Morocco with a northern zone strip being given to Spain as a zone of Spanish protection. And then the area around Tangier, which had always been an international city because the Sultan wouldn't let foreigners reside in Rabat, which was the capital. Therefore, this became the diplomatic capital that foreigners would go to, to Rabat to deal with -- this was from the century previous. Tangier and a little area around it, ten miles or so, was declared to be an international zone. This was to be governed by a committee of control that were the diplomatic representatives of the signatories of the Pact of Algeciras. It was my best preparation for the OAS, I'll put it that way.

We never fully recognized the French protectorate and therefore our man, the chief of our office, was called a Diplomatic Agent with the rank of Minister Plenipotentiary and Diplomatic Agent, as well as being Consul General. The others perhaps had personal ranks of Ambassador if they were important, or Minister, but they were simply Consuls General. We also retained our extraterritorial rights. This seems like a very un-American thing to do looked at this way, but it was precisely to protect those people and to not recognize the French protection over all of Morocco that we maintained. In other words, anybody that was an American citizen, or an American protected person, and that might be if they brought American businesses there.

Q: They were called protégés, weren't they?

JOVA: Protégés were subject to being tried by us in our own consular court. We had a special officer to do that who had legal training, and the Consul General perhaps might preside over it, but he would be the man preparing the case, accompanied by an old Englishman who had been there forever in that state. I can't give you his name right now, but someone who had been 30 years as our adviser. Many of the big Jewish families had that, but also many Muslim families were American protected persons.

The Committee of Control was like the Permanent Council of the OAS.

Q: Organization of American States.

JOVA: They in turn elected, or named, an administrator just as the Permanent Council or the Secretary General, who was the paid international administrator. In my day it was a Dutch person, at the end it was a Portuguese Minister. By tradition, or perhaps in the Pact of Algeciras, none of the principal powers could have that job, or the administrative jobs. Those were rotated or spread out among the other countries. The Portuguese handled the public transportation; the Belgians the police; the Dutch had nothing because they had the administrator then. I forget who handled the customs. That was an international administration divided up that way, and a paid administrator and these were paid functionaries. The Committee of Control was in effect the parliament. They controlled the administrator, and quarreled over prestige and everything else among themselves, and that was our chief...but we had to help prepare the papers and

documentation for that.

The same members that were members of the Committee of Control changed their hats, and they were also the Board of Directors of the Golf Club of Tangier. They changed their hats once again and were the directors of the Diplomatic Beach, and there was also a so-called Diplomatic Forest. So, in other words, the diplomatic corps was very important there and sort of ran the place. But the business interests went on, and naturally there were trading companies, plus the fact that this was really the beginning of the Cold War. There was a fear that there might be a hot war, and many Europeans lived there, or had houses there, so they were ready to move there in case...

Q: Sort of an escape hole.

JOVA: Exactly. Some of the Spanish families had been there since the Spanish Civil War, the same way. Big families bought houses so they came and went because the climate was nice, but you found French, Belgians, the British. So there was an important social life going on also.

Q: It had a reputation, at least later, of being one of the most dissolute social upper classes.

JOVA: I guess there was some of that. There was a Belgian count, and his wife who was half American and half British, on the dissolute side. She had a boyfriend. These two men who weren't interested in women, I thought, but apparently with the Countess they could get it up for her. I should scrub that out. And there was drug taking which in those days nobody would have thought of, it just seemed so horrible.

Q: Marijuana.

JOVA: It was a wonderful place to raise children because you could get anything, powdered milk, anything you wanted of that sort, because it was a free port. I'd say that most of those families weren't that way, they were rather stuff-collar, old aristocracy types. But I think the fringes of that, like the people that ran bars, were perhaps more dissipated.

Q: And I think this attracted more attention proportionately to what people think of Tangier.

JOVA: Probably they think of that. Socially, it was largely among the diplomatic community, and the big families, or the guys behind the bar. There were a few big families that one saw, but the French frowned on that a lot, and one had to be careful. And, of course, we, the U.S., were very interested in the independence movements. It was particularly important because many of the political exiles from Algeria, from Tunis, they were still French, and from Morocco itself, were there in the international zone. At the risk of offending the French who were easily offended, and had their big intelligence services, one had to see them. This was one of our duties. And, of course, I, speaking Spanish, also started to take care of the Spanish zone that had always been looked down on by the rest of the Legation friends. Traditionally they didn't do very much there in the Spanish zone. The Minister himself was married to a French woman. That meant a good terrain to cultivate for a very young person. You could make it your own thing for political reporting. Lots of things were going on in the Spanish zone too because they had an

independence movement, and it was very interesting to compare the way they ran things, as they had less money than the French. Spain was very poor at that time because, don't forget, that it was not blockaded, but by sanction by the United Nations and sort of cut off from imports or anything for a few years after the war. The Spanish people were poorer after the war than they were during the war as far as coffee and foodstuffs due to the blockade.

Q: They were sort of a pariah because Franco was...

JOVA: ...and oil and all that stuff were cut off because of Franco. So it made for interesting reporting, and then, again, the lessons in Arabic made a wonderful channel to meet some of these people, or to find out what was going on. I had a very nice young man who taught me Arabic. Years later when I was stationed here in Washington he came on one of those U.S. leader grants, and he came to have dinner with us. He was the governor of Tangier. So, in other words, I guess I had a good idea of a future leader.

Q: In the first place I assume that you were basically a political reporting officer.

JOVA: Yes, I was. At first I was in the economic section for a short time but then I was in the political section.

Q: You were dealing with both the Moroccan independence movement in the Spanish zone, and in the French zone. Let's talk about the Spanish zone. Because this was a real backwater, and it didn't get its independence until somewhat later than the rest of Morocco. How did you find Spanish rule? And also dealing with the Moroccans under Spanish rule? What was your impression of this?

JOVA: They had the Sultan's representative in Tangier, and he was treated as an independent ruler by the Spanish, with considerable pomp. It was the important thing to go every Friday at 11:00, to see the little procession that took place when he went to do his weekly prayers at the mosque. The Moroccan band, notables...

Q: Petitions being presented?

JOVA: Petitions being presented. He had perhaps less power...this was Franco times, and the Spaniards were rather tough with their own people, let alone with the Moroccans. But, in general, it was perhaps more relaxed than with the more protocolary French, and the Spanish merchants and the people that were in the government, or were in the trading class. There was a fairly large population. I'd say they were more relaxed about their relationships with the Moroccans. And, of course, Spanish was the second language of that zone, and in fact it was the second language in Tangier. French was the official second language of Tangier, but Spanish was recognized as a language, and Spanish currency...the French franc was the official currency. In effect, you dealt in pesetas usually, and I think under the Pact, and under the regulations, the peseta. So while it was not the official currency, it had the power of paying debts and whatever you wanted in pesetas.

While we were there the Spanish thought for some reason they weren't getting their way enough,

and Tangier suddenly was invaded by a hoard of ruffians, Moroccans from the Spanish zone that came in and demonstrated, and broke shop signs. The Spanish claimed this was just an independent thing, they had nothing to do with it. Now, more sophisticated, I recognize it probably wouldn't have happened, but it was directed that way to make sure that the Spanish voice was being listened to. They also were a little bit discriminated. The rest of us were trying to discriminate against them a little bit because during World War II they'd gone beyond the Spanish zone and they'd taken over the administration of Tangier themselves, and it had to be re-internationalized. And, of course, during that time the Germans and Italians also were way up there, they had special privileges. It has always been an important spying place, important traditionally because of its location on the Strait of Gibraltar.

But certainly there again was a wonderful opportunity, the fact that I was able to have more relationships with the Moroccans than most others in the Legation, and certainly to have the Spanish zone more or less to myself to report on. It was practically unknown. And through my Arab teacher, and through the people I met that way, lots of things were of interest back in the Department.

Q: How did you find the staff of the Legation? This must have been a little more formal, you must have changed a bit after the free-wheeling bit, or not.

JOVA: Oh, definitely, it was like an embassy, or a Legation. But it was stratified, it wasn't even that small looking back at it. We had a full staff: economic, commercial, consular, political, and of course the legal people. The Minister, Mr. Plitt, was quite formal, and quite old school, a French wife also.

JOVA: To sum it up, Tangier again was a wonderful opportunity. First, from a personal point of view. Our two children were born there. We arrived on Thanksgiving Day, and our first child was born prematurely on the 10th of January, but there was a little English hospital there with one doctor and some English nurses. Everybody was more primitive then, but we were lucky -- born prematurely, no facilities, no incubators. The nearest thing to an incubator was an electric light bulb placed inside the cradle that he was in that gave a little bit of warmth. And the second one came a year and a half later, also born in Tangier.

Q: You were not quite the country cousin you would have been if you'd thought of Basra as being the...

JOVA: Exactly. And it was a place where I had to use my French again, as well as my Spanish. Of course, the Arabic I arrived with was a laugh. Every time I opened my mouth they would laugh because it was so different, spoken Arabic of Iraq from Egypt. Actually Basra was different than Baghdad. Anyway, my lessons were useful and with all the reporting opportunities that I mentioned, and the negotiating opportunities. So it was an unique thing for somebody on his second post.

Q: One last thing before we terminate this interview. Did you get any emanations from Washington of the problem, because it was just starting then, McCarthyism and its impact on the Foreign Service?

JOVA: Yes, we did. We lived through it because when Mr. Plitt left the next one was John Carter Vincent. Tangier had that wonderful thing, they could send somebody with the rank of Minister to be chief of post to head a Legation without needing Senate approval. Poor Ambassador Vincent, who had been in Switzerland, they had to get him out of there because of McCarthyism, and they placed him in Tangier. He was a person, again, that we learned a lot from, a very fine person.

Q: Would you explain a little about the problem with John Carter Vincent for somebody who wouldn't maybe...

JOVA: If I recall rightly, he had been a China hand, and therefore anybody that had been a China hand was considered to have participated in giving up China to the Soviet Union. He was a liberal, or thought to be a liberal. His wife was very liberal and outspoken in that fuzzy way that sometimes women are apt to be, but for an ambassador's wife, or a minister's wife...and, of course, when you're getting into trouble all you do is get into more trouble. She would open her mouth, and she'd help him get into trouble. I can't remember the circumstances but in his overcoat or something they found Russian notes. It turned out that he was studying Russian, or being tutored in Russian. That again was something that was held against him later, and I guess they moved him out because the pressures were too great.

But while he was there, he was very nice and a very skilled Foreign Service person. A little bit dumbfounded. He was a little bit off-balance because of what was happening to him but he was trying to do his job in this other area, and this limited scene of Tangier. As I say, I had a nice impression of him, and I felt sorry for him. But he did look for it you see, he did do some things like studying Russian just at the moment when he shouldn't have been. And his wife was sounding off just when she shouldn't have been. Then, of course, they were looking for anybody that was out for trouble. They were already starting the campaign against gays, homosexuals. So there was McCarthyism there.

Q: Did you have the feeling that, "Gee, this is the time to keep one's head down." Was this the ethos of the time, or as a young officer basically this was passing over your head?

JOVA: It was passing over your head but I think you had to be careful. One would have been foolish not to watch what one was reporting, putting the proper caveats in to make sure it was an all-American point of view. But it was a very educational time, and it was also a very gratifying time. I look on that as one of the happy posts, with a nice mix of adventure; because in Morocco we would take trips, and it really was an adventure in those days. And also of reporting opportunities, and contacts both with the Arabs of various countries, and from Morocco, and also with more sophisticated Europeans. I mean our colleagues in the other Consulates General -- they weren't Legations, we were the only Legation. And, of course, we were small but we would occasionally see our colleagues from Rabat. That was only a Consulate but was already quite important -- there's where the French Resident General was. And Casablanca which was already a big commercially oriented post, so we saw some of those. And, of course, they'd have regional conferences. I remember going twice to Madrid to participate in regional consular conferences, and then a regional political officers conference.

And it's true that you could see Spain from our window, and we could go from time to time. That was on my list as number one for my "wish list," and once again it didn't happen but somebody kindly said, "We don't have anything in Spain but we do have something nice, Oporto, Portugal where you can be near Spain and also you can be chief of post. You did it in an acting manner in Basra and now you can be your own chief of post." But that's another story that we'll talk about later.

CHRISTIAN A. CHAPMAN
Vice Consul
Casablanca (1951-1953)

As a Foreign Service officer, Christian A. Chapman served in Lebanon, Iran, Vietnam, Washington, DC, Luxembourg, France, Belgium, and Laos. He was interviewed in 1990 by Charles Stuart Kennedy.

Q: Your first assignment was to Casablanca.

CHAPMAN: That's right.

Q: How did you feel about this and what was the situation.

CHAPMAN: I had asked to go to the Middle East because that's where I thought there would be some action. I was sent to Casablanca and I wasn't terribly enthusiastic. I thought, my god this is terrible. I was going out somewhere in left field where nothing happened. But, as it turned out, it was a wonderful two years. It's a beautiful country. It was an introduction to the Middle East, to Islam and to the problems of Moslem societies. And to the dying days of one empire. So it was very instructive.

Q: The empire being ...

CHAPMAN: The French. Indeed, I left in '53 and Morocco became independent three bloody years later.

Q: Let me ask you. You had a French mother and fought on the French side. Now you are an American vice consul in Casablanca. Weren't you looking at everything with bifocals?

CHAPMAN: I always felt I was an American; I served in the Free French as an American. Speaking French and understanding the French, but as an American, I've never had a problem representing this country. I believe in it and I believed, and continue to believe, in its foreign policies. We've all had our reservations about some aspects of our actions abroad, but, by and large, to this day, I think that the thrust of our policies has been right, and, on the whole, successful.

In Morocco, I specifically thought that the French were wrong. It was quite sad to observe an otherwise perfectly intelligent people absolutely refusing to face the reality of the situation. Any foreign observer could see that the situation was slipping out from under their control; that, regardless of their belief that they were absolutely necessary for the country, their days were in fact limited. In a way it was a poisonous atmosphere. You could not get into a conversation with a French person without "the Moroccan problem" coming into the conversation. They had intoxicated themselves in the belief that they were essential to the maintenance of the country, that the Moroccans could not rule themselves.

Q: Were there any instructions from Washington at this time?

CHAPMAN: There was tension between the American posts in North Africa and the Embassy in Paris. Our colleagues in Paris were of course working with the French government and trying, at that time, to work out a security system, the alliance of NATO. It was essential to develop cooperative relations with all the people of Western Europe. For the French government, the issue of their empire was a major consideration. For those of us who were observers on the ground, in the empire, we could see what was going on and thought it unwise for us to be allied too closely with France, the imperialist, against what seemed evident to us, the wave of the future. So there was an inherent tension between the North African posts and our embassy in Paris.

Woody Wallner, who was First Secretary at the embassy in Paris, in charge of empire affairs, was our principal adversary. We loved him dearly, and respected him highly, but we were in a continuing struggle with him, to win Washington's soul, as it were. He was putting forth the French case and doing his best to maintain France as an ally in Europe, France which of course played a central role in NATO. We in the empire went a different way, arguing that the US should not be perceived by the natives as supporting imperialism, or at least too wedded to the maintenance of French authority in their countries.

Q: This was part of the great battle over the dissolution of colonies that was fought in the Department and in the field really up to the end of the sixties.

CHAPMAN: Well no, until independence in 1956.

Q: But the battle continued with others. Well now, who was your consul general?

CHAPMAN: John Madonne.

Q: How did he feel about that?

CHAPMAN: John was a fairly relaxed, detached individual. He presided smilingly over his post.

Q: How did that play out?

CHAPMAN: The junior officers felt more strongly than the senior ones.

Q: Were you under any restraints?

CHAPMAN: No. I have always prided myself on being a very professional diplomat. And so, although at one point, a French friend warned me to be careful, because in Rabat, the French authorities apparently considered I was too critical, and had spoken, according to this friend, of declaring me persona non grata. Essentially I was trying to say what I thought in nice terms - that there was an evolution taking place in the world, things were changing and it was wise to adjust accordingly. Even such a mild proposition was taken amiss- which is a pretty good indication of the extraordinary sensitivity of the French at the time.

The most dramatic event in my two years in Casablanca was the Korean War. It caused a very great rise in anxieties.

Q: The Korean War started in ...

CHAPMAN: In June 1950. And I got to Morocco in February of 1951. In the spring of that year, Washington decided that we had to have the means of striking at the USSR. At that time, there was no plane that could reach the Soviet Union from the US. There were no ballistic missiles, of course. The longest range bomber was the B-33. It didn't have the range to reach Russia. The only way we could reach the USSR was to have intermediate bases. So it was decided in Washington, to build five major bases in Morocco.

Well, in 1951, 1952, there was full employment in the US. The economy was going great guns. There were not many able-bodied, qualified men (women had not entered the work force as heavy equipment operators as yet) to be hired in the streets. The whole program was carried out on an absolutely crash basis. Negotiations were concluded with the French which eliminated dealing with the Moroccans at all for which procedure we paid later in Moroccan resentment. A consortium of engineering firms under Bechtel was established and started hiring Americans helter-skelter, many characters not to be believed.

Some were hired in New York, got drunk on the plane, stayed drunk on the plane, arrived in Paris drunk, were transferred to another plane, arrived drunk in Casablanca. Three days later, they were sent back home, drunk. Any able-bodied man who had ever driven a truck or even been close to big equipment was hired. Within a matter of days, the center of Casablanca was turned into a wild west town. Brawls all the time; shootings. It was just a terrible mess.

Now it happened that we still had extraterritorial rights in Morocco, which meant that any American who was arrested, who was a defendant in a civil or criminal case, was tried by a US consular court using the jurisprudence of the District of Columbia. There was the Consulate General court in Casablanca, and there was the Legation court in Tangier.

Well, it was a lot of fun, but it became a lot of work and John Madonne decided to crack down. We had to restore order. And we began to be tough on all of these Americans arrested by the police for disorderly conduct and other acts. We levied increasingly heavy fines for misconduct and sent those found guilty of more serious crimes back to the District to serve time, and, so, with the help of the Consortium, we managed to get the situation under control.

It was important that we did for it had become a crazy scene. Shootings, fighting, double murders. You name it, we had it, including, but that was not related to the bases, a case of piracy on the high seas. Some Americans had become involved with the Italian mafia. Attacking from high speed boats, they hijacked a ship on the high seas and took off hundreds of cases of cigarettes to peddle in Sicily. Somehow, they were arrested and tried in the Tangier court. It was completely an 18th century happening in the 20th century. But it was interesting.

ROBERT F. FRANKLIN
Radio Engineer, USIS
Tangier (1951-1954)

Robert F. Franklin was born in San Francisco, California. He served as a United States Information Agency officer in Vietnam, Germany, Washington, DC, the Philippines, the Congo, Rwanda, Tunisia, and Kenya. Mr. Franklin was interviewed by Earl Wilson in 1988.

FRANKLIN: At Tangier I was involved in the initial setting up and operating of the Tangier Relay Base for the Voice of America.

Q: *What type of title was that then?*

FRANKLIN: Engineer; staff engineer. Well, I guess they called us Shift Supervisors, actually, because we had locals under us doing the slog work, so to speak, and we supervised them.

Q: *Where was the facility located?*

FRANKLIN: We had two plants. The office was in town, in Tangier. Our receiving plant was nine kilometers south of the town and our transmitting plant was 21 kilometers south of the town. We had to separate them because of potential interference from the transmitters, of course. The equipment was very good, and for the most part it worked well.

Q: *New equipment?*

FRANKLIN: Oh, yes. Brand new. It was a new installation. It had actually started on the air just a short time before I got there. But not all of the transmitters were on when I arrived. We had banks of receivers, picked up transmissions from the States and relayed them to the Middle East, Europe, the Soviet Union. I think that was about all at the time. India, perhaps; I'm not sure. My memory fails me on that point.

Q: *I don't think we had discovered Africa, sub-Saharan Africa.*

FRANKLIN: No. At that point we didn't pay much attention to sub-Saharan Africa. That's true.

Q: Okay. So anything particular happen of interest?

FRANKLIN: Well, yes. This was also the start of my attracting trouble in places where I was stationed. This would have been about 1952, I think, more or less in the middle of my tour. The French had promised to turn Morocco over to the Moroccans and they didn't. And the Moroccans had an uprising in Tangier, calling in the RIFS, from the mountain zone nearby, and really just generally causing trouble. They were turning over parked cars in the streets and burning them. They were shoving Europeans off the sidewalks and, on a couple of occasions, beating up on them, all in resentment over the French breaking their promise. And, of course, bear in mind that an American is more or less indistinguishable from a Frenchman as far as a Moroccan native is concerned. So we wound up carrying guns to work. I left my wife at home with a little .22 caliber target pistol, which was the only other gun we had, and I took along a Beretta that I'd picked up during the war. We actually didn't run into any trouble. But we felt safer if, walking down the street in the main part of town, we were carrying something a bit imposing. I happened to have about an 18 inch steel bar that I carried. Nobody bothered me. Nobody bothered me at all. But that was the only incident.

A curious thing about that: My wife said, "oh, Mother will be worried." (Her mother was in Washington state.) "I'll send her a telegram." Well, it hadn't appeared in the U.S. press at all; there was no mention of it. And my mother-in-law had no idea why she was sending a telegram. But that was about the only untoward incident. Oh, we had a little Arab servant who was really an imbecile. But very, very pleasant, did washing well and ironed like a woman; did a beautiful job. He announced to our Spanish cook that they were going to cut our throats and take over the house and take over all of Tangier.

Q: Really.

FRANKLIN: We kept him on nonetheless. He wasn't really violent.

Q: Any Americans involved with the project have any problems?

FRANKLIN: Not to my knowledge, Earl. No. We were all nervous for a week to ten days. That's really about all.

Q: And then did the French leave during your time?

FRANKLIN: No, no. Tangier was an international zone, you see. It didn't belong to the French and the French couldn't have turned it over. It was French Morocco, most of the country, they would have turned over, but this did not come about until several years later. I think about '58 or '59. I don't recall exactly when.

One other thing, as an amusing sidelight, was my wife's bread episode in Tangier. She has a taste for whole wheat bread. And we couldn't get any of that there. The bread wasn't very good. So she thought, well, why don't I bake some? A good idea! But our oven was too small, so she went out, looked up the local Arab baker, who happened to be a neighbor, and asked him if he could bake the bread for her. Oh, he said, he'd be happy to. So she sought out all the ingredients in local

shops, mixed the dough, put it in pans, and brought it down to the Arab baker to be put in his big oven. He said to come back in whatever it was, an hour or two, and he'd have it all ready.

So she went back to find that the Arab who, of course, was used to unleavened bread as distinct from bread that rises, had very assiduously, with his big wooden paddle, taken out her bread on several occasions during the baking and patted it firmly down so that it ended in looking like so many large, fat pancakes rather than bread.

DONALD R. NORLAND
Political and Information Officer
Rabat (1952-1956)

Tunisia and Morocco Desk
Washington, DC (1956-1958)

Ambassador Donald R. Norland was born in Iowa in 1924. He graduated from the University of Iowa and served in the U.S. Navy during World War II. Ambassador Norland entered the Foreign Service in 1952. His career included positions in Morocco, the Ivory Coast, the Netherlands, France, Guinea, and ambassadorships to Chad, Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland. He was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy in 1992.

NORLAND: And, worse, my first assignment was Morocco. To pursue this McCarthy business, my first duties were as assistant public affairs officer. The public affairs officer soon left, and while I was in charge the team of Cohn and Schine made a trip to Europe and threatened to come to Morocco. I got a telegram saying that, in anticipation of their visit, I should remove from the shelves of the library all books by Dashiell Hammett, the murder mystery writer, and a couple of other names.

Q:Lillian Hellman.

NORLAND: Right. It was unbelievable -- in America.

Q:For somebody looking at this period, this trip of Cohn and Schine was the greatest embarrassment that could have happened.

NORLAND: Indeed.

Q:These were two assistants of his that sort of flitted around. I hate to use the term, but they were just absolutely animals, being unintellectual and having a wonderful time giving a terrible name to the United States. They were so-called "investigating" books, and they would run around ripping books off shelves.

NORLAND: That's right. And it had further personal consequence in that I was scheduled for

home leave after two years. I had arrived in Morocco in December of 1952. 1954 came, and the Department decided not to give us home leave, for fear that, once we returned to Washington our positions would be abolished and there would be an opportunity for the McCarthyists to talk to us, to conduct investigations. I mean, I don't know what all was feared. But it was a ridiculous episode.

Q: Well, let's go back to the time you were there. I came in in 1955, and I had very much the impression, as I think most of my class did, that you really couldn't trust the Secretary of State. Alger Hiss and that whole case. I had no doubt about his guilt, as leaking documents to the...I got the feeling that my superiors would not back me up. One had the feeling that Dean Acheson was a solid person, but that Dulles was not, as far as standing up for the Foreign Service.

NORLAND: That is certainly true. And I developed a dislike of Dulles even before I saw him. I saw him a couple of times and actually had dealings once. But Dulles could subordinate what I thought was his natural human and democratic instinct and bow down to this man McCarthy. And when Dulles succeeded in getting rid of a number of people and letting the security people have their way, obviously acquiescing in a number of things that McCarthy was doing, it made things worse. I mean, it was not a good time to be in the Foreign Service.

Q: But did this not turn anybody off?

NORLAND: Oh, yes, I think it did. I don't think any of our group actually resigned as a result of it, but they certainly developed an active dislike for that particular era and that particular regime. I don't know anyone who looks back fondly at John Foster Dulles's term as Secretary of State. I did return to the Department and was working there while he was going around developing the SEATO and the CENTO, these anti-Communist alliances, and calling nonalignment immoral. And that showed that he was catering to influences that were not well grounded in reality, and that he didn't understand the non-industrialized world.

Q: Your first job, you went straight from training to Rabat, where you served from '52 to '56.

NORLAND: That's right. I was supposed to come home on home leave in '54, but they were afraid, so I stayed on and on, and finally left in January of '56, having spent more than three years at my first post.

Q: What was the situation in Morocco when you went there in '52?

NORLAND: This was a fascinating period. Let me give you a quick overview of the '52 to '60 period. In the course of those years, I spent five years abroad under colonial regimes. The only way to understand what was going on in Morocco at that time, and what was going on in Ivory Coast later, was to see that the colonial power was determined to retain its status and maintain its citizens in positions of power and responsibility. It was another mentality. And we're only talking forty years ago. But in Morocco the atmosphere was dominated by the French, in the person of the French resident general sitting in the highest position of authority, with the Moroccan monarchy reduced considerably in stature by the way the French treated him, King Mohammed V. (He was then known as Sultan Mohammed V.)

At that same time, there was percolating in the body politic of Morocco the effects of what an American president had done in 1942. You remember President Roosevelt had met with the Sultan after the Casablanca Conference. He told the Sultan that he would do nothing to facilitate continued French colonialism in the world. And that applied specifically to Morocco.

Roosevelt's word had given rise to feelings of independence, which were focused in the Independence Movement (in Arabic the word is Istiqlal). Istiqlal was banned by the French, it was anathema to the authorities and, of course, it was gaining ground rapidly among Moroccans.

So you had this implacable confrontation between the French on the one hand, with their extraordinary armed forces...I became quite well acquainted with General Duval, who was the head of those armed forces for much of the time that I was there...and the Moroccan people. The French armed forces controlled the city, patrolling where necessary. They had spies; they had their ways of exercising authority. And on the other hand, you had the Moroccans, who were quietly going about in their djellabas (long gowns).

The djellaba, in a sense, was a metaphor for their politics -- a deceptively common outer garment able to conceal arms while they looked you in the eye and said, "I'm not doing anything wrong, I'm just trying to stay out of trouble," then going behind the scenes and conducting what we today call terrorist attacks.

One of my jobs, when I moved to the political section of the embassy, was to send in weekly reports of the number of arson cases, terrorist attacks, armed incidents, such as assaults on French authority by Moroccans.

My boss there, by the way, was a figure of great capacity and dimensions. I'm sure you've heard his name -- Bill Porter. I'm terribly sorry he did not get his chance to do an oral history. Bill Porter was a man who understood the Moroccan mentality.

Q: He was what?

NORLAND: He became the consul general in the fall of '53. John Dorman had been the consul.

Q: In those days, we didn't have an ambassador because it wasn't...

NORLAND: It was not independent. We had a minister resident in Tangier. And those ministers were extraordinarily competent people. John Carter Vincent was one. And Joe Satterthwaite. And the reason those ministers were there was because they did not require Senate confirmation. John Carter Vincent was suspect because of his China policies.

Q: You're talking about the McCarthy period.

NORLAND: Yes, he was minister during the McCarthy period.

Q: So this is where you kind of...I won't say buried them, but kept them out of the line of fire.

NORLAND: That's true. And the ministers had very little to say about what we were doing in French Morocco.

Q: In Rabat, wasn't the system that Morocco was considered a separate country?

NORLAND: Indeed it was. It was governed under the terms of the Treaty of Fès, which was agreed between Marshal Lyautey and the Moroccans in 1912. In a word, it provided that Morocco would be autonomous, except for defense and foreign affairs, which would be in the hands of the French. And, of course, the French expanded the authority granted them in that loophole (defense and foreign affairs), and literally ran the country. Their investments were the dynamism that enabled the country to be actually quite prosperous and economically interesting. The Moroccans have great tourist potential. One olive oil company, Huile Lesieur, for example, in Casablanca, was a major multinational, we would say today. But the French used Morocco as a kind of training ground for their military. And they were constantly trying to preempt prominent Moroccans and get them to front for their administration.

I was going to say, when Bill Porter and I would drive inland, to Fès, for example, we had to go through roadblocks. And roadblocks meant French military poking their guns inside the windows of the car until you showed them your papers, and then you'd go on. It was a case of strict military domination and not pretty.

Bill handled it very well. He got to know the successive residents general. There was Guillaume, Duval, Dubois, a former prefect of police in Paris, very prominent French politicians in positions of authority. But the Moroccans made their wishes known.

Let me offer one incident that will describe what it was like to live in that country. I was the lowest-ranking officer in the consulate general. Bill Porter, having spent a lot of time in the Middle East (his first post was Baghdad about '36; he went on to Lebanon and Cairo), understood the mentalities, studied Arabic, and knew that the future of the country was with the Moroccan independence movement. And we kept getting informal emissaries from King Mohammed V.

One man, named Sbihi, was one of these quiet Moroccans who would slip in the back door to talk, in anxious tones, to Bill Porter, leaning forward, telling him all the feelings at the palace, how the king wanted help, etc.

Q: This would be Mohammed V.

NORLAND: Mohammed V. We'll call him the king from now on because that's when he changed his name.

The king wanted to cause the Americans to understand that the independence movement would be friendly to us, that Moroccans were not anti-French, but this was the age of independence. They remembered what Roosevelt had said.

Bill Porter would play the game absolutely straight and say, "Thank you very much. We know we are indeed a symbol of independence, of course. But at the moment, the French are the authority here, and we must work and try to negotiate something different."

At one point, a young Moroccan named Douiri came to my house. He'd been educated in France at the École des Mines. He'd returned and he was the top-ranking working-level Moroccan official. (He's still a figure in Moroccan politics, although I'm told he's not well.) He came to me and he asked to talk. I reported this to Bill Porter, who somehow got the Department to agree to allow me to have a contact with this young Moroccan. It took about two meetings to determine that, instead of being what the French thought he was, namely a product of the French universities and someone who believed entirely in the French way of looking at things, Douiri was a member of Istiqlal. I then had an authorized contact with a member of Istiqlal.

Q: Just a bit about how we operated. Here we were, our oldest relationship with any country in the world was with Morocco, of all things. The French dominated it, but at the same time, legally, the situation wasn't quite that straightforward. You had this independent movement going on. How were you guided as far as contacts?

NORLAND: Well, we were passive; I never put out the word that I wanted to see Douiri. I was authorized to receive him in my house when he came around. So it was usually after dark, in the most imperceptible way, that he would somehow find his way to the house.

I should have mentioned, as part of this overall contact, something which I stress very much when I lecture on the subject. That is the fact that the United States was building five major air bases in Morocco at this time, three of which were already operational. And you know their purpose. Perhaps I should put it on the record: these were so-called recovery bases for American aircraft striking the USSR from bases in the Middle East...

Q: We're talking about the Soviet Union.

NORLAND: A strike against the Soviet Union. They would make their strike, possibly from the United States, and would stop in Morocco for refueling and recovery, as they say.

And so this was a country that was playing an important role in the thinking of our Strategic Air Command, which was operating the bases. Morocco became important. The U.S. talked in the same terms about Libya and Wheelus Air Force Base, the Azores, about other bases around the world. But because of this strategic measure we were doing everything possible to ménager (spare) the French, i.e. to be very careful about maintaining good relations with the French. They were an ally in NATO -- not totally committed to NATO, but they were our ally, and we had this common adversary. And that superseded all other considerations in our relationship with the Moroccans; we treated the latter accordingly.

Q: Well, then, back to this contact with the young official of the Ministry of Mines.

NORLAND: Right. He would come around, and he would pass information about what the Istiqlal was doing, how they were organizing, mobilizing. They even began a newspaper at this

time. We were trying to find out whether there was Communist influence in Istiqlal. And there were, of course, some members who were Communists, but we were convinced that they were not dominant in the movement. So we maintained this contact.

I have to say that, later on, I discovered that our CIA representatives, who were based in Tangier, were receiving Istiqlal and other nationalist leaders, without the same inhibitions because it was the so-called international city. The Moroccans who got to Tangier felt much more open about seeing our people, although I'm sure the French knew who they were and who was being received.

Q: Did you ever worry about the French sending agents provocateur to you?

NORLAND: Oh, yes. And the French occasionally would seek Bill Porter and ask: "Why are you receiving these Moroccans?"

And he would reply, "We don't turn people away if they come to our door. We can't turn them away, but we do not receive them in their capacity as independence movement leaders. We are an open country, an open mission, and we receive anybody. Send over your people."

He was very good at this.

Q: When talking to this young Moroccan man, were you trying to extract information without giving encouragement?

NORLAND: That's right, that certainly describes it. It was to show that we were open, and not renouncing our past. We recognized that our country had produced the Declaration of Independence (which they kept reminding us), and that it was contrary to our historical tradition to oppose independence. But I can remember saying, time and again, "Look, we're in an international confrontation here, and once this is over, who can say." Meanwhile, our instructions were to do everything possible to cultivate the French.

And, incidentally, in running the American Library in Rabat, which I did for a year, we were discouraged from having Moroccans come into the center. We oriented our programs almost exclusively to the French.

Q: Why was this?

NORLAND: Because if we brought in Moroccans we could be accused of tainting them with the ideals of independence. I know the French used to plant people inside the door and take note of which Moroccans would visit the Library. We were running a book-lending operation, for example, movies, art exhibits; the invitations went almost exclusively to the French and to those very few Moroccans who were considered to be approved, like the one that I was seeing, Mohammed Douiri.

Can you imagine having an information operation in a country of about twelve million, with only perhaps a couple of hundred thousand French, and yet the whole operation geared to the French?

Q: Was this causing discomfort with you and with others?

NORLAND: Sure, but orders are orders.

I can remember one exhibit, for example. I had some people who were quite good at putting things together. We were trying to convey to the Moroccans, as well as to the French, what our policy was, and so we called one exhibit La Pieuvre Rouge (pieuvre is octopus, in French).

Q: The Red Octopus.

NORLAND: We had all kinds of tentacles going out, including USSR tentacles, toward Morocco (we were trying to justify our important base operation). This was an attempt to educate both the Moroccans and the French. To the Moroccans, we were saying, "Look, there is a greater danger even than your French colonial master." And to the French, we were saying, "Look, you can trust us. We understand the global threat, and we're going to continue the policy as long as this danger persists."

It was something, all the military resources in the country.

Q: Then you moved from the USIS.

NORLAND: To the consulate general, where I became the political officer. Jack Bowie left, because he didn't get along with Bill Porter. And I was asked to move. We liked Bill and Eleanore very much. It was great to work for him.

Q: As a political reporter, you say you were counting up terrorist incidents and all, but were there any official Moroccans you could talk to openly, or weren't you able to go to the palace?

NORLAND: No. The palace was guarded very carefully. Bill Porter, the consul general, would go there on ceremonial occasions, but little business was transacted. I don't think, except for special occasions, he was allowed to see the king. It was very much a resident-general-oriented operation.

Incidentally, the resident general always had a Moroccan aide-de-camp, a military aide. That was very good for photo ops., as we would say today, because it looked as though some Moroccans were supporting the French presence. There were Moroccan soldiers totally integrated into the French military -- very good soldiers, always well trained and groomed; they also had cavalry (horse) divisions. There was one particular aide-de-camp, assistant to the resident general, who seemed always to be around. The French would present him proudly. Colonel Oufkir would meet Bill when he got out of his car, walk him up the red carpet, sit in the Resident General's meetings, and escort him back to his car. To make a long story short, it turned out that Oufkir told Bill Porter of his sympathies for the independence movement. So, during the years where the French thought they were showing off Moroccans loyal to the French, in fact, their "model" turned out to be a strong independence supporter. I've never seen this in print but I'm confident it's true.

Oufkir became suspect in later years...as detailed in a book that came out last year, called "Notre Ami le Roi" (Our Friend the King), by a French investigative reporter who documents the fact that Colonel Oufkir was among those trying to overthrow the king at Fedala, site of the king's house south of Rabat, during a major celebration.

Q: *Ah, yes, the birthday party. This was King Hassan, the son.*
[By then, Oufkir was a general and Minister of the Interior]

NORLAND: That's right, Colonel Oufkir was one of the key people in that whole episode, and was himself killed. One of the things that this book, "Notre Ami le Roi," goes into in great detail is that Colonel Oufkir's wife and several children, including a five-month-old child, were held in jail without bail, without hearing, without any judicial process, until about a year ago (1991).

Q: *Oh, my God.*

NORLAND: It's an example of the arbitrariness of the King. And I don't think you can read this book, or two or three others that have come out as well, without concluding that King Hassan, the son of Mohammed V, is guilty of gross violations of human rights. The comparison made a year ago was with Saddam Hussein.

Q: *Saddam Hussein of Iraq.*

NORLAND: Of Iraq.

Q: *Well, King Hassan was just a boy at the time.*

NORLAND: True.

Q: *So he didn't play any role at all when you were there.*

NORLAND: He was a playboy, the prince.

Q: *Among the French that you'd meet, was there disquiet about the future of French dominance there?*

NORLAND: It's part of the posturing that goes on in these countries always. If you show the slightest crack in your psychological armor, even admitting the possibility that there might be change in the future...the French might agree but would respond, "Eventually, perhaps, sometime down the road." But the thought of a break soon -- such as occurred in Morocco in 1955 -- came as a shock. It came when Pierre Mendès-France became prime minister of France and decided that resistance to change was not useful.

There was the difficult problem of the colons, the farmer-colonizers. There were organizations of colons who would simply not countenance the thought that Morocco would not forever be the way it was, that they would be forced to leave their beautiful homes and their easy situations,

with servants and cheap labor responding to their beck and call, as they had always done. We knew people among the French (unfortunately, those were the people that we socialized with) who had the swimming pools, the parties; and Moroccans were wonderful as domestic servants, very good at many different tasks.

So there was no apparent concession of any significance among the French that I knew. I knew a number of people. I was an official of the Franco-American Club, for example, where I helped bring together French and Americans -- the Americans to learn French. We produced tourist outings, lectures. We'd give French officials a chance to explain their policies. Moroccans never attended those meetings.

Q: *Were you there during the changeover?*

NORLAND: Yes.

Q: *Could you describe how it developed. You might also talk about our response and the feeling of our reporting, how we saw this. Or was this something that basically happened in France. And then how did it work out?*

NORLAND: As far as our operation in Rabat was concerned, we were on the defensive, in the sense that we could not produce these earthshaking changes. We were simply reporting. We had little influence on events. It was the Moroccans who were creating the conditions that became insupportable. They accelerated terrorist activities. They began demonstrations, which we would report. They were usually under some euphemistic heading, not independence, but for higher wages, for example, or against something the French had done. They would make their wishes known in various ways. But it was the French in France, the Pierre Mèndes-France types, who had concluded that this was simply untenable or affordable and France would have to do something. And they then had to decide with whom they were going to negotiate.

Do you remember the sequence of events, by the way?

Q: *Not in detail.*

NORLAND: In August of 1953, the French found the presence of King Mohammed V in Morocco uncontrollable. So one very dark night (I think it was the 18th of August 1953), they removed him from the palace and took him by plane to Madagascar, Antsirabe, if you know Madagascar. [There are three Antsirabes in Madagascar.] There he was kept until 1955, about the 25th of November. In the interim, the French brought in a minor religious leader named Ben Arafa, from Fès, a man who could scarcely speak. (I guess his Arabic was good, but he didn't speak French.) They made a puppet king of him. As you know, the king of Morocco is also a spiritual leader. The principal sects regard the king of Morocco as the descendant of Mohammed and, as a result, pay religious as well as political allegiance to the king. Ben Arafa was able to claim some of that authority. But he was still a puppet, and everybody knew it. So there were a succession of anti-Arafa demonstrations. They were publicly pro Mohammed V, of course, but everybody knew that in fact they were calling for the sultan's return. The sultan's return then became the loudest rallying outcry, when Moroccans talked politics.

But, it was what was going on in France that created the change.

I'm sure that the French in Morocco were reporting that the situation had become increasingly difficult because there were some extraordinary events.

For example, the large demonstrations. On occasions when the French were trying to put on a good show, the Moroccans would refuse to show; they would boycott an event. And it became apparent that the event couldn't take place.

And various things occurred that could have had significant implications. I don't know if they did or not. But I go back to the commanding general, General Duval, a four-star French general, a man who had a gimpy leg. At the time, I was playing quite a lot of tennis, and he saw me at one point and asked me to become his regular tennis partner. This was morning tennis, after which we would have orange juice, coffee, and croissants at a little cabana right next to the court. The general and I got to be quite well acquainted.

But one day he asked me if I would like to go with him on a flight into the interior, to show me, as a political officer at the consulate, how his troops were combating a dissident movement in the interior.

I asked Bill Porter, "What do you think?"

And he said, "Well, you know, it's up to you."

I had just become a father for the first time, and I thought, no, I guess I better not.

Duval went out that day, his plane crashed, and he was killed. Nobody knows whether his plane was shot down or whether he actually lost control. Whatever.

But the fact that they lost a four-star general was an event. It had a certain psychological impact on what was going on.

So there were incidents like that, combined with the sullenness of Moroccans in public demonstrations, that were obviously pointing the way.

You may have heard of the leader in Marrakech called El-Glaoui. Glaoui was from another age, really. He was "old fashioned" but it's worse than that.

Q: Hadn't he been around since the turn of the century, or something?

NORLAND: Oh, yes.

Q: I mean, he was the longest...

NORLAND: Pasha.

Q: Pasha. We're talking about well before World War I.

NORLAND: He was, at one point, kind of a nationalist. But the French got him and tried to bargain, using El-Glaoui's authority to try to get acceptance for what was going on in Rabat. And that just didn't work at all; it was a futile exercise.

But what's so hard for people to understand (it relates to one of your first questions) is the determination of the French people, the fact that they did have an effective army and military control. Yet if it had been just a matter of military resources, a military confrontation, the French could have hung on. But there was something else, as we later learned in Vietnam, that made it untenable and so disrupted the relationship that they could never have been comfortable staying in the country if they continued to resist in the way that they did.

So they made concessions. And in November of 1955, I remember standing on the road leading from the airport at Salé where the Bou Regreg River runs in the valley, with the king coming by on his return and hundreds of thousands of people lining both sides of the road as he drove back up to the palace. After that it was just a matter of formalities before he was totally reinstated and independence declared in March of 1956.

It was an interesting story.

Q: You were there during the declaration of independence?

NORLAND: No. In January of '56, I got orders to return to this country and assigned to the Moroccan-Tunisian Desk as the first desk officer for those two countries.

Q: Tunisia had also become independent.

NORLAND: The same month, right. I actually greeted the first representatives of Morocco and Tunisia, at the 21st Street entrance of "New State". In the case of Tunisia, it was Habib Bourguiba, Jr. In the case of Morocco, it was Dr. Ahmed Ben Aboud, who's still a friend.

Q: Where did the Moroccan-Tunisian Desk fit in Near Eastern Affairs?

NORLAND: That's exactly what it was. There was no African Bureau at the time. It was under the Office of North African Affairs, which, incidentally, was, at the time, directed by Leo Cyr, with Fred Hadsel as the number two. But Bill Porter came back to take over that desk in 1957. After being the first charge in Rabat, he returned to the Department. So I worked for him another two years, five years in all.

Q: This was your first time working in Washington. What did you feel was the role of the Moroccan-Tunisian Desk? Here are two independent states, and sandwiched between them was Algeria. This was the period of the great Algerian war in the Department of State -- the French Desk and the NATO people. France was absolutely key. And yet here you were, and Algeria was part of France. Anyway, could you describe how you saw this played out at the bureaucratic

level?

NORLAND: As usual, there are several levels in the bureaucracy. Just to give you a quick illustration: the governments of Morocco and Tunisia looked upon our recognition as a tremendous event and expected a great deal of us. They wanted technical assistance; they wanted a flood of student exchanges; they wanted to enhance their status. They competed actively to get us to attend embassy functions. So, on the one hand, we were being courted; on the other hand, they were trying to promote the Algerian cause. And they were telling us, for example, you should receive Ferhat Abbas (an Algerian nationalist). You should receive some of the other leaders (whose faces I can see and who I met at the time).

But, of course, we were reminded daily by the French Desk that Algeria was part of France (even though the rebellion had broken out in 1954), and we were not to mess around. Every time the Tunisians and the Moroccans wanted us to receive one of these Algerian leaders (there were some very distinguished people). I mentioned Ferhat Abbas, a pharmacist, and very moderate; there was another man, who was their regular emissary here, whose name I will come to). We could hardly get the French Desk to agree to let us see them. And the relationship with the French Desk often became tense. Some people on the French Desk were totally Francophile and saw these Third World liberation movements as nothing but an invitation to chaos. And you still have something of that division in the Foreign Service, if people honestly level with you. So the tensions were real.

Still, this didn't prevent us from doing everything we could for the Moroccans and Tunisians. And although there was much to be done, we didn't have the resources. We were not responding to the extent that both those countries hoped.

We did, however, succeed in doing one of the first things they wanted, which was to have official visits by their respective chiefs of state.

Q: As far as assistance, which was not as highly developed as it became later on, particularly in the Kennedy and Johnson and Nixon administrations, did we consider that in these two places, France could do its aid and assistance there, and we would concentrate elsewhere?

NORLAND: Well, we had no basis or experience for undertaking programs of real scope in those countries. The French controlled the economies of both.

And there was a time in both countries when the French gave every indication of being able to reconcile their economic interests and the new independent governments. There were a number of intransigent colons (French colonists) who returned to France, but a surprising number stayed.

In the case of Morocco, King Mohammed V was very benevolent, very understanding. He was not a firebrand. He was quiet, possibly because he was not well and physically fragile. I remember shaking his hand a few times; it was a limp handshake. And yet he had tremendous stature.

So the French were not making a mad rush for the exits.

And what did we know that would qualify us to move in? What did we know about Morocco or Tunisia? Morocco was one of the first countries to recognize our independence. Actually they did so two weeks after France. We had a long history -- but virtually no American presence in Morocco. We had a legation at Tangier, and a few investors. We had some American expatriates, like Paul Bowles and Truman Capote. But we had almost nothing in the way of real presence. I don't think we had a significant number of missionaries. The French had virtually dominated the country. So independence was largely ceremonial. And that's why the State visits were key.

Q: How did the visits go? I assume you got involved very much in them.

NORLAND: It was in October of 1957 that the king of Morocco came. By that time, we'd divided the office, so that there was a Tunisian Desk officer (Arthur Allen, who I think died). I was doing Morocco. The king came in October of '57. In those days, the U.S. president went to the airport, National Airport, to greet high-ranking visitors. As Desk officer I had been preparing a number of briefing papers. One very lengthy paper (drafted by the Historical Division) focused on the question of whether Morocco was the first country to recognize American independence. I was all prepared for a variety of questions as there was a certain amount of press interest.

President Eisenhower did go to the airport as scheduled. And waiting there beside the President, was John Foster Dulles; the chairman of the joint chiefs; several others from State, plus Bill Porter. And way down at the end, was I. Wiley Buchanan was in charge of protocol. About ten minutes before the King's arrival, Wiley Buchanan came walking down this line of people, accompanied by Bill Porter, to where I was standing, and asked me to "come up here". The President was asking whether Morocco was the first country to recognize the United States or not. I walked up, with Bill Porter, and I stood there with the President and Dulles. And the President turned to me and said, in a very businesslike way, "Was Morocco the first country to recognize us?"

The answer was: "No sir, on August 15th of 1778, the French recognized us. Two weeks later, the Moroccans saluted one of our ships."

He asked me another question or two about what the relationship was of this particular king and the United States, and what we had been doing for Morocco, and so forth. Ike turned to Dulles and said, "Well, we can't say that they were the first, then."

Dulles agreed, "No, we can't."

I stood in that company for a few minutes before returning to the end of the line.

That was about 12:30. The ceremony was over. Then Eisenhower went back to his quarters and had a heart attack.

Q: Oh, my God.

NORLAND: To fill in at the first official dinner was Vice President Richard Nixon and I was

asked to help interpret. At the official dinner, which was at the Mayflower Hotel, I remember the king, who did not bring any female with him, and Vice President Nixon, and Prince Moulay Abdullah. Prince Hassan stayed in Morocco. My task was to sit behind Mrs. Nixon and Prince Abdullah as interpreter -- French to English. So I had an up-front perspective on events, and saw Mrs. Nixon in action with this prince. He was a ne'er-do-well, who had brought over several French ladies to accompany him, and didn't pay attention, wasn't interested in what Mrs. Nixon was saying, and, as a matter of fact, made some offhand cracks to me, which it would have been improper to translate.

There was a subsequent luncheon given at Anderson House, on Massachusetts Avenue. J. Edgar Hoover attended; it was hosted by Vice President Nixon. Those two talked very animatedly. I remember overhearing a little of their conversation.

Q: J. Edgar Hoover was the head of the FBI and a very strong conservative, a very difficult man.

NORLAND: Yes. So the visit was disrupted -- the flow, the level. They didn't have the big dinner at the White House. And, of course, people were very concerned about the President's health which was the subject, as I recall, of the Hoover-Nixon conversation.

It was an interesting visit. The Moroccans never showed their dissatisfaction with events. They're too polite. I still have two autographed pictures from King Mohammed V of Morocco -- they forgot they'd given me one, and they gave me another as a souvenir of the visit.

But then the king died in 1960; he had not been well, and King Hassan took over.

Q: Did Bourguiba come to the United States?

NORLAND: Yes, Bourguiba also came to the United States. He was dynamic. I did not get as deeply involved in that visit. I didn't attend the major dinner, although I did attend the reception and had a chance to talk to him. And his son became a friend. Bourguiba's son had a boy who was the same age as my eldest son, and we actually shared babysitters at one point.

Q: He was ambassador to the United States.

NORLAND: He became ambassador. He was first minister; Mongi Slim was the ambassador. But he was the first person to come to the U.S. and prepare the way. And he was an awfully nice person, as you know -- and competent. Married to the daughter of the interior minister of Tunisia, and very well placed. He'd come with his family to share a snack at the house and bring his son over there, and they played together. We later saw Habib, Jr. when he became ambassador to Italy. He went through a period where he was not well. But Habib, Sr. didn't speak English, and so a lot of his charm was lost in translation.

But there were distractions even in those days that kept President Bourguiba's visit from becoming the major event that the Tunisians would have wanted.

Q: How much, particularly since you were dealing mainly with Morocco on the Desk, did the air

base and the navy base that we had there continue to dominate our policy during that period?

NORLAND: They were very important. As long as Mohammed V was alive, it seems to me, the pressures on us to leave weren't great. I left the Desk in the fall of '58, having done almost three years, but I have to say that as of the time that I was still on the Desk, Mohammed V was still around, and there were indications, but I don't think anything more than that, that we would be asked to leave. And we were doing everything possible to conduct a rearguard action that would enable us to stay.

I think by the end of the Fifties, the king had also come under tremendous pressure from Istiqlal that led him to conclude that we would have to leave our bases. And I'm sure that it was in that period that the king said, "Prepare to leave."

Then we had negotiations that resulted, for example, in one of the bases, Nouasser, outside Casablanca, being turned into an international airport. The one near Marrakech, Ben Guerir, was closed. The same for the base near Meknès. Two of the bases were never operational. They became a source of acrimony, needless to say. Our military were not very pleased.

Q: Well, this, of course, is always one of the problems. Once we're in, the State Department finds itself in the not-very-pleasant position of trying to protect our military interests in the place, while at the same time trying to curb our military which wants to really sort of take over. Around the area, our people don't come under Moroccan law, and there's always the unhappiness and all that.

NORLAND: Status of forces agreement was one of the major problems that we had with the Moroccans. When our people committed criminal acts, e.g., violence to Moroccans such as automobile accidents, it did not go over well that we were able to extract those people from Moroccan jurisdictions. That probably contributed significantly to the Moroccan decision to ask us to leave. I leave it to others to assess to what extent that was done entirely amicably, or whether there were some residual problems that have impaired our relations ever since.

Q: How about the October '56 war, which we know as the Suez crisis? How did that impact? I guess at that time you were dealing with both in Tunisia and in Morocco.

NORLAND: I know that we were deeply concerned that there would be events in both countries that would be inimical to our interests. As I recall, there was no overt anti-American activity. I'd be surprised if the record shows that there were even significant incidents. There may have been minor ones, but I don't think anything serious came to our attention. This is one of the things I learned early on, and that is that Tunisians and Moroccans did not automatically follow the Arab policies. They were never pro-Israel, but they were not just automatically pulled in to whatever Arab position was being adopted. And as for the Suez, I'm sure that there were public manifestations, probably attempts to collect funds and distribute various forms of assistance to Egypt and victims of the war, but the governments were restrained.

Q: How about Nasser? What was our reading? This was during the period when we were really concerned about Nasser becoming the major influence over the whole Arab world. How were we

reading him as far as Tunisia and Morocco were concerned?

NORLAND: In Morocco, the Voice of the Revolution, his Arabic radio station, was widely listened to. As long as Morocco was not independent, it was a very important rallying point; as soon as they got independence, it tapered off. And Nasser did not respect Islam the way that good Moroccans would like and would expect Islam to be treated. The king, as I say, has a religious role, and there was no great sympathy in Morocco for Nasser, not at the governing levels. At the popular levels, I'm sure people would say Nasser was popular, but when the final choices had to be made, there was not great sympathy for him.

Tunisia was much closer and there was not this same religious barrier.

Q: Bourguiba was very much a secular figure.

NORLAND: Yes. But he had already taken his distance from strict Islam in a number of ways. For example, allowing women to go without the veil, encouraging women to be educated, giving women positions in government -- something that still is hardly done to this day in Morocco. If I'm not mistaken, Bourguiba was strong enough to be confrontational at times with Nasser. But, again, that was peripheral, and it didn't become an important factor in our relations.

Q: Speaking about relations, in NEA. Here NEA had a major crisis with the Suez thing and all this. Did you all have the feeling that dealing in the North African side, not including Egypt of course, but did you feel that you were all kind of off on the back burners?

NORLAND: Yes. The Suez invasion we thought was an unfortunate event. And we were worried that Eisenhower was going to go along with the French and British.

Q: Oh, yes.

NORLAND: We were worried, and it was a great relief when Eisenhower pulled back.

I wonder if Dulles really agreed with that? Dulles was such a colonialist in his own mentality.

But Eisenhower pulled back, and that spared relations between our two countries (Morocco and the U.S.). It enabled us to go forward on virtually the same track that we had been on when those events occurred.

But you're right, we were peripheral. The Department kept sending requests for people to go in and talk to the governments concerned. But I don't recall that we had any real problems with either one.

Suez Canal Users Association, do you remember that?

Q: Oh, yes.

NORLAND: Opinions were by no means undivided...in those days. But, as I say, Eisenhower's

action in taking his distance from the French and British actions saved our relationship.

I think Dulles would have done otherwise.

Q: *Well, he certainly didn't care for Nasser.*

NORLAND: Oh, no, nor did we.

Q: *There was a palpable distaste, for both of them.*

Going back, covering both times, both as a Desk officer and, before that, serving in Rabat, how were we reading the Moroccan Jews? Israel had been formed; very confrontational in the Arab world. We had the example of what Hitler had done to the Jews during World War II, the holocaust. And we had a strong Jewish lobby. So we must have been looking at the Jewish situation very closely this whole time.

NORLAND: Do you know that Moroccan Jews, with few exceptions, were considered to be protected by the king directly. They had what I'm sure would be described in Moroccan law as a special status.

Q: *Protégées.*

NORLAND: Protégées, in a sense. But that has quite a different connotation. There's another word for it, which I can't think of. It might come to you. But, in any case, there was not the alarm in the Jewish community in Morocco that you would find in some parts of the Arab world.

Moroccans quietly made their way to Israel. There is no question about that. The numbers were relatively restrained, I would say. And even to this day there are important settlements of Moroccan Jews and Tunisian Jews who have stayed and who have integrated and who seem to be satisfied. I don't think they have been the object of government efforts to persecute them or to cause them harm. But things go on very quietly in that field; there is not a great public announcement when Jews leave Morocco or arrive in Israel.

And yet the king has done some very interesting things. He met with Peres, remember, in Fez.

Q: *Shimon Peres, who was...*

NORLAND: Who was then prime minister of Israel. Oh, that was a daring move. That was only '86 or '85?

Of course, the king has also done some unusual things. Do you remember the Libyan-Moroccan agreement of 1984?

Q: *Oh, yes, one of these joint-nationality things that the Arab world seems prone to. One just has to wait about two to three months, and they're dead again.*

NORLAND: And, of course, there were such incompatibilities. By this time, I had taken a particular interest in Qadhafi. Among other things, he's strongly anti-monarchist.

BEN FRANKLIN DIXON
Chief, Political Section
Rabat (1956-1958)

Ben Franklin Dixon served as a Foreign Service Officer in Washington, DC, Thailand and Pakistan. He was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy in 1990.

Q: Well then, you were in Rabat, from 1956 to '58, as chief of the political section.

DIXON: Well, that was a very difficult situation. Julius Holmes, whom I had worked with, was nominated ambassador to Iran. He was turned down because he had some dealing with a...he'd bought a ship, a surplus ship, and they said there was something about it. They did not send him there. But he already had a ministerial title, so they sent him to Tangier as the minister, in Morocco. When he was going there, he was trying to get his staff together and he said he would like me to come there and work on the bases.

Q: You're saying Tangier, you mean Rabat, don't you?

DIXON: Tangier.

Q: Tangier was the capital at the time?

DIXON: The diplomatic capital, yes.

Morocco was up in arms and they were fighting for their independence. They obviously were going to get it. It was a question of how we worked it out with the French. And he asked me to come and work for him there, on the bases and about the French and so forth. He went back.

Leo Cia called me and said that they had heard that I had tried to get a job with Holmes, and that they had John Root scheduled for that job, and that I would not go. So I said okay.

Holmes came back and he came storming into my office. He said, "What is this about your refusing to come to Rabat when we go down there?"

And I said, "They told me that I couldn't go, that John Root was going."

Well, he said, "God damn it, I want you there. The main problem we've got are the bases. You are the expert on the base thing, and I want you there."

He apparently raised hell and they put me back on it. But John Root and Leo were absolutely livid with me. I said, "I had nothing to do with it." I told him that I did not want to run counter to

the establishment wishes in this thing. Which didn't please him very much.

But, anyway, I went there. And later the Department assigned John Root there anyhow. And, finally, when I came up for home leave, they arranged my transfer somewhere else. Holmes did not go there, Cavendish Cannon came there. Cavendish Cannon I had worked with on the Greek base rights, he liked me very much, he wanted me to stay there. And the department apparently... Well, he showed me some letters saying they wanted to send John Root down to be the chief political officer. And he said that he would handle the embassy himself and that I was there and that he wanted me to continue in this. But, after Cannon left, they transferred me to Bangkok.

Q: We might as well finish this particular thing. Was this, do you feel, done to show you?

DIXON: I just think that AF had its ideas of what they wanted to do, and they wanted to get me out of the way. But the inspector thought I did an excellent job on this. As a matter of fact, the agreement that I worked out again got stuck on the point of criminal jurisdiction. But the Moroccan government was satisfied with what we did work out. The base commanders were satisfied. I worked out a formula by which we could do this thing. The Defense Department would not accept it. So we simply had the agreement prevail, informally, without ever adopting it. And that stayed for years.

Q: While we're talking about these base right negotiations, I recall, not too long ago, in Italy, that one of the main problems on a lot of these bases is the legal staff in the Pentagon.

DIXON: That's right.

Q: Did you find this?

DIXON: Absolutely.

Q: I mean, they didn't seem to understand the local position or the political realities. Often there are modi vivendi that people can work out. But this seemed to be a major problem. How did you feel about this?

DIXON: It was a major problem. As I say, I got wounded in the process because Bud Howard complained to Hank Byroade, who fortunately didn't know much about it so he didn't get into it. Jack Jernegan straightened it out more or less, but it sort of blackened me and...

Q: But you found this also in the Moroccan base problem, too, did you?

DIXON: The Pentagon would never accept the agreement, although it stayed in effect for twenty years just by local ground agreement. All the base commanders said they were satisfied with it.

So I thought the Pentagon would relax, but they didn't. They kept insisting that we ask this. So all the base negotiations were simply adjourned from then on out until Phil Benzol came. Then we started giving up the bases. But, in effect, we kept people there until 1975, I guess. And that agreement stayed as just sort of an informal agreement. That's what we stood by. Which I

negotiated and which the inspector thought was a terrific job.

Q: What was the political situation in this period from '56 to '58 while you were in Morocco?

DIXON: The Moroccans were mainly guided by two people: Ahmad Balafrej and... God, what's his name, Allal al-Fassi...well, he was sort of an ideological Muslim thinker, plus some other people who were sort of tough people, like Boucetta, who was one of the principal people in the Istiqlal independence movement. There were some others, but the two important people were Balafrej and Boucetta and...I don't know why I can't think of his name.

In any case, there was a guy there with a contract for the *New York Times*, who kept intervening. And all this time neutrality was beginning to come, and he was trying to tell them that they should adopt a form of something like neutrality, non-dependence, I think they talked about, which he fostered with the Moroccan government. They were torn between saying we had falsely negotiated with the French about the bases, which was a super sin, and therefore we had to renegotiate this thing. But they would not get into negotiations. Or, actually, we had formal beginning, in which Ambassador Cannon, the present king, myself, and two or three other people got together. We had a formal opening. Nothing happened for months. And it was after pressing very hard I finally got the negotiations started. So that thing took a long time in getting started. I guess we negotiated for about a year until we got to this, what in effect to our base commanders, to us in the embassy, and to the Moroccans was satisfactory.

In the meantime, one of the major problems was the presence of the French. There were squabbles and fights between the French and the Moroccans all along. And the French tended to, if they had a post out somewhere, to come... We had these stations, I've forgotten what they're called, that have transmitter towers and you can send an electric...

Q: Oh, LORAN stations, I think.

DIXON: No, not LORAN, it was a telephone station, and they had towers and they could transmit from one tower to the other, so that we had telephone connections in all these posts around Morocco. And I used to get calls from posts, saying, you know, we hear the French have been in a firefight with the Moroccans, they've come out of their posts, they're coming into outposts, and what the hell do we do? I'd go up and talk to Francois Charles-Roux and the French...what was he called? Anyway, in effect their ambassador there. He had been the governor-general. And we gradually moved those people out of the posts. But that was a frequent occasion of conflict that we found very difficult, in trying to go between the French and the Moroccans and to keep them away from each other's throat. Which one of our main policies was to try to get through this period, get the bases negotiated, keep the French and the Moroccans from each other's throat, and try to keep doing other things that were considered very important to us.

One of the things was to measure the noise of the outer ionosphere. And we had to put in machines in several places. What they were trying to do was to correct maps to say where things were. And they were trying to what the hell, I don't really remember it much now. But, anyway, I went to the Foreign Office. And I suppose I had to get out a dictionary to find all the words in

French to tell them. And I suppose it must have sounded like absolute gibberish to them. The man got the giggles as I was saying we want to put this thing out in the desert here so that we could measure the noise in the outer ionosphere. But they finally went along with it.

And there were other projects like that, that we wanted to continue to do. And, you know, they were always suspicious that we were just trying to close down on them with more and more functions and that sort of thing.

We also got into the Algerian fight pretty badly. Unbeknownst to us, a first lieutenant, who was a supply officer at Site Eleven, which was a base and an air landing strip north of Rabat, had been in contact with the Algerian rebels. Well, actually, the middle guy, who was pretty important, was Mohammed Laghzaoui, who was the minister of interior. Somebody had put together this lieutenant and Laghzaoui. He was ordering supplies: ammunition, broadcasting stations, God knows, buildings, you know, these broken-down buildings.

Q: Yes, prefab.

DIXON: Prefab buildings. And these were all going to the Algerian rebels. And nobody knew what was in Nouasser, because the thing was something like twenty square miles or some twenty-mile perimeter or something like that. And they had no idea what was on that base. They had been accumulating things from the very first down there. And this guy would go down and order these things, turn them over to Laghzaoui, who in turn would sell them to the Algerian rebels. Which I thought was pretty unpatriotic for an Arab to sell to them, but he was making a fortune out of this.

I said something to Laghzaoui one day about, you know, what is going on? He said, "Well, I know what is going on. If you can stop your side, I can stop my side."

Much to my surprise, the legal officer from the Air Force headquarters there came to see me and said, "We've arrested this lieutenant." (That supply guy.) "He's been going to this whorehouse regularly, and we thought, you know, there's something funny. He's married and got a family and so forth. And he was getting so he was going about every day to the whorehouse to see this girl named, in effect, Lucky. And when we arrested him, he confessed to stealing things from Nouasser." They wanted to question him about why he was going to the whorehouse.

Then we got the whole thing, where it was just awful what he had given them. He told us what he had given them. And, you know, at this time, the French were in a terrible fight with the Algerian independence movement. And things were very tight between us and the French at the time. I talked with the ambassador. I said, "I think we've got to tell the French about it, because it's probably going to leak out. And I think we've got to tell them first." And he agreed. I suggested that he talk to the top French guy.

So I went to see Francois Charles-Roux, who was sort of my opposite number there. He turned ashen white. He said, "Absolutely, this must not get in the paper. I tell you, it would raise all sorts of hell at home. And we've got to keep good relations between the France and the United States." And so forth and so on. So he said, "What can you do about it?"

I said, "Well, we can see if we can get this guy transferred to, say, Podunkville in Arizona, at an Air Force base there."

So I went back and we sent a telegram home explaining this and asking that they talk to the Defense Department about doing this. And I also talked to the chief general there in Morocco, who said he would cooperate with it, and he sent it to his people. So we got that guy out of there. And the word never leaked out.

Q: That's remarkable.

DIXON: Of course, Laghzaoui knew the operation had stopped. He said to me one day, "What's happened to Lt. X?"

I said, "He was given twenty-five years in prison."

"Twenty-five years!" he said. "My God, you don't give them twenty-five years for that, do you?"

And I said, "Well, hell, he stole a fortune. Yes, I think it's probably equal to what he stole, in terms of punishment."

But we had another terrible incident there. There were aircraft carrying atom bombs, who were constantly on the alert in case we were attacked. There was a plane that hit something. I've forgotten whether it tipped over. Anyway, something caught the plane on fire. The people tried to put it out, but they couldn't put it out. And the plane started burning up -- and the atomic bomb. So they sounded a retreat for everybody to get out of the base.

While this was going on, another plane had landed. They went into the hanger, and they said, "We evacuated the base."

"Was it a practice evacuation?"

"No," they said. "We evacuated the base. An atom bomb is burning. Get in the Jeep and get out."

So they drove out, and took the wrong turn, and ended up in Petitjean, which is not terribly far from there. And they didn't know where they were, and they couldn't speak anything, and they were just sitting there. They were absolutely lost. And they were trying to find a place where they could telephone. Some lady offered to help. She said, "What's the matter?"

They said, "Well, there's an atom bomb burning on the base that's going to go off."

Well, she immediately went to the police chief. The police chief called Boucetta, who was the secretary-general of the Foreign Office.

I was just going to lunch when the telephone rang and Boucetta said, "What is this about an atomic bomb burning in Sidi Slimane?"

I said, "I don't know anything about it. Never heard of it. I don't believe it."

"Well, we've had a report from the..." He told me what happened.

So I called up there and I got this guy, McDowell, who was the deputy commander of the base there, and he told me what happened. He said, "There is no danger, however, it's just going to burn up. There may be some fissionable material around the plane there, but it's not going to hurt anybody."

Anyway, I went and got Cannon and we talked about it. And then I went up to the Foreign Office and explained to them that the thing had burned out and that nothing had happened. I don't know whether there was any fallout from it, but anyway it didn't blow up.

And we were trying to keep this from the newspapers if possible. The Moroccans weren't saying anything about it, but that goddamned *New York Times* correspondent there heard something about it. And a big to-do over it. We had to go up and dig up that place, take all the stuff out, then take it out to sea and dump it or something like that. I think they had to fly some of it out. But, anyway, we got rid of the evidence. We redid the runway and everything went back to things as normal.

At that point, there were no Moroccans on Sidi Slimane. But this guy caused one of the other ministers, who was not one of the leading ministers, to raise the question of, you know, what was the military command. The administrative command was in Madrid, but of course there were two commands: the Nouasser command and the command of Sidi Slimane, which had the other thing, plus the naval command. So there was no real thing, but they trumped up something saying that African Spain was in command of Moroccan forces in Morocco, and that this was an insult to their independence, and they made all sorts of to-do about it.

I would see this *New York Times* guy, who lived across the street from the minister who did this, and he said, "He's the one who's telling me all this."

I said, "I'm perfectly willing to go over and talk to him." But he wouldn't receive this. I said, "With you, I'd be happy to go over and talk about this." But we never did win that battle. He sort of won the battle from lack of being able to much about it.

We also had some pretty tough times. We had revolts against the French in Rabat and Meknès. The one in Rabat was when, Ben Bella was coming through Rabat.

Q: He was the Algerian rebel leader at the time.

DIXON: Yes. Well, we didn't know he was coming through Rabat. But I got an invitation from the Foreign Office to go down to Hassan for a party. They introduced me to a whole bunch of Algerians, one of which turned out to be Ben Bella. They didn't tell us until afterwards that he was Ben Bella. But we were very friendly with them, we thought they were just Algerian citizens. We were a little curious as to what was going on.

But, anyway, the next day, the Algerians plus the Moroccans went off in planes to go to Tunis to try to negotiate something. The French captured the planes. And I then learned from the Foreign Office that that guy that I'd talked to was Ben Bella.

We knew something was going to happen, so we called over to command and said, "Bring people in the base, get them off, get out of the way."

My wife wanted to go to the grocery store. I told her not to leave. Jack Williams' wife, he was administrative officer, called Frances and said she was going to the grocery store, would Frances like to go? Frances said I had said not to go out. She called Jack, who said there was nothing wrong, and so she picked up Frances. They went out into the street and got caught there by a mob that tried to turn the car over and burn it up. But some French troops came in and got them free and they came back. We were stuck at home for about three days.

There were terrible massacres at Meknès, and I went up with one of the king's principal military advisors to try to see how things were and to see if the American colony were okay and what else was going on.

Well, my impression wasn't so good. He was a young man. I first saw him in our initial base negotiation; he was part of the Moroccan team. He obviously didn't know anything about it -- he said nothing in the opening session. After that, I carried on the negotiations with Ali Benjelloun, who was ambassador here, he was the secretary-general of the Ministry of Justice, and various members of the Foreign Office. We got into negotiations pretty heavily. I hired an interpreter who could interpret into Arabic. The Moroccans were very sort of nationalistic there and they wanted interpretation into Arabic. It broke down to Arabic-French in due course.

But we reviewed for months various proposals that we had for the agreement. We were able to come to agreement on almost everything except criminal jurisdiction. The criminal jurisdiction question, the Pentagon insisted on having complete criminal jurisdiction over any American military in Morocco, without any exception. The Moroccans, who had just gotten rid of extraterritoriality, insisted on being able to try everybody who was American.

We finally worked out to a point that the American government would have jurisdiction over the people on base; and off base, they would be subject to Moroccan jurisdiction, with a formula that said that we could ask the Moroccans for a waiver of jurisdiction over certain persons if we had good reason to do so. This was arrived at with great difficulty and in consultation with the base commanders.

When we finally came to an agreement on this, we sent it off to Washington. And, although we had all the rest of the agreement agreed to between the Moroccans and the embassy, the fact that they had not gotten full criminal jurisdiction meant that we never got the agreement completed. That is, the Pentagon would not accept the agreement. And they just kept putting off doing anything about it.

In the meantime, because we had to have some sort of operating process, we informally agreed

with the Moroccan government that this agreement would prevail. And, to my knowledge, it prevailed until about ten years ago -- never signed, never formally adopted. We kept some sort of representation there on the military side up until about...well, it was still there when I was there in 1976. And the general terms of that agreement were still holding.

LEO G. CYR
Consul General
Tangier (1957-1960)

Ambassador Leo G. Cyr was born in Limestone, Maine on July 28, 1909. He received a bachelor's degree from Holy Cross College in 1930, a master's degree in Foreign Service from Georgetown University in 1933, and a law degree from Georgetown University in 1939. Ambassador Cyr's career included positions in Morocco, Cameroon, Tunisia, Washington, DC, and an ambassadorship to Rwanda. He was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy on February 4, 1988.

Q: Wristonization was a program for the integration of the Civil Service officers into the Foreign Service?

CYR: That's right.

Q: In the State Department.

CYR: That's correct. I was integrated in 1954.

Q: What rank did you come in at?

CYR: FSO-1. I had been in the Department then long enough that I thought if I do go into this as a career officer, I do want to go abroad soon. I recall that when Ambassador Jacob Beam interviewed me, he asked, "With your degree in Foreign Service how come you haven't come into the Foreign Service before this?"

And I said, "I've just been engrossed in what I was doing, and now this integration program really brings the thing up, and I do want to make the move. And I am ready to go into the field at any time."

Q: May I ask, how did many of your colleagues feel about this, because you obviously had been pointed towards this, but many of your colleagues in the Civil Service had risen rather high in department ranks, were Washington based and, perhaps, preferred it. Was there a problem there?

CYR: Yes. There was a problem in the case of one officer in AF. He said, "No way. I'm going to stay in AF as a Civil Servant knowing full well that my days are numbered in State."

The majority of the others may have taken a few years, but they got themselves mentally swung around. And they worked out fine.

I was integrated in '54, but things were so hectic in AF that it wasn't until 1957 that I actually went out into the field. And by that time, of course, Morocco was independent, and the international zone of Tangier was in the process of being integrated into the Sherifian Empire. I was assigned out there as Consul General. It being a rather special assignment in a way, in that I was familiar with the background of the International Zone and so forth.

Q: It was a picked assignment, using your expertise rather than just a regular assignment?

CYR: Right. So I went out there in '57, and I stayed there until '60.

Q: Well, what were your major duties as Consul General in this unique post?

CYR: With the independence of Morocco in 1956, Embassy Rabat replaced our legation in Tangier. As Director of the Office of African Affairs, I had been handling Moroccan affairs in the Department. I was assigned to Tangier as Consul General to help facilitate the transition. In addition to the usual functions of a consul general, I was a member of the Committee of Control of the International Zone of Tangier which, together with the Spanish Zone and the French Protectorate, would be dismantled in the process of re-integrating the Sherifian Empire of Morocco. I believe Tangier was one of the last havens of extraterritoriality in the world. Decades of complex international arrangements were unraveled. As US member of the International Commission of Cape Spartel, I signed an international agreement whereby the several signatories returned to the Sultan of Morocco the responsibilities they had assumed in 1865 for the direction and expenses of the Cape Spartel lighthouse.

World War II had brought about a huge increase in the US investment in Morocco. In Tangier, RCA and Mackay Radio had large investments in facilities, and VOA had an important relay station. Americans became sufficiently numerous to justify an American School of Tangier, and American library and an American Club.

Q: Were you trying court cases in those days?

CYR: No. I never sat on a court case. With independence, that was a thing of the past before I arrived.

Q: Well, beyond that, I'm just wondering. Tangier had a reputation of being one of the most dissolute cities for dissolute Europeans and Americans and all. This was the place where people of various persuasions went to enjoy themselves, often what were called remittance men or women. Did this reflect on your work there?

CYR: Not at all. we certainly were aware of the situation and ran into it frequently. there were many gifted and intelligent people among them. They came particularly from England, sent to Tangier by their prominent families who said "Go out there and live, and we will support you." As a matter of fact, we had many good friends among them, such as Jamie Caffery, the

ambassador's nephew, and his friend, David Herbert. We still have an ashtray given to us by Herbert, bearing his coat-of-arms and a picture of his beautiful home, Wilton House, in Salisbury, England.

As you know, Barbara Hutton owned a beautiful home in Tangier. She was seldom there. I recall a party she threw one evening. She was most gracious and my wife had an interesting conversation with her. When my wife pleaded that she was keeping her from her guests, her reply was, "No, I'd rather stay in the garden. I know you don't want anything from me."

Q: How about the sharp operators who must have been attracted to the city?

CYR: Among others. But they didn't affect us in any way. Oh, we ran into cases of American businessmen who tried to pull fast ones. One came into the Consulate General and demanded our support of one of his schemes as representatives of the American government, and we had to set him straight.

Q: Who was in charge, say the police? Who had the police authority in those days?

CYR: I'm fuzzy about the role of the police in my old age!

Q: It was a period of transition. I was just wondering if there was a Tangieran type of police, or was it under Morocco in those days?

CYR: Well, there was a governor of Tangier.

Q: Who was appointed by . . . ?

CYR: By the Sultan of Morocco. Now I remember. The police were Moroccans. I got stopped one day for a traffic violation!

Q: How was the staffing of your post in Tangier?

CYR: It was reasonable. My method of operation was to be rather strict on numbers of people. And I kept it as it was. I felt that the people who were there were needed. Our office was located in the Casbah, a quaint, lovely place--like a rabbit warren, with rooms seldom opened. While preparing for an inspection, we found papers of one of the first consuls in Tangier, under a pile of rubbish. The building was given to the United States by the Sultan about 1820, the first piece of real estate acquired by the United States abroad. During my tour we reluctantly built a new office building and a new residence. I deplore the recent closing of Tangier.

**LEONARDO NEHER
Economic/Political Officer
Tangier, Morocco (1957-1962)**

Ambassador Leonardo Neher was born in Ohio in 1922. He received a bachelor's degree from Green State University in 1948 and a master's degree from the University of Chicago in 1952. From 1943-1946, he served in the U.S. Army overseas. Ambassador Neher joined the Foreign Service in 1954 and served in Morocco, Vietnam, Syria, Zaire, Chad, Dominican Republic, and Burkina Faso. Ambassador Neher was interviewed by Charles Kennedy on October 18th, 1989.

Q: I think one of the things that's often overlooked is there are ways one has far more control over in your career and where you go than often is thought, either it be the old Foreign Service or the new one, albeit it has its discipline. You were in Ankara from 1954-'57, then you went to Tangier from 1957 to 1962 -- a fairly long tour there. What were you doing in Tangier? Can you describe the ambiance of the place?

NEHER: Okay. In keeping with this idea of going someplace else, and doing something else, and knowing that economics was my weakest area, I put economics as my preferred work and Asia, Africa and Latin America, or something of that sort, as my preferred areas. As you recall, we had at that time a kind of wish list of where we might want to go, and we could either name a post, or an area, or whatever, but there was no bid list and we had no information on what posts were available, or when they might open. But I was assigned as Economic Officer in Tangier, which at that time was in the AF [African] Bureau. Now, of course, Morocco is in NEA [Near Eastern Bureau]. So I got there partly because I was trying to go from one kind of work to another, and one continent to another.

Q: Well, Tangier was a very special case in those days. Could you describe how it was at the time, and the situation there?

NEHER: Yes. I got there in September or October, 1957. Morocco had become independent the year before. It consisted of three major parts. One of them was the International Zone of Tangier administered by the western powers, if Russia is included as a western power. The others were the northern zone, which had been a Spanish Protectorate, and the southern zone, a French Protectorate. When I arrived, Morocco had a political unification, but it wasn't very effective, but had no economic integration. Each of the three areas had its own laws and regulations, each had its own currency area, and most of the effective decisions were made locally rather than in Rabat, the capital. I was there during the time of the economic integration of Tangier and of the northern, Spanish, zone, into the French zone. The Moroccan franc became the only national monetary unit; the Spanish peseta was withdrawn. But the free money market continued for some time in Tangier. And Tangier still had an aura of the old outlaw smuggler's haven -- what was the movie that was made of the ship captain who had the...

Q: Captain's Paradise.

NEHER: Yes. It still had a little bit of that feeling. Europe was still having problems with currency, and with import permits, and all sorts of import restrictions, and Tangier became a smuggling point, primarily for cigarettes to Italy, but also a whole range of goods for Spain where corruption ruled commerce. The smugglers bought old PT boats from the United States, surplus PT boats, modified them for speed and ran to the beaches of Spain and Italy to unload

their cigarettes, or transistor radios and other items in demand, then head back to Tangier.

One of the unusual duties that fell to me in Tangier was the signing of re-export permits. Under the international regime for the territory, the U.S., like other signatories of the statute of 1923, enjoyed extra-territorial rights. No citizen of the United States could be a defendant in any but the local U. S. court, and no U. S.-origin goods could be transshipped from Tangier without the approval of the U. S. government -- mine. So I was the one who signed the re-export permits for U. S. goods, most of which were to be smuggled into Europe. Whole boatloads of cigarettes, cameras, radios and household appliances were approved under a policy of denying permits only to dangerous or embargoed merchandise. But Tangier was already losing some of that outlaw atmosphere and illicit activity when I got there. With the economic integration, it was almost entirely gone by the time I finished my tour of duty. Morocco was in fact governing Tangier, and the vestiges of the old international administration were being tidied up, and handed over to the Sultan.

One of my disappointments there was that we built a brand new Consulate General building, one of those prize-winning models. I think it was designed by Edward Durrell Stone. It was a beautiful building, but we didn't need it. We had the old palace which was down in the Medina, the old city, a magnificent place with gardens, fountains and courtyards. At that time, with Morocco fully independent and the capital well established in Rabat, all the diplomatic functions had become concentrated there. We were a backwater with no important purposes, but the bureaucracy went ahead with the final design of that building, which had been proposed by Joseph Satterthwaite when he had been Minister there, and then went back to become Assistant Secretary. The Consul General didn't want to recommend abandonment of the project because he wasn't sure what Satterthwaite's reaction would be. So he resisted all my and others' entreaties and allowed the construction to get under way. State spent, I think, \$750,000, which at that time was a fortune, to build a building that every day was less and less necessary. We couldn't get anybody to stop and listen and say, "You don't need the building." Because the diplomatic staff had all gone to Rabat, embassy secretaries, attachés, bag and baggage.

Tangier, for me, was a remarkable learning experience. Here I was at my second post filling in for an absent Consul General during a Chiefs of Mission conference an inspection and the move to the new building. Here in Tangier, I was the Acting Principal Officer, at my second post. That's also an indication of the declining importance of the post. Now, of course, we've closed the Consulate and I suppose we've disposed of the building.

Q: It's sort of our oldest post in the world, wasn't it?

NEHER: Yes, I believe it was the first piece of diplomatic property owned abroad by the United States Government.

Q: Was there much contact when you were there with the Moroccan authorities, or were you pretty well found yourself in a western enclave, being with westerners?

NEHER: Well, socially we were more involved with the European community, British, French and Spanish. There was very small American community there. I think there were about 40,000

Spanish living in Tangier, 10,000-12,000 French, several thousand Portuguese and as many as 100,000 Moroccans. And socially, if you were going to play bridge, you were not going to find very many Moroccan neighbors who were interested. Same with tennis, swimming and beaches. The Moroccans who had lived around the beaches are like the Floridians who live there: they never go to the beach. So you tend, in your social life, to have more contact with the Europeans. But the working contact eventually became almost entirely with Moroccans, the local authorities, the police. In all our consular affairs, for example, we dealt directly and only with Moroccans; for any building problems we had, any living problems of our people there, we dealt with Moroccans. And for political and economic reporting, we may have consulted with the Europeans who were best informed, far better than the Moroccans, but the main contacts became those with Moroccans.

Q: We have really a special relationship, sort of an odd special relationship, with Morocco really from the time of George Washington on. I mean even before that. I mean even the time of the Continental Congress really coming more from the friendliness of the Moroccans. Had you found this still the special relationship between the two countries there? Was this transmitted into your dealings with the Morocco authorities?

NEHER: I think it was more evident in Tangier than to my colleagues in Rabat and Casablanca. Remember this, the late '50s was a time when the newly independent countries were pretty radical. We represented just the opposite. We represented every force that was opposed to change, and modernization, and to turmoil. We wanted status quo. We wanted to keep things the way they were. In Morocco, the forces of change were the radical forces of the labor unions, the universities, the leftist intelligentsia. And they were all hostile to us. Tangier was not at the political center, wasn't highly politicized, and relations with the United States were conditioned, assuaged, by the awareness of the long, rich historic ties between the two countries. For example, in Tangier...I tried this, and I suggested to other people to try it, to get in a taxi in Tangier and just say, "la mission". And the driver would always take you to the American Consulate, nowhere else. There was only one mission, and that was the American. And here, where the French, Spanish and British had been in present in much greater numbers than we "la mission" was the American mission. That quality still existed when I was there. The building itself, with its antiquity, and with its location inside the Medina, belonged to the city, was a part of it. But we lost that asset entirely when we moved into the new building up on a barren hillside where anyone who approached the building could be seen 200 yards away. It was like an enfilade. And here we had abandoned that beautiful, historic refuge in the Medina where donkeys clopped right through the archway that separated the two main parts of the Consulate. Spanish señoritas sang while hanging clothes to dry on a line on a rooftop, the Muezzin was calling to prayer and the babbling fountain in the courtyard provided the accompaniment. We belonged to that. You could smell it, you could feel it. We were a part of it. But we lost it, all of it. We moved out.

MICHAEL P.E. HOYT
Economic/ Commercial Officer
Casablanca (1959-1961)

Michael P.E. Hoyt was born in Illinois on November 16, 1929. He received a bachelor's degree and a master's degree from the University of Chicago and served in the U.S. Air Force overseas. He joined the Foreign Service in 1956. Mr. Hoyt's career included positions in Karachi, Casablanca, Leopoldville, Stanleyville, Douala, Bujumbura, Ibadan, and Washington, DC. He was interviewed by Ray Sadler on January 30, 1995.

Q: Let me move then, if I might, to Casablanca, to Morocco.

HOYT: It came out of the blue, the assignment. Sometimes how you get assignments are interesting. My first two assignments I had nothing to do with. A telegram came and that's where I went. I was assigned as a very junior economic officer in Casablanca. Economic and commercial affairs, it's a port city. So I was the commercial officer trying to promote trade. I was also the minerals officer for the country. The Phosphate Office was there. Phosphates were the main export of Morocco. I was also responsible for reporting on all the mining. I had very little to do with policy.

One of things that I remember that went on was passing of Mohammed V, the old man who under whom Morocco had regained its independence. (It was never supposed to have lost it under the French, but they certainly had.) On his dying, I remember the Jewish community -- which was very strong in Casablanca -- was very apprehensive. Because Mohammed V had been the protector of the Jews, when his son Hassan took over, there was some apprehension. The fears proved groundless; there was very little done against the Jewish communities, who were most numerous in Casablanca.

Q: Let me move along on that line. If you're talking about the Mediterranean, as far as the United States is concerned, our relationship with Israel is the most important. How did it manifest itself among the Moroccans. Did they have relations with Israel?

HOYT: No, they had no overt relations. There wasn't a Jewish embassy there or consulate. But with the community, they were very good.

Q: Do you remember your consul general?

HOYT: At first it was Henry Ford from the administrative side under Wristonization. He came directly from the administrative side in the department. He seemed to run things reasonably well. Then came the one who had been consul general in Leopoldville at independence, Tommy Tomlinson. He was a great guy, a great guy to work for, a hard drinker and liver. We would be up 3 or 4:00 in the morning partying, and he was always there at 8:00 in the morning. Never could be at the office before he arrived.

Q: He was a good CG.

HOYT: Yes, he was very good. That was his last post. The Labor Attaché for the country was stationed in Casablanca, Bill Schaufele. He later became Assistant Secretary for African affairs and Ambassador to Poland. I worked with him quite a bit, traveled around the country and saw what was going on.

Whatever opposition there was to the government was in the labor movement. They tolerated opposition pretty much, they didn't arrest them very much. It was a lovely place and a lovely time

Q: *That was not a hardship post.*

HOYT: That was not a hardship post. The French influence remained in the restaurants. The wine was good, living was good, it's a beautiful city.

Q: *You could think about Bogey.*

HOYT: The airport was still right in town.

DAVID G. NES
Deputy Chief of Mission
Rabat (1959-1962)

David G. Nes was born in York, Pennsylvania in 1917. He served as a Foreign Service officer in The United Kingdom (Scotland), France, Washington, DC, Libya, England, Vietnam and Egypt. Mr. Nes was interviewed by Dayton Mak in 1992.

Q: *So in 1959, you did get assigned there as DCM. Back into the swim of North Africa, so to speak. You were there until 1962. Who was your Ambassador at the time and what did you do there? How did you like it?*

NES: It was a wonderful three year assignment. I had three excellent Chiefs of Mission. Phil Bonsal to begin with. He felt a little bit out of place since he was a Latin American expert. He was succeeded by Charlie Yost, who, of course, went on from there to become our head of delegation to the United Nations. He, in turn, was succeeded by a political appointee, Mr. John Ferguson who was excellent, charming with a lovely wife, and with whom I worked very well. He was particularly easy to work with because being inexperienced in running an Embassy, he turned everything pretty much over to me and conducted the diplomatic side of things at which he was very adept.

It was a very, very happy assignment. Mohammad V was the king. He died under very sudden and curious circumstances during an operation for a very minor deviated septum. Many people thought he had been done away with. He was succeeded by his son, Hassan II who was his Chief of Staff at the time.

During my tour, they had that terrible earthquake in Agadir where we sent down ships from the Mediterranean Fleet. Battalions of engineers came from Germany in order to help save as many people as we could. There were about 10,000 deaths all together. It was a hell of a thing.

The primary interests in Morocco were our three air bases and one navy communications base. It is very interesting that, as is the usual custom, when President Eisenhower decided to visit Morocco I was sent up to join him in Madrid and come down on Air Force 1 and to brief him on both the protocol he was to face and the substantive issues which the air bases were paramount. He proved to be a far more intelligent, quick, knowledgeable person than the press had led us to believe. I was very impressed with him.

On the plane, he turned to his Chief of Staff and asked how much longer the air bases would be used for the bombers presently stationed there and was told about two years. He said immediately, "I will tell the King that we are going to get out in two years." And that was it.

It was a fascinating and beautiful assignment. We had a chance to visit every province in the Kingdom at one time or another. I would say that it was probably one of the real highlights of our career.

Q: While you were there who in the Moroccan government did you deal with and in what language?

NES: French influence was still very strong. Almost all the educated elite in Morocco spoke French. That was the language which I used with the Foreign Office, the Foreign Minister, with the Chef de Cabinet, with the King. Access to all of these people for a DCM, particularly if he were Chargé d'Affaires, which was often the case since we had three ambassadors come and go, was very easy and extremely cordial.

The only problem with our political reporting there was that we did feel it essential that we follow whatever activities were being undertaken by the so-called Left, which was a labor union. Its leaders had, of course, been trained in France and were of communist orientation. In maintaining contact with those leaders we did, from time to time, get into trouble with the Palace which felt that we should remain aloof.

Q: At that time, the Palestinian issue was a burning issue in a lot of Arab states, what role did that play in Morocco at that time?

NES: I would say very little. Algeria was the key foreign issue. It was during my tenure in Rabat that Algeria received its independence in accord with the Evian Treaty. It is interesting that Ben Bella -- who, of course, headed up the FLN at that time -- I had dealt with quietly and secretly in Tripoli, and I knew him. So when he flew into Morocco on his way back to Algeria (he flew in actually on an American Air Force plane because he was afraid of the French), I was designated to go down to our air base at Nouasser and greet him. So Algeria was our principal interest and Palestine very little.

Morocco, of course, is the most beautiful country with the most gorgeous sea coast, with farming land, with the high Atlas, with the desert, skiing in the mountains. Just a tremendous post. Trying to negotiate our air bases termination was fascinating. But of all the posts, I think, Morocco was the most enjoyable from a standard of living standpoint.

WILLIAM E. SCHAUFELE, JR.
Political/Labor Officer
Casablanca (1959-1963)

William E. Schaufele, Jr. was born in Ohio in 1923. He received a bachelor's degree from Yale University in 1948 and a master's degree in international affairs from Columbia University in 1950. He served overseas in the US army from 1942-1946. Mr. Schaufele's career included positions in Germany, Morocco, Zaire, Burkina Faso, and Poland. He was interviewed by Lillian Mullin on November 19, 1994.

Q: You said that you were replacing somebody in Casablanca?

SCHAUFELE: I was replacing somebody in Rabat, a man named Steve McClintic, who had been there for three or four years, I guess. He had a wonderful, cynical sense of humor. He introduced me throughout the political spectrum in Morocco, where he had been the Labor Attaché. In some respects he was more the Counselor for Political Affairs than the Counselor himself was.

Q: He was in the Foreign Service?

SCHAUFELE: He was. I remember that they had nine children. They had one more child while we were still there. I was very much impressed by their ability to handle nine or 10 children. [Laughter] We overlapped for about four months, I think, because they were expecting a child. So I didn't have to swing right into action. I could polish my French. Steve was very good about introducing me to people. However, it quickly became apparent that the decision to move the Labor Attaché job to Casablanca, at least under the circumstances at that time, was a good decision, because most of the people that one dealt with were in Casablanca. You could see them day and night, or whenever necessary. Fortunately, I think, we had a good Consul General, Henry Ford, a so-called "Wristonee." He came out of the administrative part of the State Department, and hadn't had any foreign experience. However, he knew how to manage his staff. He didn't interfere with them. If you were doing a good job, he didn't try to get into it. He was a small man but he had no "small man hang-up" that affected him. His French was a little painful, but so what? He started his Foreign Service career late in life. He gave the staff their head, and that was, indeed, very fortunate for all of us.

Again, I was in the same kind of position I had in Dusseldorf, caught between the Embassy in the capital, Rabat and the Consulate General in Casablanca. But there was no question, at least in Morocco, that my primary superior in a substantive way -- not in an administrative or even efficiency report way -- was the Ambassador, Charles Yost. Charley Yost was one of the finest Foreign Service Officers that I ever met or worked with. He was very quiet and soft spoken, but he was incisive in his manner. They told me the story on the Moroccan side that when Ambassador Yost called and asked for an appointment with the King of Morocco, they always

knew that it was important.

That's true. A lot of Ambassadors call just to be able to say, in a cable, "I saw the King yesterday," but they really didn't have anything to report. Charley Yost never did that.

We got a few complaints from the Labor Department in Washington about my output. I don't know what they were thinking about, but they knew that McClintic was still there. They were getting reports, but they weren't always from me. Ambassador Yost rejected their complaint. He decided, and I concurred in that, that we would "inundate" the Labor Department with reports. Take anything out of the press, add one sentence of comment, and send it in. So we didn't hear from them. Eventually, we reverted to what we should have been reporting, instead of sending in reports to satisfy their apparent need for quantity, rather than quality. I never heard anything about that again. Charley Yost never "put anybody down."

I went to the Embassy in Rabat at least once a week throughout my assignment to the Consulate General in Casablanca, traveling on the most dangerous road in Morocco. One trip each week was always for the Tuesday staff meeting. Ambassador Yost held a good staff meeting. He listened to his people and didn't do all the talking. If he disagreed with you, he did it in such a way that it was perfectly acceptable.

I used to go to his house fairly often for lunch with Moroccan and other contacts. We may come to this later, but as long as I'm talking about Charley Yost, I will mention that when I arrived in Morocco a "leftist" government was in power. The king deposed that government, as he deposed every government, eventually.

All but one of the leaders of that "leftist" government moved from Rabat to Casablanca. So Ambassador Yost gave me the responsibility for not only the trade unions but the whole political "Left." He knew that it would be difficult for these people, with whom we wanted to keep in contact. I would invite Ambassador Yost for dinner at our house. He would come and meet with my contacts, some of whom used to be "his" contacts. He never had a "hang up" about coming to a junior officer's house to meet the former Prime Minister or the head of the trade union movement, and that sort of thing. He had no pretensions of that kind.

I learned a lot from Charley Yost. He ran a pretty good Embassy, partially because everybody respected him. Some of the Embassy officers were very good and some were not so good. He would find ways to handle both kinds of people.

Q: Could you describe your job in Casablanca?

SCHAUFELLE: I have a bad habit of doing this, but some people should learn this habit. First, a little history. The trade union movement in Morocco grew out of the "Istiqlal" or independence movement for Morocco, which had been a French Protectorate. Exceptionally in that part of the world, at that time, there was only one trade union federation, Union Marocaine de Travail, UMT -- Moroccan Labor Federation. Not only was it exceptional, in that there was only one, but it was also exceptional, in that it had 600,000 members. So essentially my job was to develop the necessary relationships with the leadership of that trade union federation and some, if not all of

the leaders of its constituent unions.

The trade union federation operated out of a large building in Casablanca, called the "Bourse de Travail" [Labor Market]. The leader was a man named Mahjoub ben Seddik, who was a railroad clerk before the establishment of the UMT. He was a small and very active man -- very sharp and not above using his power in obvious ways. His deputy, who handled the day to day operation of the UMT, was a man named Mohammed Abderrazak. He was a very stalwart type of man who had a lot of integrity -- probably more integrity than Mahjoub had. Mahjoub was always an "operator" -- politically or otherwise. Interestingly enough, both men had French secretaries. And it was important to get to know these secretaries. For instance, Friday used to be a holiday -- the Muslim equivalent of Sunday. The leadership would mostly be down at their offices. I would just drop in on them, dressed in a sweatshirt, without any appointment. I would just go from office to office, seeing whoever was around. I would sit down and have a cup of coffee. I would talk to them. Not only did it help the relationship -- you could learn about things informally that you might not learn in the course of a prearranged appointment.

I also did some work with the Ministry of Labor, which was in Rabat. But I wouldn't see officials in the ministry all of that often. There were two Ministers of Labor while I was in Morocco. The first one was Maati Bovabil. He was a "leftist." He moved back to Casablanca and became the Mayor of Casablanca. Then the other minister was Benjelloun. I can't remember his first name. He was what the Europeans would call kind of a liberal, and we would call him a free enterprise man. He had been in the PDCI. I don't remember the proper name for this party, but it was something like the Parti Democratique something. He had been in the first government in Morocco, though not as Minister of Labor. When King Hassan dismissed this rather leftist government, the replacement government was led by the Istiqlal and a couple of the PDCI people. I had known Benjelloun before, because he lived in Casablanca. We had met him. My wife and I got along well with him and his Austrian wife, though we had no particular business with him. He knew a lot about Morocco. His particular viewpoint was interesting and worthwhile. We used to have dinner together quite often. So when he became Minister of Labor, I wasn't meeting with somebody new.

I traveled a great deal. Somebody said once that I was the only person in the American "establishment" in Morocco, if you want to call it that, who had been to every province in Morocco, except Tarfaya, which was closed, because it was a military security zone.

I didn't really have any staff. There were only two American secretaries in the Consulate General in Casablanca. The one that I worked with was the Consul General's secretary. She would type up all of my reports and telegrams. I didn't think that this was particularly onerous, though it may have been for her sometimes. The other substantive officers did not have a lot to report. There was an Economic Officer. He had something to report because Casablanca is the economic and financial center of the country. There was a Consular Officer. There were two "spooks" [CIA personnel]. They had their own secretary, so they didn't use our facilities. The CIA people felt very much left out, particularly of the labor movement. It was Ambassador Yost who finally said that, in view of their protests or insistence, he was designating one of the CIA officers in Rabat to be the contact with the Jeunesse Ouvrière Marocaine (JOM), which was the youth wing of the UMT. I said that I would introduce him, but I doubted that it would work, because the head of

the Jeunesse Ouvrière Marocaine was also the third-ranking man in the UMT itself. He was also married to Mahjoub's secretary. He took the introductions all right. He saw that guy a couple of times. The Moroccans wouldn't do business with him. They would always come back to me, so that didn't work. That was very frustrating to the CIA because they always liked to say that they always deal with the opposition, because it's harder for the Embassy officers to deal with the opposition than with the government. You know, the CIA people can dream up a reason for almost anything.

So my job was pretty much a one man show. However, I was always very close to our Ambassador and his DCM. I'm trying to think of the names of all of the DCM's who were there. I was close to Dean Brown, who was one DCM. He was quite helpful to me. The Political Counselors were of varying quality. The first one when I got there, John Root, was very good. He was a quiet man who also had a sharp sense of quiet humor. The next two Political Counselors weren't very good. I guess Dean Brown was Political Counselor for a while before he became DCM. They knew what I was doing, and the Consul General knew what I was doing. I had a little trouble with Consul General Ford's successor, but by that time I was an "old hand," and things ultimately worked out all right.

When the "leftist" government left office, I had to spend a fair amount of time with them. As I say, what happened at that time, coincidentally with their departure from government, was that a new political party was formed, called the Union Nationale des Forces Populaires [National Union of Popular Forces]. The leaders in the "leftist" government were the leaders of the UNFP, plus Mahjoub and Abderrazak. So they were all linked anyway. However, they didn't trust each other -- not to that extent. [Laughter]

Morocco is a society and culture which is very indirect. You had better learn that early, or you'll be in trouble. You will draw conclusions and make recommendations based on the wrong assumptions. We had a case like that when I was there. The USS SPRINGFIELD, the flagship of the U. S. Sixth Fleet, was scheduled to make a port visit in Casablanca. I don't know whether you were still there or not, although it doesn't make any difference. Instructions came from Washington that, since the UMT controlled the port workers -- which probably had the highest strike discipline of any group of workers in the UMT -- and had "closed" the port more than once, we were asked to get assurances from Mahjoub ben Seddik that there would be no work stoppages, strikes, or similar demonstrations at the time of the visit of the flagship. So I went down and saw Mahjoub ben Seddik after checking with the Consul General.

Q: *What was his name?*

SCHAUFELLE: John Tomlinson. I think that he had illusions of being a Political Officer, though I don't know much about his background. He had been in Geneva for some purpose.

Anyway, I went to see Mahjoub. We sat down and talked for an hour and a half. Then I went back to the Consulate General and wrote a telegram back to the Department, saying that I had discussed the matter with Mahjoub, and there would be no problem during the visit of the SPRINGFIELD. Well, within 24 hours I had a telegram back from Washington, asking whether Mahjoub had unequivocally said that there would be no trouble during the visit. I cabled back to

Washington and said that you don't get an unequivocal answer to a question like this. If I insisted on an unequivocal answer, I might get the answer that we don't want. However, I said that I was convinced that nothing would happen during the visit of the ship, despite the fact that the UMT constantly criticized U. S. policies. So the ship came. The Navy had talked about bringing the ship into port stern first, in case they had to leave and all the port workers were on strike. No, the Navy thought that this idea was ridiculous because they would have to board on the port side, contrary to usage. Anyway, Mahjoub and his colleagues came down and visited the ship, and nothing happened. In dealing with Mahjoub, you mention the subject, but you don't get a definitive answer as to what's behind it.

My predecessor in Morocco was the first one who taught me that. There were some other, good observers also who added to my education. That was my experience, too. In Morocco you dealt with people who were indirect and who would sometimes lie or embellish the truth. You had to have a lot of information in your own memory to know how to deal with this.

I might tell a story that happened in the late 1980's in Morocco, when I was a consultant for Catholic Relief Services [CRS]. One of the things that they wanted me to do was to oversee a special, new project involving relationships in Morocco. So I went back to Morocco. One of the first people that I was in touch with was the Minister of Justice. He had been my neighbor and the State Secretary, as they called him, in the "Leftist" government. He had been State Secretary in the Ministry of the Interior. As you know, that means that he was in charge of security. I would go back and each time I went, I would call on him and would have dinner at his house. Then I went back one time, and I couldn't get in touch with him. The man who was running the CRS program said that was rather puzzling. I said, "No, it's not puzzling. What's happened is that he has found out that I had also been seeing people in the opposition, who were old friends of mine. It's gotten to the point where he feels that he can't see me. Personal relationships are probably just as good as they ever were, but in his own interests in the political spectrum, he can't really receive me in as friendly a fashion as he had in the past." I accept that.

Q: How long had the French been gone from Morocco when you got there?

SCHAUFLE: Only three years. They sent the Sultan into exile in 1951 but then had to bring him back in 1955. He resumed his position as Sultan of the Moroccan Protectorate. Within a year the French negotiated independence with the Moroccans. Actually, there had never been a King of Morocco. He didn't elevate himself to King until 1957. So all of the major players who had been active in the Moroccan independence movement and negotiations were still on the scene when I was there. I dealt with nearly all of them, to one degree or another.

Q: Was there any discussion when you first came to Morocco about the Moroccan border, or had that been resolved by the time the French left?

SCHAUFLE: No, none of the border problems had been resolved. There was first the question of the Spanish "presidios" on the Mediterranean coast. One of them is called Alhucemas. The Spanish territories in Morocco include the coastal enclaves of Ceuta and Melilla, the Penon de Alhucemas, the Penon de Velez de la Gomera, and the Chafarinas Islands. Then there was the problem of the South. First there was Mauritania, which was French, but at one time had been

part of the historic Morocco. Morocco didn't want a separate Mauritania, but finally agreed to it. The Spanish territories in between, Ifni and Rio de Oro, became Moroccan after I left.

Then came the great question of the Western Sahara. That hasn't been resolved yet. The Moroccans occupy it, but it hasn't been settled under international law. Maybe it will be in the next year or so, although I'm not sure about that. Nobody wants to take on the Moroccans there. They built all kinds of defenses which really were quite effective. The Moroccans are good soldiers. They are highly disciplined and have a long history of being soldiers, so they are tough adversaries. Even though the Sahrawis, the rebels who want independence and don't want to be part of Morocco, can cause Morocco some trouble, they can't really fight against them effectively in fixed positions for very long.

Then there is the question of the Spanish "presidios" in the North. There was formerly a territory called Spanish Morocco, and Spanish used to be spoken there. The "Rif" uprising took place in 1912. Spanish Morocco was integrated into the rest of Morocco after independence with the exception of the Spanish "presidios" referred to above. They'd been governed separately up until then.

One funny story is about the leader of the Istiqlal Party, Allal al-Fassi. He had a strong sense of history. He was a traditionalist and was educated at Fez University, which was the first Muslim university in Morocco. The story goes that a representative from Cameroon wanted to visit Allal al-Fassi, the Moroccan independence leader. Cameroon had gained its independence, I think, in 1960. The Cameroonian representative was admitted to Allal al-Fassi's office. Allal asked, "Where do you come from?" He said that he came from Cameroon. Allal said, "That's very close to the historic borders of Morocco." Of course, Cameroon was 2,000 miles away from Morocco, but he had rather grand ideas of what the historic Morocco was. You could add that two thirds of Spain were once part of Morocco. [Laughter]

Q: You were talking about the uniqueness of the Moroccan labor movement or labor union. I wonder how it was organized. Did it in any way resemble the labor movement that you had worked with in Germany or in the United States? How did the Moroccan labor movement get started?

SCHAUFLE: Well, essentially its organization is based on the French system. What was it, the UMT [Union of Moroccan Workers]. Essentially, its first basis of organization was as a part of the Moroccan independence movement. It was cloaked in workers' demands, but as much for political as for economic purposes. At that time Mahjoub was a railway clerk in Meknes. He organized the railway workers -- that's where it all started. The railway workers are always important because they communicate with everybody.

When I was in Germany, for instance, it wasn't known then -- nobody ever talked about it -- but there were very secret indications that the West German railway workers were a prime source of intelligence information on East Germany. They took their trains into East Germany for a long time. They didn't replace the train crews with East German crews when they crossed the border, as they did later. In a country like Germany you organize the railway workers and then you have communications with all areas of the country served by the railroads.

Morocco was pretty well served by railroads. So that was very important. Gradually, what was important in Morocco after independence? Probably of first importance were the dock workers. The dockers were the lifeline of Morocco with the world abroad. Morocco is a prime producer of phosphates, which is a major export of the country. And it all goes through Casablanca. So you get the phosphate miners and the port workers and you just continue on from there.

The interesting thing was that there was no significant second party formed in Morocco, other than the Istiqlal Party -- until late in 1960 or early in 1961, I guess. So the UMT, which in a sense was an arm -- an independent arm -- of the Istiqlal Party, didn't have any competition. The other political parties which existed were so small that they couldn't aspire to organize labor. It wasn't until just shortly before I left, after the foundation of the UNFP, with Mahjoub and Abderrazak in the leadership, that the Istiqlal Party formed a labor union called the Union Generale des Travailleurs Marocains, the UGTM. They had mixed success. When I left Morocco, they had some support among the port workers, interestingly enough. I think that they became stronger after I left, though to what degree at this particular time I just don't know. Certainly, the UMT still controls the Bourse de Travail, and they are the ones who one thinks of instinctively as "the" labor movement in Morocco. However, essentially this confederation grew out of the political, independence movement. I think that the model was the CGT, the Confederation Generale de Travail [General Confederation of Labor], in France, which is a communist-controlled union. However, the organizational model was useful for the UMT.

Q: It seems quite clear that the labor unions and the labor movement were quite unique in Morocco. However, I think that you were saying that there were some other things about Morocco that made it stand out, historically.

SCHAUFLE: One of the aspects is Islam. Certainly, Morocco is a Muslim country. However, the King is also the Imam or senior religious teacher. There is no other Muslim country that I know of where the chief of state is the religious leader of the state. So the King of Morocco has power that is not possessed by the President of Egypt, the King of Jordan, or even President Saddam Hussein of Iraq. Or even in Iran. Ayatollah Khomeini was not a government figure. He was just the religious leader. Obviously, he was a charismatic figure with a lot of power.

Q: How does Morocco stand in terms of its religious and political leadership, compared to other Islamic countries?

SCHAUFLE: One of the reasons that this combined religious and political leadership exists in the Moroccan system is that the Sultan is the traditional title of the chief of state. He could only be elected by the "Ulemas," the religious teachers. Even in this day and age he couldn't become King until the "Ulemas" had met. There wasn't any question that the Sultan was ultimately going to be the King.

However, there was a question in 1951. The French exiled the Sultan. The French wanted a man named Ben Arzef to be his successor. The Muslim "Ulemas" met, and they all agreed except the one who was called the "Sheikh al-Islam." He was the senior leader. He also happened to be an Alaoui, which is the Royal Family name. Although there was no close relationship, he was at

least of the same group. He refused. So the French didn't exile him but sent him to live in a rural area. He was the father of the man I talked about, who is now the Minister of Justice. So I had an entree to the Sheikh al-Islam, who, in effect, supported the UNFP and who had occasionally attended UNFP congresses. He didn't speak French. He lived in Fez. The arrangement was that I would go to Fez and meet with him. I spent three hours with him. He was so liberal by comparison with what you hear now about Islam. You wouldn't believe it.

Once he told the story -- and he always spoke in parables and in questions -- about a haj [Islamic pilgrimage] going from Morocco to Mecca. They crossed the desert. When they got there, a member of the party told Mohammed that he was not sure that he was ready to take part in the ceremonies of the haj. He was asked, "Why not?" He replied, "Because during this trip I had to take care of the arrangements, feeding the camels and doing what was necessary -- even on the holy days." Mohammed said, "He who serves my people deserves to make the pilgrimage."

That is the kind of story he was telling me. He had a very liberal, more open approach to Islam than you see in the media, at least. The report I wrote on that conversation is one of the few that I wish I still had a copy of. We ate together. I had a translator, obviously, and the conversation flowed a little differently. However, I learned a lot from him during those three hours.

The other big difference was the Moroccan relationship with Moroccan Jews. There was a large Jewish population in Morocco. Not many people knew it, but there was an Israeli representative in Morocco. With the King's blessing, he helped the Jews who wished to go to Israel. He helped the Jewish community generally. A lot of them stayed in Morocco. The Deputy Mayor of Casablanca was a Jew. He was a very good man. This didn't cause any problems.

Q: Where did these Jews actually come from?

SCHAUFLE: They were probably Sephardic Jews who originally came from Spain. At the time of the Inquisition in Spain a lot of the Jews were maltreated and went to North Africa. I think that nearly all of the Jews in Morocco were Sephardic. At first they lived in the country, in the villages. Every village had its Jews. Partially, that facilitated commerce there. Meantime, the number of Jews in the villages grew, and a lot of them moved to the cities. The Jewish Quarter in Casablanca was a separate residential area. The Jews didn't live in the "Medina" [Moroccan Arab residential area]. The name of the Jewish Quarter was "Mellah." However, the Jews did a lot of business with Moroccans.

Q: Were the Jews identifiable on the street?

SCHAUFLE: No. You couldn't tell whether they were Jews or not. You could only tell by the name -- not in every case but in most cases.

Q: Were the Jewish women also...?

SCHAUFLE: Oh, yes. In fact, there was some intermarriage between Muslim men and Jewish women. The Jews went about their business as everybody else did.

Q: *Did they wear Moroccan dress?*

SCHAUFEELE: I don't think so. Not in my time in Morocco, anyway.

Q: *They wore European clothes?*

SCHAUFEELE: They wore European clothes, as I recall -- at least the ones that I can think of.

Q: *The Moroccans?*

SCHAUFEELE: A lot of the Moroccans wore European clothes. Once we invited the top leadership of the UNFP to dinner at our house. All of the women came in from the street wearing "jellabas," or traditional, long robes. Then they took them off, and they were wearing Dior dresses underneath!

Q: *And high heels?*

SCHAUFEELE: And high heels, yes. These questions are not so important in Morocco as they are in some other Arab countries. I don't know if they can continue this way, especially with what's going on in Algeria, with the Islamic fundamentalist movement. There's supposed to be some kind of fundamentalist movement in Morocco, but it's hard for the fundamentalists to challenge the Imam, who is also the King of Morocco. That would be a religious challenge, not a political challenge. Certainly, Morocco doesn't have the same kinds of problems as in some other Arab countries. Israeli Prime Minister Rabin goes to Morocco. He and King Hussein of Jordan reached their final agreement in Morocco.

Q: *I recall that when I was there, shortly after that, the King's sister was educated at Wellesley College or Vassar, or some place like that. When she came back to Morocco, she also wanted to wear Western clothes. Do you remember that?*

SCHAUFEELE: No, I don't remember that. However, it wouldn't surprise me. However, I'm sure that wouldn't be acceptable, unless under certain, limited circumstances.

Q: *At that time it was. The King said, "Okay." So she did.*

SCHAUFEELE: Is that right? But I don't imagine that she could appear on ceremonial occasions in Western dress, most likely. Even the present King doesn't wear Western dress on ceremonial occasions. Nearly every time I saw him, before he was King, he wore a Western suit, except on ceremonial occasions.

Q: *Was he the son or brother...*

SCHAUFEELE: He was the son. He was not a very likable character.

Q: *Not like his father.*

SCHAUFEELE: He certainly isn't as respected as his father was. However, he's smart and he's ruled now for, what, 33 years. Nobody talks about the circumstances of his father's death any more.

Q: *When was that?*

SCHAUFEELE: 1961.

Q: *What happened?*

SCHAUFEELE: Well, the King went into a clinic, in the Palace, for a fairly limited nose operation. He died in the course of it. There was a lot of speculation that he was killed -- assassinated. Conceivably, his son might have been included in the "plot" to kill him. However, no one knows for sure. The chief of security back in those days was a man named Oufkir. You remember, Colonel Oufkir. I remember that when President Eisenhower visited Morocco, one of my jobs was to be the American liaison officer in what was called "Eisenhower's Office," in the Palace in Casablanca. Eisenhower never went to that office. However, in that office were Hassan [later the King], Colonel Oufkir, and me. I spent about six hours with them -- and it wasn't all that pleasant. However, that's another subject we really haven't touched on -- internal security in Morocco. It's a sore point.

When we looked for a house -- and we saw where our own Consulate General and other consular people were living -- we said that we would not live in that area because we were dealing with people from the labor movement. In other words, we would not live in Anfa. We found another house away across town, right next to the new "Medina," the largest concentration of Moroccans in Casablanca. That was important to us, and it worked out very well. We had a little house on a corner. On one side of us a Berber textile merchant lived. On the other side was the brother of the Minister of Commerce, although I didn't know that at the time.

Our son Steven went to a French Catholic school, mostly attended by Moroccan students. Peter was born shortly before we arrived in Casablanca and left there when he was almost five years old. He had learned Arabic from Mohammed, the house boy that we had, and the maid in the house. Once when we were in Casablanca, we came home one time and got out of the car. There was Peter, talking animatedly to our neighbors. Mohammed, the house boy, was standing nearby. I listened carefully but couldn't follow the conversation. I turned to Mohammed and said, "Mohammed, he isn't speaking Arabic. What is he speaking?" Mohammed said, with a great deal of pride, "He's speaking 'Shluh'," which is a Berber dialect. That's the dialect of the town where Mohammed came from, out in the country. Even Mahjoub ben Seddik didn't speak "Shluh." The Berbers are the majority in the country. Morocco is a country which was "Arabisé" [Arabized] -- not Arab. It was Berber. As Islam came across North Africa, the Berbers went through a process called "Arabization." Essentially, it was a religious and not a political change. It was Arabs versus Berbers.

Q: *Berbers are not Arabs?*

SCHAUFEELE: No. But they are Muslims.

Q: Now, since about the ninth century.

SCHAUFLE: That's right. You know, Heather, my wife, had no fear about going into the "Medinas." Most foreign wives would not go into the Medinas alone. But she lived near the Medina, and we were better off for that reason. European and American wives would not go into the Medinas alone. I suppose that came from French practice.

However, in terms of security I might go back a little bit to Col Oufkir. At that dinner I spoke of, where the Moroccan ladies arrived at our house, wearing jellabas over Dior dresses underneath, during dinner our house boy came up to me at the table and whispered to me that the house was surrounded by police. I told him that was all right. I did say to our guests that we should invite them more often, because we now had a lot of police protection around the house. They got a chuckle out of that.

I'm not sure whether I was followed much during my time in Morocco. Certainly, I know I was followed when I went to meet a leader of the "Left" whom I mentioned, Mehdi ben Barka. He was a kind of radical "leftist." I understand that he was a mathematician, interestingly enough. He was out of the country most of the time, when we first arrived in Morocco, because he was under indictment for various crimes. He came back to Morocco after the formation of the UNFP and was a member of the party leadership. I got to know him. Maybe every three or four weeks, when I went to Rabat to call on him, I noticed that I was immediately followed. I don't know whether the authorities had his phone tapped when I made the appointment or what. Anyway, the only time that I really spotted a "tail" on me was when I paid a call on Mehdi ben Barka, who was later assassinated in Paris, supposedly on the orders of Colonel Oufkir. It wouldn't surprise me if this were true.

Q: Were the security forces an official part of the King's government?

SCHAUFLE: Yes. Oufkir was the head of security, technically under the Ministry of the Interior. However, he himself actually became Minister of the Interior. When we arrived in Morocco, Driss M'Hamdi was Minister of the Interior. He had Oufkir "checked," to a certain extent, but Oufkir had a direct relationship with the Palace and could use that "in extremis," I guess. Oufkir was closer to Hassan than he was to Hassan's father.

Q: While we're talking about the government, could I ask you to back up again and go over this very interesting and unusual history of Morocco, because of the confrontation with the French?

SCHAUFLE: Well, the French effort to establish colonies, especially in Africa, was triggered at the end of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century by the wide ranging process of British colonization of Africa which seemed to bring the British more power. The view was that you couldn't be a great power unless you had colonies. The same disease infected the Germans a little later. However, by this time there wasn't much territory left for them, and they lost it all after World War I. Obviously, for the French the first issue was propinquity. North Africa was important to them because of the Mediterranean. The British had Malta, and they certainly had influence in other places. The focus of the French effort was initially on the

southern shore of the Mediterranean. Morocco and Tunisia became French "protectorates," whereas Algeria became a regular Department of France.

The most famous French figure in Morocco was Marshal Lyautey, who put down the marauding Moroccan gangs or tribes. There was a little tribalism, but not a whole lot. The French moved into Morocco in 1904. That also triggered the Spanish occupation of what became known as Spanish Morocco. The final agreement, which also included the Germans, was to make Tangier an international city. Tangier belonged to no single country, although it was actually governed by the colonial powers. It got its reputation as a city of sin because of the various activities that went on there.

However, the French hold on Morocco was initially not too firm until Marshal Lyautey was designated to establish a greater degree of order. He came to Morocco. I have never studied the efforts of Lyautey in any depth, but he must have been a unique person at that time because he was very much liked by the Moroccans. They didn't want to see French hegemony extended over them but they admired Lyautey. He pacified the country.

A very typical story about Lyautey, probably the only one that I can remember, is that he had been very ill on one occasion. He recovered and was invited by the Muslim leaders, the Ulemas, to enter the Mosque in Casablanca. As you know, in Morocco, foreigners -- non-Muslims -- are not allowed to enter mosques, unlike some other Muslim countries. Women are not allowed in the mosques, either. Anyway, Lyautey was greatly attracted by this gesture. There was a big turnout when he was scheduled to visit the Mosque. He rode his white horse down the street till he came to the Mosque. He dismounted and walked up the steps to the area in front of the entrance, but did not go in. He stood there, looked, and bowed to the faithful. Then he went down the steps, got back on his horse, and left. The Moroccans were enchanted by that. He knew that it was not in their custom for him to enter the Mosque. It would be a real violation of established custom, and he was sensitive enough to accept and enjoy the gesture without violating the custom. That's the kind of thing he did.

The French system of government, in the modern sense, became the government of Morocco, though not in a religious or democratic sense. The Moroccan ministries were administered in much the same fashion as they are in France. Probably, the only difference concerned the "Rif" area. It was not so much independent as it was semi-autonomous. There was some interchange of personnel with the rest of Morocco, but the French were very careful about how they administered the Rif because they wanted those two "presidios" on the Mediterranean coast of Morocco so they had to keep the Spanish-speaking Moroccans on their side.

I used to go up there to Spanish Morocco. You know, the Franco revolution in Spain was launched from Melilla, one of the presidios. Franco's footprints are cast in concrete there. That was done before Moroccan independence was recognized, and they were still there when we were in Morocco. I don't know if they're still there now.

So, if you wish, I became acquainted with French government administration in Morocco before I spent much time in France. All the names are the same -- the "Bourse de Travail" is still called by the same name. There is a lot of French in Moroccan Arabic. One of the first things that I

learned in Moroccan Arabic was the phrase "Fehm trik" el la gare" [Where is the station?] "Fehm trik" means "where is" in Arabic, but they add an "el" -- the definite article -- treating "la gare" [the station] as one word when they put it in Arabic. There are a whole lot of terms like that. Even unschooled people have learned what the "Bourse de Travail" [labor exchange] is. There is the word "Presidence" [Presidency]. The Moroccans use that word when they speak Arabic. So France really carried out, at least in part, its "mission civilisatrice" [civilizing mission] in Morocco.

Q: The Sultans before French colonization certainly didn't have any ministries or organization like that.

SCHAUFLE: No, they had "ministers of the throne." They had an official called the "Vizier," who was really the head of whatever government apparatus there was. They had "Caids" and "Pashas." In some places they still use those terms, but it's in a different administrative context now than it was then. The French governors of the provinces were called "Gouverneurs." At the city level the Moroccans would still use the terms "Pasha" or "Caid."

Q: In the 1950's, when they obtained their independence, Mohammed V, as he is called, just took over the existing...

SCHAUFLE: The existing French structure. Some of the administrative segments were already, for all practical purposes, run by Moroccans, although the French had the ultimate say. The security services and the armed forces were Moroccanized. However, they'd all been trained by the French, anyway. The Moroccans had fought for the French -- in both World Wars. Just like the Black Africans. The President of Upper Volta, when I was there, had fought at Dien Bien Phu in Indochina. He was in the French Army. The system was obviously several steps removed from full integration, as in the case of Algeria. That was what made the war in Algeria so bitter. Technically, there was a war for independence in Morocco, too. There was fighting, but nothing like what happened in Algeria. The French had never designated Moroccans as French. All Algerians were considered French citizens. But all of the Moroccans that I dealt with spoke French. The negotiations on the independence of Morocco were all conducted in French -- in Paris. I guess that the King's French was pretty good. Ambassador Charley Yost used to go alone to meet with the King. Certainly, then Prince Hassan's French at that time was good.

Q: When Moroccan independence was achieved and the Sultan became King, we must have opened our first Embassy in Rabat in about 1953.

SCHAUFLE: That's right. It was done almost immediately. There was a small Consulate in Rabat and a Consulate General in Casablanca. There was a Legation in Tangier, because of its international status. The important thing, of course, is that we had five bases in Morocco. We took over five bases from the French. There were only four when we were there. One of them had already been closed. The U.S. still had three air bases and a naval base in Morocco when we were there.

Q: How did we come to take those bases over?

SCHAUFLE: Part of it was a result of World War II. We never left Morocco. We always had a small number of troops in Morocco. But then those bases came within the context of NATO. We took over those bases from the French. Three of them were air bases. The French had only a small Air Force, and they couldn't leave a large number of French forces in Morocco. It was easier for us than it was for them, because they had been the former colonial power. Although there was a fair number of French military in Morocco in various positions -- carrying on training activities and that sort of thing -- the Moroccans couldn't stand to have French bases in their country. So we got the bases. We had them until the Eisenhower visit. When was that -- 1961? That's when we agreed to close the bases in Morocco, except for a small presence at the naval base, which used to be called Port Lyautey. It is now called Kenitra. There may still be an American naval presence there, for all I know.

Q: *Were you in Morocco at the time of the Eisenhower visit in 1961?*

SCHAUFLE: Yes.

Q: *What happened when Eisenhower came? What was the purpose of the visit?*

SCHAUFLE: The purpose, in effect, was to renegotiate the status of the bases, primarily, and set the level of American aid to Morocco. We agreed to keep the big air bases there -- I think that it was for five years -- and train the Moroccans. I can't remember what assistance we gave Morocco, but we gave them some. Maybe it was military assistance. However, the idea was, as one Moroccan put it, to "end the last vestiges of a foreign military presence there."

Q: *The Moroccans didn't want us there, either.*

SCHAUFLE: No. Also, if you will, Morocco tended to ally itself with the most radical African countries, in the Organization for African Unity. Then, on the trade union side, there was something called AATUF, or All-African Trade Union Federation. I had to watch over its meetings with a great deal of care, including the radical labor leaders, like Tettegzi from Ghana, and I don't remember the names of the other ones now. One that was fairly moderate in political terms was Tlili of the Tunisian workers federation. Another of the moderates was Tom Mboya, from Kenya. Mahjoub of the UMT opted for the radical position, which was probably the right choice from his point of view. It was the way things were going to go, and he didn't want to be "left out." There was no voting, as such, and Mahjoub toned down the resolutions somewhat.

I can still remember Tlili. Mahjoub chaired the conference. Tlili was disturbed about something and wanted to speak again, even though it wasn't his turn. Mahjoub threw his hands up and said, "Fudel, come on up and talk."

Q: *You were saying that was the era of Pan-Africanism.*

SCHAUFLE: That's right. The Africans realized that they would have greater effect if they were somewhat unified, in some form or other, than if they had to deal separately with the great powers. This feeling gave rise to the Organization of African Unity. The United States had no problems with this, though we had problems with AATUF, because we feared it would be a more

radical group. And the United States was considered "the" imperialist power in the world, as these Africans saw it. Certainly, we warned all of them about Communism and all of that sort of thing. Their reactions were mixed on this. They had great respect for us and, when push came to shove, they would generally go along with us -- but less and less, as time went on. They tried to show their independence.

Then you had the Nonaligned Movement, which really grew out of the African experience, although eventually it encompassed the countries which considered themselves "nonaligned" with either the Soviet Union or the United States. But it was part of the same movement, eventually, in a global sense. At least during the period when you and I were in Morocco, there was a lot of that going on, one way or another -- sometimes formal and sometimes informal. There were a lot of these meetings, with people chasing all over, assigned to keep track of them. [Laughter]

I think that even the Left in Morocco had admiration for the United States and was willing to work with the United States. However, in the interest of their larger aspirations they would attack the United States in much the same terms as everybody else, leaving out the intensely abusive terms.

Q: Were these "radicals" in Morocco getting some help? Did they have leaders who had been trained in the Soviet Union? Did that happen in Morocco?

SCHAUFLE: If I would have to give an absolute answer, I would say, "No." The Communist Party of Morocco -- and there was a Communist Party -- was a direct offshoot of the Communist Party of France. They had their contacts with the Soviet Union. However, the Soviets, I think, had more effect in places like Ghana and Guinea -- not in Tanzania, because Julius Nyerere was too smart for them. Eventually, they were fairly successful in Somalia. You find leftists who helped the Angolans. The Congo (Leopoldville), later Zaire, was a big target for the Soviet Union, and they were very successful. The Soviets had influence on and certainly helped the Algerian resistance movement.

Q: But were the Soviets really actively working in Morocco? Because the French...

SCHAUFLE: They couldn't penetrate the areas where the French had influence or hegemony, because the Moroccans really admired French culture. As I said before, the French really had some success with their "mission civilisatrice." Mehdi ben Barka was the most "radical" Moroccan leader that I knew. He spent a lot of time in Paris. [Laughter] Of course, sometimes he was just running from the Moroccan authorities. However, he also had an affinity for France. Many Moroccans had French friends. The French Ambassador certainly had influence in Morocco. However, he didn't have much in the way of resources. The Americans had resources, which was an important consideration. The funny thing about the French is that they have this "mission civilisatrice," but then they had the habit of "bad-mouthing" the indigenous, African governments which they were trying to "Frenchify." I always found that inconsistent. French officials would say that African people were really "dumb," "uneducated," and all that sort of thing. That must have gotten back to all of these Africans.

Q: Everything does.

SCHAUFEELE: Everything does. But you can't dismiss the efforts of the French. If you served in other culturally "French-influenced" places, you could see this. When I came up for appointment as an Ambassador, I thought that I might be able to get an assignment to an English-speaking country. However, I was told that the Foreign Service still didn't have enough French-speaking people. However, we can come back to this when we get further along. The officers who ran the government in Ouagadougou [Upper Volta] had all served in the French Army. A lot of them had fought in Indochina for the French. If you spend your career -- or even only 10 or 12 years -- in that kind of surroundings, it's a close, military relationship. You can't help but be affected by the culture for which you presumably fought.

Q: Somehow, I always had the feeling that the Moroccans felt a kind of superiority because of their French connection. They felt a kind of French-style superiority...

SCHAUFEELE: Added to the fact that they had their own feeling of superiority because they were a clear and distinct culture, unlike a lot of the newly-independent African countries to the South of them. They had a history. They had conquered Spain. They were good soldiers. I fought next to some of them during World War II. They had a good reputation as soldiers.

I can still remember one occasion when I was having lunch with a middle-level leader of the Moroccan "Left," who was quite a bright guy. He was talking about French and other Imperialisms. I said, "Well, you people should know. You did this before the French did." He said, "What do you mean?" I said, "Look at Spain." He replied, "Well, this country was 'Arabisé.' It wasn't us (meaning the Arabized Moroccans). It was 'them.'" I said, "Who is 'them'?" He said, "Marrakech, the Berbers." So he wouldn't even take any blame for that. He blamed the conquest of Spain on the Berbers. [Laughter]

The Moroccans have a very distinct culture. They are very proud of their country. They are proud of their art and their cuisine. Maybe the French taught them how to cook. Maybe they never thought of being proud of their cuisine before the French came. I think that from my experience during the time I was in Morocco they were proud of their moderation. They can be Islamic without "kicking over the traces." There were two feelings of superiority operating simultaneously.

Q: You were going to say a few words about...

SCHAUFEELE: I did a lot of reporting from Morocco. I reported on trade union developments, but I also did a lot of reporting on political developments, first, because of the trade unions, which were always involved politically. And then because of the split in the Istiqlal Party between "Left" and "Right" wings. Politics in Morocco are "rough," very rough. However, they are not violent. At least they weren't violent when I was there, and I don't think that the situation has changed since then. There is occasionally some violence, like an assassination. Someone may have killed King Mohammed. I'd have to get more information on that.

King Mohammed was always able to balance off conflicting political leanings and ideologies.

His first government was led by Moroccan military men. His second government was led by the Right wing of the Istiqlal Party. His third government was led by the Left wing of the Istiqlal Party. The government after that was probably somewhere in the middle. So it always balanced out. He had absolute power in that sense. There was a Moroccan Parliament, which determined who was to form the government. I gather that King Hassan has been equally, if not loved, at least successful in keeping all of these factions in balance.

I often talked with groups which included both Left and Right. They all know each other. There were some snide remarks, occasionally, but there were reasonable conversations. Sometimes, the conversations were more reasonable than we have with our Congress.

All of those leaders whom we've been discussing had been involved in the independence movement. They've probably been involved since then in some pretty nasty or undesirable activities. If not killing, at least condoning killing, perhaps. But nothing on the scale which we see in other places. It was Moroccan politics, continued. There was a lot of internal politics. Of course, before the modern era, there was a lot of regional, local, and tribal politics, if you want to refer to tribes, even though they really weren't tribes. They were groups of people against other groups of people. Some Pashas here wanted to expand his influence there, and they play a tough game. There was a lot of bluff in it. I quickly recognized that in the trade union movement.

Q: This is Tape 4, Side A, of the interview with Ambassador William E. Schaufele, Jr. The date is December 3, 1994. Ambassador Schaufele, you were telling me that you were almost "PNGed" [declared Persona Non Grata] out of Morocco.

SCHAUFELE: Well, I had made a trip down the Moroccan coast, stopping at the major cities, including Essaouira, which used to be called Mogador -- a good Portuguese name before it was Moroccanized. As usual, I paid a call on the city officials and then got in touch with the local head of the UMT [Union of Moroccan Workers]. He and I had a drink. Then he said that he had to attend a meeting of the Executive Council of the UMT, or something like that. I suggested that we meet later for dinner after his meeting. That's what we did.

About a week or 10 days later the Chief of Protocol at the Moroccan Ministry of Foreign Affairs came over to the American Embassy in Rabat and talked to the Ambassador, a non-career man by then named John Ferguson. Ambassador Ferguson was a perfectly nice man, but didn't have much experience. The Chief of protocol said that I had attended a UMT meeting at which I had allegedly criticized the Palace. The Ambassador was very concerned about this. He asked me to come to his office to discuss these charges. Dean Brown was the DCM by then. I explained exactly what had happened. I said that I had in my records what I did on that day. The Chief of Protocol had implied that there might be a further communication on this matter. I advised the Ambassador, and Dean Brown agreed with me, that we should go right back to the Chief of Protocol before they put anything on paper. We did this, and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs ultimately did nothing about these charges. Obviously, they had received an adverse security report, which might have been concocted in Rabat, anyway.

I stayed in Casablanca another five or six months -- in fact, until another Ambassador arrived. I always felt that incident helped precipitate my direct transfer. But four years at a post is long

enough, anyway. I left Casablanca with good feelings about Morocco. I was wined and dined by my Moroccan friends and contacts. However, that's one of the reasons I talked earlier about security. Internal security was important in Morocco. As we all know, security can get out of hand. I didn't suggest that the Ministry of Foreign Affairs go and talk to the UMT man.
[Laughter]

Q: You mentioned that you had a change of Ambassadors before you left Casablanca.

SCHAUFLE: That's right. The man who replaced John Ferguson was Philip W. Bonsal, a career diplomat who was well known in the Foreign Service. He was known to be conservative, and he was. He was tall and imposing. He knew the diplomatic business very well -- no question about that. I think that what surprised me was that he was a little more willing to consider the Moroccan Left in the same terms that Ambassador Charley Yost and I considered them. I thought that he might be somewhat hostile toward anything to the "Left." I thought that he might be somewhat biased, but I found that he wasn't. I was very encouraged to see him in Morocco.

I went up, as usual, to Ambassador Bonsal's first staff meeting in Rabat. I was sitting in the back of the room, along the wall, while other Embassy officers sat around the table. At the Ambassador's staff meeting his staff wanted to make sure that they got through all the items possible that were on the meeting agenda. About five or six consecutive items came up which were discussed a little bit. Then Ambassador Bonsal said, "First, I want to discuss that with Schaufele." I didn't even know him -- had never met him before. Finally, the DCM said, "Well, Bill Schaufele is here." That was a little embarrassing in a sense. On the other hand, I realized that he had been reading my reports and knew who wrote them, in the first place. He had clearly taken them aboard. I thought that was very flattering. One very good thing about Foreign Service Officers is that they do their home work. You don't have to be politically or socially "soul mates" to be recognized for your work.

About a month after he arrived in Morocco, Ambassador Bonsal came down to Casablanca. I have a picture of him, shaking hands with Mahjoub at the UMT's annual congress, which no American Ambassador had ever previously attended, though he was invited to the opening session. Bonsal was about 6'6" tall and Mahjoub is about 5'7" tall.

Q: How did living in Morocco seem to affect your family -- your wife and two children?

SCHAUFLE: Except for my following post, American Consulate in Bukavu, Republic of the Congo (Leopoldville), now Zaire, where I only spent a little over a year, it was the last time that we were all in one place as a family -- except in Washington. You know, my wife Heather is a very adaptable person. I mentioned that she was not afraid of going into the "Medina" marketplace alone. I remember that she was initially somewhat averse to the idea of going to the next post in Bukavu. When I said that it was 5,000 feet above sea level and had a good, Jesuit school, her reaction changed, and she said, "Let's go." That's the way she is. She dealt with the servants more than I did, obviously. She had a lot of contacts in the community, both diplomatic and Moroccan. I thought that the boys [Steven and Peter] did very well. Steven was almost six years old when we arrived in Morocco. We put him in a school called the Ecole Charles De Foucauld. It was named after a member of the "White Fathers" [Les Peres Blancs], who

established the school. It is now staffed by Les Peres de Betterame, a French Basque order. They are often called the "Basque Jesuits." Betterame is just outside of Lourdes [Hautes Pyrenees] in France. At first at his school in Casablanca they put Steven in a grade below his age, because he didn't speak French. However, within two weeks they moved him up to his age group. He learned French rapidly and during the time we were there, he was always first or second in his class. I remember that Steven came home one day and said, "Today in school the teacher asked us to say where we were from. Some of the boys said, 'I'm French.' Others said, 'I'm Moroccan.'" Steven said that he had said, "I'm American." Another young man stood up and said, "Moi, je suis Corse!" The Corsicans are kind of like the Sicilians, in a way.

So Steven had a good time. He is a great talker. If he doesn't overdo it, he can interest lots of people. The priests who were their teachers at school enjoyed him.

Our other son, Peter, was not in school, until our last year there. He went half days to a Montessori school. He learned the languages -- French, Berber, and Arabic. He had little friends that he played with. As you recall yourself, Casablanca, in some respects, is a very easy place to live in. You don't need central heating, although we had a roll-around heater when it got real cold. The two boys traveled around the country with us, including one trip through the snow-covered High Atlas Mountains. Then, four hours later, you were down in the desert. I think that all of my family have good memories of Morocco.

Q: I remember it also as not having any serious, endemic illnesses -- as you find in so many tropical countries.

SCHAUFLE: That's right. I don't know whether I mentioned it in that piece of paper on my career that I gave you, but I might mention the leper ward.

Q: No, you didn't.

SCHAUFLE: The wives of the American staff of the Consulate General in Casablanca put some of the proceeds of their activities into support for the leper ward of the local hospital. There were two interesting things about this. One is that the Moroccan Government didn't admit that there were lepers. That's one of the reasons that a little extra money was helpful. The other aspect is that only Mrs. Tomlinson, the Consul General's wife, and my wife, Heather, appeared to be willing to go and visit the leper ward. They went fairly often. I remember one ceremony at the hospital. Ambassador Tomlinson and I went along. Leprosy is not contagious, but it obviously scares a lot of people. That was one of the things that the American wives did. It's too bad that the Moroccan Government didn't do more for the lepers. They just didn't want to admit that they had leprosy. It was a stigma, I guess.

Q: Yes, it comes from the Middle East. Then how long did you actually stay in Casablanca?

SCHAUFLE: I was there for almost exactly four years. I don't remember the dates exactly, but I went to Casablanca after Peter was born, which was in April, 1959. We left Morocco in June, 1963, almost exactly four years later.

NORMAL L. PRATT
Economic Officer
Casablanca (1960-1963)

Norman L. Pratt was born in Buffalo, New York. His Foreign Service career included positions in Egypt, Libya, Germany, Washington, DC, Syria, Lebanon, and South Africa. Mr. Pratt was interviewed by Dayton Mak in 1991.

Q: Where did you do the Arabic training? At FSI?

PRATT: I did my Arabic at the Foreign Service Institute.

Q: What kind of Arabic was it?

PRATT: The Moroccan and the written language, both.

Q: Who conducted that course?

PRATT: Warren Benedict who was later at the FSI school in Beirut. Carlton Hodge, who later went on to become a professor at Indiana University. I did have the chance to do a long study on language and area students which was used to make changes in the program.

Q: Did you have a pretty good program then? How many were in it, other than you?

PRATT: In the Arabic program I would say we had five or six.

After completing the Arabic program I was assigned to Casablanca. You know how they sent people to do the economic work at the post. The economy, of course, was very largely French dominated, considered itself modern. Very little of the old city was there. Even what might be called the Moroccan Quarter was largely concrete. None of the old city charms that we associate with that part of the world.

Morocco during that period was going through a sad period. The air fields there dated back, of course, to the French period. They were in the process of being phased out, but there were considerable military facilities, not only air force. One nearby at Sidi Slimane, we had one outside of Marrakech [Ben Guerir] and the navy was up at Port Lyautey, north of Rabat. And there were others scattered around the countryside.

Q: Had the rights to those facilities been granted by the French?

PRATT: Those facilities came through the French. The very fact that they had come through the French was a source of irritation to the Moroccans. Of course, we had had a long history of relations with Morocco going back to 1787. In fact every office had a photocopy hanging on the wall of the first letter of George Washington to the Sultan of Morocco concerning recognition of

the States. Tangier had been a gift of the Sultan of Morocco to us. One of the things that stood in our favor was that we had this independent treaty with Morocco predating the French Protectorate which was established in 1911 over the Moroccan government. In effect we stood as somebody who had recognized the basic rights of Morocco to their independence, although we also recognized the French Protectorate.

Q: I imagine this didn't help your relations with the French at the time.

PRATT: French relations were not very happy. There was a remarkable degree of French culture throughout Morocco to the extent that even the local Moroccan trade movement would publish its weekly paper in French. I don't know how many French there were there at that time. It was up in the hundreds of thousands. The French do have a way of impressing their culture on the local people. It was fascinating to watch one time Josephine Baker come down from Paris and all the Moroccan notables gathered around for this party and just ohhhed and ahhhed at her songs of Paris that were reminding them of their days when they were at the Cité Universit .

Q: Did they know that she was an American?

PRATT: Oh, yes. It was well known who she was, but she was a representative of the French culture to them. Her entire career had been tied up with Paris.

Q: Were there many Americans there other than the military?

PRATT: Other than the military, we had only a handful of Americans there.

Q: So what were your principal duties there?

PRATT: Principal duties as far as I was concerned evolved around reporting on two specific fields on fishery developments and minerals. There is quite a variety of fish in Morocco. Phosphates were a big item there. That meant periodically going down to the phosphate mines at Khoribgha and talking to the people and getting the usual two dollar tour of the establishment.

Q: Who was the king at the time?

PRATT: The king at the time I got there was Mohammad V. He died and his son, Hassan II, took over. He remains there as king. He is an extremely adept, extremely wily politician. When I first got there, the movement of intellectuals, if you will, was quite outspoken, opposed to the king, had a rather vague program, but basically a more modern program. He succeeded, one way or another, when he became king of co-opting these individuals into ambassadors, ministers, etc. In fact, one of the things I had to do periodically when their newspaper was seized on the streets was to dig around at odd corners to see if I could get a copy for the Embassy in Rabat. The editor of this paper showed up many years later as a Moroccan Ambassador in Beirut. I remember going over to him and telling him about my paper search and he gave me a dirty look and said, "You have too long a memory."

Q: The king comes from a long line of royalty there?

PRATT: The royal family goes back probably three or four hundred years. When the family established itself Fez was at the time the capital for Morocco. You know it was only later that they moved down to Rabat. In fact most of the leading families of Morocco have Fezzi antecedents. The Fezzi themselves are an interesting group. They can trace their ancestry back to Moorish Spain. The final fall of Grenada was when they came over to Morocco. In fact some of the old houses in Fez still have the keys hanging on the wall of their houses in Spain.

I remember the first governor of Casablanca when I got there was a man named Mohammad whose last name, allowing for Arabic phonetics, came out very simply as Vargas. How Spanish could you get? Blond haired and blue eyed.

Q: Did you find it interesting in Morocco?

PRATT: Morocco was interesting. I did get a chance to do a certain amount of traveling down to Marrakech, up to Tangier. I had one long trip out into the desert. There was an oil exploration company working there in the Spanish territory of Rio de Oro. They had had their trucks seized by Moroccans -- they had gone across the frontier. So I had to take a rescue party and bring those trucks back. This meant going as far south as Agadir and on to Goulimine where the road ends and then another 160 kilometers across the desert to a little town near the coast.

Q: Did your Arabic come in handy or was it too difficult?

PRATT: The Arabic wasn't much use there and why speak Arabic when everybody speaks a little French.

Q: And you spoke fluent French yourself.

PRATT: I knew enough French to stumble along.

Q: That was often the case.

PRATT: It happened most places that way. The only real use I had for their language was in handling documents that were too hot to be handled by your local translators.

Q: Do you have any particular stories you would like to tell us about Morocco?

PRATT: We are going back close to 30 years. I'm afraid the details are rather vague.

Q: They tend to fade away, particularly when more interesting things happen afterwards.

PRATT: But Morocco basically was a fairly quiet post. The airfields were closing up because the Moroccans felt they didn't want them there. But they did permit the navy to stay on under certain conditions.

Q: What was the attitude towards Americans, the Consulate and the US in general while you were there?

PRATT: Well it is hard to tell. The newspapers had a standard drum beat of the third world, anti-American propaganda. The French newspapers were resolutely non-political, they stayed away from that sort of thing. For international news they were very good.

Q: *What years were you in Morocco?*

PRATT: I was there from 1960-63.

EDWARD L. PECK
Arabic Language Training
Tangier (1962-1964)

Ambassador Edward L. Peck was born in California on March 6, 1929. He received a bachelor's degree and a master's degree from George Washington University. His career in the Foreign Service included positions in Goteborg, Tangier, Tunis, Oran, Cairo, Baghdad, Washington, DC, and as ambassador to Mauritania. Ambassador Peck was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy on June 29, 1989.

PECK: I returned to Washington, and they said, "We have no onward assignment for you."

Q: *That's very unusual for a relatively junior officer.*

PECK: It wasn't right then. There was a bind of various kinds, and they said, "Go home. Take home leave. Take annual leave. Don't call us. We'll call you."

I said, "Well, but, but, but."

They said, "That's the way it is."

I said, "Well, can I look around?"

And they said, "If you can find something, go to it." One of the people I spoke with said, "Apparently, Peck, you have some facility with languages."

I smiled with ill-concealed pride, and I said, "Yes."

They said, "Look, we've got hundreds of people who can write reports but not very many who can master languages. How would you like to learn a hard language?"

And I said, "Sure, why not?"

They said, "Here's the list." Study Chinese, you go to China. Study Turkish, you go to Turkey.

Q: *When you say, go to China, you go to Taiwan.*

PECK: Well, yes, but I mean I looked at Arabic, and looked at the string of countries, all the way from Mauritania around to, you know, Iraq. And I thought, ah, wow! That's the language to take. So I said, "Sign me up for Arabic." And they did. And they sent me to Tangier, where they were opening a western Arabic language school.

Q: *I was going to say, was there any choice? Because that was about the time, I guess, when we had the choice between the Maghrebian Arabic, which was western Arabic -- Morocco, Tunisia, Algeria, and what's the other one?*

PECK: Eastern Arabic.

Q: *Eastern Arabic, which is --*

PECK: All the rest of it. Yes. The school opened with a group of six students -- Bob Pelletreau was one.

Q: *Who's now our Ambassador to Tunisia, and our negotiator with the Palestine Liberation.*

PECK: Yes. Lannon Walker was one. Ambassador to Senegal now. Frank Wisner was one, the Ambassador in Egypt. Myself and two other folks, one of whom has died and one of whom, Bob Duncan, is off --

Q: *He's in Thailand.*

PECK: Yes, as econ counselor. We were the six who opened the school, and I was there for twenty-two months learning Arabic -- I thought. In fact, we were all taught to speak a dialect which is fully usable within perhaps one hundred kilometers of Tangier, and since Tangier is on the northwestern coast of the continent, it doesn't really take in an awful lot.

Q: *Why did this happen? Because I mean after all, this was not a -- I mean we had a rather large language expertise in Washington. I mean people -- we were not a naive country by 1962 in that part of the world.*

PECK: It happened for a number of reasons. One of the key ones was the choice of person to head the school. He was not highly motivated, was not very interested, and in effect just let the school just kind of go on. For the last seven months of the spoken program, I worked with the tutors at night and on the weekends, writing all the drills and the vocabulary and the lessons themselves, because there weren't any. I did them. They weren't all that great, because I'm not a trained linguist, but there was an obvious need to have some way to go on with the spoken language. The other students there were more conscious than I was that what we were learning a rather outlandish dialect.

You see, Tangerine Arabic is the Arabic that's spoken in Tangier, which is heavily interlarded

with Spanish and also has a lot of Berber. The dialects in Arabic are grossly different from country to country and within countries, and we learned a way-out dialect, which even in the south of Morocco was not well understood.

When I finished the program -- and I got a 3+/3+, which was considered quite good -- I was sent to Tunisia. When I arrived there, getting off the ferry boat from Italy -- because again I'd come by ship -- I said to the dockworkers who were unloading my stuff, "Oh, my brothers, in Allah's name, handle these boxes with careful attention. They contain many things of importance to me and my family. May God reward you."

And they all said, "Huh?" They said, "What?" They said, "Do you speak French?"

And that's what I spoke for the two years I was there. It was almost totally useless in Tunisia. I could read the papers but I could not speak with anybody.

Q: Well, did this continue, or were people blowing the whistle?

PECK: Yes, and getting themselves in trouble for it. David Korn -- I'm allowed to mention names here?

Q: Oh, yes, sir.

PECK: David Korn, who has now retired -- and his last post was as ambassador to Togo -- came to the course about midway through my stay there and was appalled at what he saw. He blew the whistle to the extent of talking extensively to the DCM in Rabat -- who reported the conversation to the school director.

That's the way those things went. Most people said, "Hey, look, it's a two-year vacation. Take it easy, Peck."

And I said, "No, no, god dammit, I am here to learn Arabic."

They said, "But you're learning it."

I said, "But look at the pace. We're learning at half speed. Anyway, the school eventually closed. During the time that it was there, the fellow who was running it ran it the same way. Most of the students, I have to say, were not highly motivated to put in the effort that is required -- you may know this -- to learn a truly hard language. When I arrived -- I thought this would be another Swedish, or another French, or another Spanish. My God, Arabic is a hard language. There are no cognates, whatsoever, of any kind, even false ones. There's nothing to hang onto. It is a very difficult language.

It was extremely badly taught. As an illustration, a new tutor would report for duty, and he would come in and say, "My name is Ahmed d'El-Harshdi. What am I supposed to do?" And we would try to sit him down and teach him what he was supposed to do, in class. The Director taught him nothing.

Q: In class. Well, now, one last thing before we leave there, a question that's always interested me. Was Tangier the sink of iniquity that I've heard it was?

PECK: Unbelievably. In today's world I suppose it looks kind of tame. Looking back on it through the perspective of all those years, twenty some odd years, it was astounding how inexperienced my colleagues and I were in terms of coping with that kind of situation. I must tell a story.

Q: Please.

PECK: There was a bar there called the Parade Bar, which had been written up in Esquire and Holiday magazines as a must see. It's a place that was run by a fellow who was called the Queen -- [tape glitch]

Q: Would you say that again? I just accidentally flipped something.

PECK: He was a homosexual, but a charming, gracious man who ran a wonderful restaurant where everybody came, and the scenery was something out of a really good Hollywood movie, just extraordinary. I was there one night with my first wife, standing in a corner of the bar. We were waiting for our table for dinner. Two American men struck up a conversation with my wife, and a few minutes later at the other end of the bar, in came Frank Wisner with some folks. And he waved at us, and my wife waved at him, and one of these guys said, "Who is that?"

She said, "It's Frank Wisner."

So -- "I think I know him. I'm pretty sure I know him, but I can't remember where--"

So my wife, trying to be helpful, went over and got Frank and brought him over, introduced him, and we went on chatting and drinking and watching the show. A white-faced Frank Wisner suddenly materialized at my wife's elbow, and he said, "Goddamn you!" He said, "I had to fight my way out of that!" He said, "These goddamn queers backed me into a corner."

And he said, "For God's sakes Heather, don't you know a queer when you meet one?"

Very quietly, she said, "No." End of conversation. Frank had nothing more to say.

Q: We were very naive.

PECK: The things that went on. The things that we saw.

Q: You know. Going into a transvestite bar. I remember going into one, and I didn't know what this was, except I thought that the "girls" had rather angular jaws.

PECK: I can remember in the Safari Bar one night, watching two American airmen from the airbase we still had there -- trying to pick up these two French lesbians and not understanding

why it wasn't working.

Q: It was a different era. Well, anyway, let's go on. You were assigned to Tunis as the economic officer.

L. DEAN BROWN
Deputy Chief of Mission
Rabat (1962-1965)

Ambassador L. Dean Brown was born in New York in 1920. He graduated from Wesleyan University in 1942 and subsequently served as a second lieutenant in the US Army overseas. His Foreign Service Career began in 1946, and included overseas assignments of Congo, Saint Johns, Ottawa, Paris, Rabat and Senegal, as well as an ambassadorship to Jordan. Ambassador Brown was interviewed by Horace G. Torbert on May 17, 1989

Q: From there you went, I take it, to Rabat as DCM.

BROWN: Yes. While I was in Paris, I always tried to keep in touch with the Americans, because there are a lot of knowledgeable ones. One very knowledgeable was John Ferguson, an international lawyer associated with George Ball who had the brilliant idea that Americans and Finns should have branch offices within the Common Market. So John was there, and I met John socially and we talked a lot. He was chosen as ambassador and he simply said he wanted me to come as DCM. It worked. I said, "Sure." We had a great time.

Q: This worked well, and he was a good, solid, informed man.

BROWN: Exactly. He was well plugged-in in the United States and very sensible. He did not have clientitis in Morocco, which too many of our ambassadors there have had.

Q: That's right, particularly political ambassadors, I think.

BROWN: They often think they're the ambassador of Morocco, or whatever the country is, to the United States, which they're not.

Q: We have a certain amount of brokering, but . . .

BROWN: Yes, some pretty bad examples in recent years.

Q: Orient the listeners a little bit on the history of Moroccan independence and so on.

BROWN: Morocco had only been independent for a couple of years. The former king, Mohammed V was a fine man. He had been exiled by the French at one time. Morocco had a very large colony of Jews. This is natural as when the Spaniards drove the Moors out of Spain,

they also drove out the Jews. The Jews went with the Moors to North Africa. During World War II Mohammed V refused to allow the French in any way to apply the Vichy laws to the Jewish population. And to this day, Moroccan Jews have a great deal of respect for Mohammed V and for his son Hassan. Hassan was a young man when Mohammed V died. Averell Harriman and I were traveling around the world together; President Kennedy sent me to Morocco to represent the United States at Mohammed V's funeral. I was the bag carrier. So I had seen the country and was delighted to go back to it.

The king at that time was flirting with everybody, the Communist Chinese, the Cubans, the Russians, and us. It wasn't really until later that he decided that all that flirtation was worthless and that he'd better stake his flag in Washington, which he has done.

Q: For a while there, he was choosing up sides more on what people did in the way of supporting Algeria than anything else.

BROWN: Things like that, yes. That he was compelled to do. The Tunisians and Moroccans had the Algerian rebels in their country, more in Tunisia than in Morocco, but nevertheless, they did support them and there were certain problems, of course, with the French all along, just as we had in those days.

We had important bases we left in Morocco which we received from the French, not the Moroccans. There was a large naval installation at Kenitra, which was more than just a naval operation. It meant we had independent communication sites around the country. We also had three major air fields from which SAC operated. All of these facilities were viewed as important. Yet it was inevitable, since we had never negotiated any of this with the Moroccans, that sooner or later, something was going to have to change. That's basically the thing that John Ferguson did (and which I did in between), dealing and negotiating not only with the Moroccans, but you had to negotiate, in a sense, with the French, and you certainly had to negotiate with the Pentagon, which didn't want to give the bases up.

I was at one meeting one time when Curtis Le May was there, when he slammed his fist on the table and said, "If those goddamn Moroccans can come up with \$300 million, we'll give them the bases!" Of course, they didn't have more than three dollars in the whole country.

The odd thing about this all was, I think it's another example of how things get done in odd ways. When I was at the Imperial Defense College before coming to Morocco, one of my fellow students was a SAC officer. We used to talk about SAC. He told me that, "They're going to phase the B-47 out." I got to Morocco, and here was the Defense Department saying it was absolutely essential to have the air fields for B-47 use against the Soviet Union.

I said to John Ferguson, "Mr. Ambassador, there's something phony here. The State Department is obviously parroting what they get. Why don't you go back and talk to the President and some other people and find out what they really want you to do."

I said, "And when you do, you bring up the fact that you understand the B-47s are being phased out, the plans are already there, and they'll be gone in a few months, anyway."

So he did. And he was right, because it turned out that really the only thing the people wanted was the communications bases, Kenitra with its golf course and the other little bases that were attached to it. So we were able to phase out the bases. The B-47s left; they all went to the junk pile and were never used again. So that was all done, and it was done very neatly, because the basic thing was: how do you move out of a base without moving out? We could give the air fields away. One of them now is the major airport at Casablanca, and that was fine. We helped finance that. The other two drifted back into the desert. I mean, they were worth something to us at one time. Once you leave them, there's no reason for them because they're in the desert.

Q: Archaeologists in another hundred years will wonder what all that cement is under the sand there.

[Laughter]

BROWN: An interesting story I remember was that Soapy Williams came through. John Ferguson became very ill and went home, never came back, so I was left in charge for about a year at the end. Soapy Williams had just made his big appearance down in Rhodesia, where he'd gotten in a battle. Soapy Williams, of course, was the Assistant Secretary for African Affairs appointed by Kennedy. He came in, so I asked him if he wanted to talk to the staff. He said, "Yes, but I want to talk to all of the staff. Get all the Moroccans."

I assembled them in the courtyard. He told them the story about how he'd been in Rhodesia and pushed around, and how he had said "Africa for the Africans." And he wanted "everybody here at this meeting to know that this was American policy: Africa for the Africans." The problem is that most of our employees were French or Moroccan Jews.

My driver and I took Soapy to the airport. As we were driving back, the driver said, "I have to talk to you."

I said, "What?" He said, "I'm leaving. I'm going to Spain."

I said, "Why?" He said, "Well, I heard him say, this Secretary of State, 'Africa for the Africans.' I'm not an African." And half our staff left within a couple of months. [Laughter]

Q: Soapy was the best-intentioned guy that ever lived.

BROWN: Absolutely.

Q: And he did a lot for the African Bureau. I mean, he made the African Bureau, in a way.

BROWN: Exactly.

Q: But he certainly--well, he listened a little too much to Wayne Frederick, I'm afraid.

BROWN: That's right. I think Wayne was his eminence grise.

Q: Was there anything else in Morocco that you can think of?

BROWN: We started with one of the first Peace Corps programs there. It worked well, but it was extremely difficult because of the natural suspicions of a rather xenophobic security system that they had there.

Q: This was always a problem. I had the Peace Corps at the same time in Somalia.

BROWN: It was not easy to do in the beginning. Everybody was suspicious of them. And the Peace Corps kids were doing their thing, too.

Q: On the whole, it worked very well in Somalia.

BROWN: We had Sargent Shriver come out there and talk. Actually, trying to revolutionize the volunteers about what they were supposed to be doing. Well, you've got to be careful in an autocratic one-party country as to how fast you want to educate the people on what they, the Africans, should do about their future, or they'll go to jail.

Q: Democracy is a great thing, but . . .

BROWN: But other than that, no, it was the fumbblings of the new African countries, as you remember. The early days of Africa were extremely difficult, because all of a sudden they had to start planning, doing some real planning, and not turning around and having somebody else do it for you. You have to decide about your land.

Q: And you don't have very many educated men.

BROWN: And what are you going to do about land? All the good agricultural land, was held by French colonials. They had a population that's growing by 3.5% or 4% a year, and enormous unemployment. These are some of the problems that have to be dealt with.

Q: I think Morocco has done as well as most.

BROWN: It's done as well as it could.

Q: A little more advanced than some of the countries.

BROWN: Yes, but they could do better. They simply have not educated the people yet. There is still a great mass, maybe 40% illiteracy in that country, and that's too high.

ALAN W. LUKENS
Political/ Military Officer
Rabat (1963-1965)

Ambassador Alan W. Lukens was born in Philadelphia on February 12, 1924. He received a bachelor's degree from Princeton University. He joined the Foreign Service in 1951. Ambassador Lukens' career included positions in Turkey, Martinique, France, Morocco, Senegal, Kenya, Washington, DC, and an ambassadorship to the Congo. He was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy on November 17, 1989.

Q: Is there anything else we might cover here? Then your next assignment you went to Rabat for a couple of years.

LUKENS: I was asked to go down there as a Political-Military Officer. In the meantime, I found a lovely person in Paris, an American girl, and married her and started my new family. Her brother-in-law, Wells Stabler was also in the Foreign Service, so I met her through him. Anyway, we went to Morocco, Rabat, in the political-military job which was, in a sense, phasing itself out, because the job there was to get us out of the bases. The interesting thing there in '63 was that Kennedy had met King Hassan II, and no one else had been present. It was just before Kennedy's assassination, and nobody had written the meeting up -- well, the Moroccans knew, but nobody dared ask them. There were no Americans present. So nobody knew what the real agreement was. We basically figured out that we had to get out of the air bases but that we could keep Kenitra, the Naval base. But none of this was spelled out and as the day got closer, it became very clear that we had to get out of the bases -- the Moroccans said that. The Air Force was very, very nasty, the U.S. Air Force. They wanted to do a scorched earth policy, and even had the general coming down from Torrejon in Spain, and transplanting the roses from officers' houses and taking them back up to Spain and that kind of stuff. They were very nasty and felt that they'd been thrown out. Meanwhile, we were trying very hard with the AID Mission to convert the airport at Nouasser; to get AID money in quickly (before the airport was totally sabotaged by our own air force), and converted into an international airport; with some success, not a lot, but we kept a few things from being stolen like the fire engines. I remember I was the last American at the base. There were just a handful of people left, and we had a little ceremony and pulled down the American flag and pulled up the Moroccan one. That made the French livid, because they said the agreement had been with them in 1955, and not with the Moroccans. Anyhow, we went through the whole ceremony and then the Americans got into their plane and left; and the Captain, the highest rank there, threw me the keys to his car. I drove it back to Rabat. So that was the end of that, but the tricky part came at the end of the year (1963), because nobody knew what the Moroccans were going to do. Finally what happened, two weeks before the deadline came, the King finally agreed that we would have a Moroccan flag up at Kenitra, but basically nothing else would change. It wasn't Kenitra itself, it was the communication facilities nearby that we needed for Polaris and needed to keep. That was all a very fascinating period.

Q: The Air Force, were they sort of acting almost basically on their own? This is our turf. In other words, the Ambassador really had little control.

LUKENS: Yes. But each time, we had to go all the way back with cables from the State Department to the Air Force, have a battle back here and the Air Force would send out a command and tell them to knock it off. But it was ridiculous, the problem was...

Q: So we're talking about a "dog in the manger" attitude on the part of the people who probably had a pretty good life.

LUKENS: Yes, they had a very good life.

Q: And they didn't want to leave it -- sort of à la the French in Guinea.

LUKENS: Yes, very much, but they didn't get away with it. So that was an interesting time. We had a very nice tour there. Basically when the base business was done, I became more of a Political Officer working on external stuff.

Q: Were there any particular problems in the external side at that point, or was it quiet?

LUKENS: Well, again it was an awful lot with the French. I mean in Morocco, our relations with Morocco had always been very much closer than they'd been with anything in black Africa.

Q: I'm sure you've said it a hundred times -- first country to recognize the United States?

LUKENS: We would work it into the speeches. But even then the French had an enormous presence, but we managed to become very good friends with the French there. I think our -- political Ambassador, who has been a lawyer in Paris and spoke good French...he was a very, very nice guy -- Ferguson. And the DCM, Dean Brown, is an old timer who later became Ambassador in Senegal. So we had a good time there. Bill Crawford was Political Counselor, and it was a very nice way, particularly for me, to start my new life...

DWIGHT N. MASON
Consular Officer
Tangier (1963-1965)

Dwight N. Mason was born in New York, New York on April 20, 1939. He received a bachelor's degree from Brown University and a master's degree in history from the University of California at Berkeley. Mr. Mason joined the Foreign Service in 1962. He served in Tangier, Barranquilla, Quito, Ottawa, and Washington, DC. Mr. Mason retired in 1991 and was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy on August 3, 1993.

MASON: No. I did not have the languages for Eastern Europe, my language on entry was French. But the way it seemed to work, we didn't have any control on such decisions. To us it looked random, and I think it was. We were all assigned to language training before we were assigned to posts. We thought that was strange. I was assigned to French training, and then to Strasbourg. But that assignment did not hold up, and I was then told I was going to Casablanca, then to Rabat, then to Tangier. I landed in Tangier.

Q: You went to Tangier in 1963, and you served there to '65.

MASON: Yes. But before I got to Tangier, however, there was a six-month travel freeze. I was assigned during that period to the Office of the Historian. I was too innocent then to recognize that such a job was a bad one from a Foreign Service strategic point of view. So I had a very good time there.

Q: What were you doing there?

MASON: I was sent to the division that does special studies. I was asked to write a history of our post in Tabriz, which I did. I don't know what happened to it. It was a masterpiece of footnotes. But let me tell you, our consulate at Tabriz has a very interesting and indeed tumultuous history.

Following that study I was assigned to work with a group on a project for the Secretary. This was the time when President and Mrs. Kennedy were expecting a baby, (who did not live as it turned out), and the Secretary had decided to give the Kennedys a present to mark the event. The present he had decided to give them was a book of facsimile reproductions of letters from heads of state to presidents, one per president. I was assigned to pick four letters from Washington's Administrator to that of Lincoln. I spent the next two months or so in the National Archives researching. The Archives are a fascinating place. There is a kind of initiation to the Archives by the senior researchers there. The first question I was asked was, "What are you really doing? Are you writing a book, or something?" I said, "No," and explained my mission and background. Then they gave me a tour. It included being shown the despatches from our posts in Mexico during the period of Pancho Villa. Villa had kidnaped an American. He was threatening the most dire consequences if his conditions were not met and sent a finger back as evidence of this intentions. The finger was sent on to the Department as an enclosure to a despatch. And there it is on a shelf.

The finding of the letters from heads of state to the presidents was quite easy. They are filed separately, and one simply went through them. Some make interesting reading. I decided to go a little beyond my mandate, and include a letter from the Committee of Public Safety in France to the Continental Congress. The letter was interesting because of what it revealed about the state of mind prevailing in France in the Committee of Public Safety and of that group's expectations of the Continental Congress. It makes the Genet affair more comprehensible.

Q: Then you went to Tangier after the travel freeze.

MASON: Yes, on the first ship out. In those days you could travel by sea and First Class, and I took the Independence. Because of the effect of the travel freeze, most passengers in First Class on that trip were government travelers, and quite young. It was one long party. I left the ship at Algeciras, spent the night at the hotel Reina Christina where the Algeciras Conference of 1906 on the Moroccan Crisis of that year had been held, and crossed the Straits of Gibraltar by ferry to Tangier the next day.

Q: When you got to Tangier what were you doing there?

MASON: Tangier was a three person post. We rattled around in a large, modern building built to be the Legation. I was the consular officer. My principal work was protection of American citizens. I only did 30 immigrant visas a year, and maybe 40 tourist visas. The game there was protection. I was at the Tangier jail my second day on the job helping American prisoners.

Q: I'd like to take a look at consular work at that time, as a former consular officer myself to document this. When you say protection, Tangier always struck me as a place where the remittance men and women were sent, and particularly in those days was sort of a hippy haven, and anything else you can think of.

MASON: The remittance men were all there. They were Brits so they were not our problem. They were interesting people. It was the beginning of the hippie period and of the drug age. I suppose my largest problem was deaths of young Americans from the use of drugs mixed with other drugs -- like marijuana, hashish, alcohol. I had, I guess, about one death a month from this sort of thing, and generally it was a young American. There were a lot of young Americans over there adrift, many destitute. We had a lot of repatriation business. Many parents would tell us when we contacted them, "Sorry, we're not going to do a thing for that child, we've just had it," which was very discouraging. But we generally were able to give the kids repatriation loans and send them home. In the cases of dead Americans, the question usually was whether to ship them home or bury them in Tangier. Half the time they would be shipped, and half the time we buried them. I can remember many funerals with just the Anglican priest and me present sharing the prayer book.

Tangier had a reputation for being an exotic place. That reputation was justified. I can remember one case where an American resident who was a former golden gloves boxer went crazy one night. He was subdued by the fire department (apparently he was too much for the police!) and taken to the French psychiatric hospital. This was the normal procedure for Americans with drug intoxication symptoms, and that was the problem in the case of the boxer. The treatment then in use at that hospital for drug intoxication was vitamin B injections and electro shock. (As this story will reveal, the treatment certainly seemed effective.)

The hospital reported the situation to me and certified that the boxer was incompetent. This certification allowed us to request a repatriation loan without the consent of the patient. We did so and secured it promptly and made preparations to send the boxer home with an escort.

After about 3 or 4 days, the hospital informed me that the boxer was cured and ready to travel. But they insisted on providing the escort.

So they flew off to New Your via Madrid. The escort was a Moroccan and traveled in native costume. He spoke no English.

When the pair arrived and were met in New York, the boxer introduced his escort as the patient. The escort naturally became upset by this turn of events, and his agitation and appearance confirmed his identity in the minds of the authorities. So he was seized and hospitalized. The boxer left, we never heard of him again. So he certainly seemed cured to me. It took some time to straighten things out and get the hospital's escort back.

Q: What was the situation? Where did the consulate general fit in at that time, the political situation in Tangier?

MASON: Until 1957 Tangier had been an International Zone, a separate entity administered by the Great Powers. When the Zone ended, Tangier was incorporated into Morocco. The local residents saw this as something of a come down and did not particularly like it. The language of business for us was French but it could just as well have been Spanish.

Northern Morocco, "the Spanish zone" had been administered by Spain until Moroccan independence. Morocco was fundamentally a tribal society, and the northern Moroccan tribes were fiercely independent. They had an impressive history of guerilla resistance to the Spanish authorities. There was a feeling that somehow or other they'd been taken over by outsiders when the merger with Morocco occurred. But there was no real separatist sentiment in northern Morocco. Nevertheless northern Morocco was different from the rest of the country, and that was a subject for political reporting from the consulate.

The embassy in Rabat at the time obviously had very little confidence in us, or at least in my Consul General because they would not allow us to report directly, but insisted that all cables go first to them for their review, which was a great frustration for us.

I became the political reporting officer after a few months of consular work. The most interesting political reporting actually related to Gibraltar. Gibraltar was not formally in our consular district, but we were the closest consulate so we had an arrangement with the consulate at Seville in Spain to take care of things in Gibraltar and in the Spanish possessions of Ceuta and Melilla in northern Morocco for them.

And in Gibraltar, as it happened, there was an interesting political situation. This was at the time when Spain decided to make a big push to recover Gibraltar. The native Gibraltarians vehemently objected to the idea of being handed over to Spain, and they were not entirely confident that the UK would not sell them out. The issue was being debated at the United Nations, and there was a lot of excitement in Gibraltar including riots demanding a firm British stand. Spain closed the border (and it remained closed for years). I would go to Gibraltar fairly regularly to report on the situation there. As a new officer, this was very interesting and exciting, particularly because I had access to the most senior local elected officials as well as to the Government of Gibraltar.

Q: Who was your Consul General?

MASON: Jerry Shutz.

Q: How did he operate? I mean, this was your first post, what was your impression?

MASON: I liked him very much. I thought he was very good, but clearly the embassy didn't have much confidence in him because they kept him on a very short substantive string.

Q: Who was the ambassador?

MASON: I can't remember. Dean Brown was the DCM.

Q: So you did get the feeling of the tension between a consular post and a embassy.

MASON: Yes. I would go down with the pouch fairly regularly and talk with the political section, and this is obviously the best way to ameliorate this sort of thing. There was very little contact between the two posts. It was a mere six hour drive between us, but we rarely had visitors from the embassy.

Q: I would have thought that you would have had officers coming up to get a little taste of something a little different.

MASON: Well, you would have thought so, and a few did. Tangier was such a far superior to Rabat in terms of entertainment, living conditions, and beaches that I was surprised they weren't there every weekend.

Q: What about the life there? Its always struck me as being the place where naughty people have a good time, or something like that.

MASON: That's true. It was an exotic place, and there were plenty of naughty people -- some quite interesting.

Q: Did you have access to Moroccan authorities there?

MASON: Oh, yes. The Moroccan authorities were quite cooperative. The access I generally needed was to the police. The police commissioner in Tangier Monsieur Banana was really very helpful. I think he regarded me with some amusement as being a young whippersnapper. But nevertheless he was very helpful, and he really did prevent bad things happening to Americans. Generally it was understood that Americans really couldn't withstand the rigors of Tangier prisons, which were horrible. So the general practice, which we worked out with him, was to have them deported. If necessary I would provide the five dollars to get them on the ferry and out of the country.

My relations with the police reached stratospheric levels when I solved a murder mystery for them. It is an amusing tale and captures much of the atmosphere of Tangier. One night I was called about midnight by the Consul General who told me that the police had told him that an American had been murdered in the Marshan district of Tangier. He asked me to go to a certain police station and pick up a detective and proceed to the scene. So off I went.

When we arrived at the house, I was ushered to the crime scene. it was a bathroom, the body was naked on the floor and blood was everywhere. The police told me that when they had arrived both the door and the window had been locked, and they could not figure out how the man had been murdered.

They then handed me the victim's passport, and I realized to my horror and surprise that this was a man with whom I had had a drink two days previously -- he was a friend of a friend.

Fortunately for the mystery, I noticed that the hot water heater in the bathroom was charcoal fired and was not vented to the outside. I realized that the death was probably the result of inhalation of the fumes. So that is what I told the police -- that the victim probably had been rendered unconscious by the fumes and had then fallen and hit his head against the side of the tub (his wound was to the side of his head) and lain there until he died of the effects of the fumes. I suggested that the police test his blood to see if his red corpuscle count was elevated because I knew from Agatha Christie that such a reaction was typical of carbon monoxide poisoning. The police were enchanted (and the blood test turned out as well).

Unfortunately, the police and I had another probable murder which did not turn out so well. In that case the young companion of an elderly American woman reported that she had died after falling down stairs. To us, it seemed far more likely that he had pushed her. But we could not prove it.

Q: After Tangier how did you feel about the Foreign Service?

MASON: I liked the Foreign Service and Morocco. I was asked if I wanted to study Arabic, and become an Arabist, but I decided not to. The thought of two years of Arabic training, probably half of them in Tangier where there was a language school at that time, was more than I wanted. I didn't want to specialize that early. Tactically, that decision may have been a mistake, but I have never regretted it.

Q: Also, were you getting the feeling...I'm not sure if it was at this time, but it was around this time when I understand the Arabic Language School in Tangier, really didn't do very...it wasn't a very challenging school.

MASON: I don't know if the school was a good or bad place, but many of the students in there did extremely well in the Foreign Service. How this school actually worked as a language school, I really don't know.

FREDERICK (TED) G. MASON, JR.
Consular Officer
Tangier (1963-1965)

Frederick G. Mason was born in Connecticut in 1926. He received his BA from Yale University in 1948 and served as a lieutenant overseas from 1944-1946. His positions abroad include Tangier, Barranquilla, Quito and Ottawa. He was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy on March 2, 2000.

MASON: I went to three offices, and the one I liked best was Ramstein, between Kaiserslautern and Saarbrücken. They gave me a test and offered me a job as a GS-9. I jumped at it. I didn't

lose my grade, though I still had a lot of catching-up to do. By then I was 32 or 33 years old, and a GS9 is only the equivalent of a six or seven in the Foreign Service. I loved it. It was great work. I was the only political analyst covering France and its colonies in Africa: Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia and Sub-Saharan Africa, plus the Belgian Congo, at the time of their independence. I covered the Algerian War. I covered the end of the Moroccan Liberation Movement. I also covered the chaotic events in Congo-Leopoldville.

Q: You were doing this from when to when?

MASON: I was doing this from 1959 to 1965. Those were the critical years, during decolonization. In my novel, I have drawn on all of this.

Q: When you were doing these analyses, what did they get into?

MASON: We received articles from the State Department's INR and from other sources, and I would debrief the air attaches as they passed through. We did current intelligence, midterm intelligence, and long term intelligence. We contributed to the National Intelligence Survey, which was the permanent stuff on the geography of a country and such, and especially to the National Intelligence Estimates. I had about 40 countries altogether, because I spoke French. I was not in the Soviet area at all. Other fellows were doing that. Military officers were doing the hardware: the military capabilities of the countries. I didn't have to worry about that. I was in the coup business. I remember in early 1961 I got a phone call about 2:00 A.M. (By this time the headquarters had moved to Wiesbaden) saying, "Get down here, Mohamed V has just died," in Morocco. I rushed down to the office and was told to write an estimate immediately, which I did from my personal knowledge. I'd had one trip to Rabat, for just a couple of days, and that was the sum total of my experience in Morocco. At the same time, I had been covering Morocco for a year and a half. So I thought I had a pretty good idea of what it was like. It was my first opportunity to write an estimate of my own. But my military bosses (and I think I can tell you this now at a distance of 40 or 45 years) told me, "That Moulay Hassan, he's a playboy. He even slugged Prime Minister Ibrahim once in a cabinet meeting or something. He's not going to last, we give him six months." So I had to agree. Well, Hassan just died last year, after a successful reign of almost 40 years during which he restored order, survived two attempts on his life, and steered Morocco on a pro-Western course as a leader of one of the moderate Arab states.

Q: Yes, but he did have that reputation of being after girls and boys.

MASON: No doubt he did. But that was his personal life. We never saw a picture of his wife or his family. We knew that his sisters, Lalla Aicha and the others were off leading lives of their own. But he was a much stronger figure than his father had been. He really ran the country.

WINIFRED S. WEISLOGEL
Arabic Language Training
Tangier (1963-1965)

Winifred S. Weislogel was born in New Jersey on August 8, 1927. She received a bachelor's degree from Barnard College and a master's degree from Otago University in New Zealand. Ms. Weisloel entered the Foreign Service in 1956. Her career included positions in Geneva, Tripoli, Tangier, Rabat, Lome, and Washington, DC. Ms. Weislogel retired in 1983 and was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy on September 24, 1992.

Q: Lets talk a bit about your language training. You were going to Tangier.

WEISLOGEL: That's right.

Q: Normally the language school is in Beirut.

WEISLOGEL: Ah, but they had established one in Tangier, and I guess by the time I got there it had been going on for...I think there had been one or two previous courses, meaning that it had been in operation for about a year, year and a half. They did that because they found they wanted speakers of the North African dialect and people familiar with the North African area as opposed to the old standard Middle-east which included Egypt, Lebanon, Syria, Iraq and Saudia Arabia.

Q: North African dialect would go from where to where?

WEISLOGEL: Actually Tunisia, Morocco and Algeria are pretty interchangeable. There are some differences, but they're not major.

Q: How about Libya?

WEISLOGEL: Libya is kind betwixt and between. I found that the dialect in Libya was more akin to what you would find in Southern Morocco and the Algerian desert areas. In other words the desert dialect seemed to cross and be fairly standardized in the more southerly parts and then, of course, the northern parts and the coastal regions were mutually understandable. There was no real problem and with a background in classical you could always make out all right.

Q: Describe a bit of the setting and the school, because I think this is an interesting school. There were some problems with it.

WEISLOGEL: That's the old, well you mean the building itself.

Q: How the course was set up, too, but the setting first.

WEISLOGEL: The setting, of course, was the old legation. It's the oldest US government-owned property in the world. It was given to us by the Sultan of Morocco in the late 1700s, 1789 or 1798 something like that. In fact it's now the TALM, the Tangier American Legation Museum. I'm on the board of that and we run it as a museum library and a conference center, and it's absolutely beautiful. A lot of it has been renovated considerably since I was there and since the Peace Corps had it, but it was set up as I think most of the courses have been. The first concentration was on the spoken language. We didn't even see the script for quite a while. We

did phonetic reading of our phrases that we learned by rote. It's the same system that's used throughout the world where you learn by repeating over and over again certain sentences, interchanging words and interchanging phrases, putting it in the past, putting it in the future, substituting various nouns, and it works, it's a good system, I think.

Q: How big was your class?

WEISLOGEL: I think we had five or six people in the class, and at the time I was there I think we had two classes underway. One of the groups was sort of finishing up. They were in their last three months and were just beginning, and the course was for 21 months all told.

Q: How did you find the course? I've talked to some people, I'm not sure if it's this time or later, but they were rather unhappy with the instructors. They felt that they really weren't that committed or something.

WEISLOGEL: I would say that about one of the teachers only. None of us thought that he was very good. But the two Moroccans that we had for the longest time were excellent and one of them in particular was outstanding. He was really very, very good. There was another man who came in who subsequently joined the diplomatic service of Morocco, but he was at the time waiting I think to go in or he was out of college. He was a wonderful instructor. He was very, very well liked and unfortunately he was in the diplomatic service a few years and was one of the diplomats who was killed when that Pan Am plane was bombed in Rome. He was on a mission at the time and happened to be in the wrong place, but he was a wonderful person and very, very competent as a teacher.

Q: You had the distinction of being the first woman to take Arabic.

WEISLOGEL: To take it as a full-time subject, yes.

Q: Was there any to-do made about it?

WEISLOGEL: No, certainly in the class, my colleagues, we got on fine. There was no problem whatsoever in that respect. Some people were faster, some were slower than others, some people are just geniuses at languages, other have to work awfully hard.

Q: As one who suffered, I'm at the lower end of the spectrum. I've taken a number. It's very discouraging.

WEISLOGEL: I'm not a person who learns easily by ear. I like written things. I can absorb better through my eyes than through my ears so the rote system for me was difficult when we got on the classics. Of course, I had a little bit of a head start there because I learned some of the basics, but still it was hard work. I enjoyed it.

Q: Were you getting any feel for the history of the culture and all that as you went or was...

WEISLOGEL: You sort of picked it up as you went along. It was not done formally. We did

have a book allowance. We got books. Tangier is not a typical Arab city. Tangier is a case by itself. It was an international city; it collects all sorts of human beings from lots of different cultures, lots of people who are paid by their wealthy families just to stay out of the way and they land in Tangier.

Q: It really is the remittance man and the remittance woman place.

WEISLOGEL: Oh very much so, yes

Q: At least, at that time, I also have the impression that there was a very dissolute wealthy society hanging around there with all sorts of tastes, did that intrude at all?

WEISLOGEL: It didn't intrude. It might have been a temptation for people in the class who had an inclination in that direction. I could think of two people who probably were not assisted in their problems by the fact that they were in Tangier. They would have been better off in somewhere like Mecca. But we did learn a lot from our teachers. They were, after all, Arabs. One man was married while we were there to a Spanish girl that he had gone with for a long time and his own family wasn't too pleased, but one of our officers gave them the wedding reception. He was our favorite teacher, he was a great guy. We had a very good relationship with the teachers. We learned a lot from them just because we talked a lot. We spent a lot of time together, after all we were spending six hours a day with these teachers and part of the job too was to have a general conversation - not just stick to the texts. So we would talk a little bit about personal lives and views on various subjects. I think one of the teachers was rather conservative, and we always remember one of them coming out of the men's room during Ramadan with his jaws working that we knew darn well he had had a sandwich while he was in there.

Q: On this subject, one of the charges that has been levied against the State Department "Arabists" is that they are anti-Israeli, anti-Semitic, etc. I mean here you had a class overlap with another class. Could you comment on what your impression was of those who were taking Arabic and the view towards Israel because this was the predominant issue of our time in the Arab world.

WEISLOGEL: I'm trying to think of the make up of our own group. I think one person was Jewish in our class. I'm pretty sure he was. Actually he was a very, very fine linguist. He was very adept.

Q: Who is this?

WEISLOGEL: David Korn and he subsequently went on to study Hebrew.

Q: Hebrew, yes he studied both.

WEISLOGEL: And I think he served in the area. I kind of lost track of him and his career.

Q: Yes, I've interviewed him.

WEISLOGEL: But I would say yes, there was sympathy. I think people are drawn to the language because of an interest in the people and all. You can't help but be sympathetic and naturally our own government policy has been so pro-Israel, I mean the Israelis could do nothing wrong whatsoever, that it didn't hurt to have a few people around who said, well look there is another viewpoint here. We would talk among ourselves. I think the sympathies generally were for the Arabs. Annoyance also at the fact that they are so much in disarray, that they squabble among themselves continuously, that they are rather inept very often when it comes to managing affairs. I mean we could just see them shooting themselves in the foot every time they turned around, doing all the wrong things. If they want to make friends, influence our policy, everything they did was wrong. Sometimes you just shake your head and give up in disgust.

Q: My language specialty was Serbian and I'm going through that right now. The Serbs are making absolute pariahs out of themselves in the international community over what they're doing in the former parts of the Yugoslav area. As part of the language scene you can't help but identify to a certain extent. It's not so much that you support everything they do, but you've spent a lot of time with this that you wish them well and to see ineptness one can take kind of personally.

WEISLOGEL: You can, yes. Well this whole business of Morocco when they went off on their Green March down into the Spanish Sahara and all, the whole thing has been a disaster for years, really. Although now it looks as if they're getting their way. But it's cost a lot. I happen to know a lady whose daughter is a physician, they're Moroccan, and got a little bit of feedback from the military hospital where she was working during her internship. She said that the public has no idea of the quantity of casualties that were occurring in that war. That was the fight against the Polisario, Algerians supporting the independence of the Spanish Sahara, of course they had a political interest in doing so, and the Moroccans wanting to annex it as part of Morocco.

Q: What about the Algerian situation while you were in the language school?

WEISLOGEL: When I left Benghazi to come to Morocco a friend and I drove across. That was one year after Algerian independence, a trip we never could have made during the fighting and the bombings and so forth. But Algeria had its independence in, I believe, was it 62?

Q: Something like that.

WEISLOGEL: So we drove across at that time. Again, there were very, very high hopes for Algeria. First of all there was a very well trained nucleus of people with a lot of, the French and even some English and American, trading in the background. Although they say that the country actually lacked for a lot of trained personnel, doctors and technicians of various kinds, and engineers. I mean the French had done all that kind of work, so that the Algerians were left having to build up from scratch, so to speak. But they're savvy people. They're quite different, by the way. You take the Algerians and compare them with the Tunisians and the Moroccans. The Moroccans and Tunisians are much more akin, I think, in culture and just general outlook than the Algerians.

Q: I've always heard that the Algerians are quite dour.

WEISLOGEL: They are, they can be, yes, dour and I mean they're always struggling or fighting or asserting something. I find them very interesting people. They can't even take the whole of North Africa as a unit though because Turks only got as far as Tlemcen in Algeria, Morocco never had any Turkish incursions or occupation and therefore they've had a long tradition of freedom of their own independence under their own King. Yes, the French were there and so were the Spanish in the north but neither did too much the basic structure. I mean the Moroccans and the Tunisians still ran their country when it came to personal matters, marriage, divorce, inheritance, it was all done under the Muslim law. So it was quite different from Algeria which was treated like a province of France.

Q: Did the Writ of Morocco run very strong in Tangier or not while you were there, from Rabat?

WEISLOGEL: No, of course we had a consulate general in those days in Tangier and they kind of looked over, took care of us. We, I think, pulled duty if I remember correctly. We took our turns as duty officers just to relieve the consulate because there were only three people there, three Americans. But otherwise, socially we saw one another, but we didn't get involved in reporting or input into reporting from the consulate or anything like that. No, we were strictly students.

Q: You went there for 23 months?

WEISLOGEL: 21 months, then of course I got assigned to Rabat.

ROBERT B. DUNCAN
Economic/Financial Officer
Rabat (1964-1965)

Robert B. Duncan was born in New Jersey in 1934. After receiving his bachelor's degree from Princeton University in 1957 he served in the US Army from 1958-1960. His career has included positions in Rabat, Addis Ababa, Paris, and Bangkok. Mr. Duncan was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy on April 9, 1995.

Q: In 1962, you were transferred.

DUNCAN: We went to Arabic language school in Tangier.

Q: What attracted you toward the Arabic language?

DUNCAN: I mentioned earlier that I had done my senior thesis on French policy toward Algeria. I had minored in French, so French North Africa was a passion of mine. So, when they had this option where they had this language school that was just opening up in Tangier to teach Arabic, from my point of view, this was wonderful. So, I applied for it and was in the first class of the

group.

Q: Could you talk about this? What we call the Maghrebian Arabic school is somewhat controversial as to its history and its effectiveness and all that. What was your impression about how the school ran and how effective it was during the time you were there?

DUNCAN: I laugh about it in retrospect, but you take the first group that we had. You had Frank Wisner, who has gone on to be ambassador to Egypt. You had Bob Pelletreau, who has gone on to be ambassador to several places in the Middle East. Ed Peck went on to be ambassador to Mauritania. Lanham Walker went on to become ambassador to Senegal. If it had a problem, the problem was that we were learning a dialect of Arabic that was sort of extreme. In other words, if you think of Romance languages as a group, we were learning Romanian. It wasn't just that we were learning Maghrebi and that we were learning Moroccan Maghrebi, and we were learning northern Moroccan Maghrebi. I would share that view in retrospect. I would say that there is some question about whether or not it's intelligent to spend that much time on learning a dialect. We also learned (inaudible). We learned the classical language and we learned the newspaper Arabic, written Arabic, which is the same all over the Arab world. So, that part of our learning was valuable and I'm sure that the fellows that went on to become Arabists used it. The only issue that was controversial was is it intelligent to teach dialect, which even expanded. We went through a period when they were teaching all of these small African languages. We had a period where everyone was learning Swahili, which would be main line in comparison to some of the ones. In retrospect, I would say that that was probably a waste of time. There is like an Esperanto where what you do is you take classical Arabic and drop all the endings and it's the way in which educated Arabs will speak to one another where they will use the dialectical verbs and then they'll take these classical words and mix them all together. All educated Arabs will speak to one another in this sort of way, but they have these dialectical differences. I would be inclined to agree that probably all the time that we spent on learning Maghrebi Arabic was not critical. Another argument in favor of why I don't think it was wise is, I thought when I went into the Foreign Service that I would be a political officer. When I went to Rabat, I through a set of circumstances having to do with the personnel structure in the embassy, got an economic officer's job, which I did well in and enjoyed. For the rest of my career, that's what I was. I used the Moroccan in daily living in Tangier and in Rabat. I didn't use it at all in my professional work because all of the professionals in Morocco that I was dealing with on economic questions all spoke French. French was the language that we used.

When I went to Algeria, it was suspect because the Algerians themselves hadn't learned Koranic. A lot of them hadn't learned "good Arabic." In fact, other Arabs used to laugh at the Algerians because their Arabic was so "unsophisticated." So, I found when I was in Algeria that since my Arabic was better than their Arabic, they didn't want to speak it, even if we could understand one another. It's got a lot of French words in it. So then French became the language. So, from my perspective, the classical Arabic has been useful afterwards, but the Maghrebi dialect is basically something that I never used after I left Morocco. Once, when I was visiting in Egypt, I started speaking to Egyptians in my Maghrebi dialect, which was sort of part humorous and part quizzical. But then I would sort of shift from using the Maghrebi dialect into what I called the "bastardized Arabic," where I'd sort of speak to them in both. That was what we communicated in.

They used the building because they had the building. They built the new legation in Tangier just at the time when the city reverted to Morocco. So, they had much, much more space than they needed for their consular operations. I'm sure that the reason the school was opened was because the building was available. But it didn't last that long. I forget when they closed it, but I think it was maybe six years later maybe not even that much.

Q: Because it's sort of unique within diplomatic circles, could you talk about life for you and your wife in Tangier during this period? We're talking about '62-'64. Could you talk about what the setup was and the transition and also just about your observations about life there? I think it's interesting to capture.

DUNCAN: Tangier had been an independent international city. I believe it was set up that way formally in 1923, but I can't swear to that. It remained an international city with a separate customs zone, separate currency zone, until 1960, when it was integrated into Morocco. In other words, it became an integral part of the Moroccan economy. During this period when it was an international city and particularly immediately after the second world war when there were a lot of rationing and currency restrictions and what not in Europe, this was really sort of a Cayman Islands of the time. As a consequence, you had a lot of currency transactions going on. You had a lot of duty free. Probably the stuff was smuggled on into other countries. Everything was available. The tax structure was very mild. The city was administered by consuls, including our own, which was interesting. Were there any other cities where we were in the government? I don't remember.

Q: Not at this time.

DUNCAN: They had the protected citizen operation. In fact, getting back to this Arabic language school, which was originally the old legation (Morocco being the first country to recognize American independence), they had been running a brothel right next door to the legation. The minister kept writing to Washington all the time and saying, "We have to do something. We have to do something about this." They kept saying back that there was no money. Apparently, they had this protected system where consuls would have people under their jurisdiction. There was this one I think he was of Greek origin man who apparently bought the brothel and gave it to the U.S. government in return for being a protected person in Tangier. There was free currency exchange, very low taxation, all the goods were available. So, it was like a bit of a buccaneer sort of environment. I don't know how the homosexual community in Tangier started, but it was certainly British based largely, and it was like second sons of a lot of British aristocrats. It attracted others that came. I would assume you had sort of like Let me put it to you this way: the social structure that you had in the city probably wouldn't come as that much of a surprise to people elsewhere in the world later, but at the time, it was very unique. So, as a consequence, when the city reverted and all of the currency dealers and the smugglers and what not departed and the city went into a nosedive because it had been very heavily developed after the war We got there in 1962, so it was just two years after it had reverted to Morocco. We were very, very lucky because you had very nice apartments that were available at very rock bottom prices because you had this collapse of the economy. So, financially, it was a very pleasant environment to live in. The thing of it is that when the smugglers and the money changers and

what not all left, the artsy craftsy crowd remained. They did not leave. They stayed on. I guess some of them may have left, but a lot of them stayed on. So, it had a very interesting environment.

Q: You left there in '64. Where did you go?

DUNCAN: To Rabat.

Q: What were you doing in Rabat?

DUNCAN: I originally was scheduled to go down and be the consular officer. But I got promoted out of it. They wouldn't assign people into jobs below their grade level. I was coming out of the Arabic language school, so the idea was that I should be placed in an area where I could use the language. It happened that they had a vacancy that opened up in the Economic Section. So, while they didn't think of me as an economic officer, they had a slot that they had to fill. Obviously, people coming out of language schools should be sent to the area, so that's how I got another job.

Q: Could you describe the embassy, the ambassador, how he worked, and the operation of the embassy at that time?

DUNCAN: I guess by U.S. embassy standards it would probably fall into the category of a middle-sized embassy. But it was a pretty good-sized operation. We had a large military mission there. We had a large AID mission. The Consular Section in the embassy was very small because the consular function was performed in the consulate general in Casablanca. We at that time still had bases. Some of them had been shut down.

Q: This was part of our strategic Air Force, wasn't it?

DUNCAN: It had been. I guess one of the air bases was still there. We had a naval base at Kenitra. They had been even more important. (end of tape)

The trade interest was not great in Rabat because Casablanca was the big commercial city of Morocco. So, the commercial activities were largely centered in Casablanca rather than in Rabat. In Rabat, most of the issues had to do with what you might call economic policy questions rather than actual trade promotion. I would say that our relationship with the country was primarily political/military. That was our main interest in Morocco.

Q: What was our view of King Hassan at that time? He was fairly young, wasn't he?

DUNCAN: Fairly young. His father had been revered and had died not too long before. We came to Tangier in '62. I think he had died just maybe a year earlier. So, he was just new to the throne. He had had a pretty wild playboy life as Crown Prince. As I said, his father was really revered. I think a lot of the reverence for his father and then the religious context because they were Sherifian, were supposed to be the representatives of Mohammed, passed on to him. He knew how to play the role very well. He would be modern in one context and in another context he

could play the traditional Sherifian emperor. At the time, of course, I was one of the youngest officers in the embassy. My general impression was that people thought that he was... There were criticisms from the political opposition in the country. They viewed him as an autocratic monarch and what not. But the opposition in the country never got to the point... Even now, he's still on the throne. It was never a situation like Idris in Libya or Faisal in Iraq.

Q: You were in Rabat from '64 to when?

DUNCAN: I got down there in '64. I was directly transferred to Algeria. It wasn't quite two years in Rabat. I wasn't quite two years in Tangier.

Q: While you were in there, did our recognition and support of Israel come up?

DUNCAN: That was not a problem in Morocco. The royal Moroccan government actually had Jewish ministers. The Moroccan attitude toward Jews was very different from what you had in the East. A lot of Jews had fled from Spain and had settled in Morocco. In fact, even during the second world war when the Vichy government was responding to the Germans on Jewish rounding up and what not, the Sherif, King Mohammad, made it absolutely clear to French authorities that they were his subjects, and there wasn't going to be any nonsense about this. In Islam, the Jewish and the Christians are semiprotected people.

Q: They're people of The Book.

DUNCAN: They're protected people. And the King, the then Sultan, took this very seriously. The French government, the last thing they wanted was to have the Sherifian government in effect creating problems for them. So, they didn't do it.

Q: You had two ambassadors there, right?

DUNCAN: We had two.

Q: Who was the ambassador in Rabat when you first got there?

DUNCAN: It was the lawyer from Paris, Ferguson.

Q: We had talked about this off the tape. I think it's kind of interesting. You were mentioning that he stood sort of on his dignity there.

DUNCAN: Yes. The Kennedy's apparently knew him. He was a lawyer in Paris. He got the job as a political appointee. One of the main issues for him was the fact that he took very seriously the courtesy of when an ambassador enters the room, people are supposed to stand to represent the dignity of the position. The two famous cases were once when Mrs. Ferguson was having a tea for ladies in the embassy. He came in during the middle of the tea and walked into the room. The ladies didn't get up. So, the next day, all of the officers in the embassy received a memo telling them to please remind their wives that they are supposed to rise when the ambassador comes into the room. People were amused about that because of the fact that it all depended on

what Mrs. Ferguson was going to do and she didn't get up.

The other incident was that the way the embassy was designed, there was this glass enclosed waiting room immediately inside the main entrance to the embassy. When the ambassador came to work in the morning, he had to come through this little portico and then go up the stairs. It was part of the waiting room for people coming to the embassy. So, apparently, he came in and walked through the door and people who probably didn't even know who he was who were sitting didn't stand up. So, he had the chairs removed.

Q: These were just private American citizens coming through.

DUNCAN: Yes, or people in consulting with the embassy. To deal with that problem, he had the chairs all removed.

Q: I realize you were a fairly junior officer, but did you have any feeling about how he related to the King and all that?

DUNCAN: How he personally related to the King?

Q: Yes. Were there any developments or issues during the time you were there that sort of stick in your mind?

DUNCAN: We did have one issue which I was involved in which was fascinating. In order to deal with the problem of the large French land holdings in Morocco, where as part of the independent Morocco, the issue was trying to get the land back to the Moroccans if you want to use it, they had a land registry system. They called it "Recuperation." They were trying to deal with the problem, that it wasn't just a seizure. But they were taking back, in effect. This was the policy framework. They were recuperating what had been taken from them by the colonial administration. In other words, it had to do with the nature of land titles. It was not involved in municipal real estate. It was farmland real estate. We did not think of it as being a problem for us. We were reporting on the policy. It was a very major, major issue in the relations between Morocco and France at that time. Most of these landholders were French nationals. But we as Americans did not think it was a problem in the first instance because we knew that to the degree that Americans own property in Morocco, they owned it in urban areas or in suburban areas, but not agricultural lands. Lo and behold, in the midst of this operation, we had a missionary who had a piece of property where he ran a camp. It was agricultural property in an agricultural area, but they didn't sell the produce. What they did was, they grew produce for feeding the students that came to the camp. But it was like a missionary welfare activity. The issue when it came up was, if the Moroccans couldn't figure out some way to deal with this problem and took it in this recuperation exercise, then the Hickenlooper Amendment would go into effect.

Q: You might explain what the Hickenlooper Amendment was.

DUNCAN: The Hickenlooper Amendment was that if you expropriate American property without compensation, you are ineligible for any assistance. We had a major assistance program in Morocco. Talk about gnashing of teeth! Here was the embassy of this important country and

"We're going to have to suspend it" because there was no exception. It had been passed by the Congress basically to make sure that countries to whom we gave aid didn't seize American property. It was sort of nip and tuck and nip and tuck. The French were, to use a phrase, highly interested in this whole situation because the Moroccans, on the other hand, couldn't make any exceptions to the general rule because then they would undermine the program with the French. I can remember one particular case. I won't mention the person's name. I will say this: it wasn't the leadership of the embassy, the number one and two man. It was one of the next tier down. Faced with this problem with the missionary, he was saying, "Why doesn't he just give it away?" In other words, the church apparently bought it fair and square. To make a long story short, I was out talking with this guy. I went out and visited him. This was being viewed as a major question. The more facts I was finding out about the case, what I was trying to do was to find a basis by which the Moroccans could make an exception for this piece of land without undermining their objective. We were very lucky because of some of the things I mentioned. When I went out there and visited him and I found out that it was a summer camp and that Moroccan boys came there and it was free. We even had some sons of some of the ministers in the government that had sent their kids there. The operation was not moneymaking at all. There was no commercial sales. The produce that they had was consumed by the camp. We were able to get the thing converted into the fact that this was "not a farm."

Q: It was a charitable institution or something like that.

DUNCAN: That's right. So, when the list of the recuperated lands came out, all the Moroccans had to do was to not include it. It was not included. It's just that by not including it, they solved the problem. The French apparently were absolutely apoplectic. The problem that they faced was, "Well, look, the Americans have succeeded in protecting their people, but you haven't done a damn thing for us."

Q: Your other ambassador was Henry Tasca.

DUNCAN: That's right.

Q: Henry Tasca, who I served under for four years, was a rather controversial figure. Could you tell me a bit about how he worked and also about Mrs. Tasca? She was considered by some one of the dragons of the Foreign Service. I wouldn't put her in that category as much as others.

DUNCAN: Ambassador Tasca was a very forceful person. He had very strong views on what he wanted and to get what he wanted. His attitude was very definitely progovernment. In other words, he identified very closely with the Moroccan government. What he viewed as his role with them was as an advocate. My own job at the time did not require me to be involved in types of... I was not, in effect, present in his interaction with the King. But I do recall that at the time what characterized him was the fact that he was an advocate. He was convinced in his own mind that the government of Morocco was very clearly in the interest of the United States and whatever he could do to get the government of Morocco what the government wanted, that's what he would do. That's what his job was.

Q: I think this is in contrast (I want you to correct me if I'm wrong). We've had other cases

where people felt that, particularly political ambassadors, have come to Morocco and have been absorbed. The King made them almost his, flattered them and all. So, it was not for the benefit of the United States that some of our ambassadors became strong supporters of the government, but mainly through identification and almost on a social level with the King. But you didn't have the feeling with Tasca?

DUNCAN: You have to be very careful. Remember, at this time, I am probably if not the most junior officer in the embassy, either the lowest or the next to the lowest. My contact with the ambassador was basically as a control officer for his trips. I went with him and his wife on a major trip to the southern provinces. It was very clear that the Moroccan government was making an all out effort to cultivate him. He on the other hand was clearly making an all out effort to promote what he viewed as Moroccan. My impression was that he viewed Moroccan interests and U.S. interests as identical. Whether you feel that the Moroccans conned him into this, that I don't... He struck me as an extraordinarily independent thinking person. I don't think he was snookered into it. I think he wanted to do it, for whatever reason.

Q: Also, one has to realize that in the '60s, the Cold War was going strong.

DUNCAN: This was the time of the Cuban Missile Crisis.

Q: So, Morocco was considered sort of a rare but important area for our military, too. If all hell broke loose in Europe, Morocco would have become very important. Strategically, it made very good sense.

DUNCAN: As I said, we had a strong military presence there.

Q: It strode the entrance to the Mediterranean. Anything about Mrs. Tasca? I like to catch a little of the spirit of the times. Did she impact heavily on your wife or others or not?

DUNCAN: Mrs. Tasca was of Italian background from an eminent family in Rome. To try to put a kind word onto it, there was a hierarchical status in society and she was among one of the ruling group. She expected that she was going to be catered to. The Moroccans just treated her like she was one of the royal princesses. In other words, the demands didn't surprise them. There was one famous case where she was complaining about the fact that when she had to go back to Rome, she had to transfer planes in Nice and it was very inconvenient. She would try to see what she could do to get direct service. I remember one particular case that happened to me where she had spilled lobster on her dress. I asked her if she was going to need it tomorrow. She said, yes, she had to have it tomorrow morning. So, I made special arrangements to have a dry cleaner come and pick up the dress and take the dress out and clean it and have the thing back at eight o'clock in the morning for a meeting she had. Having gone through this whole thing and having brought it back to her, she decided she didn't want to wear that dress.

Q: When did you leave Morocco?

DUNCAN: It was a direct transfer to Algiers. We didn't come back to the States. We just went directly. They were going to have a nonalignment movement conference.

Q: This was 1965?

DUNCAN: Yes. They needed somebody in Algiers. They thought that I was appropriate for the job. So, Washington definitely wanted me to go and they wanted me to go right away. Ambassador Tasca did not want me to leave. So, it was a bit of a shenanigan. I said, "Tell me what you want me to do and I'll do it." That's how it was: direct transfer. We drove. It was a very interesting experience driving from Rabat to Algiers.

Q: What were the relations between Morocco and Algiers at that time?

DUNCAN: Very bad. They had had a war in '63. The problem is that Moroccans view the Algerians as feminine (We're talking about traditional stereotypes.). The Algerians view the Moroccans as camel drivers. So, there is this stressful relationship between the two. Morocco was the only country that wasn't under Turkish control. So, the Moroccans, whenever they would have a battle, they would always win.

Q: We'll pick this up next time with Algeria in '65. You went primarily to look at nonaligned meeting that was going to be there.

DUNCAN: Which didn't occur, but I was sent for that.

Q: You were in Algeria from when to when?

DUNCAN: I was in Algeria from 1965 (I can't remember the exact month off the top of my head) and we were there until the June 1967 war. We left during the ArabIsraeli War in 1967.

Q: When you went there, was this just a normal followthrough assignment to what you had been doing?

DUNCAN: I had been directly transferred from Rabat to Algiers because they were expecting that they were going to have a conference of nonaligned nations and they were going to need some additional help. So, they had, in effect, created an additional slot in Algiers and direct transferred me from Rabat to Algiers.

When I got there, I was assigned as the commercial officer in the Economic Section.

Q: You say that your main responsibility was the nonaligned.

DUNCAN: Originally, I was being sent there because they believed that I was going to need to help out on that meeting. I'm trying to recall... I think it was not held. The meeting was canceled. I would have to refresh my memory. I'm not sure. What I do remember is, after I got there, whatever the purpose was that I was coming for wasn't used because I worked in the Commercial Section all the while that I was there.

Q: What was the situation in Algeria as you saw it in 1965?

DUNCAN: Our political relations were very bad. The Algerians viewed us as not being friendly to them. There were specific exceptions. I remember during the period that I was there that the Algerians had always had a very warm feeling for President Kennedy because they felt that Kennedy even earlier when he had been a Senator had been a very strong, vocal supporter of independence for Algeria during the FrancoAlgerian War. As a consequence, they had retained great esteem for President Kennedy' (Senator Kennedy) support for them. During the time that I was there, Robert Kennedy came over to represent the family to dedicate a John F. Kennedy Square which was done by the Algerian government in memory of him. That was an exception. Generally, our political relations with Algeria were very stressed. Our political people really did not have ready access to the government. It was sort of an alliance relationship. At the same time that this was going on, our economic relations, which were basically private relations, were really rather successful. We were running a very substantial trade surplus with the country. This caused a tremendous amount of anguish for my French colleagues because, of course, the French still had very substantial aid programs there and what not. So, the French were pouring money into the country and were nevertheless running a substantial deficit because the Algerians, in effect, were running a more and more rigid trade program. We, on the other hand, had lousy political relations. We had excellent economic relations. In fact, if I look back over my whole career (Thailand was an exception because we were having excellent economic relations there.), if I had to say, of all the countries I served in, what was the country in which relations with the Americans were politically the poorest, it would have been Algeria, but where the relations proportionally speaking were excellent. So, I was lucky because while my contacts with the government officials were limited because I didn't have that much need for it directly, all my contacts for the most part were with the business community and what not. It was not a problem.

Q: What were the forms that American commerce was taking?

DUNCAN: The biggest American involvement in the country was in the oil and natural gas business. Shortly after I arrived, Exxon, which had been exploring in the country, took the decision to pull out. They had been a very big player in the country. The statement at the time was they decided that they were in exploration mode and they hadn't uncovered. They had tried, but hadn't gotten results that at least were satisfactory for them. Sinclair had been successful and continued to operate there. That was the biggest American operation in the country. They operated down in the Sahara and we had a chance to go down and visit their operation in the Sahara Desert. That was the single biggest operation. A lot of the American subsidiaries that had operated in Algeria had operated through their French subsidiaries because Algeria had been an integral part of France. Caterpillar had a big operation there. But it was like the French subsidiary of Caterpillar.

Q: Were there commercial disputes and problems that you got involved in?

DUNCAN: In terms of problems, we did have expropriation cases. We did have cases of property that had been expropriated by an independent Algerian government. They were usually individual cases. I was trying to remember if there were any major corporate expropriations. I don't recall. Most of them were individual American citizens with property rights and things like that that had been expropriated. We really did not make any progress on any of those questions.

The Algerians had so many expropriation problems they had to deal with the French that from the Algerian perspective, even the settlement of a minor issue created a problem with precedent. I had similar problems with that in Morocco, but in the case of Morocco, we were able to work them out because we had much more leverage in terms of our own aid programs and things like that. The thing I enjoyed about it is that when relations were broken during the ArabIsraeli War of '67 and the ambassador ordered that all of our files be burned, I rushed around to make sure that these dossiers with all the documents concerning these expropriation cases were preserved because they would not have created a problem if they had fallen into Algerian hands because we were dealing with a rather open issue. But it would have been extremely difficult for my successors to have had to try to reconstruct those files.

Another major issue that I had to deal with is that when Algeria became independent, right at independence they took the necessary decision of saying that existing French law would be applicable until they took an act to, in effect, substitute Algerian law. One main area from a commercial point of view where this was extremely important was American patents and trademarks which had been registered in France were protected in Algeria because Algeria was an integral part of France. So, that law, as soon as the Algerian determination that until it was changed French law would apply came up, continued to protect American trademarks and patents in Algeria as an independent country. While I was there, the Algerian government passed a law requiring that all people had to register trademarks and patents separately with the Algerian government. These were extremely important issues because patents and trademarks are extremely valuable and the fear would be, if you didn't get them registered in Algeria, then someone could come in and manufacture the product because the trademark protection wouldn't apply. So, there was a real Oklahoma land rush of all of this high priced legal talent rushing over to Algeria to try to get their patents and trademarks registered. My favorite story is of one lawyer who came into the office that represented a lot of major companies. We were discussing the problem and he said to me, "Who do you recommend as the best?" We had a list of qualified attorneys. The embassy would say, "You have to choose yourself." He said, "Who is the best?" I said, "I don't know who is the best, but there's no need to go to this one because I know that he has more business than he can handle." I said it was obvious that the guy rushed out of my office and he was going right down to that guy to see if he could outbid his time. My intent was not to say that this was the best. It was just to indicate that this was the guy that was so busy that he didn't have time. I got the absolutely diametrically opposite reaction of "Jesus, if he's got more work than he can do, that's someone I need."

Q: How about on the business level? You're saying that at the government level your relations were not very good.

DUNCAN: Being a commercial officer, my contacts with the government except like in the patent and trademark issue, where I had to deal with them because it was a commercial question, I was not dealing except in very specific, technical areas in the nature of my job. The general political relations, with my colleagues in the Political Division, there was a stressful relationship for them.

Q: What about dealing with Algerian businessmen? What was your impression of them?

DUNCAN: I thought some of them were extremely competent and intelligent. They were operating in a country which had a very strong socialist ideological underpinning. In other words, the government strongly believed that state ownership of the means of production was the right way to go and what not. But that still left many areas in which private enterprise operated. The Algerians had a long tradition of being very good traders. I found they were no problem at all to work with. In fact, I would argue that if the Algerian government had opted for a more capitalist oriented system at that time rather than being wedded (They had close relations with the Russians and the Chinese, who were strong influences in the country. Therefore, they were, in effect, opting for their model.) I sincerely believe that if the Algerians at that time had opted more for a capitalist approach, I think the country would have done much better than it did.

Q: Did you see a difference between the Algerians and the Moroccans?

DUNCAN: Oh, very definitely. The Moroccans had, in my impression, a very strong sense of national identity. The French colonialism in Morocco was of more recent date than in Algeria. The French had a planned policy of building the new but preserving the old. The Sherifian government was maintained even though the political power may have been with the French. As a consequence, the Moroccan identity as an identity which was a Muslim country that had never come under Turkish control, which is what made it different, it had a lot of national pride, a lot of national identity. Arabic was widely spoken. Arabic was widely taught. The Koranic schools had always been maintained. The educated people were all bilingual. There was no question when you were in Morocco, whereas you had this modern element like the modern towns next to the old towns, there was no question but that the identity of the country was Muslim and the identity of the country was Francophone, Francophile Arabic.

In Algeria, the 130 years of French colonial rule there had, in part conscientiously but in part just the name of the game, in treating the place as an integral part of France, had really undermined, if you want to call it that, the traditional culture. In other words, there were some Koranic schools. But they were definitely not encouraged to the degree that the French were providing education, everything was being taught in French to meet the French mold. There were widespread school systems and a substantial European origin population. French influence was very deep in the country. I think it was even deeper than many of the Algerians themselves recognize. For example, I remember when I was still assigned to Tangier and I made a field trip over to Algeria, we were invited to go into the National Assembly to hear a session. At that time, the speaker of the National Assembly was Gerhard Abbas, who had been one of the nationalist leaders of independence, but he spoke no Arabic. He was strictly French speaking. So, when he got up and started to speak, he spoke in French. In fact, he apologized for the fact that he could not speak in the modern colloquial form of Fossam, which is classical Arabic, which is the formal spoken Arabic. There were a number of Arabic newspaper correspondents in the well of the Assembly. I distinctly remember some Egyptian ones. They started hollering, complaining about the fact that "This is a Muslim country and an Arabic country. You should be speaking Arabic. You shouldn't be speaking French." He sat down. Then after he had finished, Ben Nellah, who was the Prime Minister at the time, got up next to speak. He tried to speak in Arabic, but the colloquial Arabic in Algeria was not only a dialectical Arabic, but it was filled with French words. It became sort of like Creole. He's standing up there starting to speak in this Arabic where every once in a while, he'd have to think of a word. He would throw the French

word in because he couldn't think of what the Arabic word was. These newspaper correspondents from these Muslim countries started to laugh at how awful his Arabic was. He came down from the podium and started a slugging match with one of the newspaper correspondents. I use this as an example of what Franz Venome, a Haitian psychologist, described the Algerians as "the damned of the Earth." The point he was trying to make was that over the years of French colonialism, they had been ripped out from what their traditional pattern was, but the French had not really made them all 100% French. Some they had. Some they had, in effect, totally assimilated. But unfortunately, most of the ones that were the most effectively assimilated fled the country and resettled in France.

Getting back to the question of contrasting it with Morocco, the national identity of what is an Algerian, they were still working on that. I think today some of the stress in Algeria between the Islamists and the government, in a way, is even a reflection of that problem in the sense that the revolutionary force wants a nonfundamentalist, secular, if anything quasiMarxist... Women fought in the army in the revolutionary forces. Women in Algeria under the French definitely didn't wear the veil. They were very liberated. Now you have the traditionalists in the society which had no influence under the French coming back and struggling where the government doesn't want to go fundamentalists and the fundamentalists are saying the trouble in the country is this "secular," corrupt, godless government.

WINGATE LLOYD
Political Officer
Rabat (1964-1967)

Wingate Lloyd was born in Pennsylvania in 1931. He received his BA from Princeton University in 1953 and his MA from Johns Hopkins University in 1955. Mr. Lloyd entered the Foreign Service in 1957 and his career postings included Marseilles, Douala, Rabat and Lisbon. He was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy on February 1, 2001

Q: Today is February 15, 2001. We're off to Morocco. Was this just a regular assignment, or did you ask for it, or how did it come about?

LLOYD: It pretty much just was a regular assignment. They were looking for a political officer in the embassy in Rabat. The timing seemed right. As I recall, I don't think there was any special process at that time for seeking open positions. I was off in Cameroon, as you know, with very little opportunity to see who was bidding on what job was open.

Q: Yes.

LLOYD: So in any case it happened.

Q: Yes. By the way, you were there from 1964 to when?

LLOYD: To '67.

Q: To '67. Yes.

LLOYD: What I'd like to do would be to talk a little bit about Morocco in general-

Q: Sure.

LLOYD: Morocco in 1964 was coming out of the period of the SAC (Strategic Air Command) bases. The Strategic Air Command had about six bases in Morocco.

Q: These are for B-47s, weren't they?

LLOYD: Well, they were for B-52s.

Q: B-52s?

LLOYD: The great big ones. This was before the time of intercontinental ballistic missiles, and this was the massive retaliation of the previous decade. There were huge bases in Morocco, a lot of American military and dependents. The bases were there for two purposes. One was for the Strategic Air Command, as I mentioned. The other was for intelligence work. Apparently the propagation of signals in the airways was particularly good at that particular area.

Q: Yes.

LLOYD: For that same reason we had a VOA (Voice of America) station in Tangier that was better able to broadcast into Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union than other stations that were perhaps closer to that area. So these were three elements of our policies in Morocco in the sixties. By the time I got there in early '64, the SAC bases were closing down. The other two issues did remain. VOA was an important, a very important element in U.S.-Moroccan relations and the basis in many ways for American aid to Morocco, which was in technical assistance, in PL480 (Public Law 480), and in some straight economic assistance.

Overarching U.S. policy toward Morocco in the sixties was the relationship between Morocco and its former colonial power, France. The French embassy was bigger than any other embassy and probably than many embassies combined. They had ties of many decades standing into Moroccan government, society, and business. Moroccans still went to France for education. French was the lingua franca of the country, and virtually all important business, even between Moroccans, was done in French. Some Moroccan cabinet officers schooled in Spain from the former Spanish Morocco, found it very difficult to operate because their Arabic and the Arabic of their francophone cousins was not good enough to deal with policy issues. So the work of government was done in French. The French embassy could fit in very easily to that.

Morocco's role as a moderate Arab nation in the sixties was very important to the U.S. This was just prior to the Six-Day War. There were the aftermath, the Suez incursion of the fifties was behind us in the Middle East, but nonetheless the U.S. was looking for moderate Arabs to work

to try to calm the situation in that part of the world.

Domestically in Morocco, King Hassan II was very much in power. He'd come to the throne in 1961, about five years after independence. He was a young man, about 32 or 33, and given to having a good time. People felt that here was a playboy who wouldn't make it. As it turned out, he had a lot of political skills and was able to divide his enemies and continue to be the focus of power, domestically and internationally for more than thirty years.

Q: By the way, there were two occurrences that had come. One was the birthday party and the other one was the airplane. Now did either of those things happen during-?

LLOYD: Those happened after I left.

Q: Oh, I see.

LLOYD: I knew both of the people on the wrong side of those events. One was Mohamed Oufkir, who was the interior minister, and the other was a man named Mohamed Medbou, whom I knew quite well. He was a colonel then in the army and a personal aide to the king. Often as the number two person in the political section I would be charged with giving to Colonel Medbou a message for the King from the Ambassador.

So these were some of the policy issues that were active between the U.S. and Morocco during those years.

One question that came up that was very interesting was the role of the Moroccan dissident named Ben Barka, a leftist dissident intent on bringing about change in Morocco. If you can believe all that was written, apparently the king said to the French, "Couldn't you get rid of him, or take him away, or something?"

This became a major crisis between the French and the Moroccans, and had implications for the U.S.-Moroccan relations. As French prospects declined in Morocco, the U.S. was there as an alternative friend. The French were very much aware of that and were very anxious to keep us from moving in, from muscling in on what was their private reserve. In any case eventually this blew over, but it was a period of great tension and a lot of involvement by the U.S. embassy.

Q: This was the Ben Barka affair?

LLOYD: Yes, yes.

Q: How did we react to that?

LLOYD: The U.S. government said, "Well, this is a domestic issue for Morocco." But the Moroccans fired the French ambassador. The French saw this as a time when the U.S. would be moving in on Morocco, would be urging Morocco to take international positions that would be more friendly to the U.S. This was just approximately the time when France withdrew from NATO, from the NATO military forces. So U.S.-French relations were not particularly good.

Chip [Charles] Bohlen was the U.S. ambassador in Paris for a good part of that time. So it was a time when U.S. relations with Morocco appeared to be improving at the expense of France, which was a factor in the cooling of U.S. relations with France.

To touch on a couple of other things: By this time I had spent nearly eight consecutive years in French-speaking posts, and could handle the language very well. I was given some interesting assignments as interpreter for various high level visitors. I had some interesting times in serving as a translator or interpreter for Averell Harriman, with the King, with Richard Nixon when he came to Morocco in 1967, Senator Ted Kennedy, Senator John Tunney, and with several others. There was a long series of intelligence exchanges with the Moroccans and a number of other things in which I was involved as interpreter. It was interesting to be in the middle.

Q: Let's just talk about some of these. You observed the king who had quite a reputation of being able to play Americans.

LLOYD: Yes.

Q: Did you see this in person?

LLOYD: Yes, he wasn't able to play Harriman - I don't think anyone could play Averell Harriman - but certainly the U.S. ambassador of that time, Henry Tasca, who was a protégé of Harriman's dating from the forties, later ambassador in Greece. He figures in some of your other tapes.

Q: Yes. One other thing, when Nixon was talking to him was it essentially sort of platitudes?

LLOYD: Nixon was to see the king on June 5, 1967. He arrived a day or so before. That was the first day of the Six-Day War. Nixon never got to see the King. A half an hour before the appointment the King sent word that Nixon was to see Ahmed Balafrej, the Personal Representative, who ranked the Prime Minister. The king turned him off that morning with about half an hour's notice.

Q: Nixon was at that time out of office.

LLOYD: He was out of office. It was after his defeat in 1962 when he ran for governor of California. He was obviously thinking about the future, and was traveling around and talking to people. I was impressed with Nixon. He met with Balafrej, and contrary to what you might have thought having been turned off at the very last minute, Nixon was completely relaxed, fully understanding of the reasons why the King could not see him at that time. I briefed him on what we were getting from the Middle East and from Washington. At that time there were reports in Morocco that American aircraft were bombing Egyptian positions.

Q: Now this is the story the Egyptians made. It was believed throughout the Arab world!

LLOYD: That's right. It was that that led to the burning of the American embassy in Tripoli and various other attacks on American facilities. In view of that, Nixon was fully understanding and

had a wide-ranging discussion with Balafrej. It wasn't just platitudes; they talked about different parts of the world. By that time, it was '67; it was three years after Tonkin Gulf, and things were heating up in Vietnam. The U.S. was pouring military personnel into Vietnam. That was a concern for all of the Arab world, for all of the developing world.

I was highly impressed with Nixon. I had been fully prepared to be anything but highly impressed. He showed himself to be thoughtful, intelligent, and very adept in dealing with Balafrej. They had about a one or one and one-half hour conversation together.

Harriman was really at the peak of his power. This was a couple of years earlier, in 1965. Harriman came to Morocco, as a personal representative of President Johnson, met with the king for two hours, talked at great length about every part of the world and with great erudition and knowledge of the facts and of history. At one point in the conversation Harriman gave a little advice to the king, a man probably 40 years his junior. Harriman was 75, and the king was about 35. Harriman said, "Well, you know, you might just look at the Shah of Iran as an example. Here's a man who has modernized a monarchy and has insured that he will be a continuing monarch."

Additionally, one little vignette about Harriman. The meeting was over at about six in the evening. Ambassador Tasca said to me, "Well, why don't you go home and get some sleep, and we'll do the memorandum of conversation in the morning." Harriman left immediately after the meeting with the King. About 10 o'clock that night from his plane we got a flash cable saying he was flying right to "the ranch" in Texas and meeting with Johnson the next day. He wanted to have the memorandum of conversation in his hands by the time he arrived. So I went in and spent three or four hours in the embassy writing up the memorandum of conversation, which I had from my interpreter's notes. He was still in the air when we sent it. About two hours later we got a response calling for a few changes in the memorandum. Harriman said the King had listed several countries in a different order than the order shown in the memorandum of conversation. I was 35 with my notes, and he was 75 and on an airplane-a very impressive mind!

Q: Yes. Your job was what? Where did you fit within the embassy?

LLOYD: I was the number two person in a three member political section.

Q: Yes. Who was the DCM (deputy chief of mission) in the embassy?

LLOYD: There were two DCMs while I was there. There were two ambassadors there. John Ferguson was there until the end of '64. Henry Tasca arrived in mid-'65 and was there for the remainder of my tour. The DCM had been Dean Brown at the beginning of the time I was there, and later Leon Dorros. The political counselor was Bill Crawford for all of the period of my tour, except for the first couple of months.

I did work on domestic reporting, just sort of a standard political officer's job, domestic and international reporting in the political area.

Q: When we have a friendly monarch, certainly the case in Iran, and I was wondering about in Morocco, did you find yourself under any constraints regarding opposition and all that sort of

thing? Our problem in Iran is renowned!

LLOYD: We had similar problems in Morocco. The labor-reporting officer was stationed at the consulate general in Casablanca. It was his job to keep close to Moroccan labor, and they were clearly in the opposition. The opposition, though, was a relative term because if it became too extreme they would either be locked up or exiled.

Q: Oh!

LLOYD: So you had to have an opposition that served as a brake on the king but could not take extreme positions.

Q: Did you find that you were being told if you ran across problems of government corruption, or people saying the king is doing this, or the king's party is doing that, were you told at any time to sort of cool it. We don't want it-

LLOYD: Well, Ambassador Tasca, as I think is well known and certainly chronicled in your work, was very close to the king, and he wanted that to be known. He wanted the king to know that he was a friend of King Hassan II, and that America was a friend of the king. The result was that he got so close that he lost credibility with people back in the U.S., which was something that I really didn't know. But it became clearer as time passed that people didn't believe a lot of the things that he was reporting. He became so close and so uncritical of the king that it made it difficult for the embassy to make recommendations that were accepted in Washington.

Q: Well, this has been, had been at least, a continuing problem with Morocco. I mean mainly we have political appointees. When you had somebody like Dick Parker and one or two others who were sort of Arabists who were their own person, the king got rid of them!

LLOYD: Yes, exactly. I know the case of Dick.

Q: There's the case of one of our ambassadors, a political appointee who was renown for putting in his cables "our king."

LLOYD: Yes, I remember that. I remember that. Those cables were sometimes posted on bulletin boards for a big laugh in some parts of the State Department.

Q: Yes. This is something that as one looks at the culture of the Department of State, if an ambassador loses objectivity, it's quickly picked up. It means that his effectiveness is seriously hurt.

LLOYD: That's true, but an ambassador is given two tasks. One is to become close to the country that he's accredited to and to know them well. Also, if economic assistance is a factor in the relationship he must be able to bring increases in aid. So he has to be close to the government that he is accredited to, but he also has to be a representative of the United States government and to keep a certain distance. Those can be contradictory instructions. I know Dick Parker, and I know that he was never happy with that assignment.

Q: From within the embassy, from you, but also within your group, how did you view the French? I mean the French of everywhere, everywhere you go, particularly in Africa, to this day have been extremely suspicious of what the United States is up to. You know, do we want to take over Chad for example? And you know, I mean this is the last thing in our mind. During the '64 to '67 period, how did we view the French role and what were we doing?

LLOYD: Well, I think that the United States, I think the U.S. embassy made a point of being close to the French embassy. I knew really everybody there. My wife and I had some good friends who were in the French embassy. But we were very much aware that we were competitors at the same time. North Africa, and the rest of Africa for that matter, had been for France, since the latter part of the nineteenth century, a wonderful market. France has succeeded today, 35 years later, in maintaining those markets. Much of the French economy was dependent on ties with the French colonies in Africa and the French ex-colonies in Africa. So they were very jealous that the United States was going to supplant them and that they were in the wake of the United States, and were trying through various means, through separating themselves from us in NATO and other, and talking about the “force de frappe” (French nuclear strike force)-

Q: It was the atomic nuclear response French-

LLOYD: French nuclear response in which they reserved the right to act independently with nuclear weapons, which, as you can imagine, was very troubling for the United States.

Q: Well, how did we feel? De Gaulle was not at the peak of his popularity in the United States at this point. You know, his anti-NATO, anti-American stance had really permeated. Maybe on an individual level it wasn't there, but it certainly was in official government circles.

LLOYD: Yes, I think the United States simply saw France not as an adversary, but certainly as a competitor. The objectives of France were tightly bound to French history and to France's historic role in the world. The United States, I think, took what it would consider, a more modern view: that these countries are independent, and we're looking toward democracy and the sorts of values for which the U.S. stands.

Q: How about Algeria at the time? Where was it in its revolutionary cycle at that point?

LLOYD: Algeria became independent in 1962. In 1964 Algeria fought a war with Morocco over the southern boundary, which is an area that I traveled around a lot and did some camping and driving down there. It's not really a marked boundary; it's largely desert. Algeria was feared by Morocco. Ahmed Ben Bella who had been incarcerated in France in the fifties was released and became the first president of Algeria. I think that the spread of the “virus” of Algerian policies, anti-French policies, was greatly feared by Morocco. People said, “Well, Algeria's had its revolution. Bourguiba is in Tunisia. When will Morocco have its revolution?” because Hassan II, his line went back 200 years or 150 years as rulers of Morocco.

Q: Was it pretty much a French system that was running Morocco at the time, a sort of prefix of rather tightly centralized education, centralized control? Or was it more of a loose sort of

sheikhdom type?

LLOYD: It was very much a French system. The French had come into Morocco in the first years of this century and in 1924 extended a protectorate over Morocco. They basically reorganized the country along French administrative lines. There were young French officers who would go to be “assistants” to a local leader, and, in effect, would be coaching a local leader as to what would be well viewed by the French government and what would not be. So they had throughout Morocco a very good system. They spent a lot of money on infrastructure: roads, schools, and public buildings. In many ways, I think the Moroccan people saw that as a very good thing because they put a lot of investment into Morocco, and at the same time they made no effort to stamp out Arabic or to call on the Moroccans to speak French only, or anything of that kind. There was bilingual education and an educated Moroccan would always have spent probably a little bit of time in France. But even if he or she had not, the teaching had been done by French teachers in Morocco. So they spoke excellent French, accentless French in many cases.

Q: What about the younger educated people? We're moving into the '60s now, which was a time when the young people, and particularly educated people, were sort of on the edge of revolt. We had it in the United States. The French in '68 had it, you know, as did other places. Were you sort of watching for, particularly at the universities, and the young graduates of universities, were we looking at those?

LLOYD: We were. Through the USIS (United States Information Service) leader of programs and student exchange programs we worked very hard, particularly using the younger officers in the embassy, to get to know some of these students. They were generally anti-monarchy, and they were generally on the left, but as I indicated earlier, not so far to the left that they would be outlawed. Something called the UNEM (Union Nationale des Etudiants du Maroc), the National Union of Moroccan Students, was an important organization for us, which we got to know. We succeeded in persuading the president of UNEM to go to the United States on a leader grant and to meet with other students. There was a U.S. student group, whose name I don't recall, but in effect students of the United States were all in this one big federation. After we had persuaded this fellow to go to the U.S. and I think after he returned and had a very interesting time and met a lot of people, it came out that the American group was being supported either by CIA or some other clandestine effort. That was a huge embarrassment to us, and I don't know that our relationship with UNEM ever recovered. I think that the people we sent to the U.S. were embarrassed and humiliated.

Q: Speaking of American students, had the drug culture moved to Morocco yet? Later this became quite a problem of, not Americans, but European kids going to Morocco and...

LLOYD: I think the drug culture had always been in Morocco, certainly in Tangier. I wasn't aware of that as an issue for Americans. Tangier it was well known as a place where drugs were available. I think the U.S. drug culture of the sixties didn't get to Morocco in the sixties.

Q: Oh!

LLOYD: I suspect that because of the conservatism of the monarchy the sixties came a decade later.

The backpackers who hitchhiked around Morocco later were not there when we were there.

Q: What about...were we concerned with the Moroccan military because this, of course...I can't remember when Qadhafi made his move, but-

LLOYD: That was in 1969.

Q: Sixty-nine? So it was after. Yes, one goes back to the kicking out of King Farouk out of Egypt. The military seems to be the place that if someone's going to get kicked out, it's the military that usually does it.

LLOYD: Yes. They have the means, as I found in later posts, a way to meet very easily and without attracting attention. I think the military was very much under the king's thumb. The chief of staff met with the king almost daily and was part of a retinue that moved with the king. He kept close to them, and they were close to him. Their power, the power of the senior military officers depended on his favor, and he depended on them.

Q: How is the military stacking up? You said there was a small war with Algeria. How did that come out?

LLOYD: Well, I think it was a stalemate. As you can imagine in a desert environment without modern communications it was a question. I don't know even whether there were tanks or planes down there. I think there were some armored personnel carriers and some troops. They tried to move the line one way or the other. One side or the other made an attack and moved the line a few kilometers and then said, "Let's sign a peace treaty."

And the other side would say, "Well, not quite yet!"

This was sort of on again, off again, and it was a very sensitive issue for Morocco. I went on a trip by plane with the ambassador soon after I arrived in 1964, down to one of these areas. At one point we landed on a lakebed. The pilot, the Air Force Attaché, said he was lost so we landed on the lake. Well, the lake was actually either in Algeria or in no-man's-land. The Attaché and his staff proceeded to take core samples from the lakebed to see how heavy an aircraft could be landed there. We were in a DC-3. As the samples were being taken, a cloud of dust appeared on the horizon. It was a couple of jeeps full of Moroccan soldiers heading for us at a high speed. We took off without meeting with them, with the jeeps traveling behind us. When we came down that evening in the local provincial capital, the local officials were pretty upset about that. We said that we were lost and regretted any inconvenience or some such thing. But it was a really foolish thing to do! The U.S. ambassador was on the plane, and I think it put the U.S. in a very bad light. It was something that DIA (Defense Intelligence Agency) had sent out a request, what was called a SICCR, I believe, for an intelligence estimate of this and perhaps a sample of the lakebed. So they got it. I guess he got a promotion for it-

Q: Yes. [Laughter]

LLOYD: ...at some cost.

Q: Yes. How did you find social life there?

LLOYD: There was a class of Moroccans in government, not so much in business, but particularly in government, who moved effortlessly through the diplomatic social life there. There were a lot of big embassies; all the European countries had quite substantial embassies there. The language was always French. The Chinese were there; the Soviets were there. In those days the U.S. didn't recognize China, so we passed without getting to know each other. The Soviets were very interested in the Chinese and were trying to assess the role of China at that time. But the social life was government oriented. Rabat is not a commercial capital; it was a government capital. I came to know people from many ministries and Moroccan agencies.

Q: Casablanca was the commercial capital, wasn't it?

LLOYD: Yes, indeed. That's where the biggest airport was and is. The airport is Nouasseur Airport, which is the name of our air base on the outskirts of Casablanca. That was really the commercial hub of Morocco. There were other cities, Marrakech, Fès, Meknès, and so on, but they never really had a major commercial role.

Q: Were we looking at the Islamic establishment as a concern at that time?

LLOYD: Not in the sense of Islamic fundamentalism. The king was descended from the prophet (as I guess anyone else who wanted legitimacy in the Muslim world would like to find that same tie), so that part of his charisma, if you will, was a religious position. He had a title that was similar to Henry VIII's, defender of the faith. So he used that. He used that very carefully and used it to great benefit and was, in effect, the head of a state religion in Morocco. But fundamentalism had not made an appearance at that time. Or if it had I was really unaware of it. The Moroccans that I knew who were largely Europeanized Moroccans who lived in a quasi-European world.

Q: Were we keeping an eye on the king about his proclivities as the crown prince? I mean he was sort of like Prince Hal. But I was just wondering whether we were kind of watching what was going on behind the scenes?

LLOYD: Well, there were stories of what was going, parties in the palace, and all that sort of thing. That said, the conclusion that some people drew: that he wouldn't last. I think that at that time when he came to power in '61 CIA assessments said he wouldn't be there for more than three or four years.

Q: Yes.

LLOYD: He developed though a very astute manner in terms of dealing with people. When he appeared in public for instance, he was in Moroccan dress, in traditional Moroccan dress that

would almost show him to be a priest. When he met with Averell Harriman he was in a dark blue suit, and he looked like anyone else in a dark blue suit, except for the fact that in his lapel he had a little gold crown, as if to tell you, "In case you've forgotten who I am, I'm the king."

Q: [Laughter] Oh! Speaking of life there, myself having some experience, was Madame Tasca a problem?

LLOYD: She was pretty funny. She was an occasion for a certain amount of mirth and so on. In the embassy it seemed to me that she and the ambassador didn't get on terribly well. She was away a lot.

Q: Yes, yes. She was Italian.

LLOYD: She was Italian. I do remember that she was often away. When she'd come back, the morning after her return was never a time to give a draft to the ambassador of something you'd been working on for three or four days-

Q: Yes, yes.

LLOYD: ...because it would be thrown out, or whatever.

Q: Yes.

LLOYD: I learned after a couple of those. I found that there was an alarming repetition that he was not in a good mood on those days.

Q: [Laughter]

LLOYD: But she was not particularly effective. He brought with him a woman, whose name escapes me now, who was probably 20 years older than Ambassador Tasca, who acted as sort of a surrogate mother for his youngest son. She was a Ph.D. in economics from Chicago and had quite a distinguished career. She would serve as a hostess for him. Because of the age difference there were no winks and smiles on that score.

Q: Yes

LLOYD: She spoke good French and was very helpful to the embassy. I must say Tasca, as I mentioned earlier, did go overboard with Moroccans. But some of his ways of operating, and I worked very closely with him, were very effective. He would call up a minister and say, "Would you come to lunch, just the two of us?" and "Pick a day."

The minister would pick a day and likely as not the minister would not show.

That didn't bother him. A man with a huge ego who'd come a long way, Tasca would say "That's all right. That's all right. I'll have lunch alone and go back to the embassy."

In a week or so the minister would send him a note saying, "I'm sorry! Something came up!"

In a week or so he'd call him again, and after a while the minister would show up. He got to know these people one on one. In terms of managing an embassy, and I guess you've had experience with him, didn't you? Did you say in Greece?

Q: Yes. I was his consul general in Athens.

LLOYD: In Athens, yes.

Q: I had a...it comes out to me as a positive experience.

LLOYD: Yes.

Q: It was very difficult because we had the colonels there.

LLOYD: Yes.

Q: Our policy under Nixon and Kissinger was to have close ties, and that's what he did.

LLOYD: Yes, yes. Tasca was very effective. I remember one of his themes was, "Your job as a subordinate officer in the embassy is to prepare me to work with the political leaders of the country, with the king, and with those around the king." He saw little point in meetings at lower levels with officials without a policy role in the country. The difficulty with that idea (and it's a good one) is that if the ambassador is overboard in terms of his relationship with the country, he's not able to really make a dispassionate appraisal of the leaders he meets.

Q: Was there any disquiet or concern within the embassy? I'm talking about officers like yourself, about we really should be trying to do something about the Moroccan situation on, you know, of political economic one there? Or did we feel that we had any particular role other than to maintain relations?

LLOYD: We often had AID colloquies with the Moroccans. I remember interpreting for some of those, where there would be a group of people from the U.S. who would come out for a full-scale review of the Moroccan AID program. Morocco needed so much that it was very difficult to decide where to turn first. As we found in later years, United States assistance doesn't necessarily address the needs of a country. More likely than not, I think the aid helped to cement political relations more than it did to address the real needs of the country. The Moroccan population, the birth rate was 50 per 1,000 at that time. The death rate was something like 20 per 1,000 and going down. So the growth rate was over three percent. A large number of young Moroccans were coming onto the job market without jobs. There was little that PL480 and a little bit of technical assistance could do. But what it did no was to keep our VOA transmitters, and keep a certain amount of political relationship with Morocco. But in terms of handling probably a 10 or 15 percent unemployment and another 10 or 15 percent underemployment in the country, it was not particularly effective.

Q: Did we have a Peace Corps there?

LLOYD: We had a Peace Corps. I got to know them a little bit traveling around the country. I think they found it not as challenging as they would have liked to find it. It's a comfortable climate, a language that many of them spoke well. One of them, I remember, complained to me that he was all set to find a challenging environment in the Peace Corps, and he was living in an apartment in a town. His friends were living in mud huts 2,000 or 3,000 miles to the south, and he was just an English teacher in a town. Of course, this was modeled on the French system of sending in young teachers to teach your language and thereby ensnare the people of the country and attach it to your culture. The French were understandably nervous about this because this was what they had been doing for 50 years in Morocco.

Q: What about the '67 War. I take it you were still in Morocco when it happened?

LLOYD: I was, yes.

Q: This was June of '67?

LLOYD: Early June, yes. June 5, 1967. I was there only for about another two weeks, and later became the Morocco desk officer in the Department. The war dampened relationships with Morocco, but there was no break in relations. There was no attack on the American embassy. I think the Moroccans assured us privately that, "Given the circumstances of the day we're not really in a position to be as friendly as we were before. But let's wait till this blows over."

The Moroccans are Muslimized Berbers. So the word Arab to them has a meaning that's not quite the same as what it means in the eastern Arab world. While we call them moderate Arabs, they looked on the Arab countries of the Fertile Crescent and of the eastern Arab world very differently from the way those countries saw themselves. Nasser had come in 1952 and was still there in the sixties. I think they were fearful of the anti-monarchist virus spreading not only from Algiers, as I mentioned before, but the virus spreading from Cairo. A military junta that had taken over Egypt; was Morocco next?

Q: Did you get from your contacts with Moroccan officials... Were they looking at what was happening in Algeria with a certain... I'm not talking about the threat, but Algeria had sort of a thriving economy, mostly done by French... But it was going downhill rapidly, and it's still going downhill. Were they looking at that and saying, "This is not the way we want to go?" Or was this still early days?

LLOYD: I think the oil coming out of Algeria seemed so promising. Morocco at that time had no oil. They have a little bit of oil in the southwest, some of it offshore, but not in any quantities like the refineries in Oran or elsewhere in Algeria, in central Algeria. I think they didn't see Algeria's wealth as a problem. They saw Algeria's politics as a problem and a virus that should be stopped.

Q: Yes. The Polisario Movement was not in place at this point?

LLOYD: It had started. Morocco's competition for what's now called the Western Sahara was in full bloom at that time. The Moroccans and the Mauritians were sparring to take over Spanish Sahara where very few people lived. Morocco though had very substantial phosphate mines in southern Morocco. Similar phosphates are found in what's now called Western Sahara. Morocco was the world's principal exporter of phosphates in those years. The U.S. produced more phosphates, but didn't export as much as Morocco.

Q: You were saying they saw the Western Sahara as a very rich-

LLOYD: Yes, they saw the phosphate reserves as being a huge advantage for Morocco, and they feared that the Mauritians would somehow succeed in getting Western Sahara. So this was a threat. There was a lot of intelligence work; there was a lot of fun and games on both sides. I know that at one point when I was on the desk in about '68, the Mauritians sent a group of Western Saharans to the UN (United Nations). They all primed to make a speech at the UN about how their hearts really were in Mauritania and that's where they wanted to belong. However, the Moroccans got to them with money or whatever, and they made a speech that they wanted to be in Morocco-

Q: [Laughter]

LLOYD: ...to the horror of the Mauritians who cried, "Foul!" The Moroccans simply smiled and said, "You know, this is a big boys' game."

Q: Yes. The king did his "Green March" or something, but this is later on?

LLOYD: That was later. The berm that was built along the line there, and yes, that was all later.

Q: Yes. I'm looking at the map here; I don't know when this came out. What is the situation with Western Sahara today?

LLOYD: Morocco annexed it in the 1970s. A guerrilla war ended with a cease fire in 1991; there were calls for a referendum, but it has not been held.

El Aaiún [La'youné] is the capital.

Q: Were we concerned with Soviet influence in the area there?

LLOYD: We were certainly concerned in the broadest cold war terms that the Soviet Union held great attraction for the developing world. I think certainly we were concerned about Soviet influence in Egypt-

Q: Yes.

LLOYD: ...at Soviet influence in the Arab world. But the Soviets were not particularly adept. They had moved into Guinea at that time, Guinea, Conakry, and were heavy handed. This was the country where, when the French pulled out in the early sixties, they took everything with

them.

Q: Yes, yes, including the faucets [laughter].

LLOYD: The faucets and the wires off the walls! The Soviets were there. I think there was a certain amount of mistrust of the Soviets in the post-colonial time.

After Morocco, I came back in 1967 and spent two years on the Morocco desk in the Office of North African Affairs (AF/N). Then I became deputy director of the Secretariat Staff in S/S (Office of the Executive Secretary). I don't think there's a lot more to be said about Morocco during those two years. I was working from the State Department on the same issues.

Q: Well, let's talk about this, '67 to '69. This was still basically the Johnson administration.

LLOYD: Right.

Q: Was Morocco in the Near East at that time?

LLOYD: AF/N involved Morocco, Algeria, Libya, and Tunisia, and reported to the Assistant Secretary for African Affairs.

Q: Was there any sort of tie to the Near Eastern Bureau because, you know, the lines ran that way?

LLOYD: There was. I remember talking to people in NEA (Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs) during those times. But Morocco's ties were north-south. Morocco's ties were with France. They considered, I think, those ties to be more important to their country than their ties with the Eastern Arabs. As I mentioned earlier, they had great misgivings about the Nasserite regime in Egypt.

Q: Was there any attraction to Spain? This is still Franco there?

LLOYD: A little bit. Some Moroccans had been trained there, many in the Spanish military academy. At one point there was a defense minister, who was from northern Morocco, who spoke very little French. He found it very difficult to operate in the cabinet because of his poor French and the fact that the people in the cabinet didn't really speak enough Arabic to deal with policy issues, as I mentioned earlier. At one point he was reported to have thumped the table and said, "Now see here! We're supposed to be an Arab country! Why aren't we speaking Arabic?"

Q: Dick Parker was saying when he was ambassador to Algeria that...well, it was Boumediène, I guess, was saying, "How come the American ambassador can speak better Arabic than you can?" [Laughter]

LLOYD: [Laughter]

Q: ...which, of course, didn't sit very well, I'm sure. I'm sure.

LLOYD: Yes, yes.

Q: I can't remember. Is Ceuta in Morocco?

LLOYD: The two enclaves of Ceuta and Melilla remain part of Spain.

LLOYD: While there might be a Spanish governor, he was appointed with the approval of the Moroccan government.

Q: Was there any problem? I mean, are they-

LLOYD: No, I remember going up there to just sort of see what it was like. The border crossings were almost unmarked, and these were just sleepy towns, that for one reason or another, and I don't even know why, had remained connected to Spain.

The Gibraltar issue would remain a thorn in everyone's side - the fact that the British were holding Gibraltar. The Moroccans, I think, were being enlisted by the Spanish who felt they had a historic tie with the northern part of Morocco in an effort to persuade the British that the time had come to give up Gibraltar.

Q: I was wondering. I would have thought that. I can understand sort of the broad political thing that Morocco would say be rough on the British on Gibraltar, but at the same time I'm sure that an awful lot of Moroccans who liked the idea that they could go and get just good shopping for themselves.

LLOYD: Yes, absolutely. There were good ferries from Tangier over to Gibraltar. It was very easy to go back and forth. It provided an outlet for Morocco, although I don't think Moroccans felt that they particularly needed an outlet. I think they felt they could get everything in Morocco that they needed. They were more likely to go to Paris than to go to Gibraltar or to go to Madrid, certainly.

Q: Well now in '67 to '69 we mentioned a couple of things. Any of these developments and there were two assassination attempts on the king. Did they happen during your watch?

LLOYD: No, they were later. The first coup attempt was by General Mohamed Oufkir. The second was by Colonel Medbou. Oufkir was minister of the interior, very much involved with intelligence. The king was very adept at running parallel intelligence services, just as the French had always done

Q: Yes.

LLOYD: The King had kept Oufkir very close to him for many years. Certainly the birthday party was a wake-up call for the king.

Q: When we say the birthday party, this was when there was a big reception, and lots of

diplomats were there, and some...who were they? They were troops, weren't they?

LLOYD: Yes. This was a place called Skirat, which was a beach palace on the coast northeast of Casablanca. It was a big reception for the king. As I recall there was a sudden group of troops arriving with machine guns and tried to assassinate the king.

Q: Yes.

LLOYD: I believe that was not the aircraft incident.

Q: No. That was a different one.

LLOYD: That was a later one with Medbou-

Q: That was a later one, yes.

LLOYD: ...yes, when they said the king had been killed.

Q: Who succeeded Tasca in your desk office?

LLOYD: Tasca was there all the time I was on the desk.

Q: Oh, all the time on the desk?

LLOYD: Yes. I was very much aware working with people in the Department of the amount of credibility that Henry Tasca had lost because I was, of course, tagged as his man in the Department and the apologist for the views of Henry Tasca. He would be on the phone to me saying, "Why didn't this get done? Why weren't my policy recommendations adopted?" It's a little hard for a desk officer to say, "Well, sir, they didn't believe you!"

But I think he probably knew that, too, that he had stretched the credibility that he had. I think that U.S.-Moroccan relations, '67 to '69, continued as before. If we were to look at the cables they would probably seemed to be getting better and better through his tour there. I guess he went right from there to Greece, did he?

Q: Yes, he went there in, well, about '70.

LLOYD: Yes, I left in the summer of '69, and I think that he was still there then.

Q: Yes, yes, he had-

LLOYD: He was very active. He knew a lot of people by that time.

Q: This brings up an important point. The story I heard was that when former Vice President Nixon came around, when you sat in, Tasca had treated him very well at a time when Richard Nixon was considered to be an out-of-date politician. He'd lost the election of '60, and then the

crowning touch was he was defeated for governor in '62 with California. When he went on these trips around, because he was always very much a foreign policy type, some places treated him a bit offhandedly. But Henry Tasca, the story went, treated him extremely well. Nixon remembered this, and when he became President, he got [what was] considered the plum assignment.

LLOYD: That's interesting, yes. I think that's entirely possible. Henry Tasca saw the advantage of having a protector and of connections. He had worked for Averell Harriman in the late forties, in 1946 I believe, in the European Recovery Program. Harriman had been his supporter and booster ever since. I think he saw the advantage of putting some money in the bank, if you will, in terms of ties with people who were going to be around for a while.

But I don't think that during the AF/N years there were particular policy issues. We were grappling with the State Department bureaucracy that is legendary and dealing with AID. There's not a great deal to add to the Moroccan story.

DAVID E. LONG
FSI, Arabic Language Training
Tangier (1965-1966)

Mr. Long was born in Georgia and raised in Georgia, Oklahoma and Florida. He was educated at Davidson College, the Fletcher School and the University of North Carolina. Entering the Foreign Service in 1962, Mr. Long studied Arabic and was posted to Khartoum. Subsequent postings were Jeddah and, for further Arabic language studies, Tangier and Beirut. Mr. Long became one of the Departments senior Arab and Middle East experts, serving in INR as Director and on the Policy Planning Staff. He authored several books dealing with Arab and Middle East matters as well as on Terrorism and Counter- Terrorism. His expertise brought him visiting professorship at the University of Pennsylvania and the Coast Guard Academy. Mr. Long was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy in 2000.

Q: You were in Morocco from '65 then to '67. Was this part and parcel of any plan, or was this just an assignment?

LONG: This was language. I had taken six months of colloquial Arabic, and the colloquial Arabic that they teach here is Lebanese. I went back for the full course. A full course of Arabic at FSI is 22 months, so I went to the Western Arabic Language School for the rest of that. I was supposed to pick up western dialect; I had the eastern dialect plus the Pusshah, which is the educated, literate language. I had a wonderful time learning Arabic.

Q: This was where?

LONG: Tangier. We had a great time. The cost of living was so cheap that I went broke taking advantage of all the opportunities.

Q: I've heard sort of mixed reports about this school that was set to teach western Arabic, that it didn't quite reach sort of the standards of effectiveness on the one in Beirut. What was your impression?

LONG: When you say effectiveness, that's a far more complicated question than maybe you think you've asked. In Beirut they learn Lebanese, and to my way of thinking Lebanese is not the language you ought to learn or the dialect you ought to learn. Back in that day and time you should have learned Egyptian or, as we say, Egyptians – their 'j' they pronounce 'ga' instead of 'ja', so you know it's an Egyptian if he says 'ga' because there is no hard 'ga' sound in Arabic. So Gamal Apanasa is really Jamal Apanasa in classical. At any rate, that was the dialect that everybody knew. That was the dialect of Radio Cairo, of *Satal Arab*, blah, blah, blah, and they learned Lebanese. Having taken all this Arabic here and it was Lebanese, and I went to Khartoum, the first day I was in Khartoum I was in a taxi and I wanted the guy to stop at the embassy, so I said, "*wokte lehone*," which meant 'stop here', and he kept driving and went by, because the word '*wokte*' is in classical '*wokte*', but the Lebanese pronounce a 'ka' like a hiccup, so instead of saying '*wokte*' they say '*wokef*'. Then the 'le' on the end of '*wokef*' means 'for me', 'stop for me'; '*hone*' means 'here', and the classical is '*huna*', so they say, "*hone*," but everybody else says, "*hene*." In Sudanese, that would be '*inaudible*'. When I said, "*hone*," he probably knew what I was saying, but he didn't stop. The dialect just is not widely enough used, and when it is and it's Lebanese, it's not the most popular dialect in the east. So even if the eastern school were excellent, which it was, I have always had my doubts whether it should have been in Beirut learning Lebanese. They should have learned something. Anyway...

Q: They're in Tunisia now.

LONG: Yes, which is in the west. Certainly in Morocco you learn Moroccan. We learned the dialect very well. But Moroccan dialect, even among the western dialects, is pretty far away from the western dialects. So quite apart from the quality of the instruction, you then have to ask yourself how useful was it. In my case they sent me to Saudi Arabia where it was of no use, the western dialect. Now, I learned the Pusshah. All the newspapers are in Pusshah, which is standard all over the Middle East. But for the spoken dialect I basically had to go back and resurrect my Sudanese, which was an overlay of my Lebanese, and then put in Saudi vocabulary and sounds to make it work. So from that point of view it was a total waste of time to learn the western dialect, but the reason was they thought I was going to be assigned somewhere in the Maghreb in the west, and they needed somebody really quick to go to Jeddah. I went kicking and screaming because, having spent all this time to learn the western dialect – this was like learning Portuguese and being sent to Madrid – but then that's how life is in the Foreign Service.

Q: It's rather important when you left in '67.

LONG: Actually I left in December of '66. We went to Beirut, and I had to be retested again in Arabic because they didn't trust the testing over there – you know bureaucracy. Actually I did very well there, and then we took leave and so I spent a couple of weeks in Beirut, which before they tore it up was a beautiful place, and then we flew into Jeddah just after New Years in '67, so the war had not happened yet.

SAMUEL CLIFFORD ADAMS, JR.
Director, AID
Rabat (1965-1967)

Ambassador Samuel Clifford Adams, Jr. was born in Houston, Texas in 1920. He received his Bachelor's Degree from Fisk University in 1945, his Master's in 1947, and his PhD from the University of Chicago in 1952. He served in the US Army from 1944 to 1946. His postings include Saigon, Phnom Penh, London, Lagos, Bamako, and Rabat, with an Ambassadorship to Niger. He was interviewed by William J. Cunningham on February 2, 2000.

ADAMS: What about Morocco?

Q: Morocco comes a little bit later, yes.

ADAMS: I thought I left Mali to come to Washington.

Q: You did come from Morocco to the General Assembly in 1967. You were a member of the Fifth Special Session of the General Assembly in New York in 1967. You were on the U.S. delegation there. How did that develop?

ADAMS: I don't know. There were a lot of weird things, like somebody having three people sit down and look down on top of you in the beginning, you know. It was inconceivable that somebody would ask me to go to the General Assembly, but somehow it happened. The thing which was fortunate in going up there, I found out that I ran across people that I had known in different places, not in the United States at all.

Q: You met acquaintances from overseas.

ADAMS: Yes, I did. They had me make the speech. I can't see what they expected to get out of that.

Q: You addressed that Special Session of the General Assembly?

ADAMS: Yes, I did.

Q: What was the subject of it?

ADAMS: I don't remember but the whole thing was odd.

Q: Well, I don't think there was anything odd about it. You were an experienced official by that time.

ADAMS: I had a Ph.D. and all that kind of mess.

Q: By that time you had been in government service with AID for fifteen years. From there you went to Morocco as director of the AID mission from 1965 to 1968.

ADAMS: That was an unusual experience, too.

Q: What was unusual about that?

ADAMS: One thing about it, we were trying to do something about Morocco's needing wheat or something. In some kind of way, I learned about Rockefeller having done experiments in Latin America, I guess, which made it possible for us to get seed. Then we found a way to train Moroccans almost overnight in the planting of this particular seed. It was the first time that television was used in education.

Q: Is that so?

ADAMS: What was really interesting, we hired a television crew to prepare the planting instructions, based upon the Latin American experience, and used that as a training thing for the Moroccans.

Q: The planting instructions were for the Moroccan farmers?

ADAMS: Yes, and we had a select group of Moroccan farmers.

Q: What do you mean by select? Were they educated and literate?

ADAMS: No, no. I mean that they had to be selected on the basis of military service and also had to have the endorsement of King Hassan. What I am saying is, it didn't take in all of the Moroccan farmers at all. But the television group who was responsible for the training worked out, and the Moroccans got enough wheat almost overnight.

Q: So in other words, there was a group hand picked by the government, I suppose.

ADAMS: Also, too, the thing about it, they had certain places where they were trained.

Q: Oh, it was not just in one location but all over the country?

ADAMS: No, it was in - what do you call it - not cubicles, but in counties or something.

Q: Oh, I see, it was in different districts.

ADAMS: The farmers were brought together almost under the military.

Q: Really. How long did this training take? Did it take a day or a couple of days or a week?

ADAMS: It took longer than that because it was for the entire country.

Q: Was each session for each group of farmers fairly short?

ADAMS: I imagine so but I've forgotten now. All of these kinds of things gave me a reputation [that] was unheard of. The idea that you are going to use a television group in New York to devise training [films] for growing wheat in Morocco was unheard of.

Q: Was that your idea?

ADAMS: Yes, it was.

Q: So that was innovation at the time to use very modern technology for educational purposes in a developing country.

ADAMS: Yes. Nobody ever heard of it. It was a desperate thing because on the one hand we had certain air rights.

Q: Yes, we had. The Moroccans made air fields available to our military.

ADAMS: It was something very, very important, I know that. Money was no cost. What a life.

Q: So in other words, improving the agriculture of Morocco generated goodwill and gratitude on the part of the Moroccan government that, in turn, facilitated our access to military air fields.

ADAMS: No, no. We already had the access. It was a matter of them surviving. The French gave up or something of that sort, I don't know what it was.

Q: We came in to help with this desperate agriculture problem. What about the results of it? Did you see the results in the actual harvest and yield?

ADAMS: All of it worked out. It was a miracle. The idea of taking what had been a very costly and successful experience in Latin America and to transfer that experience all the way across to North Africa was revolutionary.

Q: So in other words, this was the Green Revolution. You brought the Green Revolution to Morocco.

ADAMS: Yes, that's right.

Q: It involved also not only the planting techniques but also irrigation.

ADAMS: It was a whole round of things because also you had control [by] the military. The military was assigned to make sure certain things took place at certain areas.

BEN FRANKLIN DIXON
Economic Officer
Tangier (1965-1968)

Ben Franklin Dixon was born on November 21, 1918 in North Carolina. He received a bachelor's degree from the University of North Carolina in 1939 and a law degree from George Washington University in 1956. He served in the U.S. Marine Corps from 1940-1946. Mr. Dixon served as a Foreign Service officer in Morocco, Washington, DC, Thailand and Pakistan. He was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy in 1990.

Q: What was the situation in Tangier during this period you were there?

DIXON: Well, there were several problems in Tangier. Tangier had been a free city, of course, and the whole Northern Zone had been Spanish, where the Spanish participated in the government of what they call the Northern Zone. The Spanish did not do like the French, which was to have straw men technically running the government that was run by the French. The Moroccans ran the government in the north, and in Tangier it was run by an international commission. Tangier was a free port. Everything had plenty of money.

They had been through the war, in which they had a tough time, but they made it through by doing foreign exchange both for the Germans and the Allies. That's where they kept alive during that time.

But when the independence came, for the first time, the southern Moroccans in effect took over the northern Moroccans. They came up there, but they brought the French advisors. And, for the first time, northern Morocco and Tangier were subjected to French control through the figureheads that had their French advisors come along and run the country.

Well, this was very unsettling in Tangier. And, by the time I came back there as consul general, things had gotten in pretty bad shape. Economically Tangier had gone down. The rest of the country paid no attention to the Northern Zone. It was not developing; it was going backward economically.

And I thought I'd try to help them get two things: to get more attention of Morocco's resources to the north, and also to try to establish our relations with the people there, because our embassy had practically no contact with the whole Northern Zone of Morocco. So I started making trips out, meeting the Caids and the governors of the provinces and that sort of thing.

Q: Caids being equivalent to the mayors, I guess, wasn't it?

DIXON: Yes, yes, yes. And reporting on what was going on there. I found, for example, a particular Caid had just been put up there and not given enough money to do the job that needed to be done. He was pretty sore about it. He used to tell me all sorts of secrets about what was going on in the government and that sort of thing.

Another fellow, a guy named Dickey Byrd, had some very close friends in Morocco with whom he was associated. He was very smart and ran a tourist business, a car business, a travel business and that sort of thing for a rich Moroccan family. He got all sort of gossip from them that he would tell me. And that way I found out about how Ben Barka was killed, which displeased the embassy very greatly.

Q: Could you explain, Ben Barka was...

DIXON: Ben Barka had been one of the foremost figures in the liberation of Morocco and had become the speaker of the legislature, in effect. He was pretty radical. He was also born on the same day as my wife, so they said they were great friends, having been born about the same time on the same day. Ben Barka went to Paris. He disappeared there. He was found by Oufkir and a guy named Dlimi, and they had tried to get him to do something, I don't know what it was. They were pretty annoyed with him, and they beat him up some and pushed him down some steps into the basement. He fell and died, and they had burned him up. Which I reported, but this angered the embassy considerably. There was a big political problem...

Q: Why did it anger the embassy?

DIXON: Because it was obviously the doing of the government of Morocco, which they were not anxious... Henry Tasca was primarily concerned...

Q: He was the ambassador.

DIXON: He was the ambassador. He was primarily concerned with being the Moroccan proponent in the American government.

Q: This is almost endemic to our ambassadors to Morocco, isn't it? I mean, it happens an awful lot.

DIXON: Yes, well, they are very friendly to us and they are very supportive, and it's easy to fall into that. But that was considered to be, you know, a lack of the... Well, and truly, in fact, it was true. Oufkir later tried to kill the king. Dlimi...I don't know what he did, but he became dead on the highway, supposedly in an automobile accident -- which was arranged. But both those guys, they should have taken note of that early in the game and realized what was going on. I think the king wanted to get rid of Ben Barka. And I think they wanted to get rid of him because they wanted to take over the government; they didn't want Ben Barka in their way.

Well, that was one of the big to-dos up there. But they were great heroes of Abd el-Krim, you know, who was the...

Q: The Rif.

DIXON: The Rif fight against the Spanish. It was the French who finally came and helped the Spanish put it down. Abd el-Krim died and he wanted to be buried in Morocco. And they brought him back and they buried him there, very quietly. But then the Muslims have the thing

they called Abayung, which is when they get together one month after the person is buried and have a sort of a memorial service. Well, the government didn't want this to go on, so they put interdiction in the roads to stop people from coming to it. The Caïd told me about this. There were some fights going on and the government finally knocked them down. But they had no idea this was going on, down in Rabat. The Caïd told me about it, I reported the thing, and Rabat was furious about that.

Q: Well, could you explain a little about the relationship. Most of the time you were there, Henry Tasca was the ambassador?

DIXON: Yes, and he tried to present...

Q: By the way, I served four years under Henry Tasca in Athens. But I wonder if you could explain how you saw his operation and how he dealt with the consulate general, from your vantage point.

DIXON: He was very nice to me and always very friendly. But his DCM and political counselor were very anxious to try to do what he wanted to do. And he wanted to present the shiniest, brightest picture of Morocco possible. Therefore, when I reported these kind of things, they thought that was being unpatriotic. And they were the ones that raised hell about this. Then Doros came up to see me and said, "You know, we're going to have you just report on these things to Rabat, and we will report what is necessary back."

Q: Who was this?

DIXON: Leon Doros. He was the DCM, a man who was afraid of his shadow whom Tasca asked to come out there but in whom Tasca had rapidly lost faith. And Doros was always trying to bring somebody else... he caught hell from Tasca. I always got along fine with Tasca when I was with him and I explained things to him. But he let them talk me into sending my dispatches only to them and letting them decide what they ought to send on.

John Root came out, who was then the head of AFM, and he said, "We haven't heard much reporting on this from you."

And I said, "Well, I've been sending it to Rabat and they haven't been sending it on."

Well, he said, could he take a look at all these things, and so I gave them to him. And he said he'd like to send some through the pouch. He took all these things and sent them back to Washington. And he said, "Would you send us a copy of all the stuff you send to Rabat?" And so I did that.

But we had lots of things that went on up there. Another thing I tried to do was to get the king up there to see...

Q: This was now Hassan? He was no longer crown prince, but the king?

DIXON: Yes. And I sort of pushed Henry Tasca to get him to go. And I...

Q: This was sort of presumptuous, trying to get the king of a country to go to a part of his own country.

DIXON: I guess so. But things were in pretty bad shape. And, you know, we had serious problems. But let me go on with this. I'll tell you about the other problems that came to us because of this.

I got the governor up in that province, the governor of Tetouan, and another guy to try to bring pressure down in Rabat, in addition to Tasca, to get the king to come up there. He finally came up there. I helped the governors make up a list of things in all this general area that needed attention, which we knew through the AID mission and through things people were telling me about what they needed to do. We got the projects sort of lined up.

But of course they were all scared to death of the king. The king would just cut somebody's head off without thinking twice. They were all scared of him and they didn't, I think, press very hard.

But he went and looked at these things and saw them. And I thought, once he saw the sort of state of things, that he'd want to do something. He never did do anything about it. He made a speech saying he was going to do this, that, and the other, but he didn't do anything.

But, you know, I thought one thing was very indicative, and that was, I went down to meet him, with all the other consuls general and the governors of the areas and so forth. He got out and he didn't speak to anybody. He simply got in his car and drove on up, and we followed.

I was about three-quarters of a block behind the king. All these crowds were out there, who were pretty silent. When I came up, they were sort of looking at who it was, I'd wave to them, and they'd all cheer. They were cheering me, but they weren't cheering the king. And I think they were cheering me simply because I waved to them; I don't think they particularly knew who I was. But I think the king paid no attention, he just rode right through like he had taken a taxi to get to the train station in a hurry.

The thing was going pretty fast, but by the time it got out to me, it was going slightly slower. There was a man that threw himself in front of the king's car as it passed, making a turn at a corner, and that got everybody uptight. The guy was trying to say that he wanted to touch the king and he wanted to bow down before him. And I don't know exactly what it was, but the security hustled him off pretty fast. And that, I suppose, made the king tense. But, anyway, it was a sorry show. He went fast up the street and, I mean, he should have waved to the people, but he didn't.

What the problem was, we just had tons of Americans coming in to Tangier to get kief, which is marijuana. We just had the jails full of these people. What would happen was, they'd get a taxi because they wanted to get some kief. They'd get in the taxi and they'd ride down to the market and they'd buy some kief. The taxi driver would tell the police, while he was out negotiating. The police would stop the car. He had put the marijuana under the seat or in some crack. The police would search the car, find it, and put him in jail. They charged him for not buying kief from the

Regis du Tabac. They have tobacco in Morocco that has kief in it, so you could get it. None of these people knew this, of course. They'd charge them for violating that. They'd charge them for trying to hide the stuff, resisting arrest and so forth. And so they had certain fines. They'd bring them in, fine these things, and they'd paid it, and let them go.

But the people who didn't have any money were in trouble, and they'd beat them up. Sometimes they would take them down to the scene of the crime if something...I don't know why. But somebody out on the beach would call up at our consular office and say that some guy is screaming, the police have got him and they are beating him up and he's down at such and such a beach. And we'd try to get somebody down there to see what it was. ...American citizen called the consulate and so forth.

So we'd try to monitor this. We never could get our fingers on it. The police chief, named Ben Abi, we used to call the Old Fox. I would see him socially, and I'd say, "Look, would you please check into so and so. You know, a guy went down from the consulate and... and they had gone, but apparently the people there say that he was being beaten up by the police. Would you please check into this?"

"Oh, certainly, I'll check into this. We'll not have any of that."

Finally, some guy came up and the consular officer called me and I went down to see him. He pulled down his pants and he had, on his buttocks, a blue line right across it. He said that he had been in there and they had taken rubber truncheons and beat him on the buttocks, just constantly, until it was so painful he couldn't stand it. They had also held his head under water until he began to breathe-in water, and then they'd resuscitate him. He was just terrified.

So we took pictures of this. I went down to see Ben Abi and said, "This guy, without any question, has been beaten by your police." And so forth.

"Oh, we'll certainly not have any of this at all."

He didn't perform, so I went back to see him and said, you know, "What about this?"

He said that perhaps they had done it, but he'd gotten rid of that officer and there'd be no more of that stuff and so forth.

And the things did go down some, but we kept pushing on it. But we had no end of Americans who were being beaten up by the police there. And we finally got it down.

I wrote a dispatch saying the Northern Zone depends almost entirely on kief. They can't grow anything else. There's nothing done there. And what happens is, the government supervises the bringing of this stuff down and they take a part of the crop. Whoever that local official is, he brings it into Tangier and they sell it to the merchants there. The merchants sell it in the market or they sell it overseas. And it's the main source of living for all these people that live in the mountains, and they're having a tough, tough time of it.

And I said I think what we need to do is to get AID to put some programs in to, say, grow

berries, like blackberries in... Mountain area, to grow rice, to grow bagasse, which makes sugar. And I had found a Cuban guy who had left Havana and started some sugar fields in Louisiana and other places. He came visiting there and he showed an interest in doing bagasse out towards the end of my consular zone. Anyway, I suggested a number of projects that they might help do that to let these people make a living and to get them to stop growing kief.

Nobody paid any attention to it until they started having a special group on drugs. Somehow they went through a computer and found this thing, and then they used this as an example of what ought to be done to help an area where this sort of thing goes on. But they never did anything in Morocco, and nobody paid any attention to it.

Q: Were you able to warn the young people coming there not to do it, not to come?

DIXON: We did the best we could. But, you know, we didn't know where they were. They'd come in by ferry from Spain into Morocco, and, you know, they'd bring in two or three hundred people to come in by plane. No way we could keep up with anybody. And Tangier is a great place for sexual intercourse, for drugs, for drinks, for restaurants -- everybody has a great time there. And the Moroccans all fawn to this, they enjoy all the same things, and it's just a Good-Time-Charlie place. Everybody knew about it, and everybody came in there.

But later I got a letter of commendation for having written this dispatch, about three or four years after the thing was over, after they used this as an example. But, you know, they paid no attention to it at the time.

I also tried to get people to make movies there. A guy named Martin Manues, whose a friend of mine who's a producer in London, came down to visit. And I said, "How about doing some movies in Tangier. They're awfully hard up and they need money here, and could use some." And they did a thing called "Hard Contract" there, which was not much of a movie. But, anyway, they must have dropped about a million dollars in Tangier; it was a great help.

He was going to do some movies there. He had one scheduled, when he called me up from London one day and said they couldn't do it because, since the '67 War had come along, they refused to underwrite any insurance for a movie being made in a Muslim country. I said, "Martin, you know, Morocco is full of Jews. They're in the cabinet, they're in banking, they do all sorts of things here. Jews do not have a hard time in Morocco." (There had been some problems there. We might get into that in something else.) But, anyway, he wouldn't do any more movies there. Now they've gone around to doing some. They're doing one of Paul Bowles's books, "The Sheltering Sky," now. But it was a good thing while it lasted; it helped a lot.

Another thing was the Jewish community. The '67 War...

Q: This is the '67 War between Israel, Egypt, and Syria.

DIXON: Yes. People got very uptight in Morocco, particularly when the Egyptians got defeated. It was funny, because, up in the mountains where they were not Arabs, they were secretly pleased that the Egyptians had been beaten by the Israelis. The Arabs in the low country,

however, said, well, you know, the Egyptians are sort of sissies, and if we'd been there it would have been different and so forth and so on. But they were very upset about it.

The result was, there was some problem against the Jewish community in Tangier. The president of the community, who was not far from our office, asked me to come and see him. I went to see him and we talked about these things. And I talked with the governor, and the governor assured me that every Jew would be protected. He was a great friend of Felix Benorush, who was a Jew. They were trying to get everything straight.

There were a couple of areas of difficulty. There were three or four very outstanding Jewish lawyers, the best lawyers in Tangier. The Moorish lawyers wanted to get rid of them and take their practices. Thomas Jefferson said, you know, when they elect them to judges, then they can split up their practice. Well, they wanted to get rid of the Jewish lawyers so they could split up their practice. And they went fairly far in sort of isolating the Jewish lawyers and frightening them.

But I caught on to this and reported to Washington and to the governor, who reported to the Interior Ministry, and we finally got the thing under control.

Another sort of tranche of the Jews began to leave. They had been staying and were going to stay. It peeled down a little further, but they're still there and they still get along fairly well.

I tried to get an art school to use the American School for summer courses in art, which they did. The head of the thing was Jewish, and I explained to him that there had been a slight problem, but that generally speaking the Jews were well treated in Morocco and there was nothing to worry about. And he did open a school there, which got along very well, but for some reason they closed it up. I wasn't there when they closed it up.

We were also trying to get the American School on its feet. And we had a guy that was pretty headstrong. We got most of the money from the overseas school fund in the State Department, because it took mostly the children of Foreign Service officers. I had a time sort of keeping them in line and doing things that would not make them unacceptable to the educational office, plus trying to ask for help to write-up the explanations of what we were trying to do in the school so that we could make a good explanation of why we needed the funds to run the school.

I also worked with Jimmy Hall, who raised money to build the dormitory there. By doing that, we could take students from, say, the neighboring countries and have people come to school there, which made a great difference in the appeal of the school. I got that building built for a hundred thousand dollars; that's what Jimmy could raise. And a friend of mine, who was a contractor there, said he would build it for a hundred thousand dollars, which he did, and the rest of it was his contribution to the school. And it solved the problem, because the school was getting smaller and smaller. It solved the problem of the school, because people out of town didn't want to send people up there to live in God knows what kind of homes that were willing to take them in. But I thought that was an accomplishment I was proud of.

Q: *Oh, yes.*

DIXON: One other thing that caused friction with Doros was, at this time there was a great war going on between the Spanish and the English over Gibraltar. They had a thing called Smokey Sam that used to come in. A Spanish ship, sort of a frigate, would go in and sort of turn their guns on Gibraltar and sort of mess around some, but they never did fire anything in there. But the Spanish had closed the port on them, and there had been all sorts of gradual problems of drawing down Gibraltar.

The Gibraltarians were absolutely adamant against being part of Spain. They had seen the Spanish Civil War and all the cruelty that had gone on. You know, they were right there before, and from the hills and the buildings they could see what was going on in Malena and all those territories that go around Gibraltar. Also, you see, it's right across the bay from Algeciras, which is the town just right across the Bay of Gibraltar. They could see a panorama of this whole thing. And of course people tried to escape across the border. There were all sorts of things going on. They then saw the results of the Franco regime. When I first came to Morocco, Acatheata was still in ruins. The war was over in '39, this was in '56. Málaga was just blocks and blocks and blocks and blocks on end of ruins. All that part of Spain, they just said the hell with it. That's where, you know, the Republican government held out longest. They just said the hell with it. The Gibraltarians had seen all of this. They had seen the kind of outfit that Franco had had.

They had really a first-class democracy. They had a legislature, in which you could get up and say what you pleased. Freedom of speech, you could say anything you wanted to. And the British protected them from the Spanish. Therefore, under no circumstances, did they want to be part of Spain.

I did the reporting from there. I used to go over to Gibraltar about once a week and talk to the people and see what happened. Leon Doros didn't like my reporting on Gibraltar. They talked once about my having an office in Gibraltar. We had a naval attaché over there. But the Spanish objected to having any representation there, so we didn't do it. But I went over there.

Later, Tad Szulc, who was the *New York Times* correspondent in Madrid, called and said he'd like to come down and see Gibraltar. He wanted to report on it or something. So he came down and I took him over, introduced him to all the people there, and we talked. He went on back to Madrid. And, from then on, instead of coming down there, he called me up to know what was going on. So I would tell him what was going on, you know, from the Gibraltar side; he knew from what the Spanish said. What actually happened and what the Spanish said happened were not necessarily the same thing.

Later on, when the inspector came, he said that he thought I was diverting time from Morocco, reporting on Gibraltar, and it wasn't necessary because it was all reported in the *New York Times*.

I said, "Well, the reason it's reported in the *New York Times* is because I'm reporting it to the *New York Times* guy, who writes these things up in his own way."

He said, "You know, frequently the things that you write do come out in the *New York Times*. I mean, they also report the same thing."

And I said, "That's because I'm giving it to Szulc."

But they criticized me in the inspector's report for working on things that were unnecessary to do. Which practically finished my career in the Foreign Service -- if it hadn't been for Johnson.

CHARLES A. SCHMITZ
Political Officer
Rabat (1965-1968)

Charles A. Schmitz was born in Kansas City, Kansas in 1938. He received a bachelor's degree and a law degree from Yale University. His Foreign Service career included positions in Morocco, Japan, and Washington, DC. Mr. Schmitz was interviewed by Samuel F. Hart on July 29, 1993.

Q: You came then and spent 1964-65, at least parts of those years, in the Legal Advisor's Office and then you were off to Morocco as second secretary in the political section. What do you particularly remember about those years?

SCHMITZ: First of all, the basic idea of this was to give me training in how an embassy worked. I thought it was going to be for a very short period, like a year. The Embassy said that it was not long enough, you won't be of any utility during the first year so you have to stay at least two.

I was impressed by two things. One was the silliness of an awful lot of what we did in the Embassy. At that point we felt that we needed to know everything there was to know about a foreign country, particularly one that we could describe as strategic...and we did so describe Morocco. I had come now to believe that anybody can describe any place in the world as strategic and make the same justification.

But in any case, we felt that we needed to gather all kinds of data, no matter how irrelevant to any decisions that the US might have to make in its foreign relations. And we did. We did a good job of that. My own expertise was in the Moroccan educational system. I spent a lot of the government's time researching that educational system and writing an excellent report about it. Probably better than was given to the Ministry of Education in the country. In fact, to do the report I talked to the Minister of Education. For that I received a commendation from INR. In retrospect I thought this was a good example of how the US is wasting its time and energies because as far as I know there was never more than a modicum of reason in our wanting to know about that educational system. It had to do with maybe how we could help it so that its people would be more broadly educated and therefore more resistant to the seductions of communism.

It had a little bit, I think, too, to do with what we then called "nation building." An era when we thought we knew how to build nations. And that is my second point. I worked a lot with our AID mission in Morocco. The people were good. A lot of the programs were on their own terms excellent programs and yet I dare say that I don't think we did much at all to develop the

economy of Morocco. I think what our program did primarily was to give Moroccans the sense that America was trying to help. It gave us a tiny bit of leverage, mostly represented by access of our ambassador and other officials when they wanted to see somebody because Moroccans thought we were important. But we were constrained at using what might have been that leverage in any really important situation because we thought if we used the leverage it would be seen as a condition on our aid or otherwise being stingy or mean spirited and that would eliminate the value that we thought we were getting from aid in the first place.

So we did spend a lot of our personal time and effort...most of the resources though came from our surplus grain supply which didn't cost us a thing.

Q: PL 480.

WINIFRED S. WEISLOGEL
Consular Officer
Rabat (1965-1970)

Winifred S. Weislogel was born in New Jersey on August 8, 1927. She received a bachelor's degree from Barnard College and a master's degree from Otago University in New Zealand. Ms. Weisloel entered the Foreign Service in 1956. Her career included positions in Geneva, Tripoli, Tangier, Rabat, Lome, and Washington, DC. Ms. Weislogel retired in 1983 and was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy on September 24, 1992.

WEISLOGEL: 21 months, then of course I got assigned to Rabat.

Q: Where you served from 65 - 70.

WEISLOGEL: In two different jobs.

Q: What were you doing?

WEISLOGEL: I was assigned there first as consular officer. The consular section really consisted of me and I think one full time local and one part time local. So it was a small section. We did not do immigrant visas but we did all the others.

Q: Wasn't that hippie heaven at that time?

WEISLOGEL: No, Tangier was more so, you got a lot of hippies up in Tangier but a lot of them just didn't get down as far as Rabat. Rabat wasn't a problem in that respect and you had a lot of people of course from the military base. We had the military base at Kenitra Navy Base but those people were handled by the military. We didn't have anything to do with them so it was fairly routine welfare and whereabouts, births and deaths and the usual chores. You had your occasional welfare case. I still remember Mr. Duck. Mr. Duck was a welfare case. He was down

and out. He'd committed, oh I know he tried to hold up a taxi driver and of course having a gun in Morocco is a military crime. You're tried before the military courts. Nobody has firearms. So anyway, he was found with this and he was waiting trial, but meanwhile they just took his passport away and let him loose and he was sleeping on a park bench. He had his shoes stolen while he was sleeping and he came into my office. Can you imagine having this man announce this Mr. Duck? He came into the office and had on a pair of Moroccan baboosh, these yellow slippers and, of course, there he came padding into my office on these slippers and his name was Mr. Duck. I had all I could do to keep from rolling under the desk with laughter.

Q: What was the situation in Morocco in the '65 to '70 period?

WEISLOGEL: There were a few occasions I remember, this was before the two attempts on the king's life, I left and one year after I left, the famous coup at the King's palace at Skhirat, the birthday party, and then next time when his plane was attacked. I always said, by the way, that was one of the best advertisements that Boeing aircraft could possibly have had. Just leave the aircraft that he was traveling in at that time on the ground in Rabat where I saw it about a year later. I went through there and the plane of course was just shot full of holes, a big hole in the wing and everything, and I said if that thing was able to withstand the attack and land, they ought to just leave it there.

Q: Was it relatively stable?

WEISLOGEL: It was relatively stable, but you were having problems. There was a man, I can't remember the name anymore, but he, I think, had taken refuge in France. But the French weren't able to capture him and he was believed to be back in Morocco. Of course, there are always plots against the King. I mean they knew that there were people who were plotting to overthrow the government, and I remember, on a couple of occasions at least, where they were looking for one of these anti-royalist agitators and we would travel and we'd suddenly come up against road blocks. What they did was shove a board across the road that had nails, big spikes, about four inches long, sticking up and you had to stop at these road blocks which could be anywhere and they would go through the car. They'd look in the glove compartments, and I said I don't know whether Ben Barka was hiding in there or not. It was quite unlikely. But they stopped all cars including diplomatic cars looking for him. And that happened on several occasions. I did a lot of traveling in the country. I was all over the place in Morocco. On many occasions, you did have these road blocks.

Q: What was the impression of King Hassan? From what I gather he's gone through several periods like anyone.

WEISLOGEL: Of course, everybody always shook their heads and said, oh he's not like his father. Of course, Mohammed V had practically reached a sanctified position, but the son as a young man I think had had a playboy reputation. He was devoted to golf, in fact, we had an administrative officer, Frank Hazard, who was a scratch golfer, excellent golfer, and the King found out about him and every once in a while Frank would just have to drop his work and go over. The King summoned him to play a round of golf. We then called him our golf attaché. But it was a nice entree. There was also talk about the succession. Of course, the King had this young

son who was a mere boy, but he had a brother who had certain ambitions and there was some suspicion of him. It turned out that it probably wasn't likely that he could have commanded any kind of following. He had many, many personal failings moral and otherwise. He's dead now.

Q: *What were relations..*

WEISLOGEL: Relations were very good. Most of the time that I was there, in fact, just about all but the last four months when Stuart Rockwell came on board, but the rest of the time Ambassador Tasca was there. I liked him very, very much. I got on extremely well with Ambassador Tasca. I had the greatest respect for him.

Q: *Could you talk about his style of operation?*

WEISLOGEL: His style of operation was one that I appreciated. He did not hang over your shoulder and tell you what to do. He assumed you would carry out your work as you should and he did not breathe down your neck and keep telling you to do this and not do that and so forth. I appreciated that. I was doing economic work, of course he was an economist, that was his field, he had a Ph.D. in economics. But I also had very, very good bosses there I should say; Ed Dow and then Mr. White, He was there when I left but Ed Dow was the one who was there most of the time. And by the way, he also supervised me as a consular officer. Now, as head of the consular section I was on the country team and I was supervised by Ed Dow because Leon Durso, who was our DCM, somehow or other didn't have a feel or he had never done consular, I don't know what the reason was, but he did not supervise the consular section. He turned it over to Ed Dow. So I worked very closely with Ed Dow over a period of time. In fact, he was the one who asked for me when my predecessor in the economic section left. He asked that I be moved into the economic section to work for him.

Q: *Harry Tasca had a reputation for being a very difficult person and, of course, there was Mrs. Tasca who was one of the dragons of the foreign service.*

WEISLOGEL: That's another story entirely. Again she wasn't there most of the time. She spent her time in Rome so actually she didn't get into our hair very much. But when she was there she did. I know his secretary very well, one of my best friends. She did have her problems and so did the protocol secretary when she was in town.

Q: *I served for four years with Harry Tasca when he left in Greece.*

WEISLOGEL: Oh, did you really? Then you knew Gwen in Greece?

Q: *Yes.*

WEISLOGEL: She went with him there. She's my best friend, really. She's the person I spend most of my time with.

Q: *Gwen is a fine secretary. She was able to handle it. I never had any problems with him either.*

WEISLOGEL: But I enjoyed working for him.

Q: *I kept away from Mrs. Tasca.*

WEISLOGEL: He was criticized sometimes. This is where you get into this delicate new area of families and what wives should do and so forth, but Ambassador Tasca was there very often alone. For a while he had Ethel Dietrich who was a dollar-a-year woman. Did you know any thing about her?

Q: *No.*

WEISLOGEL: I believe she had been a teacher at Wellesley or Bryn Mawr in economics and then she worked for the government. And now she'd come back to be his sort of economic aide, but I think she was working for peanuts if anything at all. And maybe they paid her way over. So Ethel was there sort of fulfilling the role of somebody who could sit at the table and be his hostess. But Ambassador Tasca, not having his wife there, would often call on the wife of one of the military attachés who happened to be a very lovely, very well-bred woman who could entertain nicely. And then he would often, in an Arab country you'd never quite know who's going to come whether somebody was going to bring his brother or whether wives will or will not come, would invite many of us, men and women who were working in the embassy to the parties to the cocktail party reception, part of it, and then when they were going to sit down to the formal dinner, if there were empty spaces we would fill in. I never objected to anything like that. Now some of the women did not like it when their husbands were asked to stay and they themselves went home or vice-versa.

Q: *They didn't understand the situation.*

WEISLOGEL: That's the business of the country. You have to sort of fit in and assist where you can and it's all part of the job. So I never objected to that but some people did rather strongly.

Q: *What about when you're doing economic work or how did you find the economy and also the infrastructure dealing with statistics and that sort of thing.*

WEISLOGEL: The infrastructure in Morocco was very good. The infrastructure was better than most of the developing countries. It was left with a good telephone system, good road network, the communications worked, telephone, telegraphs, whatever, worked very well. I understand there has been deterioration rather than improvement. You had good air service, you had excellent train service between the major cities so you had something to work with. We had statistics published in both Arabic and French, and I didn't do a lot of that statistical analysis. I didn't have to. I was doing the commercial and reports on the economy in terms of industry, agriculture, that type of thing. It wasn't a difficult place to work in.

Q: *How about the bureaucracy dealing with it?*

WEISLOGEL: There again, if you are talking about my going in and asking questions, they were cooperative.

Q: Again, we keep coming back to this woman thing, but that's only one side, but also just dealing with them because in some Arab countries this can be very difficult for anyone because they just don't operate...

WEISLOGEL: Yes, or they don't have the information. You did have to chase around. I always felt that Arabs did not like to deal with people over the telephone. They're not telephone people. They want to deal face to face, and if you are going to go and ask or if you want something, you go to somebody's office, you make an appointment and you go see them. You're not going to get very far over the telephone. You can't just do like we do, just pick it up and ask a question. So that's one thing you learn. You deal with people personally, and it takes a lot more time. Sometimes you make an appointment and you go there and they're not there. Well, they've been called home because a child is sick or God knows what. They're very family oriented and that takes precedence over everything else. And I always found that I could get through to people as far as going to see them without much difficulty. I think it's much harder for their own people to do so. They can treat their own people miserably when they're in positions of certain importance and, say a local citizen comes in and tries to get information or needs help, they're not always helpful to them.

Q: You were there in '67 during the Six-day War with Israel.

WEISLOGEL: Yes.

Q: That was a terrible blow to the Arab world because the Israelis really defeated the Egyptians, the Syrians and Jordanians and took over Jerusalem and the West Bank.

WEISLOGEL: Yes, the whole thing.

Q: It was a terrible blow.

WEISLOGEL: It changed the picture.

Q: How did that reflect...

WEISLOGEL: There again, Morocco was never as much in the thick of it as the other countries were. We had people who had to be evacuated at that time from Algeria, but they never even talked about possible evacuation from Morocco. It wasn't in the cards. You never felt threatened. Now I understand during later incidents the feeling against foreigners is growing. The resentment is growing. I hear from friends regularly in Morocco. They do have this growing fundamentalist movement, and it has a xenophobic side. I think people nowadays are probably more threatened than we ever were. There was never a threat, we never felt in danger. I know one of our colleagues, it was Herb Hoffman, went to Algeria from the Arabic language school and I think they had to evacuate if I'm not mistaken, from Algiers. But no, that was never a serious problem.

Q: In fact a series of Arabic countries cut relations on us for a while.

WEISLOGEL: Oh yes, which Morocco never did. We did not break relations. They did not break relations with us.

Q: Were you ever hearing while you were there, I served in Saudi Arabia which is, of course, a whole different matter, 'why did you recognize Israel, why do you support Israel?'

WEISLOGEL: Oh yes. You get it from friends, just talking with people that you'll meet at a reception or just get to talk to in other circumstances. Yes, they don't understand and I don't think the Arabs will ever understand why we are so unbalanced. Especially when we protest, of course, that we are balanced because it's a blatant lie. I mean, we're not. There's no question about it. We don't have an evenhanded policy. But all Arabs, I mean Arabs here in the United States, resent it -- people I've seen in the United States and talked with about the problem.

Q: Could you look somebody in the eye and say, 'Look we are a democracy, the Jewish vote is very important in the United States and the politicians respond to this, and there it is?'

WEISLOGEL: Oh yes, but also I'm not convinced that that even is a logical argument because when you talk about the Jewish people, you talk about five percent of the population.

Q: Oh, I know it's very small.

WEISLOGEL: It's just that it's balanced in a particular way. The concentrations are such that there is influence. Also, of course, influence in certain professions which they're very dominant in. And everybody knows that the Arabs are as aware of it as we are.

Q: Particularly the media and the literary field.

WEISLOGEL: The media, the papers, sure. Right. I must say that at least the people that I was likely to talk with on a regular basis just didn't bring the subject up that much. I think it was a given. It's one of those things, you can't fight it. This is just the way you are. They might interpret it just that you're pro-Israel and anti-Arab. I mean, that's the way of the world. One of these days we may get even, but they kind of shrug their shoulders and say it doesn't look like it's in the cards because they know as well as we do they can't get their act together. You've heard a lot about Pan-Arabism. You remember that Morocco, Tunisia and Algeria were going to form a union. That went on the whole time I was there and nothing serious ever came of it.

Q: Was the base there, Kenitra, the naval base?

WEISLOGEL: Oh yes, Kenitra was there the whole time I was there.

Q: Did that rub nerves wrong there?

WEISLOGEL: There was always an element that was saying let's get the foreigners out, let's get rid of the naval base, but there were an awful lot of Moroccans who were employed by the naval base, and they would have lost their jobs. Of course, eventually it was disbanded. They were there when I first arrived, I can't remember when the air base down around Marrakech left.

Whether it was before or after I did. But the idea was that eventually these were going to go. That was in the cards. We probably didn't need it anymore.

Q: Were there any other major occurrences that I may have missed that happened while you were there in those five years?

WEISLOGEL: There probably are, and I just can't think. If somebody could mention events I might respond to them, but I really can't recall.

Q: Well, if something comes up, you can always add it in.

WEISLOGEL: There was a lot going on when I was working in the economic area in phosphates, one of the things that I followed with great interest. The phosphate industry. Morocco was the largest exporter of phosphates in the world and the US is, of course, the largest producer, but we don't export as much because we use most of it ourselves. It's funny, too, the next post I had was Togo and that was also a major phosphate producer.

Q: Did phosphates go up and down a lot as far as demand.

WEISLOGEL: Well, actually, they had a pretty steady market for what they produced, but of course this was where the Spanish Sahara came in because they also had this deposit, the deposit of phosphates, and if Morocco could acquire control over the Spanish Sahara, they would have a big corner on the world market of phosphates. So it was a very important issue. It wasn't just the fact that they had these long-term sentimental ties with the Spanish Sahara. There was a very distinct monetary value to the place. I have to smile when you think of how you work on some of these subjects for years and years and years and nothing every happens. I mean you talk to the desk officer 15 years later, and they still have the same problems.

The head of the Phosphate board, head of the Phosphate industry in Morocco, was a quasi-governmental body and a very bright and very capable man, but there was always a lot of politics involved in the phosphate industry and the running of it. I remember that we had an interest in selling because we sold them big drag lines that they used to scrape out the phosphate. It was open pit mining. That was an important thing which was always on the front burner while I was there. How the phosphate industry was doing and what equipment they needed to buy and who was running the thing and if it was being run efficiently. What it was contributing to the economy of the country. How the money was being used once it got into the country.

Q: But we weren't in particular competition or anything?

WEISLOGEL: No.

Q: So this was more a watching brief than anything else?

WEISLOGEL: It was a watching brief, and it also meant a lot to the country and how it was doing. And the economy was probably a lot better. Morocco and Moroccans are a lot better than nine-tenths of the developing world. They do have something to work with, but it is still a

disappointment to a lot of Moroccans who expected a lot more from independence. But that could be said of most of the countries that became independent.

Q: How about the role of the French?

WEISLOGEL: Very dominant.

Q: Did you find that we were either rivals or was this a problem ?

WEISLOGEL: We didn't even try to attempt to outshine the French. It was just generally understood that the French are dominant in Morocco. That's their sphere of influence if you can use that old-fashioned phrase. And they had the inside track, very obviously. We had some business interests that we were trying to promote. We did have the base that we were interested in keeping at that time. But the French were embedded. If I am not mistaken, there were more French in Morocco after independence than there had been before. Because a lot of the Pied Noirs who had lived in Algeria moved to Morocco. It was considered a great place to live. They were attracted to it, and they performed a lot of useful functions. Sometimes the advisors that you talked to in the government if they were technicians, turned out to be French.

BERTHA POTTS
English Teaching Officer, USIS
Rabat (1966-1969)

Bertha Potts was born in California in 1915. After receiving her degree from San Jose State College, she became a member of the WACS. Her career has included positions in Bangkok, Saigon, Lyon, Algiers, Vientiane, and Rabat. Ms. Potts was interviewed by Howell S. Teeple on February 19, 1999.

POTTS: I then got assigned to the job I wanted which was working with our foreign employees who came to the States for training, orientation, and to see the United States. We had very good programs worked out for them. I enjoyed this but had an unsympathetic boss. By then, 1966, I had become pretty good friends with the African head man at USIA and the only place I wanted to go was Morocco. So, I asked Mark and he said that he thought he could fix that.

Q: That was Mark Lewis?

POTTS: Yes, that was Mark Lewis. So, I was assigned to Rabat as English-teaching officer. I had to give up my diplomatic passport which I had as cultural attaché because English-teaching officers were not considered for diplomatic status. I had friends who were counseling me not to give up the diplomatic passport, but I wanted that job so badly that I was willing to do it. I really thoroughly, thoroughly enjoyed that job. I ran a big English-teaching school.

Q: Was it a Bicentennial Center type of operation?

POTTS: No, we ran it.

Q: Teaching English to Moroccans?

POTTS: Yes and anyone else who wanted to come and sign up. We had some French people.

Q: Who was the public affairs officer in Morocco?

POTTS: I had three. The first one was Ned, I can't remember his last name, then Dick Monsen and Bill Payeff. Bill Payeff was not very fond of Morocco and called Rabat "Dogsville." So, I stayed there through three PAOs and two cultural attachés. Ed Fairley was cultural attaché and then Margot Cutter.

After three years there, I loved the job so much I wanted to come back and told personnel I would be willing to stay on another couple of years. I would delay my home leave and spend another couple of years in Rabat and then return home and retire. But they wanted to send me back to Washington and didn't listen to my request. At that point I made up my mind and said, "If that is what you want, it is not what I want, so I will retire."

Q: That concludes the interview with Bert Potts.

PHILIP BIRNBAUM
Deputy Director and Director, USAID
Rabat (1967-1969)

Philip Birnbaum was born in New Jersey on October 3, 1928. He obtained a bachelor's degree from Rutgers University, a master's degree from Columbia University, and a Ph.D. from Harvard's Littauer Center. His Foreign Service career included positions in Tunisia, Algeria, Morocco, and Washington, DC. Mr. Birnbaum retired from USAID in 1985. He was interviewed by W. Haven North on February 22, 1996.

Q: You were assigned as the Deputy, and then became the Mission Director?

BIRNBAUM: Yes, because after a year, Sam Adams was appointed Ambassador to Niger, and I was promoted to Mission Director. In Morocco, King Hassan, Hassan II, as he was called, was both the secular leader and the religious leader of the country. He is a direct descendent of Mohammed and every Friday there was an enormous procession to the main mosque in Rabat, with a huge entourage. He was very clever in that sense, because as the religious leader of the country, he really had absolute control. They had a parliament, but it was a rubber stamp. In Morocco, unlike Tunisia, they did have a landed aristocracy. These were the Fez families, and like the 400 families in Pakistan, if you came from a Fez family, you were well connected. They married one another, and all these people surrounded the King. There was a lot of resentment by young people, because it was very hard to get anywhere unless you had these connections.

An example of the type of problems that existed, the World Bank was building a number of dams and the idea was that once the land was developed, it was to be distributed to the peasants. Then the Bank found out that all the land was bought up by certain generals, certain people, close to the King. The peasants were going to wind up as tenants for the generals who now owned the land.

We had a relationship with Morocco that went back a very long time to the days of George Washington. There were also US military bases in Morocco. By the time I got there, the big air bases were gone. They had been moved to Spain. But there was still a naval facility in Kenitra, primarily communications facility, and US ships called occasionally. Furthermore, King Hassan was an outspoken anticommunist, so again, it was the cold war, and Morocco was our ally.

I'll never forget, sometime in 1968, there was a worldwide State Department circular telling Ambassadors that they had to call on the leaders of their respective countries and discuss population growth as a major economic and social problem and recommend family planning. This was a direct message to Ambassadors and Ambassador Tasca knew he had to do his duty. We put some charts together, and we set up a meeting with senior Moroccan officials, which always included a number of generals. Many of the Cabinet people were military people. Tasca made the presentation, and then there was a pause for questions. One general put up his hand and said, "The United States and Morocco are great allies, right? We are both anticommunist, right? Moroccan soldiers were good fighters, during the First World War and the Second World War, right? Then why do you want to keep down the number of Moroccans? You want more soldiers, not less. I don't understand what you're talking about."

That was an example that sometimes your message doesn't get across.

Q: Did we ever present the message to the King?

BIRNBAUM: To the top people, the Cabinet, but the King wasn't there. Ambassador Tasca did have a very good relationship with the King. It was a one on one relationship. They would walk arm in arm; the King really liked Tasca. Anglo-Saxons don't like to touch, but in the Arab culture you touch. For young men to hold hands and walk together is not unusual. They really got on very well. The King was a very fascinating character. In public he was the traditionalist. While we were there, the King and Queen of the Belgians made a state visit. Because Hassan was a traditionalist, the dinner in honor of the King and Queen of Belgium was for males only. Queen Fabiola was not invited. Now, the Belgian King had to give a return dinner in honor of Hassan at the Belgian Embassy. And the whole town was talking, "Will the Belgians have enough guts to say, Fabiola is coming, because she is the Queen, and Ambassador's wives are also invited." In the end, it was only males, and Fabiola was not at that dinner. But in the King's private life, he was a golfer, a pilot, a woman chaser; he was very modern. But he knew how to maintain a traditional image.

In terms of our program there, we had a multifaceted program. We built another big dam, Oued Moulouya Dam. We were involved in a project which I'd like to talk about, the Hassan II Agricultural University. We had a big PL 480 program, and we started the CYMMT wheat program. We brought Norman Borlaug to Morocco.

Q: CYMMT being what program?

BIRNBAUM: It was the introduction of a high-yielding wheat variety. In the Far East it was done with irrigation. In Mexico and Turkey, high-yielding variety was grown on rain-fed land. We also had non-project aid, program loans, which now are considered almost a new phenomenon. But I'm talking about in the late 1960s, and in India and Nigeria there were program loans.

There's been a lot of recent discussion about institution building and the proper kind of technical assistance has been debated. I'm very proud of the US support of Hassan II Agricultural University, because it was something that I started. It turned out to be a success because there was a Moroccan, Dr. Becali, who was dedicated to turning what was in effect an agricultural high school into a first class university. This man realized that this was a 20-25 year job. Initially he was not interested in the US support because although he respected our capabilities in the agricultural field, there was the language barrier, and he was French trained. We found out that Minnesota University and Louvain University in Belgium had a working relationship in agriculture sciences and research, which had nothing to do with AID. For a number of years there was an interchange between agricultural professors from Louvain and Minnesota, so that there were a number of people on the Minnesota faculty who spoke French, and could lecture in French. A professor from the agricultural faculty at Minnesota University was visiting Morocco on an AID project and told me about their relationship with Louvain University. I thought this combination could help Dr. Becali in developing his Agricultural University and accordingly I arranged a meeting with Becali.

The people from Minnesota and Louvain, as well as Dr. Becali, recognized, that if you were talking about getting this school up to a level to graduate people with M.A. and Ph.D. degrees, and do decent research, it was going to take 20 years. I wasn't sure Washington was going to buy this. But I said we would sell it in increments. As we were doing in any number of places in the world, we sent Moroccans to be trained at Minnesota and Louvain, and in the meantime professors from Louvain and Minnesota gradually would build up the faculty, the course work, and the research program. I was only in Morocco for two and a half years, so I only saw the beginning of this. But I understand that our support did go on for almost 30 years, and now Hassan II Agricultural University is a university of first class standing and graduates people even at the doctoral level. They are getting students from all over Africa, as well as Moroccans. So, when you ask what lessons did you learn, what makes for success, I believe the most important thing was this Dr. Becali was willing to dedicate his life's work to make this project work. And we were lucky that we had some very capable people from Louvain and Minnesota, who had experience, and had Becali's confidence. So when people talk about institution building, it is important to establish the right time frame. If you are talking about building a university, 15-20 years is the minimum.

Q: This was one of the most successful of the agricultural university programs that we had around the world.

BIRNBAUM: I can't take credit for what happened later, but it was an idea that I thought could

work. Dr. Becali was very much taken with the American approach to agriculture. That really came home in bold letters, when Norman Borlaug arrived. You know his approach; he got the King involved, and the Prime Minister. Ambassador Tasca made it very clear that this was a very unusual man. Borlaug made his presentation on vertical integration from field trials to mass production. Borlaug brought the varieties they used in Turkey and Mexico, and said, "We'll have about two years of field trials, we'll see how they do. And once we see they are OKAY, we're going to grow a lot of seed, and then we're going to go out to 50,000 farmers to plant the new seed." He said to the King, "I want you to fire a cannon the day we start the planting. This is like war."

What was fascinating was that Morocco had a pretty good agricultural research unit in the Ministry. They were French trained, and maybe even some French staff, and they had a unit that was working on wheat varieties. It seemed that this unit had no connection with what they call "Mise en valeur," the unit in the Ministry of Agriculture responsible for production. So you had a unit concerned with production, but the people in research looked down on them and never spoke to them. Borlaug's people got to know what was going on, and they discovered that there were two varieties developed in the agriculture research unit in the Ministry, which were better in terms of disease resistance, but had never been put into production. So Borlaug demonstrated his point in spades, how important it was to integrate research, extension and production. So they took off with those two Moroccan varieties, and within three years, they had thousands of farmers growing these high yield varieties.

Q: While you were there?

BIRNBAUM: They started in 1968 while I was there, but the major field plantings were a couple of years later. This is another interesting fallout you get from foreign aid. Borlaug was able to demonstrate the importance of an integrated approach. The people who did the research felt that it wasn't their business to try to transform the work into an operational program. The production people never went around to research people to ask what are you working on; have you got something we could use? Borlaug was quite a breath of fresh air.

Q: A good example.

BIRNBAUM: But there are other not so flattering examples. We had a veterinarian assigned to our program to do an artificial insemination program. This fellow was an operator. He said, "They've got a bunch of cows that are like broken down Fords. When I get through with them these cows are going to look like Cadillacs." There was a lot of publicity, and he provided "the service" in many different villages. The first birthing season came, and the veterinarian looked very glum. He said, "Oh, very bad news, something like 60 percent of the cows had still births because they all have venereal disease." We started this program without doing a survey of the health of the cows. So this failure had nothing to do with the poor Moroccans. Here was the USAID program with a highly trained technician, who should have known to start a disease control program, before we could start the artificial insemination. Everything is a learning experience.

Q: When you talked about having a non-project assistance or program assistance, what was

that? Was there a policy discussion related to that, or was it just simply resource transfer?

BIRNBAUM: It was basically a resource transfer in those days. There wasn't much policy discussion. We had the same program in Tunisia, and policy indirectly came into it in terms of efficient use of resources. The question was what to import? The Tunisians wanted oil imports, because their power station was fueled with petroleum. There was still program money left over. German export credits had been provided to set up a little state-owned steel mill in Tunisia. We said, "A steel mill in Tunisia? You don't have iron ore and you don't have coal." "Well, no, you don't understand. This plant uses steel ingots, which we're going to import, and now all we need is the coking coal, and we can make steel rods for the building trade." The Tunisians asked for financing the coking coal under this US program loan. We had tied procurement in those days and found out that the freight would be as much as the cost of the coal. The Tunisians said, "Why are you worried about cost? We're going to make the coke available to the plant at no cost." We replied, "You can't run an economy that way," and we did not finance the coking coal.

In Morocco, I remember, we proposed the purchase of certain fertilizers. Under a program loan, the US was competitive, and the ocean freight was manageable. The Minister said, "No, the market here is set; they know where they want to buy the fertilizer. They are not going to buy from a new source." We said, "We can understand that the private sector is free not to buy US fertilizers, but the government is running a big demonstration fertilizer program, which you are financing with your own foreign exchange. Here you can use an AID loan with 40-year money for this demonstration program." Then we found out that the fertilizer bought by the government was all rigged. It was a big pay-off program. So when we had these discussions on what to buy, we would find out what was going on in the economy. But then there wasn't the idea of adjustment or macroeconomic policy reform programs. It was basically a resource transfer, and the loans were quite small. The Tunisian loan was \$10 million. We preferred to do projects.

Q: Why did we do it?

BIRNBAUM: Well, I guess the rationale was simple. They said they have this petroleum shortage, and could you help us out?" We backed into those things. However, in India, we were discussing policy issues, for example, they adopted a competitive exchange rate.

Q: How big was the program in Morocco?

BIRNBAUM: About \$30 million a year. Ambassador Tasca wanted it to be much bigger.

Q: Mostly technical assistance?

BIRNBAUM: The Oued Moulouya Dam was a big project. That was interesting, because, I "violated" certain AID rules on this project. The US financing of the dam was about \$40 million. It was built in the eastern part of Morocco, that bordered on Algeria, in an area that was subject to flash floods. The experts were saying that if Moroccans don't do the proper upstream work in terms of terracing and environmental protection, this dam could be silted up in less than 10 years. So we put a lot of emphasis on this problem, and it was understood that the conservation work would be done by the Moroccan government. However, all the reports I was getting said that they

weren't doing anything. When I arrived in Morocco in 1967, the construction of the dam was in process. So in a couple of years the irrigated perimeters would have been ready and the silt would be building up. I went to see the Minister of Agriculture. He said, "We don't have the budget resources. I know I have to do this terracing but the Minister of Finance doesn't give me the money." We had a big PL 480 sales program, which generated local currency counterpart.

Rather than saying to the Government, let's get together and review your whole budget and the available resources. I worried about the US financed projects. So we allocated PL 480, counterpart funds, earmarked them expressly for the contracting of terracing work. The next problem was, we got the money in the budget, but no contracts were being awarded. They're all piled up. Again, I violated a basic principle of foreign aid. I assigned an AID engineer and an accountant type, and they awarded all the contracts. I still have some pictures when we went up to see the terracing work being done.

Someone said, "You've done 100 percent financing of the project, both the foreign exchange, and the local currency costs, and you're managing it as well, when the Moroccans should be doing this."

If you look at it in retrospect, many donors tried to do that -- earmark funds for their project, set up a project management unit, and syphon off the best guys from the government. Everybody is fighting for limited budget resources, rather than saying, "We've all got to sit down with Government, stop fragmenting the budget, and agree on a set of priorities."

The King thought he was very smart, in getting four or five dams under construction at the same time. But the problem was that the existing irrigated perimeters were used only at 40 or 50 percent capacity. The King was very clever. He said, "We should build all these dams now, because if we wait 10 or 15 years, the cost will be double. I'll catch up on the implementation later." Tasca did tell the King that General Dynamics, which just built a tire factory in Morocco, had more trained engineers in its corporate system than Morocco planned to train in the next 20 or 30 years.

Q: What was the point?

BIRNBAUM: The shortage of trained manpower was a major obstacle to development in Morocco. The King was very much interested in these big projects, and he got donors to respond. The Bank, and we responded with the Oued Moulouya Dam. I understand that it is a pretty good irrigation project now. You know it's not the best thing to do -- 100 percent financing and taking over functions the recipient country should do -- but you don't want to be caught out and have someone say, "This project got screwed up because none of the reclamation work was done." So one steps into the breach occasionally.

Q: How were the Moroccans to work with?

BIRNBAUM: The Moroccans at the very top level were very sophisticated, well educated, extremely au courant with all social graces. But then there was a big divide. If you spoke to students, there was a great resentment against the ruling elite. It will be interesting to see if the

King's son succeeds him. Hassan took over as a young man, so he's been King for a very long time. He's survived any number of assassination attempts, some people feel he has a charmed life. Now my friends in the World Bank tell me that the Moroccan economy is doing pretty well, but my sense is that they have this underlying tension there. He's kept the fundamentalists under control, but I think there's a lot of resentment because it's really a two-class society.

Q: You saw that when you were there?

BIRNBAUM: Oh, yes. It's very evident in student strikes. They used to close the university twice a year, and once it closed for a whole year. The King kept the lid on. Again, I said you have to be lucky when you are assigned to a country.

A man named Ben Barka was the head of the opposition party. One day Ben Barka was kidnaped off the streets of Paris, and they never found his body. De Gaulle was in charge of France at the time, and the evidence indicated that this was done by the security police of Morocco, in conjunction with the French security police. De Gaulle was outraged and he set up a trial in absentia, for the Minister of Interior of Morocco, and the head of the Moroccan secret police. They were found guilty in France. Well, you can imagine the reaction. The Moroccan Ambassador was withdrawn from Paris, and they kicked out the French Ambassador. The Moroccans were very anxious to show the French that they had a very powerful ally, the United States. It opened up a lot of doors for us in the Government, because they wanted to demonstrate to the French that they had an alternative. So our relationship was very positive and cordial. I could see the Minister of Finance if we had a problem. We had a lot of opportunity to have a dialogue, and in that sense, it wasn't difficult to work there. But still one had a feeling that the opposition is one day going to get to the government. The King maintains control by having this unusual position of being both a religious and a secular leader, and he's a very clever guy.

Q: What happened to their family planning program? Did you have one while you were there?

BIRNBAUM: They had a small one. There's always the question of whether Dr. Ravenholt of AID was right -- in saying you don't have to worry about the demand side for contraceptives; it's just a supply problem. As mission director, we had two or three domestic staff, a maid and a cook, and they would ask my wife where they could get contraceptives, where they could get help. There was an understanding of the problem, and people wanted help, but you couldn't openly buy contraceptives. With regard to our AID efforts in family planning, we went to see the Minister of Health, and were pushing the family planning. He responded, "I don't have a big enough health budget to inoculate more than a quarter of the children in this country for measles and other communicable diseases. And you're telling me that family planning is the most important problem? If you come back with a total health package, where I can do inoculations and other programs as well as family planning, then I'm willing to talk to you. But if you're just saying that family planning is the most important thing, forget it. Besides which, half of my doctors are French Catholics, and they wouldn't do it anyway." So we made very little progress.

I was struck by the fact that, very often we go on a single track like family planning when a country has an enormous health problem. You have to develop a balanced program. While I was in Morocco, we didn't have a sector-wide health program.

Q: Do you remember anything about, was there any particular development policy or thrust being pushed by Washington while you were there, or did you feel free to operate pretty much within your own judgments?

BIRNBAUM: Well, I had a feeling then that it was still the business of a little of everything. We did some family planning, the high-yielding wheat variety, a range management project, and of course some capital projects. We were doing the Oued Moulouya Dam and the rehabilitation of the airport, with the Federal Aviation Authority. So there was a little bit of the Noah's Ark, a little bit of everything.

Q: What about private sector? Were we doing anything about that?

BIRNBAUM: In Tunisia in the early 1960s, we hired a "Beltway" firm to identify private investment opportunities. They looked at the ceramic industry and local industries, and they must have written up 20 or 30 potential private investments, at a cost of maybe \$150,000, which was big money in those days. We showed them to some private investors, both Tunisians, and a few Americans that were brought over on a mission. And they said, "You wasted your money, because businessmen are interested in what are the possibilities for a good cash flow? How long is it going to take me to get a return on my investment? No such analyses was available in these studies. A bright kid working at the New York Public Library could have prepared the general information or facts in these so-called investment studies. I don't think we generated one investment.

One only good thing we did was to bring Walker Sisler and Detroit Edison to Morocco. Sisler was the president of Detroit Edison and in World War II he was a brigadier general in charge of helping with the rebuilding all the power plants in Western Europe. Based upon this experience, he wanted to help developing countries. The power generation in Morocco was pretty antiquated. Furthermore, they kept saying that all the industry is concentrated in the Casablanca area, and we'd like to disperse it throughout the country by making power cheaper. But the cheapest power was in Casablanca, and the most expensive power was in the countryside! We brought Walker Sisler to Morocco. He made his people available for no fee. We paid the fare and the per diem. Detroit Edison staff came over a six or eight month period. They improved their maintenance system, the bookkeeping system, and changed the tariff structure. It really was a fantastic thing, because Morocco was getting people who had operational experience, not some general consultant. Some Moroccans went to Detroit Edison. This was not like the "paunch" corps, the retired executives, but involved a whole company which could backstop the technicians they sent.

Q: Was AID financing any of this?

BIRNBAUM: There was little AID financing. Ambassador Tasca was good at attracting potential investors. King Ranch people came to Morocco, including its founder, Mr. Kleeberg, who launched Lyndon Johnson's congressional career. King Ranch was interested in starting a large commercial cattle operation in Morocco. They saw a big market for meat in Europe as the standard of living went up. They had big cattle operations in Australia and Argentina. They knew

exactly how they wanted to organize themselves. The King was very excited, because it was going to involve some of his cattle. I got to know the King Ranch people and went out to see the ranch. I said, "Why don't you give some consideration to running a training center on the ranch, which I think I can get AID to finance? There are many Moroccans who have a goodly number of cattle, but they don't know anything about supplementary feeding and all the other modern methods you use for a commercial operation. You could run a little school here, which would go over very big with the Moroccans and create some goodwill, because a lot of them say, 'Oh, the King's made another deal now with these foreigners.'" King Ranch people said, "It's not our business." We tried to sell it, but we couldn't push a string; they don't want to do it.

Another private investment project that we got involved with in Morocco was in the Sousse Valley, where in January and February you can grow melons, tomatoes, the works. We knew about Israel growing vegetables and flying them into Europe, especially in the winter. So we said, "You have the Royal Air Maroc airlines, which can fly from Agadir to Paris overnight. These planes are on the ground all night. They could fly up with vegetables and come back with passengers. There was a company that did this in Texas. They would fly lettuce from Texas up to Seattle overnight, with all the seats out as a freight plane. They would deliver the lettuce and then put back the seats and fly passengers down to Texas. We felt the Moroccans could do the same thing. We brought out two Italian Americans, farmers from Florida, who operated very large irrigated farms, growing lettuce and celery on a thousand acres. The Sousse Valley was irrigated farming and the soil and weather conditions were fine. The Americans said, "We want complete control of the land. It's like a factory operation." The Moroccans were saying, "No, you have to work with all these little farmers." We spent a lot of time with these American farmers, and it was fascinating to hear how they operate -- like a factory. With a tight schedule: pesticides on this day and not a day later and fertilizer on this day. They said we can only do that if we have absolute control. We cannot work with hundreds of small farmers. The King, I believe, realized that because a lot of this land had been taken back from the French, it was unwise to turn it over to some Americans. So the Sousse project never got off the ground.

So we were thinking about private investment, some pretty big stuff. Morocco has the potential, and I wonder how much of that they've done since then. In many ways, they were not interested in resource efficiency. They have a big phosphate industry. It's a big money maker. There was the question of financing new equipment. The phosphate company was mainly owned by the government, and they wanted to get export-import credits. Although Europeans, weren't supposed to, they were prepared to give him them mixed credits, because these were big purchases. I remember having a discussion with the Minister of Finance, saying, "This huge company has cash flow and earns substantial profits. It can tap the private capital markets. There are very few enterprises in Morocco which can do that. Why are you wanting to use a limited amount of concessional assistance or export-import credits when you can finance the equipment with private sector capital? Concessional assistance should be used for education and health projects." But the phosphate company wanted to get the softest money it could get, because they wanted a better bottom line, highest level of profits. One explanation was that the King was one of the largest shareholders in the company.

Q: So, any other dimensions of Morocco that you want to add?

BIRNBAUM: It's a long time ago. It was a good assignment.

Q: You were there two and a half years, you said?

Move to Washington as Deputy Assistant Administrator: Africa Bureau - 1969

BIRNBAUM: We arrived in Morocco in June of '67 and by November '69, I was back in Washington. The reason was that Sam Adams was recalled from Niger by Dr. Hannah, to be the AID Assistant Administrator for Africa, Sam insisted I be his deputy. It was a very fortuitous development, because I was scheduled to go to Vietnam as Economic Counselor of the Embassy, and the Associate USAID Director for Program and Economic Policy. I'd already been informed of that while in Morocco. Ambassador Tasca tried to intervene and said that "He should stay here in Morocco, he's just started a lot of good things." But the message came back, "No, he's going to Vietnam." However Sam Adams insisted, and Dr. Hannah wanted to support him, so my going to Vietnam was canceled, and I wound up working with Sam. This was in 1969.

One incident in Morocco at the end of my tour, that I remember concerning my possible assignment to Vietnam involved Orville Freeman, who was Secretary of Agriculture for a number of years. When we were in Morocco, Freeman was out of the government already, and was heading up a private agricultural consulting firm. Freeman sent a message saying that he would like a series of meetings with government officials, and with private people to discuss potential agricultural projects. So I arranged it, and then we had a big luncheon at my residence. After everybody left, we had another cup of coffee, and Joan, my wife, joined us. Freeman said he made good contacts. He said, as Secretary of Agriculture, "Whenever I traveled I didn't have to do anything. Everything was arranged for me. Now I have to stand in line with my passport." How different the world was. Then he said, "But you've got a pretty good life here. It's a lovely house. You obviously have a good cook; that was a delicious meal and a very lovely garden." Joan said, "Well, it is very nice, but it's all over. My husband's been assigned to Vietnam" and that she had to decide whether she was going to the Philippines with the children or to the States. Freeman said, "When are you going to Vietnam?" and he mused, "Those Vietnamese women -- they don't walk, they sort of glide as they go across the street. I can still remember how beautiful they are." I thought that was amusing, but Joan said, "Oh, so that's what it's all about!"

The last time we met I was talking about being transferred from Morocco back to Washington as the Deputy Assistant Administrator for Africa. Sam Adams was the Assistant Administrator, and this was in November of 1969. I was Sam Adams's deputy from November 1969 to February 1972. That was during a Republican Administration. Dr. Hannah was the AID Administrator. Looking back, one major problem was a management problem. The African region was providing assistance to over 40 countries. They had gone through a number of different organizational structures: one, to have the field missions in all the countries, although some of the missions were quite small. Then in the interest of economy, they closed the smaller field operations and moved them back to Washington, and tried to backstop, e.g. Benin or Niger from Washington. Well, that didn't work too well. So we were confronted with the problem of how do we operate programs in both big and small countries. We came up with the idea of regional support offices. It was during Sam's tenure that a regional office was opened in Nairobi, and one in Abidjan, which they had contract officers, lawyers, engineers, and they backstopped the

smaller programs.

JOSEPH CHEEVERS
Consular Officer
Rabat (1967-1970)

Joseph Cheevers was born in 1933. His Foreign Service career included positions in Morocco, Spain, France, Ethiopia, Nicaragua, and Senegal. Mr. Cheevers was interviewed by William Morgan in 1988.

Q: Let's start off in Rabat, where you served between '67 and '70. What did you consider to be the highlights of your tour there?

CHEEVERS: There were a number of highlights. We had a relatively small American community in Rabat, and a small consular section with emphasis upon protection. It was the beginning of the drug culture: from the middle to the end of the 1960s. There was a great increase in hashish smuggling and a number of Americans were being arrested in Morocco for things which now might be considered relatively minor, such as possession. Morocco, with its U.S. bases at that time, and its relatively open attitude toward certain drugs, was a primary source of hash for the U.S. military bases and for the American as well as the European market.

Q: So Morocco was a source of drugs?

CHEEVERS: Yes, it was. Not only a source with vast tracts of the Rif areas under hash cultivation, but it was also a point of transfer. You easily crossed the Straits of Gibraltar into Spain, which was a country very, very tough on drug offenders at that time.

Q: What kind of volume are we talking about?

CHEEVERS: At one particular time, I could tell you. I don't recall what the tonnage was but it was substantial.

Q: No, in terms of people. How many were arrested?

CHEEVERS: I think we had at one time about 35 people in jail in various stages of judicial process.

Q: What did you do for them?

CHEEVERS: We did what I think good consular officers do, immediately let them know that our government does have an interest and endeavor to extend protection to them.

Q: Did they believe you?

CHEEVERS: Nine times out of ten, we were dealing with people far more sophisticated than we were, in the sense that they had been trafficking for some time and they were not interested in anything except getting out of jail. "If you can't get me out, go away," was not an uncommon attitude, although many softened considerably after a few weeks in a Moroccan jail.

Q: So they were professional smugglers?

CHEEVERS: I wouldn't say professional or in the same league as the Medellin Cartel, but in the sense that they had experience. There were others, of course, a teacher from New York and one from Ohio, who were in for the bucks and knew they could make a whole lot of money fast working as carriers or "mules." The big time smuggler was a rarity in Morocco, as I recall.

Q: Some you looked at as innocent, and some as guilty?

CHEEVERS: Yes, you found yourself making judgments, although you were very careful not to impart that to anybody, who had anything to do with the arrest, incarceration, or trial, to say, "I know this guy is guilty," although on several occasions I raised key questions with local attorneys on behalf of a number of our arrested countrymen whom I thought were poorly represented.

FRANK D. CORREL
Assistant Director, USAID
Rabat (1969)

Frank D. Correl was born in Germany in 1929. He received his BS from Rider College in 1950, and his MA from Columbia University in 1955. He served in the US Army from 1953 to 1955. His postings include South Korea, Vietnam, Morocco, Sri Lanka, Lesotho, and Zambia. W. Haven North interviewed him on September 29, 1990.

CORREL: I arrived there in August of 1969.

Q: So, you were off to Morocco and what was the situation in Morocco at that time?

CORREL: Well, in Morocco I felt that in some ways I was stepping back in time to my days in Vietnam. We definitely believed that the Moroccans were very important to us and that we weren't going to argue with them about the niceties of what programs looked like.

Q: Why wasn't it important?

CORREL: I think it was all part of the Cold War fallout and their strategic location, as well as their moderate stance regarding the Middle East.

Q: We had bases there at the time?

CORREL: Several had just been given up. In fact, one of our main aid projects was the conversion of Nouasseur Air Base into a civilian airport. We still did have some bases there, but they were terminated during the time that I was there. We had a Navy establishment at the old Port Lyautey, now Kenitra; there were also a couple of small facilities around. But, I don't think the bases were half as important as the overall importance of Morocco due to its strategic location. There was the perception of Morocco being a very moderate Arab country. And, mind you, this all sounds kind of hollow right now, not from the point of view whether Morocco was moderate or not, but rather about how even more unstable Middle East politics became after that time. Just as I went to Morocco in 1969, Qadhafi overthrew the Libyan monarchy, so things were only really getting started.

Q: What was the development situation in Morocco at that time?

CORREL: The development situation in Morocco was that we had a number of projects largely in agriculture and education. In addition, we were gamely trying to get a family planning project started. The Moroccans had the feeling that essentially they needed no assistance with regard to the human side, that they had all the trained personnel they needed that were fully capable of making decisions. Essentially what they wanted from us were dollars. Our position on these projects was that there was extensive upgrading needed in the skills of Moroccan managers; that there was a very thin supply of Moroccan technicians who needed training; and that much of the Moroccan outlook was along very traditional lines and weren't really ready to go much beyond a subsistence type of farming to big capital projects.

In education, the question of agricultural-oriented education or a scientific type of education, was really not a high Moroccan priority at all. There was still a great deal of influence by the French. When it came to family planning, what the Moroccans very cleverly did was to appoint a chief, not the Secretary General in the Health Ministry, but rather a Director of Family Planning, a very dignified, elderly former ambassador, a very decent and articulate guy, but with no political clout. We endeavored to help him get a Family Planning Program started. The overall attitude of the American Embassy was pretty much like that of my boss in Saigon: "they want it, they ask for it, they get it." The Ambassador at the time I arrived was a very strong proponent of that viewpoint. At one point, our Food for Peace officer was told to make an allocation of wheat to pay Moroccans to build a wall around the International School or something like that. When our man pointed out to the DCM that this was against AID and PL480 regulations, he was promptly taken in to the Ambassador, who told him that if he didn't know how to do it, they'd get somebody else who would.

Q: It didn't sound like you had a very productive relationship with the Moroccans in that kind of situation.

CORREL: Actually, surprisingly enough we had some quite productive relationships with the Moroccans. I won't say we got that much done overall, but it's amazing what we did get done in the family planning area.

Q: What kind of approach were you taking on family planning?

CORREL: A very low profile one of making supplies and training programs available, and training Moroccan health workers with heavy emphasis on maternal health. We were quite successful, for a while at least, in two or three pilot provinces.

Q: This was through the Ministry of Health?

CORREL: Through the Ministry of Health. I will say that Dr. Laraki in his quiet persistent way was able to get programs started these provinces despite official indifference or worse. We endeared ourselves to Laraki by helping get his daughter out of the country to avoid a bad traditional marriage.

Q: It was the beginning of the program.

CORREL: With regard to some of the other programs, one thing I didn't mention was the beginning of priority programs for opening the economy to more competition and private enterprise. It was the early AID-mandated private enterprise initiative. The same officer who had been the head of the commercial import program in Saigon ended up as the private enterprise officer in Morocco. He served as a conduit for a number of visitors and missions. He interpreted his work in Morocco basically as going around and, for example, visiting a hotel that was being set up and saying, you ought to put the reception over here, and you ought to have this over there, and so forth. He saw his role definitely as a hands-on type of job while I think the intent of the job was a little different. I think this gentleman, conscientious enough, basically was used to something other than what we think of as an American ways of doing things. He saw doing things pretty much through personal relationships, which sometimes may have caused ethical problems, and being a quasi-colonial administrator.

Q: Was there any private investment facilitated by the program at that time? What was the result of it?

CORREL: Yes, actually I'm trying to think what, if any major thing there was. I know there were a whole bunch of little things where people had come through looking for investment possibilities. As far as I recall, there were a couple of hotel projects such as Ramada, as well as agriculture processing plants. My memory isn't too good on that.

Q: What other programs stand out in your mind?

CORREL: We had quite extensive agricultural programs.

Q: Were you involved in the Hassan II Agricultural University?

CORREL: Yes, I was trying to avoid talking about that one, because I remember there was an exceedingly ineffectual head of that institute.

Q: Do you mean a Moroccan?

CORREL: A Moroccan, yes. We used to go and talk with him about improvements, but I'm not sure we accomplished very much. We tended to tread water on that activity.

Q: Did we have a University contract at that time? Minnesota, I think had a long relationship with it, but I don't remember whether they were active at your time.

CORREL: I'm trying to recall. Minnesota doesn't sound familiar to me. Actually, I remember that we had quite a bit of economic planning and analysis going on. We had a team headed by Wolfgang Stolper come out. I had responsibility for taking them around on a trip.

Q: What was he supposed to be doing?

CORREL: He was going to make some kind of a critique of the Moroccan economy. What happened was that on the day we left Rabat, I started feeling quite sick and that night at Azrou in the Middle Atlas, I developed a hundred and four degree temperature. We came back to Rabat the next day. I saw a doctor at the hospital in Kenitra and had a good raving case of mononucleosis and hepatitis. So, Mr. Stolper's trip is only a faint memory in my mind. I don't think he ever did submit a report.

Q: Any other programs that you want to speak about?

CORREL: We still had a big agricultural irrigation project in Northern Morocco in the old Spanish zone, in the Moulouya Valley. Agriculture was an important part of the program and we had a good agriculture office there. But, as far as being able to talk very much about specifics, I'm not so well equipped.

Q: Did you work with the Moroccans very much?

CORREL: Yes, quite a bit.

Q: How did you find working with them?

CORREL: Once we were out in the field, things were fine. In Rabat it was very difficult. One of our key contacts, the Secretary General of the Agricultural Ministry, was an exceedingly difficult person to deal with. Some of the other government officials were equally so. We didn't get very far with them. Right after I came, the Mission Director left, that was Phil Birnbaum, to become Deputy Assistant Administrator back in Washington. After a lengthy hiatus of about five months, Don Brown came as Director, who established quite close relations with a number of high level Moroccans and basically handled that level with little, if any, input from anybody else in the Mission.

Q: He was very much on his own?

CORREL: He was very much on his own. He was very interested also in getting included in the Embassy-type things. The rest of us were left dealing at the working level. There I found that our relations with field people were really quite satisfying. As memory comes back to me, at the

Mission, we were assigned a multi-sector officer who took care of PL480 Title II and some other projects. This was Helen Wilson with whom I traveled on one very interesting trip across the High Atlas to the area on the other side, including well into the desert. We saw some Title II activities and various other AID stuff that I don't recall particularly. The Title II Promotion Nationale project, a food for work project, sounded very good in concept. In actual fact, I don't know how much we had to show for it, but in those days I don't think that Title II was considered as a significant a resource as it subsequently became.

Q: I see. Well, you can add things on Morocco if you like, but that pretty well covers it for the moment?

CORREL: I would also like to recall a coup attempt in the spring of 1971. It came out of the blue and occurred when Ambassador Stuart Rockwell was attending a function that the King had at his seaside palace near Mohommadia, between Rabat and Casablanca. Some army cadets and others captured the palace and had the Ambassador and the rest of the diplomatic community lying on their stomach on the floor for several hours while they were searching for the King. They did not find the King. Apparently, he was hiding in a closet or a bathroom somewhere. There was a state of emergency in Rabat and that impacted quite strongly with regard to me. Our Mission Director was out of the country and the Acting Mission Director was monitoring what he was hearing on the radio in his car. Meanwhile, I was trying to stay in touch with the various USAID people. As luck would have it, in our mission the married people, who were the more senior people and technicians, by and large lived in the suburbs where there was no particular problem. But, in downtown Rabat, we had a number of single women, secretaries and others, and I was concerned that we had a constant method of communication with them.

I'd also like to mention briefly the topic of relations with the State Department. I referred earlier to my experience and views that I developed as a result of taking the exam for the State Department Foreign Service. I was very happy to join AID. I found it a challenging and enjoyable experience. In Korea, I met a couple of State Department people with whom I became good friends and who were very good people to work. I mentioned one name in particular, Elsie Quick. However, one thing that I ran into quite early on in my Foreign Service career was that as an AFSA member I read the magazine and found article after article written by various people, talking about how the life at the embassies was being complicated and almost polluted by all these non-State Department people, like AID, USIA, and others. I was really amazed that this seemed to be such a big theme of the magazine of an organization of which I was a member. So, when the time came to renew, I failed to do so and I have never joined AFSA again in all of that time. This kind of exclusiveness or elitism seemed so strange and in some cases, it was reflected in how an Embassy might deal with AID people. It seemed extraordinary to me that this would be done in the process of trying to maintain the foreign relations and interests of the United States. This whole business was brought home to me in a very direct way when I was in Morocco, which together with Zaire was probably the worst post I ever served at with this particular problem. At the AID Mission in Rabat, we had to rely on contractors for some of our project operations. In one agricultural project where we had the benefit of advice from the Corn Improvement Institute (CYMMIT) in Mexico City, at the recommendation of Norman Borlaug, now a Nobel Prize winner, we hired a third country technician from Mexico, a Mr. Acosta, who arrived in Rabat with his family and four children. The embassy flatly refused to give him access

to the commissary. Given the fact that this was a family with small children, it was a considerable hardship. Some appeals at the staff level were just turned back totally without any kind of consideration.

Well, I felt I had a responsibility there. I was the Assistant Director for Program. The Mission Director was in Washington. He subsequently stayed there as a Deputy Assistant Administrator. The Acting Director and I discussed this again and we went over and made an appeal directly to the Deputy Chief of Mission who was about as glad to see us as he was a case of leprosy walking in through the door. However, I did bring the regulations with me and we stood our ground. I don't think I will ever forget the look on the DCM's face when he turned to the CAMO Director and the Management Officer and said, "admit them." The Acostas were granted the access and I guess all's well that ends well. But, it really made my flesh creep that at an embassy, even when the regulations were on our side, it was such a big job to try to get them to understand that AID had needs that they were responsible to serve. I'm pleased to say things got much better later with Stuart Rockwell as Ambassador and Richard Parker as DCM. They treated us with consideration and courtesy and the other levels followed suit.

Morocco was my first foreign post where I was in a key mission management position. Not that program officer is usually that prominent a position, but in Morocco we had turnover at the director level and the Deputy, later Acting Director, had some health problems and often referred actions and decisions to me as next in line. Thus, I became involved in a number of very touchy personnel issues and assumed the role of trying to move the mission from its almost total deference to the embassy way of doing things. While the Director and his deputy were in the embassy "loop," the rest of the mission staff often were not well informed and felt that challenging time-honored ways of doing things was likely to get them in trouble. Thus, things occurred regarding program as well as more personal matters such as housing assignments and commissary privileges that were not appropriate or fair. I saw my job as being a little more proactive concerning AID concerns and personnel and gradually became known over at the embassy as an advocate for change. This happened largely after Phil Birnbaum and Ambassador Tasca were no longer on the scene. The new leadership at the embassy reacted very positively. I became a member of the commissary supervisory board and the CAMO director often consulted me on other matters also, and seemed to appreciate my suggestions. I also established close working relationships with the Peace Corps, especially Bill Garvey, the Peace Corps (PC) Director, and was able to relate AID and PC activities and plan accordingly. I mention this because I believe my Moroccan experience proved very valuable to me in my later career as mission chief and DAA (Deputy Assistant Administrator). I believe that it was in Morocco I really learned how not to do things. Rather, that it was important to encourage initiative and feedback in two directions, both upwards and downwards. Also, judiciously to promote mission interests and personnel within the country team structure and, very importantly, not to isolate the staff from the embassy and to back them up when needed.

During my tour in Morocco, I also went to two excellent Bureau program and evaluation conferences, one in Uganda and the second in Ethiopia. There, I was able to see other missions and programs in operation, and share and profit from others' experiences. I think that the two years in Morocco really were a trial by combat or fire that served me well.

That would take us to August of 1971.

LEWIS M. (JACK) WHITE
Economic Counselor
Rabat (1969-1973)

Lewis M. White was born in August 1921 in Virginia. After serving in the US Army from 1943-1946 he finished his bachelor's degree at Georgetown University. His career included positions in Colombia, New Caledonia, Dominican Republic, Nicaragua, and Morocco. Mr. White was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy in June 2001.

Q: In '69 you left, and then whither? Where'd you go?

WHITE: I went to Rabat, Morocco, as economic counselor.

Q: You were there from '69 to when?

WHITE: To '73. Four years.

Q: How did that assignment come about?

WHITE: I spoke French, so they were looking for somebody. I guess they thought after the long period of time I'd served in all these developing countries, they would send me to a developed country. At first they were going to send me to Oslo, Norway. They said that the ambassador there wanted me as commercial attaché. But my DCM thought I should try for an economic assignment. So I waited. They gave me economic counselor in Rabat; I guess they thought that was the closest thing to a European assignment. I didn't really mind being sent to a developing country. I'd go anyplace and serve anyplace and make myself at home. I always hoped it would be a non-communist country so I could take my wife.

Q: What was the situation in Morocco, '69 to '73?

WHITE: When King Mohammed V died in 1961, his son Hassan became king as King Hassan II. They got independence in '56. His father died - King Mohammed V - and Hassan II took over. At first he ruled as a constitutional monarch, but after some riots in 1965 he dissolved the parliament and ruled henceforth by decree. That was the situation when I arrived. We considered him to be a friend and moderate on Middle Eastern issues.

He tried to cooperate with the Arabs, but he was a moderate on Arab affairs, and I thought he ended up, too, being a moderate influence in the Arab world. He wanted good relations with France. Many Moroccans were working in France and sending their remittances home, a big source of foreign exchange. France was also Morocco's biggest trading partner and the source of much of its direct foreign investment.

Q: What was the economic situation '69 to '73?

WHITE: I think there was a lot of unemployment. There wasn't much inflation. They were the world's biggest exporter of phosphates. And they had big citrus exports, too. And they had minerals. They had iron and coal. Lately, I think they've had petroleum. They had vegetables they'd send to France, and so forth. Tourism was one of the biggest sources of income. The French left a good infrastructure. So it really wasn't too bad. But they financed a lot of their budget with PL 480 wheat imports from the U.S.

Q: What about French influence? Were the French a pretty strong hold on most enterprises?

WHITE: The French had a very strong influence there, and a lot of the French were still there. I think they made a real contribution. From a tourism viewpoint, the hotels were all good in Morocco; the roads were good. It was a wonderful place to spend a vacation - and safe. It wasn't like Algeria.

Q: What was your major interest when you were there?

WHITE: I was interested in commercial matters, U.S. commercial interests and U.S. investment interests - business interests. And I worked with the aid administration, too, on things that we thought would help them, like the PL 480, where they could finance their budget. Because it was a moderate government and relations with the U. S. were good. In fact, Morocco was credited with being the first country to recognize the independence of the United States.

Q: It's true. Did you find yourself running up against an attempt by the French to wall off Morocco from other than French commercial ventures?

WHITE: No, we cooperated to a large extent with the French; we had good relations with the French. We even had deposits in French banks. We didn't want to antagonize the French in Morocco. We knew they had vital interests there. We had no conflict with the French that I know of. The French Economic Counselor used to let me read his economic reports, which were very good. The French commercial attaché was also very helpful.

Q: Did you ever deal with Hassan or was that pretty much the ambassador?

WHITE: Hassan? I dealt with some of the ministers; but I was presented to King Hassan and he usually made a lot of the decisions. I dealt with him through his ministers. We had a problem with the Holiday Inn there. The Holiday Inn wanted to build a hotel; but they weren't putting any money into it; they just wanted to use their name and ability to get people to use it. The king didn't like it, so he canceled the agreement after the hotel was built. He didn't think it was a good deal for Morocco. That was one of the problems we had. We couldn't get the King to change his mind on this.

Q: At one point we had a lot of bases there, but by this point the bases had been disassembled?

WHITE: That's right. We disassembled those bases. We moved up to Spain, but we still had communications facilities. The personnel operating them were living at the Moroccan base at Kenitra. The Navy operated a high school for Americans there and my daughter and son attended it. Two years ago they had a reunion there and many former students went back. Both of my children went with their families. My daughter was one of the principal organizers. The place is a Moroccan military base and the commander gave them a nice reception on the base. They loved Morocco and had a wonderful time on their return.

Q: There were at least two major attempts to kill the king. Did those happen while you were there?

WHITE: In '71, there were five generals and about 1400 military cadets who raided the king's palace at Skhirat where he was entertaining many guests and tried to carry out a coup. In the shooting 28 dignitaries were killed, including the Belgian ambassador. After about two hours units of the army loyal to the king came and rescued him

Q: This was during a birthday party, wasn't it?

WHITE: Yes, it was. His 42nd birthday celebration. They had a lot of diplomats invited there.

Q: Were you there?

WHITE: No, but our ambassador was. He was made to lie face down. The Belgian ambassador spoke up and said he was a diplomat; they shot him. So they were wild; but the question was, would the military remain loyal to the king? I always thought they would.

A labor officer in Casablanca, who later went on to be an ambassador and assistant secretary for Middle Eastern affairs, had a long report saying that we should not give all our support to the king; that his strength in the country wasn't that strong. Those of us in the embassy thought that the king was our best bet.

Our labor officer, Ed Djerejian, wrote a brilliant report, which I'm sure everybody admired. And we considered everything there, but we decided that the king was our best bet. And I myself thought that the military and the people in the rural areas would basically remain loyal to the king. He was descended from the prophet; he was a fairly modern monarch. And after about two hours, he talked his way out of it. He persuaded them to give up, and his loyal military took over. Then they were all let go.

Again the next year there was an attempt on the king's life. The officer who led it appears to have been General Mohammed Oufkir, who we considered to be one of the most loyal supporters of the king. The dissident officers in the army who wanted a change tried to shoot down the king's plane returning from France. The plane was set on fire and they thought they had killed the king. The plane landed with two engines on fire, but the king survived.

Then the planes were shooting at the palace, too, which was just a few blocks from where I lived. I was at the Embassy and my son called to say he had been on the roof watching the planes

flying over and shooting rockets at the king's palace.

And I myself was over at the Ministry of Commerce when they first got word that the king's plane had been attacked. There was a lot of excitement there, but I didn't know the reason for it. I had some usual business there. But they suspected we were behind it because we had people at the Kenitra air base, where the planes originated. But we, of course, had nothing in the world to do with the thing. The king survived, but they found out that Mohammed Oufkir, the minister of defense at that time, was behind it, so as I understand it he committed suicide. He disappeared altogether.

But his family ended up in confinement in some place in the desert for a good many years. his daughter has just written a book on it – about how harshly there were treated because of their father.

Q: During this time, were there any problems with Algeria?

WHITE: There were some, but they were settled. They had problems with Libya. They thought Libya was the one that had jumped to recognize that the coup - they said the king had been killed. Libya jumped to recognize the junta government when the king was still alive. I think Algeria held off awhile.

They had the problem with Algeria later, with the Spanish Sahara business. The Polisario.

Q: But that was after your time.

WHITE: That's right. That was after my time.

Q: Didn't they have the Green March during your time?

WHITE: What do you mean by that?

Q: This is, I think, when the king led_?

WHITE: I know what you mean. This was in 1975 when the king sent maybe 350,000 unarmed Moroccans to Spanish Sahara to reinforce Morocco's claim to the Spanish Sahara. Shortly afterwards, the Spanish left Spanish Sahara, assigning the northern two-thirds to Morocco and the other third to Mauritania. Mauritania eventually decided they wanted out because the Polisario were becoming active. These were the local people fighting for independence. So then Morocco claimed the whole area.

Q: How did you find American firms, were they able to deal in a straightforward manner with the Moroccan authorities and business community?

WHITE: I don't think it was completely satisfactory; I believe it was Goodyear Tire that wanted to come down and establish a plant there, but the government owned a tire-making plant, and they didn't want competition. So the Goodyear representative didn't get an appointment. I couldn't get an appointment for him, either.

But there was a lot of corruption in the government. They said that one of the reasons that some in the military had the attempted coup in '71 was because of corruption in the government. There was corruption, and I was reporting on corruption quite a bit; they removed a number of ministers and put them in jail. The minister of tourism, I know was one. Then they put the minister of finance in jail- he once entertained the ambassador and me at a French restaurant in Paris when we were there for a conference. Our ambassador did not think he was guilty and he was subsequently released.

Q: This was a time when an awful lot of young Americans were drifting around the world - the hippies and all that sort of thing - and Morocco was one of the places many went to get hashish and stuff like that. Did that cause any problems?

WHITE: I'm sure they caused the consular section a lot of problems. I know that a lot of them were running around. I was down at the embassy one time when some girls called up; they said, "We took this cab from Marrakech to Casablanca, and the guy said he would do it for \$20 and now he wants \$50," and they wanted me to resolve it over the telephone.

I talked to the cab driver. He said, "Gasoline costs \$.50 a gallon. I couldn't afford to do it for \$20." So it was his word against theirs. I knew that what he was charging was a fair rate, because I had already paid \$25 for a taxi from Casablanca to Rabat, a much shorter distance; so I couldn't help them out over the telephone.

Q: Was Moroccan society easy to get to know? I mean, were relations pretty formal from your point of view?

WHITE: I think it was more of a formal relationship than Latin America. Of course, you get very good friends in Latin America; they open up their homes to you. A lot of them have families in the United States. A lot of them have studied in the United States.

In Morocco it is, as you say, somewhat more formal; you did get invited to their places, but it wasn't quite the same as Latin America. A bigger difference. I nevertheless made some very good friends in Morocco and entertained many of them in my home.

Q: What ambassadors did you have while you were there?

WHITE: First I had Ambassador Tasca, he was a political ambassador, but he was a very effective one. Sort of a career political ambassador. But he was only there for a few weeks after I arrived.

Q: How was Stuart Rockwell in dealing with economic problems? Was he good support?

WHITE: He always gave me all the support I needed. He was a very intelligent, impressive-looking man. And then we had Richard Parker as DCM. Richard Parker had a triple-bypass or quadruple-bypass operation, but afterwards he went on to be ambassador in three different countries, including Morocco. We had a good team in Rabat.

Q: Algeria, Morocco and Lebanon.

WHITE: Yes. So he has written books. I've seen him lately at Diplomatic and Consular Officers Retired. Don Brown was Director of the AID (Agency for International Development) mission.

Q: Did you get involved much with AID?

WHITE: I went over there to their meetings, yes. But they were the ones making the decisions. Sometimes, if it was a question of commercial versus aid, I would frequently come down on the side of commerce.

Q: '73 you were finished. Sounds like it was about time to come home?

WHITE: That's right. Yes.

STUART W. ROCKWELL
Ambassador
Morocco (1970-1974)

Ambassador Stuart W. Rockwell was born in New York on January 15, 1917. He received a bachelor's degree from Harvard University. His Foreign Service career included positions in Tehran, Washington, DC, and an ambassadorship to Morocco. Ambassador Rockwell was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy on October 5, 1988.

Q: You were appointed as ambassador to Rabat, Morocco, from 1970 and you served there until 1974. How did that assignment come about?

ROCKWELL: I believe it came about because somebody else was appointed that didn't get through the Senate. So I was the State Department's candidate. The one who was appointed was a political appointee.

Q: What happened to him?

ROCKWELL: He eventually got another post, but he didn't get this one.

Q: Was this because there was a feeling that Morocco was too sensitive to turn over to a political appointee or was it just personalities?

ROCKWELL: I don't really know the answer, but my belief is that Senator Fulbright considered that this man was not the appropriate person to send to Morocco, possibly because I think he was of Jewish background. I'm not sure of that, but anyway, I was the Department's candidate. When he failed the confirmation, I was then put forward.

Q: Before going out there, you already, of course, were dealing with Near Eastern affairs. But

did you have any instructions or any stated objectives from the State Department when you went out to Morocco, or was it just, "Go out there and do a good job"?

ROCKWELL: That's more or less it. Our relations with Morocco were tranquil. Obviously it was far removed from the Middle East, and it was just to keep things ship-shape. There were no specific instructions except the usual ones of promoting American business interests. We had a Voice of America relay station, we had a naval communications unit. We were supposed to maintain those.

Q: You went out there in 1970. How did you see the situation in Morocco at that time?

ROCKWELL: It was another of these one-man countries like Iran, and there was unrest because of that. There was a feeling, especially among the younger people, that there should be greater democratic participation. But the main problem turned out to be the corruption that was endemic there.

Q: The one-man rule, this was King Hassan. He had been King for how long by that time?

ROCKWELL: He succeeded his father in February of 1961. The country became independent in '56. His father died. I guess he was on the throne certainly 9 years.

Q: So the corruption could be laid at least to the fact that the King didn't do something about it.

ROCKWELL: Yes. In fact, members of his own family were involved.

Q: Did we see corruption as being a problem, as far as the United States was concerned?

ROCKWELL: No.

Q: This was just something we reported on?

ROCKWELL: It was something that we were concerned about, because it affected the stability of the regime. In some cases it was American companies who were having the bite put on them.

Q: You mentioned that the United States, as a government, our interest was in tranquil relations, our relay station, and our naval base there. But what were our commercial interests there?

ROCKWELL: Quite limited. Morocco was not a good market for U.S. products. It was pretty much tied up with France. Except for a limited amount of tourist type stuff like a hotel, U.S. commercial relations were really not terribly important. Phosphates, perhaps. But we were a competitor in phosphates.

Q: But you didn't find that there was a dominant American commercial interest that guided you, or that you had to be watching this all the time?

ROCKWELL: No. The Moroccans didn't make it easy for Americans to engage in commercial

activities.

Q: Did you find much of your time spent trying to help American commercial firms do business there?

ROCKWELL: Yes, that was one of the roles of the embassy, and particularly commercial firms that got into trouble because of the ambivalent attitude of the Moroccans toward contracts. We had to help them try to resolve some of these disputes they were having. Goodyear, for example.

Q: When you say "ambivalent attitude," a contract was only good as long as it served the purpose?

ROCKWELL: That's right. What was good one year wasn't necessarily good the next year.

Q: In doing these interviews and my experience also as a reporting officer, one of the hardest things to do is to report on corruption, not because it's not there, but one always is a bit concerned that if you over-report on corruption, this will begin to either be leaked to the United States press, and then the next thing you know, you're going to have to answer to a leak in the other country, or else that you may so disgust the policy makers if you talk about corruption, that they may make some decisions which are not really based on American interests, but ones of abhorrence of corruption. Did you find this was a problem, how to report on it?

ROCKWELL: No. I think we reported regularly on the corruption factor, but since the American commercial interest in Morocco was so limited, it wasn't a dominant characteristic of our reporting or of our daily life in Morocco. It was just a fact of life that if a foreign firm wanted to get something in the way of a contract or permission to build something, they had to grease the way. Of course, it's not only in Morocco that that happens; it's well known throughout the Middle East and Far East, for that matter.

It seems, as it turned out, that people who were really more concerned than anybody were some of the Moroccans themselves, who felt that their country's good name was being besmirched, and that the King was not doing enough about it.

Q: Did you have any problems meeting with what would amount to the opposition in Morocco? You didn't feel the same constraints that you felt when you were in Iran?

ROCKWELL: No. The opposition was also not so well organized or as meaningful as it was in Iran.

Q: How would you describe, from your perspective, the role of King Hassan?

ROCKWELL: It's a one-man rule, certainly, and I think that King Hassan turned out to be extremely clever, a good maneuverer, a good survivor, in a sense, a courageous person. I think it has to be said also that at least the time I was there, most of the Moroccans were apolitical. They expected to have a monarch, and all they really wanted was that the monarch do a good job. They didn't conceive of Morocco without a King, except possibly for some of the younger

elements, the student people. So I would think that Hassan has been a pretty good King for that country, a pretty good ruler. I don't happen to think that his standards are the same as the normal Anglo-Saxon ones, but why should they be? He's not an Anglo-Saxon.

Q: Did the United States play any role in giving help or advice, or was whatever there was of this nature really French? Would you say that France was the dominant foreign power, if there was such a thing as a dominant power?

ROCKWELL: The U.S. gave quite a lot of advice because we got involved with military assistance and economic assistance in Morocco, and also relations with the French were quite strained because of the expropriation of the French colonial interests there and the seizure of the land that the French were farming. So I would say that the French rather withdrew from direct participation. They had their cooperants, their young men and women who went out there to teach and that kind of thing, but that was principally in the interest of maintaining the language. So insofar as meaningful programs were concerned in the country, the French were not in a terribly important position when I was there.

Q: We were looked upon as being the main source to turn to for certain types of assistance.

ROCKWELL: Yes, I guess so, but the Moroccans always complained that we didn't give them enough. Of course, it was a modest program compared to what we were doing in Iran.

Q: Were there any repercussions there of the Vietnam War or opening to China or any of those things?

ROCKWELL: It seems to me the Moroccans sent some sort of a contingent to Vietnam, medical people or something. Yes, they made a contribution. For a while, we thought the Moroccans were going to vote with us on the two-China question. They almost did, and then they backed down at the last moment. Having told us they would vote yes, they voted to abstain.

Q: You were at a very famous birthday party.

ROCKWELL: Yes.

Q: This is on July 14, 1971. I wonder if you could tell what happened.

ROCKWELL: This was the King's annual celebration of his birthday, which took place at his summer palace south of Rabat, between Rabat and Casablanca, at Skhirat. It usually involved all the notables of the realm and all the chiefs of foreign diplomatic missions. It was a stag party, and everybody was very informally dressed in sports clothes, and there were opportunities for golf and tennis and swimming and clay pigeon shooting, but mainly for a huge banquet at mid-day in this summer palace. It was a very sportive affair, supposed to be, until just as we were about to go in to sit down to lunch, we heard these sort of popping sounds, and somebody said, "Oh, the King has arranged fireworks for us this year."

And until people started to fall with blood pouring out of them, we realized that the palace was

being attacked, and the King's entourage, especially the military members, rushed out to defend it and were cut down. The rest of us were trapped inside or out on the golf course or wherever we might be. There must have been a thousand guests there, at least.

Eventually, the guard was overcome and the attackers forced us all out of the palace and required us to lie down in front while they searched for the King, who had hidden in the men's room of the palace, which they didn't know about, with some of his key people. They never found him until the very end, but at that time, the command of the rebels had figured out that the King had fled to Rabat somehow, so they had gone to Rabat to try to catch him.

When the subordinates finally uncovered him and realized that contrary to what they had been told, that the King, instead of being endangered by devious foreign types and disloyal Moroccans, was being endangered by themselves, they reversed their attitude and declared their loyalty to him. The King dispatched General Oufkir to Rabat to get control of the city, which was being attacked by the rebel group. In fact, the Ministry of Information had been seized and the radio was under rebel control. So the ringleaders were court-martialed instantly and shot.

It turned out to be an offshoot of this problem I mentioned earlier, that the head of the military household of the King was a very personable officer who was personally affronted by the degree of corruption and felt the King was not doing enough about it, and felt that the King should make way for the Crown Prince. He got the cooperation of Colonel Ababou, who was the head of the cadet academy at Fez, and owing to the position of the head of the military household, it was possible to infiltrate during the night 1,000 or 1,200 of these young men, cadets, into the surroundings of the palace. They were the ones that attacked the palace, who had been told apparently that the King was in danger, and that it was their patriotic duty to liberate him.

But obviously, what happened, apparently, was that Colonel Ababou decided that this was a good opportunity to get rid of the King and establish a sort of Libyan-style republic. The fact of the matter is that Colonel Ababou asked the head of the military household where the King was, and the man knew where he was, because I saw him lead the King into his hiding place, and he didn't let on. So Colonel Ababou had him executed right then, right on the spot, as being a traitor to the cause. So there were two people with different motives.

Q: What happened to you and the other diplomats?

ROCKWELL: We were lying on our faces outside the palace until the King was uncovered by the cadets who were left in charge, and as soon as they laid down their arms, everything returned to normal. It was very strange. I mean, there we were with all our limousines parked down in the parking lot. Although the Belgian ambassador had been shot dead and the Syrian was wounded, we all went back to Rabat, and the countryside seemed perfectly normal. People were selling fish by the roadside, there were swimmers at the beaches. It was hard to believe that this bloody event, which must have cost the lives of about 130 people, had occurred only two hours or so ago.

Q: Makes one realize that diplomacy and getting close to someone in power is not always the best place to be.

ROCKWELL: That's right.

Q: Was there any role that the United States played in this?

ROCKWELL: No, it had nothing to do with the United States.

Q: There was another attack on the King. This was on August 16, 1972, when he was coming back from Paris, when he was attacked by his own air force which was escorting him. These planes, were they American planes?

ROCKWELL: They were American planes piloted by English-speaking Moroccans who had been trained in the United States. They were based at Kenitra, which was where the U.S. naval communications unit was. So all this was very suspicion-making. But the fact remains that our people at that base had no idea what the Moroccan pilots were up to. The hangar and the environs of where the planes were declared off limits to them. They didn't speak Arabic or French. So we didn't have any idea that these pilots were plotting to do the King in.

Q: Did the King wonder about our role?

ROCKWELL: Oh, instantly everybody said the U.S. must have known about it, and if we didn't tell the King, that was therefore very unfriendly. Yes, I'm sure he did, although it doesn't make much sense for us to try to kill the King of Morocco. That type of a situation is ripe for that kind of interpretation.

Q: Did you find yourself making special representation to the King, to let him know?

ROCKWELL: Yes.

Q: Did he seem to accept this?

ROCKWELL: He seemed to accept it, but I don't think he did. I think that it was a shadow over the rest of my career in Morocco.

Q: There's always the feeling that somehow, if anything happens, I know this was true when I was in Greece and many other countries, they always think, "Aha! The United States is behind this."

ROCKWELL: Yes.

Q: And the more you protest, the less likely you are to be believed.

ROCKWELL: That's right. But you had to admit that the circumstances are very suspicious.

Q: Where were you when this happened?

ROCKWELL: I wasn't even in the country. I was on home leave, as I recall it.

Q: Again I ask my unclassified question. How did you find the work of the CIA in Morocco? Was it giving you good information? Did it seem to be unobtrusive?

ROCKWELL: Yes, it was all right. They seemed to be spending most of their time dealing with out-of-country matters, like who the Algerians were sending in or whether the Russians had any agents. There again, the situation in Morocco itself was not one that was so dynamic that a lot of information was needed or available.

Q: It really wasn't a place where spies hung out and exchanged information and that type of thing.

ROCKWELL: That's right.

Q: Not being a front line state with Israel, our concerns there must have been minor.

ROCKWELL: Of course, they had the usual good relations with the Moroccan security service, and they sometimes produced some rather interesting information about who the King was going to throw out of office or promote or do something like that.

Q: The CIA reporting, as far as you knew, did you share the information they had of what went on?

ROCKWELL: Yes.

Q: Mr. Ambassador, I'm speaking to you now as a former consular officer. You must have found yourself much more involved with Americans who got into trouble because of the hashish and all, didn't you, in Morocco? Wasn't there a real protection problem there?

ROCKWELL: Well, no, because it was perfectly easy to get hashish in Morocco, and the Moroccans were very relaxed about people who bought it. The problem usually resulted from people who left Morocco and got picked up in Spain for carrying this stuff. But we didn't have very many cases of people who were picked up in Morocco. There were two or three that I can remember.

Q: Morocco seems to have been on the tourist circuit, particularly the young students.

ROCKWELL: Yes.

Q: Including, I think, at the time, my daughter went through there. So you must have had a great flow in and out of young people.

ROCKWELL: Yes, there were a number of them, but they didn't seem to get into an extraordinary number of problems with the local authorities. They were tolerated. They went to Marrakech and Tangier, sat around smoking pot, I suppose. It was not a major problem.

Q: *We have a consulate in Tangier, one of our oldest. That came under you. Did you find that a very useful post?*

ROCKWELL: No.

Q: *It was more there than for historical purposes, did you think?*

ROCKWELL: Yes. Tangier is a backwater, as far as Morocco is concerned. It used to be important when it was an international zone, but nothing much happened up there. Well, nothing much happened anywhere except Rabat, really. The commercial capital is Casablanca.

Q: *Do we have a post in Casablanca?*

ROCKWELL: A Consul General.

Q: *Was this a useful post for you?*

ROCKWELL: Well, yes, insofar as there were American business interests that were concentrated in Casablanca.

HARVEY E. R. GUTMAN
Deputy Mission Director, USAID
Rabat (1971-1975)

Harvey E. Gutman was born in Switzerland in 1921. From 1942-1946 he served in the American Army overseas. Upon returning in 1949 he received his bachelor's degree from University of Portland and later received his master's degree from American University in 1958. During his career with AID he held positions in Laos, Paris, Thailand, Morocco, Liberia, and Nigeria. Mr. Gutman was interviewed by Stuart Van Dyke in August 1997.

GUTMAN: Though I was to fill the number two position (Deputy Mission director), I arrived as Acting Director. Ten days later, Morocco underwent a failed but bloody military coup against the King that traumatized the government for months.

A word about the general setting of the USAID program: the GOM felt that it was entitled to American assistance for the important military base rights and stand-by facilities that we enjoyed. While there existed specific payment modalities for these military accords, the GOM considered all American aid as a quid pro quo. Moreover, the country exercised a moderating influence on more extreme members of the Arab League and King Hassan II was an important go-between in Middle East negotiations that were of great importance to Washington.

Understandably, the Embassy was not prepared to spend a lot of effort on the USAID program

which was dwarfed in size and importance — and appreciation — by U.S. military assistance.

Our program was undergoing major changes. In past years, our assistance programs had emphasized large-scale infrastructure projects, e.g. the construction of the Lower Mouiyouya multi-purpose dam. Under new guidelines, such undertakings were to be left to other donors and, especially, to the World Bank. We were to stress that any funding by the latter included a 25% contribution by the USG. Simultaneously, we were cutting back on our non-project financing of imports (CIP). The Moroccan-titled local currency funds that it generated provided a very flexible funding mechanism and required much less documentation than standard, dollar-financed projects.

The GOM took badly to this change in AID's approach. They stated bluntly that the country needed U.S. assistance for major projects. The Minister for Cooperation (the former "tough hombre" Minister of the Interior) told us point blank that technical assistance was available from a dozen donor countries. "Technicians stand in line to come to Morocco and they even speak French."

Moreover, Morocco adhered to the French OPEX (operating executive) style of technical assistance under which foreign experts fill slots rather than formally train and demonstrate. Except for Thailand, this was the definition of technical assistance in most countries with whom I was acquainted. The GOM felt that their junior officials would learn from OPEX experts by osmosis and informal understudying. Those who returned from abroad after training would be placed into appropriate position, under a "swim or drown" approach.

At times, I felt that the Moroccans went along with our technical assistance projects, to some extent, as a quasi good will gesture. We found it difficult to obtain genuine cooperation from GOM officials in planning and evaluation of projects. Exceptions were the commodity components, especially vehicles and certain types of training activities.

For long-term higher education courses, most students preferred to go to Europe, especially France. Given the country's French-based legal and administrative system, this was understandable. Moreover, France, in an obvious attempt to coopt the next leadership generation, provided stipends, home leave transportation, etc. that were more generous than those provided under our training program. However, increasingly, Moroccan students started to look to the U.S. for higher education in technical disciplines, both under AID auspices or self-funded. Those who had received their education in both France and the U.S. felt that American institutions were far ahead in teaching practical applications of scientific and technical subjects.

I am convinced that over the years our training programs have made major contributions to Moroccan development and at the same time have imbued a small, but growing segment of Moroccan leaders in government and the private sector with American methods and values. Our technical assistance programs did contribute, in a more limited way, to Morocco's socio-economic progress in various spheres. Unfortunately, by frequently not providing qualified counterparts, as provided in the project agreements, the GOM did not fully exploit these projects.

One of the basic shortcomings of our approach was that we wanted some of the technical

assistance projects more than the GOM. We knew that they would frequently not make their contributions as stipulated in the project agreements. However, the greatest sin a USAID could commit was not to obligate its funds. We took cover by advancing the argument that we had no right to question a commitment by a sovereign nation a priori.

Morocco had been selected by AID/W as a testing ground for the application of the new sector approach which was to revolutionize the development process. We were instructed to explain AID's new approach and obtain clearance for a AID/W team to cooperate with the GOM in recasting the AID program. The GOM was totally unsympathetic and disinterested.

The Minister of Finance, product of a French elite school, was now in charge of cooperation. We had met with him several times to expound the advantages of AID's new concept and left pour memoirs with him. At a final meeting on the subject, he stated that after a discussion within the GOM, he was authorized to concur in the team's TDY. However, this was subject to the understanding that the team would work in the USAID office and in no way impose on the existing workload of GOM officials. They were currently overwhelmed by priorities set by His Majesty. "Your team and yourselves can prepare any papers and documents that you feel you need for your projects". Even today I recall how grating the Minister's use of the phrase "your projects" rather than "our joint projects" was.

Of course, our reply to Washington recognized AID's enthusiasm over its new orientation and couched the GOM position rather diplomatically, somewhat like "GOM concurs but in view of space and logistic limitations wants team to be located on USAID premises. GOM also points out that series of highest priority assignments, personally set by King, will regrettably impose major limitations on contacts with responsible GOM officials. We appreciate that sector approach team's TDY assistance will greatly help to strengthen our program."

AID/W, particularly its GS officials, were frequently unable to understand how host countries could fail to share Washington's excitement over new developmental insights and were not interested in adopting AID's complicated documentation and regulations. AID/W rarely appreciated that countries with French traditions found it difficult to accommodate a additional system for, e.g., procurement and accounting procedures. AID/W also failed to realize how small many of our assistance programs were compared to those of the French, IBRD and, sometimes, of UN organizations; too small to justify a dual system in the eyes of our hosts.

The Ambassador, in making his Washington rounds while on TDY, had repeatedly discussed at senior State levels and with the AID Administrator and his staff, the GOM's lack of appreciation for our technical assistance program. From his point of view, it did little to advance U.S. objectives in Morocco. He liked the presence of an AID Mission but urged that the program be shaped to meet Moroccan concerns, i.e. visible infrastructure-type undertakings, non-project assistance, large-scale loans. Of course, AID/W's hands were bound.

My first major task in Morocco had been the drawing up of a five year phase-out plan for the aid program. But a year later, no one mentioned this any more. For one, State feared that the Moroccan might interpret termination as a sign of U.S. disengagement and, equally important, the Bureau plainly did not really want to shrink its size, staff and budget. It is now 25 years since

I left Morocco and the USAID is still carrying on. I would guess that it is occasionally mandated to come up with a multi year phase-out plan.

KENTON W. KEITH
Western Arabic Language Study
Tangier (1972-1973)

Branch Public Affairs Officer, USIS
Fez (1973-1974)

Ambassador Keith was born and raised in Kansas City, Missouri. After graduating from the University of Kansas he served with the US Navy before entering the Foreign Service in 1965. An Arabic speaking Officer, Ambassador Keith served as Public Affairs Officer and/ or Cultural Affairs in Iraq, Saudi Arabia, Morocco, Syria, France and Brazil before his appointment as US Ambassador to Qatar. His Washington service included several tours in senior positions with USIA. Ambassador Keith was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy in 1998.

Q: Today is October 30, 1998. We're in 1972. You went to Morocco. You were in Morocco from when to when?

KEITH: I was in Morocco from the summer of 1972 until the summer of 1974. I was assigned to Fez as the public affairs officer – by way of a year of focus on western Arabic, Maghrebi Arabic, in Tangier. There had been an Arabic language school run by FSI in Tangier for some years. That school had closed, but they thought it was a good idea for me to go and re-establish contact with some of the former instructors. I was able to organize my own courses with Ahmed al-Harshni and Mohammed Senhadji, two veterans of the FSI school. Both were good teachers.

What I discovered in the first year in Morocco was that I really had no interest in learning Maghrebi Arabic as a spoken dialect. I spent much of that time working on classical Arabic, or more accurately, standard written Arabic. I found the western dialect, the Maghrebi dialect, impenetrable and not very attractive and I found also that anybody I really needed to deal with could understand a sentence in more or less classical Arabic or in French.

Q: Is classical Arabic essentially what is used in educated exchange?

KEITH: Yes. It was the language that was understood by educated Arabic speakers from Morocco to Iraq. That is a language that is taught. That is the language used in public media. Most important, perhaps, it is the language of the Koran.

Q: Why have they tried again and again seemingly without a great deal of success at establishing a Maghrebi Arabic corps? There were problems with a school at one time and they found that the language wasn't terribly transferable.

KEITH: I guess the best two Maghrebi Arabic speakers in the Foreign Service that I knew were Larry Pope and Chris Ross. Larry actually spoke Maghrebi Arabic. Chris Russ spoke classical Arabic with enough Maghrebi terms and words to pass it off as Maghrebi Arabic. Of course, I knew also at least two Peace Corps volunteers in Morocco who were extraordinary linguists. They spoke not only Maghrebi Arabic but one of them got by very well in Berber, one of the several dialects. The Peace Corps had a need to communicate in the villages in the Moroccan dialect. That was not really the case for diplomats.

Q: What was the situation there then?

KEITH: The situation was rather tense. I remember having an offsite with Ambassador Robert Newman, who had a policy of assembling the junior officers for a no-holds-barred session away from the embassy. He wanted us to let all of our instincts come out in a conversation that was not monitored by our direct embassy supervisors, and would not be interpreted as criticism of authority. He took us down to a place called Sidi Yahya and we talked for a couple of days. The underlying assumption in 1973 was that King Hassan was in the end game of his regime. There had been two assassination attempts, one that took place just before I arrived in 1972.

Q: There was the shooting down of the airplane.

KEITH: Yes. The society was still reeling from these very dramatic events. For various reasons, we thought the tide was running against the King. Whether it was a disaffected political class in Fez or Casablanca or whether it was disgruntled laborers in Casablanca and elsewhere or whether it was disaffected villagers in the Rif, we thought it likely that a combination of things might soon lead to the demise of the King. Well, that was 1972. Here we are in 1998 and the real concern now is looking at his succession and trying to come to some conclusion about whether his designated political heir, his son, is going to be capable of taking on the country's leadership. Hassan has proven over the years to be an extremely able man, extremely agile on the political scene, a man who understands the society as well as anybody ever has and the dynamics of the political life of Morocco. If you've had many years of experience in the Arab world and go to Morocco and think you may be able to transfer that knowledge, you're in for a big surprise. Morocco is very different from the eastern Arab world, where I was much more comfortable and had a stronger grasp of family dynamics. In Morocco, there is a kind of insularity that goes down to the neighborhood, village level. There is a book by John Waterbury called "Commander of the Faithful" that is a very good analysis of the political dynamic in Morocco that works from the village level to national politics. I've often recommended that book to anybody who is going to go to work in Morocco.

Q: How about American relations with the country?

KEITH: We had interests that went beyond what we normally had with anybody else in the Arab world. We had a longstanding and very sound military relationship with Morocco, including bases and VOA transmitters. Moroccans were perceived until 1973 as moderates in the Arab-Israeli dispute. We also liked the king. We thought he was a force for stability, a moderate man. We knew that his cultural references in the West were not American but French. We knew that

he had a personal history that made him suspicious of Western interests in his country. But he was somebody we thought we could trust and I think that has been borne out over the years.

We had a stubbornly low level of commercial and economic interests in Morocco. Morocco's main source of wealth in those days was phosphates. In terms of regional politics, my period in Morocco preceded the conflict in the Western Sahara. Morocco's main external irritant was Libya. The Libyans would broadcast stories about local corruption in *Moroccan dialect*. Much to the Moroccan government's chagrin, the Libyan broadcasts began to gain credibility, and they were certainly entertaining. However, as I say, this was an irritant, not a real threat.

Q: What about the situation in the Western Sahara?

KEITH: There had always been controversy over land in the Western Sahara, and it took on greater importance when the Spanish withdrew. But those were back burner issues when I was in Morocco and didn't explode until later. It was in the late '70s when there was the famous Green March. The King, again drawing on his extremely acute sensitivity to the Moroccan mentality, was able to mobilize ordinary Moroccans - in what really wasn't much of an interest to the average man - but managed to whip up a frenzy and cause what was essentially a peaceful demonstration.

Q: When Moroccans and Americans get together, they always talk about the first recognition in the United States and their close relationship. This is still a theme.

KEITH: Yes. Moroccans refer to this often. The legacy of the Peace Corps was much more important than the legacy of early recognition and that early legation in Tangier. We had up and down relations with Morocco in the early days, as did all seafaring nations whose ships came close to the Barbary Coast. In any case, it wasn't 18th century relations that really mattered in our 20th century relations, but the Peace Corps. The Peace Corps in Morocco had almost unblemished success in the years that I was there. Extraordinary young Americans lived in villages, taught, worked, and I believe fulfilled as well as anywhere in the world the ideals of the Peace Corps, often in very difficult circumstances. Certainly Brazil and Morocco have produced the most successful of the Peace Corps legacies in my experience.

The relationship with Morocco was not of primary importance from the perspective of American strategic interests, particularly after we began to use satellites for communication.

Q: In the early days, it was a fallback position for bombers.

KEITH: Yes, but that's long past. There were communications facilities in Morocco that were important to us at the time. We had to disengage from that gently. This was certainly an instance where technology influenced policy. For all the years when we needed those facilities Morocco had great importance, especially in the estimate of the Pentagon. Then came a time when those facilities were not needed at all. That transition was rather abrupt. We had challenge of disengaging, giving up our base facilities for example, without harming our political relationship.

Q: After a year of language training, you went to Fez?

KEITH: As branch PAO.

Q: What was Fez?

KEITH: Fez is one of the old imperial capitals. Several cities in Morocco were dynastic capitals and represented the most important city at a moment in history. These included Meknes, Marrakesh, Tetuan and Fez. These cities were centers of Moroccan and Islamic culture and they still have vestiges of these things, but Fez is unique. Most Moroccans still consider Fez the cultural capital of the country, and the seat of its aristocratic class.

The old city of Fez hasn't changed very much. You still can't drive cars in there. You have to be on your toes or the donkeys will knock you over. Artisans still bang on copper trays. It is taking a step back into medieval Islam to walk through the old town of Fez. Fantastic place. It is intimidating in a way that Marrakesh is not. Marrakesh is a much more accessible city for a Western observer and more comfortable for tourists. You can wander around Marrakesh and go to Jama al-Fna, the open square that remains the center of local trade and entertainment. There are no real hindrances to enjoying a place like Marrakesh if you're a tourist, but Fez is a bit different. It requires some work. It is intimidating and getting lost in that labyrinth of old Fez is very easy. A lot of people rely on the local urchins as guides and that's not always a safe thing to do. Fez is historically very important both for Morocco and for the Islamic world. It's one of the great centers of Islamic learning. There is still an Islamic university that rivals the importance of Al-Azhar in Cairo. There is a class of ecclesiastical thinkers who still have some impact in the Arab world. Islam in Morocco has important local flourishes that many of in the rest of the Islamic world see as bordering on the heretical, particularly the veneration of local saints. It's certainly very different from what would be standard Islam in the eastern world, but at the same time the Alaoui dynasty traces its roots back to the Prophet.

Q: I would have thought that running a USIA operation in Fez would be very difficult in a society that would be almost impervious to what you were trying to do.

KEITH: No. I guess if you were honest with yourself, you knew that you were not there to revolutionize the relationship between the United States and Morocco. My major effort in the one year I was in Fez was to use focus on education and links with education in the U.S. We tried to acquaint educators in Fez with pedagogical development in the United States. We managed to develop a good relationship with the local director of the Ministry of Education and some university people, especially teacher trainers. For example, on one occasion the annual meeting of directors of American schools in the Middle East took place in Rabat. I arranged for a group of local teachers to audit the meeting with a translator. At that point I thought we had really gotten some momentum going. It was fortunate in a sense for me that the USIS leadership in that country in Rabat was focused on something that was so entirely different from what my interests were that I think they sort of wrote me off in Fez. As long as I wasn't making problems, they just let me go on and do what I wanted. I found that ideal.

Q: What were they doing in Rabat?

KEITH: Bob Behrens was the PAO. There were widely varying opinions of his leadership, but undoubtedly he was a man of vision. I think he was able to see that this alien society – and believe me, Morocco is an alien society to the United States – would never relate deeply to the U.S. under prevailing circumstances. I have never been in a more exotic country in that regard than Morocco. I've been in countries that are a lot further away from the United States or from Europe, but I've never been in a more exotic country. I think what Behrens wanted to do was to transfer as much of an American cultural experience into Morocco as possible in shortest possible time span. He believed that importing American the contemporary American experience, whether in the form of shopping malls, or bowling alleys or Cineplex movie houses would create broader cultural affinity with the U.S. among ordinary Moroccans. I think the experiment was doomed for various reasons, but he was certainly a persuasive advocate for the initiative. He managed to enlist a number of wealthy and well-placed Moroccans that they could serve the cause of mutual understanding and make money while doing it. In the end, it didn't go very far. But it did galvanize and involve everybody on the staff in Rabat. Basically, since I wasn't really a part of that process, I was allowed to be off in Fez doing my own thing.

Q: With our efforts there, one always thinks of the King as pulling all the strings. Were there target groups that you felt were important in Moroccan society?

KEITH: Yes. I think it is fair to say that the intelligentsia – the politically aware and active elites in Morocco – were not on our side. Whether they had grievances against the U.S. because of our stance in Middle East issues, our support of a non-democratic king, our involvement in Vietnam, and their preference for French rather than American culture. Many intellectuals were influenced by education in France, from which they emerged with a leftist, anti-American ideological bias.

Q: Were the French intelligentsia connections still pretty strong there?

KEITH: Yes.

Q: Of course, this was a cultural battleground for France.

KEITH: Very much so. It was an early lesson for me that the sense among my French counterparts was that I was an adversary. They nurtured the image of a United States grasping, trying to extend its influence, trying to replace France as a western cultural reference.

Q: I've talked to people who served in Paris and said that the foreign ministry there believed that we were trying to supplant them in Africa. And this was just not what we were trying to do at all.

KEITH: Yes. I have a very close friend, a man I've known for 25 years, who is a senior member of the French foreign ministry. One of his jobs was as the director of *La Francophonie*, the French effort to project and protect French language and culture all over the world. There is no way that I will ever convince him that supplanting the French in any way is not a major goal of the United States. A few years later, in Cairo, when I was asked by my French colleague how much money the United States puts into the American University in Cairo, and I told him practically nothing, he could not believe it. Basically, he got as close to saying, "Well, I know

you're lying for reasons of state" as he could and still maintain our friendship. But his point was, if the United States has an American university in Cairo, this was a goal that the French would love to be able to achieve and it just defied logic that we wouldn't be supporting it to the maximum extent. On that point I agree with him. I think we should be supporting it to the maximum extent, but we weren't and that doesn't seem to be a high priority of the U.S. government.

Q: You were there at an interesting time – the October '73 war. Every time there was one of these wars between Israel and its Arab neighbors, it always has reverberations all around the Arab world. What happened?

KEITH: One thing that surprised all of us was that the Moroccans sent some planes and joined the fight and actually saw combat against the Israelis in the '73 war. In fact, the anecdotal evidence that came out of that experience suggested that the Moroccans were quite committed in their combat against the Israelis.

Q: Did we train them?

KEITH: I believe there was some staff training from time to time, but the bulk of western training they got was from France. Our military relationship with Morocco was quite straightforward: we were paying for facilities. It surprised everybody that the Moroccans went over there and fought so enthusiastically. The biggest impact of that was a local impact. It was a great shock to the Jewish community in Morocco that had managed to survive and hang on. There were Jews historically and even after 1967 who were advisors to the King. The Jewish communities, although greatly diminished after '67, continued to exist. But the '73 war was a shock and a lot of the Jewish community in Morocco went to France. In fact, the atmosphere for them, which had been remarkably tolerant, changed.

Q: Why would this happen? There had been a number of wars...

KEITH: I think it was a surprise to everybody but the Moroccan government. As to why then and not before, I just don't know the answer.

Q: I was wondering whether they shut down your office for a while?

KEITH: No. This occurred during the Islamic month of Ramadan. It was a tradition at the Center, one established by one of my predecessors, Chris Ross, that we conduct a nightly Ramadan chess tournament. The tournament went on as usual, and we couldn't really detect any unusual behavior or comment.

Q: Were there concerns about mob action?

KEITH: We got a couple of extra soldiers standing around, but no. Not in Fez.

Q: In your work in Fez, did you find that there was more or less support for the King?

KEITH: The King has relatives all over Morocco including, of course, Fez. That was a period, the early '70s, in which he was spending a lot of his time at his Fez palace. The focus of anti-Hassan sentiment was certainly not Fez. It was Casablanca and Rabat. The traditional links between the King and Fassi society were strong and remained strong. Fez was not a hotbed of anti-Hassan sentiment.

Q: Was there much connection between Morocco and Algeria?

KEITH: No. They're rivals, and that was brought into sharp focus in the Western Sahara with Algeria's ongoing support for the Polisario. The same thing is true about Libya. Morocco is isolated. The Tunisians really had no regional role except to keep their heads down. The Algerians and the Libyans have always been tough opponents for King Hassan. As I've mentioned before, in those days the Libyans were broadcasting into Morocco in Moroccan Arabic and with the kind of radio broadcasting what we call today call "shock radio." They had incredible sources and knew about corruption and favoritism and unfair treatment down to the village level and they were talking about those things on the radio. Libyan radio was admired because it dealt with everyday life in Morocco and it was so accurate.

Q: Did we do anything to foster the enmity between Algeria and Morocco?

KEITH: I never heard of such a policy and I don't think it existed. We had difficult relations with Algeria, but we had important economic interests there. Algeria has major gas deposits and American companies had significant commercial interests and were looking for an even more important role. Our long term interests in Algeria were far more important potentially than our interests in Morocco. So, there wouldn't have really been much impetus for us to do anything in the '70s that would promote instability

MARK LORE
Economic Officer
Rabat (1972-1974)

Mark Lore was born New York in 1938, and graduated from Bowling Green State University. He served in the US ARMY from 1961 to 1964 as an overseas captain. His foreign service postings include Rio de Janeiro, Brasilia, Luanda, Rabat, Brussels and Lisbon. Lore was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy on July 9, 1998.

Q: Today is July 9, 1998. Mark, we're off to Rabat, 1972. Did this come as a surprise or was it a requested assignment, or how did it come about?

LORE: It was a requested assignment. It was a position that was at my grade. It was an economic position. I had taken the FSI six-month economic course and had not done any economic work. I obviously needed a working economic assignment, it was time to go abroad, and it was one of two or three possibilities. I was attracted by the chance to learn French in addition to my

Portuguese.

Q: When you got to Morocco, 1972, when you first arrived could you describe the state of the country as you saw it and maybe as the embassy saw it?

LORE: It was an interesting time. As I was doing my consultations preparatory to going out, a number of people congratulated me on going out to a place that was about to explode, a place where the government would change. There had been two attempted coup attempts against the king of Morocco in the summer of '71 and the summer of '72.

Q: '71 was the birthday party and '72 was the airplane, attempt to shoot him down.

LORE: Exactly, you've got it right. So the general feeling was that you had another Libya in the making in Morocco and Foreign Service Officers being what they are, people felt this was professionally great, I was going at a good time. When I arrived in Morocco it was a difficult time for the American embassy because the 1972 attempt had been spearheaded by U.S. trained Moroccan pilots flying U.S. furnished aircraft out of a U.S. controlled base in northern Morocco. The king, not surprisingly, suspected U.S. connivance with the plot to remove him from power and to kill him in the process. The attempt was to shoot down his private plane coming back from France that summer. I didn't think at the time, and I've never thought since that there was anything to that -- what would the U.S. have to gain in doing away with a close friend and ally? Nevertheless, the king was at least standoffish, not being quite sure who in the U.S. government might have known or should have known about the coup attempt.

Some of the young Moroccan pilots, U.S. trained pilots, were married to American women. This increased the impression that the U.S. was abandoning Hassan. The embassy thus was in somewhat of a cold freeze as regards the palace. Late that summer and early fall there was a show trial of the pilots which was exhaustively reported in the local press. By the way, the Moroccan press was, and I think still is, remarkably free. You're not allowed to criticize the king as the king directly but otherwise there is a great deal of freedom. Obviously, the government in this case did not try to stand in the way of almost verbatim reporting of the proceedings. So it was a very tense time and nervous time for the American embassy. That dissipated by the winter, however. Whether the king decided to put his suspicions aside or for whatever other reasons, relations appeared to return to normal during much of my tour.

Q: Your tour was from '72 to...?

LORE: '74.

Q: Did the embassy go through the exercise of trying to find out what possible American influences might have been on these pilots?

LORE: I expect so, although I wasn't involved or privy to any such consultations. I'm sure that various people in the embassy were looking at this as well as some people in places in Washington, but it wasn't something I was involved in.

Q: Who was our ambassador then?

LORE: Our ambassador at the time of my arrival was Stuart Rockwell, career Foreign Service Officer who had been DCM in Teheran, preceding this assignment. He was essentially an Arabist and an old line, old style diplomat. Very courteous, but somewhat reserved in his manner and reserved and somewhat distant from the rest of the staff.

Q: Was he there the whole time you were there?

LORE: No, he left probably before he expected to because the White House wanted to put a political appointee in the position. This was at the time that Watergate was beginning to unravel. Remember that Nixon gave one of his famous speeches in which he announced the firing of Haldeman.

Q: It was his chief of staff.

LORE: His chief of staff. It was only shortly thereafter that suddenly the word came that there would be a new ambassador in Rabat. The new ambassador, Robert Neumann came from Afghanistan where he had been ambassador for seven years. Neumann was a California Republican who, in 1964, headed up Republicans for Johnson. When Nixon was elected California Republicans came to him and said, "You may not like this guy." Of course, both Nixon and Haldeman were California Republicans who knew very well why they didn't like Bob Neumann. Nevertheless, it was argued by some powerful people in the Senate and elsewhere that you had to give this guy, who was a foreign policy expert, a job in the new administration. Neumann was sent to Afghanistan, which was an even more undesirable and distant place than it is now. He was allowed, the scuttlebutt said, to essentially just sit there for seven years. The talk was that the White House wanted to just wear him out.

Q: It must have been Johnson who put him in then, because...

LORE: Yes.

Q: Johnson put him in.

LORE: That's right. Johnson put him in but the new Nixon White House prevailed upon to leave him there in order that he...because he did have powerful friends in Washington. But they vowed that they would never do anything else for him. When Haldeman fell out of power, however, that is said to have released him from bondage and he showed up in Rabat soon afterwards as the new ambassador. He was the ambassador for about 14-16 months of my tour.

Q: How did you find him as ambassador?

LORE: He was a man who was very sure of himself. Very sure of his opinions. He's often been compared to having a kind of Kissingerian style about him. Not only the German accent but also an academic who views his opinions as more worthy than those of most other people. He didn't take much of an interest in economics so my embassy section didn't have as much to do with him

as did some others. He did what ambassadors to Morocco have often done, and that is he stayed close to the king. He worried about the security relationship. This stood us in good stead late in my tour during the October '73 war when suddenly the U.S. government looked around and discovered it had no friends in the Middle East, except for Hassan. It used Hassan's close ties with Sadat to develop that relationship. One day we in the embassy were packing our bags and putting them at the door ready to be evacuated when the war kicked off. You have to remember that there were Moroccan troops on the Golan Heights and there were U.S. Naval communications facilities in Morocco that were dealing with the Sixth Fleet which was sending out bombers to bomb those positions on the Golan, so it was a very dicey period. But Hassan realized where his interests lay and essentially brokered the relationship with Sadat. The upshot was that, within a week, we were no longer planning on being evacuated but rather were receiving the Secretary of State for urgent consultations with the King.

Q: Neumann, I believe is Jewish, isn't he?

LORE: I believe so.

Q: Did that play any factor? I'm just trying get, sort of...Morocco is sort of unique in this area and I'm wondering if you could comment on that.

LORE: Neumann's religion played no perceptible role in his effectiveness. Morocco has traditionally been very tolerant of Jews. It's true that, during the '73 war, there were mutterings against the remaining Jewish population. The Jewish population didn't always feel welcome in Morocco but they certainly didn't feel endangered the way they did elsewhere. By and large from the king on down there was an official policy of strict tolerance.

Q: Did you find...again, you're sort of the fly on the wall, you're not in, sort of in the political deliberations, but one of the accusations that's been made against our ambassadors and our embassy in Morocco is they end up identifying so closely with the king that they develop a bad case of localitis, as we call it, rather than representing American interests they seem to represent Moroccan interests. Was that a problem at this period? Did you observe...?

LORE: I think it's always been a problem no matter who the ambassador is. Neumann was not as egregious as some others have been. But the king is very skillful at manipulating us. The king understands, and understood particularly at that time, that the U.S. needed friends. The king needed it, wanted a tight security relationship and a lot of support in the military area. Otherwise, he wanted the U.S. to basically play a relatively passive role in Morocco. We were important to him but I'd argue that, at least at that time, he was more important to us. We needed Arab friends and Hassan was one of the only ones around. Economically, he relied much more on France and on Europe than on us. The one thing we could supply, military hardware, had to be fought for in competition with other claimants. These circumstances inevitably made our ambassador more of an open partisan in Washington. We didn't have much leverage on the Moroccans, they had a lot on us.

Q: What was the economic work that you were doing?

LORE: We did standard economic reporting on the condition of the Moroccan economy. I did a lot of resource reporting. The Bureau of Mines has been very interested for many years in Moroccan mineral production. It's quite sizable for the size of the country. Morocco was, at the time, the biggest phosphate exporter in the world and one of the biggest phosphate producers, in competition with us to some degree. So we did a lot of minerals reporting. We worked quite a bit, particularly under ambassador Neumann, in the latter part of my tour, on investment promotion. More than I have at any other post in my career. Normally, U.S. economic/commercial sections focus on selling U.S. exports into the country. Investment is certainly supported, but it is not as important an activity. In this case, however it became very important to the embassy to develop various kinds of assistance efforts for the Moroccans to attract American investment into the country. That was the gist of it. Most of the commercial activity was in Casablanca which is a major commercial center.

Q: How did you find life there as far as dealing with Moroccan society? Did you have good contacts and all? Was it difficult?

LORE: Contacts are difficult. It is outwardly an easier society than many others in the Middle East. It has a French veneer and many of the elite bureaucrats in the foreign ministry and elsewhere that you would deal with were French-trained people. They were very, very skillful at their work, multilingual, very smooth, very cosmopolitan. Many of them had French wives. Scratch the surface, however, and it was very difficult to get to know them very well. Moroccans, at least during my time, and I suspect it's still the case, the elite Moroccans with whom an embassy would tend to deal, would have two lives. One was the official life in which they spoke French and did their work. The other was their personal life that they kept rigorously separate and closed to foreigners for the most part. Even closed to many other Moroccans.

Moroccans are not an outgoing people. They're a rather insular culture and it's difficult to break into that culture. I did not speak Arabic or Berber. We didn't have any Berber speakers, serious Berber speakers in the embassy. But our Arabic speakers, some of whom were quite fluent, including Dick Parker, the DCM, had as much trouble breaking into the society as we French speakers did. It wasn't a language thing, it was more a cultural thing. Parker would frequently complain about the difficulty in getting to know Moroccans, where in his long service in Cairo, Egypt he had found it very easy to get to meet and get to know Egyptians on a personal basis.

Q: What about relations with Algeria? How were they at that time in your perspective?

LORE: They were uneasy. The Algerians were supporting the Polisario Front in what was Spanish Morocco. The Algerians were a revolutionary, Marxist regime. On the other hand, Morocco was essentially a capitalist economy run by large firms, mostly French, and a Moroccan elite - somewhat of a robber baron elite. So the two countries didn't have a lot in common in the way they looked at the world. The Moroccans, having suffered two coup attempts from army officers who were trying to establish a fundamentalist regime in Rabat, understandably were very suspicious of Algerian intentions in this area. Algeria and Morocco have competed for many years. It's not helped by the fact that the Moroccans have always looked down on the Algerians and in fact all others in northern Africa as peasants and they regard themselves as the most culturally developed and cosmopolitan people of North Africa.

Q: Did you find in your economic work that you were up against the French Mafia? I'm using that term very loosely. In other words, did the French establishment didn't want us messing around in their area?

LORE: Yes, it's a fact of life in the country. Most big contracts went to the French. The French were well ensconced at all levels of the bureaucracy. But there are some things that France can't provide and the king's relationship with us was such that you couldn't have blatant favoritism. In the military area, which of course extends into all kinds of hardware and technology, we had an advantage over the French. So this was not a major issue, but certainly we were always aware that the French were very sensitive to our influence in the country - particularly on the commercial side, but also to some degree political.

Q: You say this was your first economic post. How did you feel about both your training and your sort of progress in the field of economics?

LORE: The training was excellent. It's a rigorous course they give at FSI. This was before, really, State entered the computer age. So I didn't get a lot of quantitative economics. But the basic concepts were I think, put across quite well and they were quite helpful in Morocco. The Moroccan economy was an interesting third world economy.

Q: Looking at Algeria where this revolutionary socialist hard-line Marxist government came in and destroyed what seemed to be, at least on the surface, a very wealthy country. They got rid of the French but didn't put anything in its place, they destroyed agriculture, they did everything wrong. One, were we watching the Moroccans to see whether they might be tempted to go this way, and two, were the Moroccans, people you talked to, looking at the Algerians and understanding the trap that they might get into if they tried to get too revolutionary?

LORE: There never was any inclination in Morocco to follow the Algerian example, not even among the Moroccan left. First, the Moroccans look down on their North African neighbors as bedouins - they see Morocco as the only cultured society in the western Arabic world. Second, the organized left in Morocco such as it was, such as it is, is largely trade union based and resembled Western European trade union movements which did not challenge the basic capitalist model. What the generals who tried to overthrow Hassan in the '71-'72 period would have done is only conjecture. The fact is that Morocco has remained a stable, capitalist society. The king has been skillful enough to stay on the throne, the country has prospered - albeit with great income disparities - while Algeria has continued to disintegrate. This of course has confirmed the views and approach of Morocco's leadership elite.

Q: Did Tangier play any particular role as a bridge to Europe or not?

LORE: No, Tangier at that time, and I suppose it's still true, has diminished in importance. Essentially it is a picturesque ferry stop for tourists. It has little political or economic or commercial importance. It has some cultural importance. But even Moroccans don't look at Tangier with any great interest because it doesn't represent for them the cultural wellsprings of their country in the same way that Meknes and Fez and Marrakech and even Rabat do, the four

imperial cities. Tangier is sort of a fabrication largely built and peopled by Europeans. You also have the historical split between French Morocco and Spanish Morocco between which Tangier sat as sort of an anomaly.

Q: As an economic officer and with a commercial hat too, did the Sharia law come into effect? Did it have any impact on commerce? Having served as an economic officer in Saudi Arabia at the end of the '50s I know that the Sharia law didn't work well in modern commerce. I was wondering whether this had any intrusion.

LORE: You'll have to explain the Sharia law to me.

Q: Well, Sharia law is the law of the Koran essentially. It doesn't make allowances for modern commercial practice and all that.

LORE: No, that wasn't a factor in Morocco. To my recollection the only thing in Morocco that was traditional and Islamic in nature was the judicial system. You have to recognize that the French colonized Morocco in a very different way than they did Algeria. Algeria was beyond being a colony, it was considered part of France. It was a department of France. In the case of Morocco, it was a protectorate. It didn't belong to France, France had it by international agreement to administer, but it was not a part of France and it was not a colony of France. There were several other countries including the United States which had a formal role as overseeing this protectorate. So the French were more limited in what they could introduce.

Interestingly enough though, that resulted in a situation where they allowed the traditional culture to maintain its past presence and practices in terms of family life, in terms of judicial institutions, in terms of local government. But they built alongside it a parallel structure of essentially European institutions to run the economy and to run the economic life of the country. This was essentially the balance that the French struck. When the Moroccans took their independence, after a relatively short fight - nothing like the Algerian war of independence - the Moroccans maintained that division as something they felt comfortable with. So commercial life was always quite recognizable to any Westerner.

Q: Did you as duty officer, as an officer of the embassy get involved in any problems with American youth heading for Marrakech and other places and enjoying hashish and that sort of thing?

LORE: No, occasionally I did a little bit of consular work there and occasionally you would have a problem with young Americans trying to smuggle, as you said, hashish out of the country. Nothing more serious in those days. We didn't have the problem with Americans in jail and the draconian treatment of them that you find in parts of the Arab world and Turkey and Latin America today. There were only a few young Americans trekking around the country. Occasionally there would be a problem such as when a group of them made a stew of poison mushrooms and all died. In general, Americans who were in country in those days largely kept to themselves and were savvy enough to keep out of trouble.

HAYWOOD RANKIN
Vice Consul
Tangier (1973-1975)

Haywood Rankin was born in the District of Columbia in 1946. He received both his bachelor's degree and law degree from the University of North Carolina in 1968 and 1971, respectively. His career has included positions in Tangier, Algiers, Cairo, Damascus, Baghdad, Muscat, and Abidjan. Haywood Rankin was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy on July 24, 1998.

Q: This is going to be a shortened interview rather than a full career one because you are going off to North Carolina. I'm not sure whether we could continue it again. Could you tell me though the dates of where you served, when to when, your various assignments.

RANKIN: My first assignment was as vice consul at the consulate general in Tangier, Morocco. That was 1973 to 1975. It was one of the most varied consular assignments anyone could have had, even if not a great tour for a political cone officer. Of course we no longer have a consulate, much less a consulate general in Tangier, although it actually was the very first American diplomatic post abroad. We have a museum there now, where the old legation used to be. Tangier remains very special to me, with its incredibly beautiful setting on the Strait and its wonderful mix of Berbers, English, Spaniards, French, artists, aristocrats, and drifters.

CARLETON S. COON, JR.
Deputy Chief of Mission
Rabat (1974-1976)

Ambassador Carleton S. Coon, Jr. was born in France on April 27, 1927. He served in the U.S. Army from 1945-1946 and received a bachelor's degree from Harvard University in 1949. His career in the Foreign Service included positions in Frankfurt, Damascus, New Delhi, Rabat, Kathmandu, and Washington, DC. Ambassador Coon was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy on October 26th, 1989.

Q: ...at Carlston College, and then you moved from '74 to '76 as...

COON: Deputy Chief of Mission in Rabat.

Q: Who was the Ambassador then?

COON: Bob Neumann. I had met Bob when I was DCM in Kathmandu. I admired him, I liked him. I found his style, and his wit, refreshing and quite different from the run of the mill diplomat. He's not a career man, but he's very, very much an old school diplomat and he did rather well in Kabul as far as I know. And he could have done quite well in Morocco, only his

career there was cut rather short, as it was in subsequent assignments.

Q: What cut it short?

COON: Let's put it this way, he didn't see eye to eye with Henry Kissinger on everything. Henry was Secretary of State. I don't think I'm revealing any great secret if I suggest that possibly Henry was responsible for his early removal.

Q: What, when you were there, this '74 to '76 period, what was our particular concern in Morocco?

COON: I've got to try to separate this out because my more recent memories from '79 to '81 are so much more vivid. And this was still during the Nixon-Ford administrations. I guess we were still on something of an even keel as far as our military relationship with Moroccans were concerned. We had a substantial arms program, and then a big military mission there. The Spanish pulled out of the western Sahara during my period there and the king staged his famous green march in which he sent hundreds of thousands of Moroccans walking across the border into the face of the Spanish guns, which didn't fire. If the King had been more popular he would have been another Gandhi out of it but he had a bad reputation among American liberal circles so nobody heard much about this. But it was a fantastic development, and the Moroccans -- at least the northern part of the western Sahara -- after cutting a deal with the Mauriticians and started fighting them. That was just revving up when I left.

Q: What was your impression of the king...

COON: Hassan. He started as a playboy and has ended up as a very astute...one of the most astute, and skillful leaders on the Middle Eastern scene. He has shown real leadership in spite of his rather bad reputation. Considerable vision -- he talks like a visionary at times, but when it comes to the manipulative sides of his role he's very skillful.

Q: At the time you were there, why did he have a bad reputation in the United States?

COON: Again, I'd rather talk about that when we get to the next time that I was dealing with him, because I can speak with a clearer memory. In fact he had a good reputation with the administration, the Republican administration. But the King has always been ideologically litmus-like as far as American politics are concerned. Republicans tend to like him, and Democrats tend to dislike him. That may be an over simplification, and probably was in terms of Dean Rusk's day, but certainly there was a...let me come to that after we get through the Foreign Service Institute.

Q: Okay. You went to the Foreign Service Institute as Deputy Director. This was '76 to '79.

COON: Yes. I came back a few months after Neumann left. I had been thinking of staying on for three years but I felt on balance...I mean Bob Anderson had come in with ideas of his own regarding his own DCM of choice. And I felt staying on was a little bit pushing it, and also I was developing a little bit of a high blood pressure situation and they felt I should come back for

treatment, which they did and they fixed it.

Q: You were Deputy Director of the FSI for a while.

COON: Three years.

Q: What were you doing?

COON: I was helping George Springsteen manage it. I was personally running the Diplomat in Residence program, did a lot of traveling around America for that. And George gave me a kind of license to go around the various parts of the Institute and shake things up where I felt like it. And I chose to shake up the language school, which I did. I think the results are still evident. It was a revolution whose time had certainly come. The manager of the language school, Jim Frith, had been there since the beginning and had run the place in a tightly controlled fashion. I began to talk to linguists and found that all sorts of opportunities were being overlooked, and persuaded the school and the management to bring in some important changes. I got the Peace Corps experience in training kids in foreign languages sort of focused into the process too. And I got some fairly basic changes in personnel assignment practices for junior officers wired in, that made sense. And some changes in curriculum and teaching approaches. It was interesting and in the meantime I also carried on and did my job as DCM for the professional studies, and area studies, and the family liaison people.

Q: Were you there during the change over to the consular training? Or did that happen before?

COON: A new consular program had just been started a year or two earlier and I sort of helped with some of the follow-on problems there, and helped transfer that experience to the administrative training program. But I didn't help very much, I mean there were experts that were doing it and I was generally supervising. When I talk about what I've accomplished, I'm distinguishing between a general supervisory role where I was there and approved what was going on, and situations like the language school where I intervened personally and reached down and banged heads and actually things changed as a result of my direct intervention.

Q: Did you find that the FSI was well plugged in to the operations of the State Department?

COON: That's always a question. Springsteen fought that one very hard. George was not one to be overlooked or ignored by the powers. He was quite frequently at odds with the Director General's office on various aspects of personnel. I mean there is an instinctive and natural tendency in any system for this kind of confrontation to occur between people who regard training as a convenient place to park officers that are either unemployable, or temporarily out of the loop, and people who regard training as sort of a cost effective basis as something where you've got to put your best officers at the right time and with priority.

Now there was a considerable overlap of views between the personnel and the trainers, but every once in a while this basic difference would rear its head in one way or another. I would certainly regard my Diplomat in Residence program as a safety valve to let off a lot of steam on the tension on what you do with senior officers who are temporarily out of the loop.

No, I think it was a healthy situation with George there with his capacity to attract attention, even when people didn't want to give it to him, which he had.

Q: Then we come back to North Africa.

COON: Yes. I in effect stepped down a level in rank by taking an office director job where I'd been in a sort of DAS type job.

Q: Assistant Secretary.

COON: Deputy Director was ranked with DAS's and it was a little bit awkward because, just as I did it, my wife, who'd been office director, became a DAS in NEA. But she had South Asia and was very busy with Afghanistan and all that, and I had North Africa. I worked for Maury Draper who was DAS and had responsibility among other things for North Africa. But, unfortunately, he also had responsibility for Lebanon, and he was much more concerned with Lebanon than North Africa. I can't really fault his judgement. Anyway, I operated without terribly much supervision from Maury, except when I clamored for it. That was one of my incarnations that I look back on with more pleasure because I stepped into a situation in which the US government was deeply divided regarding our North African policy. Not Qadhafi. I mean it was hard to be divided about Qadhafi, but about Morocco specifically, and to some extent Tunisia and Algeria. There were people in Policy Planning, and certainly people in the African Bureau, and to some extent they had Cy Vance's ear and felt that the Moroccan regime was, a) bad; and b) a loser and bound to change. As one of them said when I said, "Look, why do you constantly talk about doing nice things for the Algerians, who are kicking us around all the time, and doing horrid things to the Moroccans who have been our friends and allies for centuries?"

Q: They were the first people to seek us out. We're talking about 1978.

COON: Right. "Well," this person answered, "Carl don't you realize the Algerians have already had their revolution." That's a direct quote. And the theory was, that the Moroccans were on the skids, they were losing the war with the Polisario, revolution was incipient and was virtually inevitable. The King might last another year or two, but he wouldn't last more than. It was this vision that was in effect dominating US policy to the extent that...and there were large elements of that sentiment in Congress on the Hill too.

Q: I find it just strange.

COON: It was very strange but...

Q: There doesn't seem to be anything...it's not as though they were crossing us, or doing something...

COON: No. Remember the Shah had just been thrown out and here was another King. It was a little bit of a reaction to that. And then perhaps I'm overstating the point of view a little bit, but I don't think I am very much. I mean that was a direct quote I gave you about the Algerians have

already had...I didn't believe in being mad at the Algerians or anything. I mean, sure they gave us a hard time in the UN, but actually we had a mutually profitable economic relationship which we were interested in continuing. I couldn't see why...I mean it wasn't a zero sum game for us between the Algerians and the Moroccans. I didn't see why we couldn't revert to a more normal stance towards the Moroccans, and keep the Algerians more or less where they were. But that was another argument. "Oh, if you're nice to the King, then you're going to lose the Algerians, we're going to lose the oil, the natural gas thing, and so forth." I questioned the assessment of the King's fallibility. I questioned the assessment that was being produced, I think, because they felt it was what was wanted, that the Moroccans were losing the war. And I plunged full steam ahead to try to change those aspects of our policy that the Moroccans found particularly repulsive. They had this very limited number of aging F-5As that were their principal tactical weapon against the Polisario ability to strike unexpectedly at various outposts on the desert. We wouldn't even supply spare parts for the F-5s they had, let alone supply new ones. And there were questions of reconnaissance aircraft and that sort of thing. I found that I had powerful friends. The NEA Bureau was very much on my side. In fact, they'd recruited me because they knew that I would do this.

And I did a lot of traveling out there. I was out there a quarter of the time on field trips, and negotiated unilaterally with the Algerians and the Moroccans. And worked very hard developing contacts on Hill. Wrote quite a large number of papers of one kind or another, and used every trick I'd ever learned in the clearance process for telegrams. Brzezinski in the White House in the NSC was strongly pro-King and felt strongly...between Brzezinski and the military -- DOD was on this side too, couldn't understand what was going on with our good military relationship with the Moroccans. Anyway, by the time the election came along we'd pretty much turned things around.

Q: This is the election of '80? Reagan.

COON: Yes. And we turned things around to the point where the Moroccans were getting their spares, and we were negotiating for F- 5Es. I don't know, the exact record may be a little different. We were moving ahead with these spotter aircraft. The whole atmosphere had changed. The Moroccans were very encouraged by their new relationship with us. Then the election came along, and from my parochial point of view, it constituted a kind of referendum on the failed policy of Vance, and to some extent, the President. Carter had always been a little bit ambivalent, but leaning a bit toward...well, it's hard to say. It was hard to pin him down. He had Brzezinski in one ear, and Vance in the other, and it was not clearly identified, which camp he was in, on this Moroccan policy. But it was a pretty clear cut case in the election insofar as Reagan campaigned on foreign policy issues at all, it was "we help our friends." So the new gang came in and I was in very good odor because I'd been fighting on the right side.

JANE ABELL COON
Spouse of Deputy Chief of Mission
Rabat (1974-1976)

Ambassador Jane Abell Coon was born in Dover, New Hampshire and received a bachelor's degree from Wooster College. She served as a Foreign Service officer in Karachi, Bombay, New Delhi, and was ambassador to Bangladesh. Additionally, she was posted as the spouse of a Foreign Service officer to Kathmandu and Rabat. Ambassador Coon was interviewed on November 4, 1986 by Ann Miller Morin.

COON: I don't know whether it was before we left for Morocco the next summer, or after we got to Morocco, I was accepted back in at my old grade. They said that they could defer until we returned to Washington, so it was a two-year deferral there. I don't know, it may have been only a one-year, because of the security clearance; I don't remember exactly. So anyway, we went from Minnesota to Morocco.

Again, I considered this sort of something in my hip pocket, so to speak, coming back into the Service, but it didn't seem to me to be very viable if we had another overseas assignment after Morocco.

Q: What was Carl's position there?

COON: Carl was DCM. This was not something that was going to be very practical if Carl went on to be DCM elsewhere or got his own mission. But after a couple of years in Morocco, we did come back.

Q: Could you just tell me about that time when you were in Morocco? You made the statement that you were restless at the time, but is there anything else from that period that you feel helped you subsequently when you were an ambassador? Again, you were the DCM's wife.

COON: Well, I think I was very fortunate that the ambassador was Bob Neumann, and his wife was Marlen Neumann, two people for whom I have a very, very high regard. Both of them included me as an intelligent member of the community, so to speak. And Marlen and I got along very well. She is an outstanding woman, and Ambassador Neumann was a person who treated both men and women with a great deal of respect. So I think that was a plus. I became a member of the Tangier-American school board, which meant visits up to Tangier. We did quite a lot of traveling in Morocco, and I also spent a month, which was useful, on my own in France at Besançon studying French; living with a French family and studying French one summer, because my French was terrible. Still is.

Q: Do you like the Maghreb?

COON: Yes. Particularly Morocco.

Q: Fez is a fascinating place, isn't it? Well, so is Rabat.

G. NORMAN ANDERSON

**Political Counselor
Rabat (1974-1978)**

G. Norman Anderson studied Russian while he was in the U.S. Navy and later attended the Russian Institute at Columbia University. Mr. Anderson entered the Foreign Service in 1960 and served in Lebanon, Germany, the Soviet Union, Morocco, Bulgaria, Tunisia, Sudan, and Macedonia. He was interviewed by J. P. Moffat on June 18, 1996.

Q: ...firmly into the Arabic speaking world with your assignment as political counselor to Rabat in 1974. That brought you there in time for such excitements as the Green March. Can you set the stage a little for us about your time in Morocco?

ANDERSON: The Green March was a very interesting event. King Hassan announced that Moroccans would start marching on the Spanish Sahara, claimed by Morocco but occupied by Spain at the time. Of course we were all wondering whether he could actually pull this off, but he did send hundreds of thousands, I think it was 300,000, people down towards the border. They were to march across with their Korans in hand without any arms. So, it was a rather clever propaganda move. Indeed, as time went by, Spain did relent and set up a tri-partite transitional government in the Spanish Sahara. The Mauritians, Moroccans, and Spaniards ran the Sahara during the interim period. At just that particular time, the embassy was invited to send someone down to visit el-Ayoune, the capital of Sahara. So, I was designated to go down there. The Moroccans took us all around. Their point was to demonstrate that everyone in the Sahara wanted to be Moroccan. So, they had organized all kinds of rallies and we went to a session of parliament and so forth. Everywhere we turned people came up to us and informed us that they wanted to join Morocco. We were sent out in helicopters to some outposts in the desert. We did notice that Moroccan troops were quite nervous at these places. They seemed to be on the alert for attacks by the Polisario, a movement favoring independence. They breathed a sigh of relief when we finally left these outposts. In any case, I think King Hassan very cleverly was able to absorb the Sahara and he did withstand the many attacks by the Polisario over a long period of time. He had staying power, which seems to be the main factor there.

Q: I recall that your first ambassador there, Ambassador Neumann, and his colleague in Algeria engaged in a battle of telegrams that would electrify Washington. Can you bring us up to date on that?

ANDERSON: Well, some people thought there was a bit of localitis involved in the reporting back and forth, and I suppose that was probably true. I think a lot of the people assigned as ambassador to Morocco, as you point out in your own paper, were enamored with the king. He was extremely charming and won people over. It was very hard to be critical of the king. Also the king, I think, had the nasty habit of getting rid of ambassadors he didn't like. So he more or less assured that he had a favorable voice at the embassy. I'm not to sure what the situation is today, but I wouldn't be too surprised if this continues.

Q: As your time there went on the question became more and more one of U.S. military assistance for Morocco. Were you deeply involved in that?

ANDERSON: No, not really. I think those questions were handled on a higher level. We mostly were involved in the political contacts, especially with some of the opposition parties. The ambassador, for example, probably didn't want to be too deeply involved with those because King Hassan would notice and take such contacts amiss. Of course, I think Morocco was very important in American policy because it was one of the few friends we had among Arab countries and King Hassan pursued a very moderate policy on the Arab/Israel issue, so that made him quite valuable, I think, to American policy.

Q: And he was also, was he not, involved in African affairs?

ANDERSON: That's right, I think he had much greater influence on the international level than some others, in a very constructive way, so that made him quite valuable. Also he took a very enlightened view regarding the Jewish community in Morocco, allowed many Jews to leave the country and those who remained, I think, felt quite secure as long as King Hassan was there.

CHARLES L. DARIS
Political Officer
Rabat (1975-1979)

Charles L. Daris was born in Massachusetts in 1938. He received his BA from San Francisco State College in 1963, and served in the US Navy from 1955-1961 overseas. His postings include Saigon, Kabul, Paris, Rabat, Johannesburg, Tunis, Bahrain, and Jeddah. Raymond Ewing interviewed Mr. Daris on March 3, 1998.

Q: You were on the desk about a year then? Where did you move from there?

DARIS: I went into Arabic training with a view to being posted in Morocco. After a number of permutations in my orders between Casablanca and Rabat I ended up in Rabat as a political officer. I had studied Arabic for a year, six months of which were in Tangier. Unfortunately a year is not enough, at least for me, to learn Arabic so much to my regret it did not make me an Arabist. But I stayed longer in Morocco than at any other post I ever had. I was there for almost five years including the Tangier time. It was an excellent assignment. Morocco is a fascinating country physically, geographically, culturally and even intellectually. As a political officer I did what I enjoyed doing most in the Foreign Service and that is getting out and meeting people. I found my dealings with the opposition more satisfying in the relatively closed society that Morocco was, but I knew a lot of people from all walks of life and thoroughly enjoyed my work there.

Q: Was that a problem for you, for the ambassador, that you were having good contacts with the opposition? I assume that everybody kind of knew that but was that subject to sensitivity at times?

DARIS: No. King Hassan was very wise in creating opposition parties that served to let off

steam, while they were closely watched and controlled. They existed and therefore it was perfectly normal that we talk to them. It would have been a contradiction otherwise. I don't think it ever caused any problems or certainly none that I was ever aware of. I was there over a span that included three ambassadors: I overlapped with Bob Neumann only briefly, followed by Bob Anderson and Dick Parker. Our relations with Morocco were close. While we were talking about the French a little while ago in terms of their domination of sub-Saharan West Africa, in Morocco their presence was very heavy but the King cleverly played his American card whenever he could to maintain leverage in his relations with France. This is a game you see time and time again in North Africa, an area where I must say I particularly enjoyed working. As we'll talk about later, I subsequently served in Tunisia.

The blend of African and Arab cultures and the proximity and vestiges of European presence in the region make it a very unique place. Morocco is especially diverse. It is a crossroads for so many cultures: Spanish, African, Arab, French, in addition to being a very rich country in terms of its topography. The fact that I met my wife of over 20 years in Morocco adds to the special memories I have of the country.

Q: That makes it special certainly. You mentioned that you had good contacts with the, if I could use the term authorized opposition or established opposition. Did you also try to make a point of getting to know people in the universities, labor, and I don't know whether there were other elements that were perhaps neither government supporters nor a part of the opposition, Islamic elements or otherwise? I don't really know Morocco at all so I'm not sure that that is a valid question but I guess after what happened in Iran it's probably worth asking as a political officer would.

DARIS: Yes, a good political officer will do as much as he can to get to know as many people as he can, and we did this. The Islamist movements, and remember this was in the late '70s, were not really coming into focus as political movers and shakers at that time but there were a few people with Islamist views who weren't affiliated with any parties who were around and one got to talk with them quite a lot.

The most prominent political issue arose after the demise of Franco, the Western Sahara question. This occurred in 1975. Shortly after that the King sent tens of thousands of unarmed people on a so-called "Green March," a peaceful march, into the territory to claim it for Morocco. That set off a conflict that is still unresolved to this day, basically between Morocco and Algeria, over the sovereignty of this territory. It has dominated the political agenda for Morocco for the last 25 years.

Q: Besides the Western Sahara issue which began really while you were there more or less, were there other regional issues that you were involved with like the Arab-Israeli issue? This was not too long after the '73 war and King Hassan in Morocco has certainly on occasion played a significant role, or a role in facilitating talks or dialog or some kind of a process.

DARIS: The King has always sought ways to be helpful and instrumental, or instrumental and helpful. I'm not sure which his priorities would be, I suspect the latter but nevertheless he has been in some ways helpful, and his willingness to help has always kept us engaged with him on

regional subjects. His ability to be helpful, given his distance from the problem, has varied in effectiveness but it has been a characteristic of the King that we have always nurtured. I personally think that his usefulness has been overemphasized, but I understand why we encouraged him.

Q: How about the United States role? I think you've touched on this before. We certainly have a long history with Morocco. I guess the consulate in Tangier goes back centuries or a long time. There was a military presence I think at the time you were there. What else can one say about our interests? Obviously it's partly related to Morocco's geographic position.

DARIS: As you say the consulate in Tangier I believe is our oldest U.S. owned diplomatic property overseas. It is still in our possession. There is a foundation now running it and they give conferences and hold colloquia, and I think give some grants as well. Morocco geographically sits astride the Straits of Gibraltar and has feet in the Mediterranean and on the Atlantic. In times of war, whether the Second World War or the Cold War, it was of some value to us. When I was there we were phasing out our last navy facility and actually closed down Kenitra which was the last military base, military presence, we had there. It was a small naval communications center. The U.S. Navy presence was a potential political liability for Hassan. Subsequent to that, however, the U.S. military got its foot back in but Hassan's motivation was to influence the U.S. position on the burning issue, the Western Sahara.

Our assets in Morocco were never central to our strategic posture. And, as is the case in so many third world countries where we have military facilities, it depends on the conflict whether they can be used at all. I think it is a useful exercise for those who seek to strive to obtain facilities, military facilities especially, to try to project under what circumstances you can actually use those facilities. That is because countries, if they don't agree with what we want to do, can and often do prevent us from using their territory. It isn't very useful for military planners to have expensive facilities that they can't use. I've seen this occur time and time again.

Q: At the time that you were there we had, and I guess we still have, a consulate in Casablanca. I hope it is still there.

DARIS: Yes it is.

Q: I think there was at least one reporting officer, a labor-political position there. Did you spend much time in Casablanca yourself or try to draw on the reporting by the consul general and the labor-political officer there?

DARIS: Ironically that labor job was the one I was initially slated to go to. The situation went back and forth and I finally ended up in Rabat. The Casablanca Consulate people came to us more often than we went to them because Casa was their territory and they were covering things pretty well. Some of the opposition movements were more present down there than in Rabat and it was that aspect that drew me there when I did go, but it was potential duplication of effort for Embassy people to be spending too much time doing reporting in Casablanca.

Q: We talked about the role of Morocco vis-à-vis the Middle East peace process, the

Palestinians, at the time you were there was Morocco trying to play a role or seen as playing a role in North African organization? Obviously Morocco had its problems or had problems with Algeria about the Western Sahara but were they trying to find common ground with other North African states or with Southern European states in a broader Mediterranean context? How did Morocco see its place at that time in its immediate region?

DARIS: The question in a way was more, how did the King see his place? The King always was looking for ways to play a larger role, often, I felt, to satisfy his ego. This does not mean that it did not at time serve Morocco's greater good. Over the years Hassan floated a number of ideas, concepts, and proposals involving the region, but their concretization was seldom achieved, in my view.

The main impediment to Hassan's would-be aspirations in this regard were Morocco's very bad relations with Algeria. That really dominated regional political equations. In this regard, it was an interesting professional experience to watch the advocacy from our embassies in the two warring capitals and the way it played out in this period. Our embassy in Algiers was usually arguing for "balance" in U.S. policy in the Western Sahara dispute and our embassy in Rabat was often more inclined toward the Moroccan thesis, although not always. There were spirited exchanges of telegrams between the capitals and Dick Parker, who was in charge of the Algiers Embassy at the time first as Interests Chief and subsequently as ambassador, was a formidable advocate. In fact, Dick probably suffered in Moroccan eyes for his role in that period, because his later assignment as Ambassador to Rabat was curtailed at Hassan's request.

Q: He was in charge of which embassy?

DARIS: Of Algiers.

Q: Because later he was ambassador to Morocco.

DARIS: Later when he came over as ambassador to Morocco, he didn't last long because the King and his people I think felt that Dick, shall we say, was too balanced. That is no reflection on Dick whom I admire enormously and who is a friend. On the contrary it is if anything a positive reflection. I think he was quite right to argue (and argue effectively I think) for a go-slow posture on the part of the U.S. in terms of the Western Sahara conflict because the legal and moral aspects of it raise questions which the U.S. government still hasn't come to terms with.

Q: The Western Sahara conflict at some point, and I don't remember the details, became a United Nations issue and the UN has played a role ever since. I don't know when that happened. Was that when you were there?

DARIS: It has played a role for a long time. In the most recent period, Jim Baker has negotiated a package that is being played out now.

Q: That is on behalf of the secretary general I think?

DARIS: The secretary general has just appointed an old colleague of ours, Charlie Dunbar, as his

special representative to the Western Sahara. He is going to try to do something with this package but it is problematic because the same issues that prevailed then prevail now, the most important of which is, who is a Saharan and who votes?

Q: What about Morocco with regard to Africa south of the Sahara in the other direction? Were they doing much at that time either bilaterally within the OAU or within the United Nations?

DARIS: Morocco was a player in the OAU. It became a very intense player particularly after the Western Sahara, but then subsequently absented itself when the OAU recognized the Polisario. Morocco has always spent time looking southward and, when it wishes to, projects itself as an African country because of its geography and because of its historical antecedents. In the western part of the continent the substantial Islamic heritage emanated largely from Morocco. There are tombs in Morocco which draw pilgrims from Senegal, Mauritania and Mali, for example. There are still lingering views in some Moroccan circles propounding the idea of greater Morocco; these extremists can produce maps showing Morocco's frontiers extending well into these areas. At one point in history local leaders paying fealty to Morocco ruled in the famed desert city of Timbuktu. In more recent time, Hassan was close to Mobutu and he sent troops to Shaba twice. Morocco also tried to overthrow the regime in Benin and was quite activist in Francophone Africa in the '60s and '70s.

Q: You mentioned post-Franco development of the Western Sahara problem and the green march and so on, what about the two enclaves that Spain has within Morocco or on the Mediterranean shore? Was that an issue or was that seen, basically that arrangement, as beneficial to Morocco for economic and other reasons?

DARIS: Ceuta and Melilla, and there are also three small islands, actually. Morocco and Spain in a way have agreed to disagree on these issues. Morocco, quite interestingly and I think prudently, is tying activism on the recuperation of these territories to movement on Gibraltar between the British and Spanish. But while there are small groups in Morocco who militate for the return of the territories it is not something the King has not been able to manage. At this time, it is not in my view a burning issue. It is something the Moroccan government can use and turn on if it wishes to. For example, it briefly applied pressure on this issue after Franco's death when it was trying to get Spain to favor its position on the Western Sahara.

Q: What about Gibraltar again? Has Morocco taken much interest in that?

DARIS: Morocco says that it supports Spain's position on Gibraltar.

Q: It supports Spain's position?

DARIS: Yes, and the King says rather cutely to Spain that once you get Gibraltar back, of course you won't need Ceuta and Melilla and that will be the time for you to give them back to us.

Q: Meanwhile don't hold your breath. So you were there almost five years besides the time in Tangier. Let me come back to the language question again. A year of Arabic training is certainly not enough, particularly the writing system and all the nuances of Arabic. Did you find that you

were using Arabic a lot in Rabat or were you using French more?

DARIS: That was the trap, combined with my own linguistic lackings. French was so widely spoken among the people I dealt with that I worked in that language and my Arabic faded away, never having been at the working level anyway. The Department continues to make this mistake on Arabic. They keep training people for short periods. Perhaps it has some utility on the visa line but I don't think it justifies the investment. Arabic is traditionally a language that needs to be studied for 21 to 22 months before you can put somebody out there with the foundations necessary to reasonably expect them to function. It makes no sense to me to study it for any less a period.

Q: Could you read the newspaper in Arabic?

DARIS: I read it. I tested at a three level. It was a weak three in reading but the problem in addition to all of this, in the Maghreb context, and particularly the Moroccan Maghreb context, is that the Arabic is highly corrupted by the Berber dialects. The two extremes in the Arabic language exist in Iraq and in Morocco. In Iraq, Kurdish has corrupted the language. Arabs can't understand colloquial Moroccan. The Moroccans can understand them but not vice versa. What little I took away from Morocco didn't transplant anywhere when I went to other parts of the Arab world.

Q: This was about '73, '74, '75 maybe that you were in Tangier?

DARIS: '75.

Q: At that time we had an overseas Arabic language school in Beirut and also in Tangier?

DARIS: No. There had been an Arabic language school in Tangier and it had been closed but a few teachers were still there. When they were trying to train me for whatever job I was going to take, be it Casablanca or Rabat, they tailored my instruction and hired a couple of the old instructors who were still living in Tangier to work with me. Mohamed Senhaji, who wrote FSI's Moroccan Arabic textbook, was one of my teachers, and he is a friend.

Q: In theory they were particularly giving you western Arabic?

DARIS: The reading and writing were in classical arabic, so perhaps half the time I continued what I had been doing in Washington, which is what is called modern standard. But my oral exercises were all in the Moroccan dialect.

Q: Anything else we should talk about in context of almost five years in Morocco?

DARIS: No, I can't think of anything.

ROBERT ANDERSON

**Ambassador
Morocco (1976-1978)**

Ambassador Robert Anderson was posted to Morocco, China, Thailand, India, Washington, DC, Paris, Nanking, Benin and the Dominican Republic. He was interviewed in 1990 by Horace Torbert.

ANDERSON: Now on Morocco, where I went in March, '76, there are three or four points that I might mention. One, the King himself, King Hassan, is a truly remarkable person, whom Henry Kissinger qualifies as a statesman; Henry doesn't say that about many people. Why does he feel that way about Hassan?

When Kissinger came in as Secretary of State, you may remember, that was the first time that he then decided, after the '73 war, to become involved in the Middle East. The first stop he made, before he went out there was to see the King in Rabat. The King briefed him on every person he was going to see on his trip. He talked to him about Sadat. He talked to him about Faisal in Saudi Arabia. He talked to him about Hussein in Jordan; Assad in Syria, and even Boumedienne in Algeria. Henry had never met any of these people.

What's more, the King sent his Foreign Minister, Taibi Benhima, in advance of Kissinger to each stop; Taibi could brief all of these leaders on the King's impression of Kissinger. Henry never forgot that.

Now Hassan is no fool. He felt, "I'm of use to the United States of America and because of this the Americans will support me." He did this on the question of Sadat going to Jerusalem. There are certain initiatives that King Hassan took to bring the Egyptians and the Israelis together; it never would have occurred without Hassan.

Here again, he knows that we never would have had Camp David later on. None of these events would have occurred if it hadn't been for Hassan's actions when I was in Morocco. Phil Habib, who visited me at the time, and I were privileged to learn of what transpired on condition that we remain silent about it.

Q: What was our posture in Morocco at the time you went there? Did we still have communications bases, but no military bases, so to speak?

ANDERSON: That's correct. We had two communications facilities, but no military bases as such. While I was there, the U.S. Navy made the decision to close the communications facilities. I found out about this just by luck; hearsay at one of the facilities. I was not told officially. I was concerned in view of Hassan's reaction in light of what he had been doing to help us in many areas.

I went back to Washington and saw the vice CNO, and the Secretary of Defense, commenting: "Look, you don't do this just like that. King Hassan is a friend of the United States and doing some very valuable things for us. Any action we take must avoid showing a lack of confidence in him. Let us study this plan. If the Navy says it doesn't need the communications facilities, that's

fine. But let's see if there's anything else we would like to have from Morocco in a security sense."

So the Army, Navy, and Air Force were asked to look into this. In the meantime no final action was to be taken as to closing the facilities. All sorts of wish lists came in. Some were ridiculous; some practically wanted to go back to Morocco and make it a colony of the U.S. But finally, there were two or three items that would be politically palatable. I went to the King -- and this is all in the history books -- and told him that we were going to close, outlined the very orderly way we planned to do this and sought his approval of our plan and our desire to consider two new security operations in Morocco.

The King made a very sensible comment when I told him about closing these facilities because we were going to rely on satellites. He said: "Well, I'm not a communications expert, Mr. Ambassador, but you might tell Washington that I am perfectly willing to have them leave any of the equipment here in mothballs in case there's a war and the Russians shoot down your satellites and you will be in need of these older communications systems. You might want to use these again."

I relayed this to Washington. "No, no, no, no was the answer." Later on, that's just what the Navy wanted to do and it was too late, because they moved all the equipment into Spain, where its future use is far from assured. And to think we could have had this. The King was a very far-sighted individual.

There is another subject that I think we ought to concentrate on. This concerns the Sahara. I recommend that anyone who has the time and wants to be serious about the historical evolution of the Sahara, should focus on one or two things here. There was an international-court-of-justice opinion, which if read objectively, indicates that there certainly is a Moroccan claim to the area.

But the key here, I have always felt, is the gentleman who is now the President of Austria, Kurt Waldheim. I consider that he is the man primarily responsible for the war in the Sahara continuing. He was up for reelection as UN Secretary General. Bouteflika was the Foreign Minister of Algeria at the time, and President of the UN General Assembly. Waldheim took some actions that were not neutral, and had sided with the Algerian position. And this caused --

Q: To ensure his own reelection?

ANDERSON: Yes, I'm sure, especially when one recalls the dominating influence of Algeria in the Third World. For example, Waldheim sent a Swede, Rydbeck, who was in the political office at the U.N., as a neutral observer to go and talk to the different sides. Rydbeck was totally on the Algerian side. There was a census of the 75,000 people that were there at the time Spain left the Sahara. Waldheim refused to give it to the Moroccans to conduct any kind of a referendum. The rest of it is all written down. But I just wanted to flag this. Kurt Waldheim did not distinguish himself here.

Again on our relations with France, there is one specific point here to show that if you gain the confidence of the French you can work with them. Bids were out for a radar air traffic control

system, to encompass the entire country, including the Sahara. Westinghouse had put in a bid. The French had put in a bid. Giscard d'Estaing, who was President of France, kept calling the King to try to win this bid for France. This was a \$120,000,000 or more contract, a significant contract.

I was having a meeting with the King, and he brought this subject up. He said: "This Westinghouse bid is much lower than the French, and the quality is better."

Once I heard that, I said to him, "Well, you know that one of the objectives that I have here is to try and bring American investment in, because you want to diversify, don't you?"

"Yes."

I said: "If I have to, to make sure that this bid is treated fairly, may I use this information that you just gave me, on price and quality?"

He said: "Absolutely."

So I went to the French Ambassador and told him about it, I said: "I know that your President is calling the King. But here are the facts. We've been dealing with each other very honestly. I'm going to go after this. And, you know, if, in light of what I have been told, the French win this contract, I am never again going to recommend that any American company invest one penny here. And I think you'd agree."

He said: "No, I don't blame you."

I continued: "I would like you, to the extent you can, politically -- not to push it. If your President wants to call the King, that's fine. But you don't have to push it at this end."

He said: "I will play fairly."

David Rockefeller happened to be visiting Morocco at the time the Finance Minister, who was a good friend and involved in the selection of the contract, gave him a dinner. So at the Minister's house, I asked David if he would come with me for a moment, and we stood at the stairwell, together with the Minister.

I said to the Minister in French: "I want you to know, Mr. Minister, and I want David Rockefeller to hear this. I have the Westinghouse people here now negotiating for the radar contract. I want you to know that I've been told about the price and the quality of their proposal. If anything happens on this contract, and anybody else that has lower quality or higher price receives this contract, I will never recommend that any American company come to your country to invest one penny. I wanted the chairman of Chase Manhattan to hear this conversation."

Three days later, Westinghouse was awarded the biggest contract in history for an American firm in Morocco. I think this is historically important because it shows what one can do if one cooperates with the French, and they don't become suspicious of you.

An amusing story on Melilla and Gibraltar. One fine morning, an urgent call from the King to go and see him. And it so happened, the British ambassador received a similar call. We both ended up there together. The King was talking away, and all of a sudden, the King looked at me and smiled very slightly. He turned to the British ambassador, and said: "There's been talk about my trying to go after Ceuta and Melilla. But I want you to know that I am not going to give my kingly brother, Juan Carlos, any problem. He has enough problems moving his country forward. What I would like you to know, Mr. Ambassador, is that when Spain gets Gibraltar back, I am then going to turn Ceuta and Melilla to Morocco. Because by that time, that won't be a problem for Juan Carlos. You may tell London this." [Laughter]

The Ambassador was a Scotsman named Jock Duncan. On leaving the meeting he said: "Bob, I am not sure I really understand all of this. Do you think we could have a small drink before lunch to review what His Majesty had to say before I communicate with London?"

I said: "Come on over, Jock." We went over the meeting so he understood exactly what the King meant.

When Jimmy Carter became president, our policy towards Morocco changed dramatically. It was a policy that I could not agree with, because I felt it was founded on false premises. The basic premise was that we wanted to have improved relations with Algeria, and that to improve those relations with Algeria, you couldn't remain friends with Morocco. That was absolutely wrong.

Dick Parker, a career officer, who you probably know, was our Ambassador to Algeria then. He had been number two in our Embassy in Rabat under Ambassador Stuart Rockwell. This was early on in the Carter Administration. I suggested to Dick: "Look, why don't you and I go someplace, sit down and iron this thing out, and really try and think it through?"

Dick and I eventually met for four days alone in Madrid. We came up with a joint telegram, which Roy Atherton subsequently said was unheard of in the Foreign Service where two ambassadors representing countries that were not exactly friendly, could come to a joint assessment. Basically Dick and I believed that there was absolutely no reason why you could not be friends with both countries.

There are a number of things that entered this picture, I believe. There were certain people in the United States that wanted to get LNG (liquid natural gas), for New England. Clark Clifford represented some interests in Algeria, and was close to Carter. Jim Schlesinger, who was Energy Secretary, told me at one point: "The worst thing we could ever do is make a long-term contract with Algeria for liquid natural gas for the northeast of the United States. The Algerians would hold that over our head and use it as a tool against us."

One of the main problems that we had was the question of OV-10 reconnaissance aircraft, and again, I'm not going to go into this in detail, because it is part of history. But the King asked me to see if he could get half a dozen of them. They were really small observation-type planes to use in the Sahara, to see what was going on. Our position on the Sahara was so pro-Algerian then. We wouldn't let them do anything to displease Algeria, which was absolutely wrong. The

Libyans were helping out, the Algerians were recruiting Tuareg tribesmen by the tens of thousands for the Sahara. We were practically signing the death warrant of Morocco for a while.

I did see a lot of Al Haig, at that time. He was the SACEUR [Supreme Allied Commander/Europe] in Brussels. I saw him when I was still Ambassador, and then after I left, in October, '78, and went to work for the Commander-in-Chief Atlantic, in Norfolk, who was also the Supreme Allied Commander Atlantic. I used to see Al Haig in Brussels, four or five times a year when I was over there on NATO matters.

Al Haig understood the picture; that the Moroccans had to be given some help, or else we might lose this very valuable ally. All I want to say on the record there is that the day that Al Haig became Secretary of State, he was sworn in in the late morning, walked over to the State Department, and made his first remarks on the stairs, where he said something that I think he should not have said. To announce: "I'm the vicar of foreign policy for this Administration," was not his brightest remark and did not go down well. He then went to his office, and that afternoon ordered and implemented all of the things he and I had talking about for four years, on military assistance to Morocco. He did it that afternoon. It was the first act he did as Secretary of State. That action helped enormously.

Q: As a result of these troubles going on then, did you resign, or was this just coming to the end of a term, more or less?

ANDERSON: No. I didn't resign. I loyally carried out every policy that I was told to. On the other hand, I continued to send in my views. I think that probably the White House and State were getting a little weary of reading them. One reason for my departure concerns Dick Parker. He was our ambassador in Lebanon, after Algeria. And Dick had some health problems in Lebanon. He's an old Near East hand, as you know, and they wanted to find a place for him right away. So they chose Morocco. He'd been there before as DCM. I guess the timing of my transfer was a combination of that and having to look at my telegrams all the time.

But I have to tell you, that Dick only remained for a short time. The King never focused on the *agrément*. One or two of the coup d'état attempts took place when Dick was the DCM. He was not pro-monarchy, and his views were known in Morocco on that score. He and the King just didn't hit it off, and the King then made a decision that he didn't want any more career people. He was very unhappy that I left, and he tried everything he could to keep me there. He said: "I don't agree with President Carter's policy." But he said: "At least you understand us and I know you're honest, you're objective, and you report what our policy is. And I can't ask anything more from you. And I have confidence in you." Therefore, after Dick Parker's departure, Angie Duke went out and they've had politicians ever since.

There's one other point I want to say about the King. In the beginning when I arrived there, he had been using the CIA as his main channel to Washington. He had a tendency to do this all the time, and not using the State Department, nor the embassy, nor the ambassador.

Q: Duly encouraged by the CIA, usually, of course.

ANDERSON: Yes. Well, we wanted to get rid of this practice. I took with me a private letter from Kissinger to the King. In it Kissinger suggested that the King could entrust to me anything he had on his mind, and that I had the access to him and to the President, and that he would prefer that business be done that way, to avoid confusion. That had a tremendous effect, and was one of the reasons I was very close to the King.

JAY P. MOFFAT
Deputy Chief of Mission
Rabat (1976-1982)

Ambassador Jay P. Moffat was born in New York on January 17, 1932. He received a bachelor's degree from Harvard University. He is a third generation Foreign Service Officer. Ambassador Moffat's career included positions in Japan, France, Trinidad, Morocco, Washington, DC, and an ambassadorship to Chad. He was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy on November 16, 1989.

Q: What was the situation in Morocco when you went out in 1976?

MOFFAT: Morocco was already heavily involved in the Sahara, and the question of the Western Sahara dominated my time there, in particular the aspect of U. S. military assistance to Morocco. It became a major foreign policy question for the Carter administration.

Q: What was the Sahara situation? You had the Polisarios, an insurgent group backed by Algeria, particularly, in the Moroccan desert area. What was the debate in the United States Government apparatus?

MOFFAT: What had happened was that Spain had withdrawn from its part of the Western Sahara and Morocco and Mauritania had moved in, two thirds for Morocco and one third for Mauritania. Algeria and the Polisario Front claimed that there should be self-determination in this area. As you can imagine there were competing pulls and tugs in the United States. There were those who viewed Morocco as a steady and faithful ally of the U.S., the first country to recognize the infant United States, a country which did a number of things to help Israeli-Arab relations and so on. There were a whole host of reasons why we liked the Moroccans and felt they should be rewarded. On the other hand you can well imagine that there are those who feel very strongly that when there is decolonization there should be some modicum of self-determination and that these "blue men of the desert" deserved the right to determine their own destiny, that they were merely caught up in power politics. Also very much involved in this was the relationship between Algeria and Morocco. Our relationship with Morocco was much better than with Algeria, and so on and so forth. We came down with a waffling position which in effect held that the United States recognized Moroccan administrative control over the Western Sahara. (For the purposes of this discussion let's leave Mauritania out of it, eventually they gave up their part of the Sahara and Morocco took it). We recognized Moroccan administrative control but we did not recognize juridically their sovereignty. It was a waffle. This of course was mostly in the Carter administration. Later, certainly under Haig, we came down much more

strongly for Morocco.

Q: Who were the Polisario?

MOFFAT: When the Spaniards pulled out the only documentation was a UN census which showed that there were something like 75,000 inhabitants in their part of the Sahara. These were nomadic tribes, largely the Reguibat, that moved with their cattle and their warfare from place to place and might be resident in the Western Sahara one day and Mali the next and that kind of thing. With Algerian help and with publicity a lot of non-Western Saharans became part of the liberation group. This made things even more difficult, for soldiers of fortune and ideological people were drawn to the movement. It had and has a structure which involves a president and defense minister, you name it, it exists as a group, eventually won Organization of African Unity recognition, and it has caused Morocco tremendous problems. It appears that by now the Moroccans have more or less neutralized the Polisario and we may reach some sort of UN-brokered arrangement. But that is not moving too fast at this time. It was heady stuff during my time. There were camps in Tindouf in Algeria where the Polisario would repair to and come back from their raids in the desert.

Our policy was not to have any Americans go into the Western Sahara and on the other side we did not have any contacts with the Polisario. All of this played itself out over time. The Moroccans put 100,000 plus troops into the area and they desperately needed equipment. There were certain things, particularly aircraft, that they wanted. Like an old-fashioned drama we wrestled with the fundamental question: may U.S. equipment be provided to Morocco if it is known that it is likely to be used in the Sahara? Equipment, particularly F-5 aircraft, was provided and it was used in the Sahara. It was a messy situation over a number of years. That involved a great deal of time and effort by our ambassadors over the years.

Q: Obviously if a country is fighting a major war and you give them military equipment, how could you get around the fact that it is going to be used in the desert?

MOFFAT: There is some equipment that is designed to be used in the desert. OV-10's and helicopters, requested in 1977 are examples of such items. That is where the real crunch comes. I don't think that if you provide certain kinds of ammunition anyone can follow where that goes. The Moroccans have some failings in the human rights area, which didn't help. The final major decision by Carter came when I was Chargé in 1979. It was fought out on the front pages of the New York Times. When the final decision was going to be made, in a Policy Review Committee of the NSC on October 16, 1979 I got on the phone to Washington and said that every single step of previous internal deliberations had appeared on the tickers out of Washington before we could even tell the Moroccans. When the decision is reached, I continued, for God's sake, let us get to the King before he reads about it on the Agence France Presse ticker. They said, "We think we can get you three hours, maybe, by sort of tying the people up." So we were able to get to the King's counselor, Reda Guedira, first. It was in fact just about three hours before the ultimately favorable decision was all over the press.

Q: Where was all this information coming from, and why?

MOFFAT: Because major players in the Executive Branch and Congress had their own agendas and firm positions.

Q: *Why?*

MOFFAT: It involved things that deeply moved people. I think that the pro-Algerian people (to call them that) or pro-Moroccan camp (I don't like to use these designations) had very, very strong feelings. The worst leaks came out of the Congressional staffers. Carter blew his stack once when he read in the press about the results of an NSC meeting before anyone had reported to him. The issue was just one of the great leak producers of the Carter period.

Q: *I just can't imagine anybody being terribly pro-Algerian.*

MOFFAT: Well, they were pro-Polisario, anti-Morocco, pro-self-determination.

Q: *Was it because there was a king, was this a visceral thing? Anybody who is revolting against a king has to be our kind of a good guy?*

MOFFAT: There was a lot of that. Algeria was seen in some quarters as progressive. Particularly the Polisario were seen as a doughty bunch of desert innocents who were fighting for their freedom and their independence. It got terribly involved, the human rights aspect got involved. There were Congressional staffers who were just tight as a tick, wrapped up in this stuff. We had Solarz deeply involved, you name it.

Q: *Solarz was a congressman on the House Foreign Affairs Committee.*

MOFFAT: He was viscerally pro-Polisario. He arranged for a like-minded Paul Simon (the Senator from Illinois) to come through later and study the situation. There were a lot of other things going on. We were withdrawing from Naval Bases and that was a fairly major thing. There is nothing that takes more time than getting out of Base Agreements.

Q: *How did the Moroccans feel about Base Agreements?*

MOFFAT: By then there were only three communications facilities involved. The King did not mind our having facilities there. He was interested in the golf course being kept going as long as possible and that things be turned over to the right people. But as in Trinidad and elsewhere, so in Morocco we turned over everything in great shape, in good running condition. A year later they were stripped bare and derelict.

There were certain things going involving Israeli interests (which I don't want to go into in this interview) and there were a lot of things involving Morocco in the Arab context, the Arab League and so forth.

Morocco is a key country in a number of ways. It has its African vocation, its Middle East vocation, its Mediterranean vocation, its Maghreb vocation, and a close relationship with France. For a variety of reasons, economic and demographic, practically any issue for thousands of miles

had a Moroccan connection.

Q: Let's go back to the Polisario business. How did the Embassy view this? Often you get a situation where our Embassy in Algiers might think that the Algerians and the Polisarios are obviously in the right and our Embassy in Rabat thinks just the reverse. Was this the case, how did you all feel about the situation there?

MOFFAT: Except for Dick Parker, of course, the other two ambassadors were convinced of the rightness of the Moroccan cause. Anderson's predecessor had in effect lost his audience in Washington for being blatantly pro-Morocco. I think Dick Parker had a more nuanced view of the whole thing. Some of our lower-level people probably were less convinced, but there certainly was not a situation where people felt that strongly one way or another. There was right on both sides.

Q: It was not cleaving the embassy the way it was cleaving the government back in Washington?

MOFFAT: No. There were a lot of people in the Embassy who were unhappy at what Morocco did in the field of human rights, were unhappy with the way the king ran things, that sort of thing.

Q: How would you characterize Hassan, he had been there a long time and he still is there. A lot of people thought that he would not last, but he and King Hussein of Jordan are still in power?

MOFFAT: When Hassan was first in the job, so to speak, I was in Paris. On New Years Day the papers traditionally come out with the predictions of the astrologers for the coming year. At that time, I think, there were eight dailies in Paris. All eight in 1963 or 1964 predicted that Hassan would not last out the year. Well, he is still there. During the period when I was Chargé in Rabat the Central Intelligence Agency did a NIE (National Intelligence Estimate) on Morocco. They had been under criticism from the White House for not predicting in sufficiently finite terms. So lo and behold, an NIE predicted that Hassan would not last another year. This would have been fine except that it appeared on the front page of the New York Times. You can imagine how that went over in Rabat!

I had another thing like that. Once Solarz came and talked to the king for over an hour, and the king was very forthcoming and said a lot. At the end of the conversation he beckoned me over and said, "I talked freely and I don't want what I said to be reported." So my account went by NODIS. Three days later in Jack Anderson's column, there appeared: "In his report on the conversation, Chargé Peter Moffat said ..." Those two under cuttings by the press happened to me in my Chargé time -- I don't know which was worse.

Q: How did you view Hassan?

MOFFAT: Dick Parker is the great authority on Hassan and all the rest of us are neophytes. I had a personal fascination in watching him perform and how he runs things. The one great failing in American diplomacy with King Hassan is that Americans come and this quintessential Arab host makes them feel welcome and very special, if he wants to. He has had squadrons of American

leaders come over to be given the treatment. They all think, and ambassadors are not immune, that they have established some sort of relationship, which is fine by Hassan, but it does not deter him one whit from doing what he wants. He eats ambassadors alive. It has dogged our relations with Morocco in the sense that we have people who mistakenly think that they have a special relationship with Hassan. If there is anyone who does it is probably Dick Walters, and even there I have doubts.

Q: You equated him to de Gaulle in that he operated the same way.

MOFFAT: Yes. To an extent they operated the same way. They did not follow the same laws of nature as other people. You could conceivably have had a warm personal relationship with de Gaulle but that would not have made him act a bit differently.

Q: You were in Morocco during the time of the Carter administration and the great emphasis on human rights. Almost any country that does not have a full-blown democracy Western style is obviously very vulnerable to accusations. What were the problems in Morocco as we saw them?

MOFFAT: There were several problems. Some were left over from the coup attempts against the king in '71 and '72, which led to Summary retribution. Our most continual problem was the status of prisoners, who may or may not have been political prisoners, but were kept in bad conditions. Moroccan prisons were abysmal. Amnesty International and the Anti-Slavery League were quite unhappy with what Morocco did in individual cases. In my time, it never came to a rupture, but it was a major problem. We were always running around trying to sort out the case of somebody.

Q: When you dealt with the Moroccans was it the king you saw or did you work through their hierarchy?

MOFFAT: Well, I personally saw the king only if I were accompanying somebody important, unless I was Chargé. The ambassadors saw the king on special calls every couple of months or so, and would meet him on ceremonial occasions. Certainly on the big questions the king wanted to be involved. There was a prime minister and all the other ministers and the people in the palace. At any one time the king had three or four trusted advisors; they did not always survive politically and once literally, they were very useful. You did not have to talk to the king if you talked to one of them; you could get a message across. There was no problem of access. The real problem was -- I imagine it was like service in Israel -- that if you took a visitor to call there was the obligatory lengthy disquisition about the Western Sahara. You could not avoid being harangued. Only then could you get to the business at hand. Americans were well-viewed. It was tougher on the military side. Our military people, our Attachés and MAAG (Military Assistance Advisory Group) people, did not always have very good access. The king did not want them to.

Q: What about the French role? I would have thought with their background the Moroccans would have turned to the French military?

MOFFAT: They did, but the French were in somewhat the same box we were. The French had to balance off their real interests in Algeria, more than we did. Everyone was playing everyone off

against everyone else.

Q: How was Ambassador Robert Anderson? How did he operate and what were his major interests?

MOFFAT: Well, he is an old-line FSO, he had been ambassador in Dahomey (now Benin). He was one of the most energetic people I have ever met, quite hard on his staff, but just as hard on himself. The king does not take kindly, as a practical matter, to career ambassadors. I think he sees them as less pliable, less cooptable, than non-career ambassadors and I think the record shows that well. Dick Parker, whom you know well and is a consummate diplomat, had the same problem. It was harder for them than if they had been non-career diplomats.

Q: What you are saying is that there is a case for sending career ambassadors. We are taking about having ambassadors who represent our interests rather than be pliable to somebody else.

MOFFAT: After I left, we got to a position where we had a very weak ambassador who would talk about "our king" and so on.

Q: He ran into some trouble in confirmation because he was called the equivalent of a horse's ass.

MOFFAT: "A gold-plated nincompoop," if I remember right.

Q: One final question on this. Did you have much of a problem on the consular side with the drug problem? Morocco used to be known as a great place for students or rich Americans to go and play with every known vice, including drugs.

MOFFAT: We had problems, indeed we had a DEA (Drug Enforcement Agency) man there, but basically the problems were cannabis or hashish and involved for the most part the easy purchase in Morocco and shipping it by yacht in and between Spain and Gibraltar, but there was no coordination of policing among these entities. The boats could flee from one to the other. This is not as high a priority, for understandable reasons, as cocaine has become, and heroin already was. Yes, it was a problem, but it was not of international interest. It took a lot of time and occasionally Americans would be imprisoned and U.S. senators would object and the king would let them out.

Q: Is there anything else you think we should talk about on the Moroccan side?

MOFFAT: Only the comment that I made earlier that Morocco was a country with access and friendship for the U.S. where FSOs can make or break their performance by how much they get around and do things.

Q: In the Moroccan society, for example, not the playboy society, but the real working government and business, were they easy to know? Arab societies can be very self-sealing.

MOFFAT: It was tough on the Peace Corps. We had a large Peace Corps there and their psychic

rewards were far less than in other parts of Africa. They had a pretty tough time, but among the educated Moroccans, not necessarily the playboy group, it was reasonably easy. You had to work, go from one person to another, but it was doable.

Q: What was the common prediction in the embassy about Hassan and his survivability? Outside of the obvious coup which could happen at any point, was he sitting on a situation in which he was in reasonable control, or was there tremendous discontent that might bubble over at any time?

MOFFAT: Oh, it varied. Just his sheer success tends to inure one to the fact that he has real problems. He has a sometimes restive army which is down in the Sahara, far away. Some people claim he likes it that way. There are very real social problems, stresses and strains. Yet Morocco does not have the identity problem of some of the other Arab countries. Moroccans know who they are. They are not like Tunisians who do not know if they are Frenchmen, Arabs or what all. He has embodied the religious feeling in his person. If something happened people could say they always knew it would, and if nothing happened the same people could say they knew he could last.

Q: It was not a situation where every day was a crisis?

MOFFAT: There were particular crises. After we left there were serious riots in Casablanca. There are periods of crisis, but there is some bemusement that he has done it so long and so well.

ROBERT MARK WARD
Program Officer, AID
Rabat (1977)

Robert Mark Ward was born in New York in 1927. He received his Bachelor's Degree from Wesleyan University in 1949 and his Master's Degree from Harvard University in 1961. He was with the Foreign Assistance program (AID) for twenty-eight years, serving in Cairo, Pakistan and Morocco. Mr. Robert Ward was interviewed by W. Haven North on May 27, 1998.

WARD: So after three years there, I went off to Morocco for four years, where I was the Program Officer, first under Al Disdier as the AID Mission Director, his first and last overseas post. He was then succeeded by Hal Fleming, whose Deputy Director was first Eric Griffel, then Harry Petrequin.

Q: What was the situation in Morocco at that time?

WARD: In Morocco, we had a fairly limited program which involved heavy emphasis on dry land agriculture. I'm not sure if this was at the beginning, the middle, or the end of the basic human needs period.

Q: This was what year?

WARD: 1977/78.

Q: It was sort of mid-way.

WARD: We were very much concerned that 80% of the peasants in Morocco lived in dry land agriculture areas and that was where we wanted to place our emphasis. We had a major long term contract with the University of Minnesota for developing an agricultural training institute.

Q: What was it called?

WARD: The Institut Agronomique Hassan II, the Hassan II Agronomic Institute. This was to train agricultural extension people and trainers of agricultural extension people and create an agricultural extension service. This program went on for a long time before I arrived and after I left. That part of the program was very good and appealed to the Moroccan government. The heavy emphasis on dry land agriculture did not appeal to the Moroccan government so much. They were much more interested in fruits and vegetables. Morocco produces a lot of oranges and dates and grapes. They wanted to improve the cultivation of these products rather than dry land wheat. Part of the reason was because larger, wealthier members of society owned farms and plantations which produced these products. In due course, we agreed to do what the Moroccans wanted. It was probably a good decision. It was increasing one kind of agricultural production for the Moroccans. In the end, I think, dry land agriculture came along okay anyway.

Q: What were we doing in the fruits and vegetables area with our program?

WARD: Toward the end of the period that I was there (1980-1981), we began to do something in horticulture, to establish a horticultural institute not so far from Agadir down the coast in southern Morocco. I understand that's going along pretty well. We got involved in a variety of things.

We had a major population program there, which seemed to be working pretty well. The Moroccan government supported it.

Q: They were fairly receptive to a population program?

WARD: Yes.

Q: What was the feature of the program?

WARD: We were able to distribute contraceptives rather widely in local health centers. We had a mother and child health program, which encouraged women or showed women how to take good care of their small children, and also incidentally how to use contraceptives. It was slow, but it was making progress.

Q: And it was run through the government.

WARD: Yes, it was run through the government. During 1979, if you remember, there was an energy crisis. Gas prices went up in the United States and in Europe. There were big lines at gas stations. Renewable energy became popular. We decided that we were going to have a renewable energy program in Morocco. The only problem was, nobody knew anything about renewable energy. However we had the assistance of Alan Jacobs' Office of Energy in the Bureau for Science and Technology. Alan Jacobs was extremely helpful. He corralled experts of various kinds: wind, energy, small hydroelectric facilities, solar energy. He would send these people out to help design projects. So, we managed to put together a multifaceted energy project. In the end it faded as the fad of renewable energy faded. It lasted three or four years. Morocco is particularly rich in wind facilities. You drive down the road from Rabat to Casablanca and you can see the remains or, in those days, you could see the remains of old, broken windmills which had been put up by the French, but had never been repaired since Moroccan independence in 1956 and therefore didn't work anymore. But the wind was there and they would use it for things like pumping water.

Q: What was our program?

WARD: We established a renewable energy institute in Marrakesh, which is about four hours drive south of Casablanca. It's a nice, warm place. That renewable energy center was intended to demonstrate energy efficient methods of construction as well as carry out pilot projects in wind energy, small hydroelectric installations, and solar energy, both flat plate collectors to warm water, and photovoltaic cells. We did that. In the end, the project wasn't continued by AID because it could not be demonstrated convincingly enough that the different projects were economically sound or replicable. The most promising of the renewable energy forms were small hydro. We worked very closely with a remarkable Frenchman, who was at that time the chief engineer of the National Electric Office, the Office Nationale de l'Électricité (ONE), a gentleman named Andre Fougerolles. He's still alive, living in southern France. He had lived in Morocco since 1934. He knew that country like the palm of his hand. This man was an historical monument to that country. Moroccans loved him. He trained a cadre of Moroccan engineers in the National Electric Office who went on to lead in a variety of engineering areas in the country. He was the design engineer and supervising engineer for the construction of a very large earth-filled dam which exists today at Bin El Ouidane in the Atlas Mountains in south central Morocco, east of Marrakesh. It produces electricity and irrigation. So, he was a major figure in Morocco. Well, he took us under his wing and helped us discover some places where it would be quite appropriate to put in a small hydroelectric installation, a couple of kilowatts maybe (one to five kilowatts). Although we picked three as pilot projects, in the end one was built.

Q: Why only one?

WARD: Because AID economists did not consider that there was a sufficient guarantee of economic viability and replicability. At that time, that was probably true. I would say that it was the risk-averse nature to which AID has increasingly succumbed, wanting guarantees before the fact that Project X will succeed when you know that you don't know whether it will or not. But in this particular case, this one installation did succeed when it was installed. It was used and it is still being used in large part by a program financed by the French foreign aid program to train

Berbers in some of the fertile valleys of the High Atlas mountains east of Marrakesh to be actors in ecotourism - how to guide tourists, how to run bed-and-breakfasts. This was an area off the beaten track, beautiful areas where people liked to go with rucksacks and hike on trails. It's become pretty popular, more for Europeans than for Americans.

Q: How does this connect to the hydro?

WARD: The facilities, this little hydro installation, supplies electric light and electric power for a little training institution and also for other farms in the valley to do things like pump water, grind grain, and various other things.

Q: Did it prove to be economic in that situation?

WARD: I don't know whether anybody has recently done a rigorous study of this, but it still operates. I guess, if it wasn't worthwhile to maintain the thing, it would probably fall into disuse. The National Electric Office always took the position that they are not a charity organization and, therefore, in order to have something be worth their attention, it's got to pay for itself. Since they have kept an eye on this, apparently, it must have paid for itself.

Q: The wind energy didn't work?

WARD: Things actually got installed after I left on the wind energy front. I remember, I went to a wind area on the Atlantic coast northwest from Marrakesh, southwest from Casablanca, with one of Alan Jacobs' renewable energy experts, John Kadiszewski, who the last I hear was with the Winrock Institute in Rosslyn. We were scouting out some possible sites. There seemed to be considerable promise that at least a few of these windmills would be installed, but I have no idea whether AID actually went that far.

Q: What about solar cells?

WARD: Flatplate collectors are apparently commercially available in Morocco at this point. There are local manufacturers and people install them. For solar cells, the main use has been in the military for remote transmitters and repeating stations.

Q: Were there any other dimensions of the program? You talked about the population and so on. Were you involved in any of that work?

WARD: There was one notable success which Eric Griffel and I managed to get a little project begrudgingly approved by our principals in AID/Washington. It provided research grants to Moroccan graduate students for work on development issues. We got into a conversation one time with a marvelous woman whom I met while we were out there, a woman named Dr. Fatima Mernissi, one of the Arab world's leading feminists, who at that time was a social scientist teaching at Mohammad V University in Rabat. She said, "Look, here you have all these consultants. You foreign aid people want to do something useful and you bring in your consultants and ask them to help you design a project and what do they do? The first thing they do is come to me or people like me. They don't know anything about Morocco, the foreign

consultants. They may know their field, but they feel that it's necessary (quite rightly) to talk to people who live in this country and who hopefully have some insights into what some of the problems are and how one might realistically deal with them. Then they don't pay me any money. They come back, they write their papers for you and you pay them. Then they go back home. What you need to do is mobilize the local people more and draw on the talent of the local people and the knowledge and experience of the local people. How can you manage to do that?" Well, after a while, and after a number of conversations, we put together a proposal for this little research grant project, something which fitted into none of AID's priorities, could not be demonstrated to produce success. Nevertheless, because it didn't involve very much money, AID/Washington said, "Oh, well, this is just some of your spare change. Go ahead. But let's look at it after a year." AID/Washington grudgingly approved it.

Well, it was controversial in Morocco because we placed the responsibility of the project in a research institute whose director was politically extremely prudent and did not wish to use any of the funds to support research which could conceivably criticize social or economic conditions in the Kingdom of Morocco. As it happened, there were lots of things that one could usefully criticize in the Kingdom of Morocco and perhaps find solutions to. But at that point, the palace and the government were not interested in that sort of thing. So, nothing happened. Almost a year passed. Despite all of our entreaties, the director of the research institute did nothing. Fortunately, it was possible to transfer responsibility for the project to another institute, Institut National de Recherche Scientifique, whose leader had a bit more courage. Finally, they managed to get a few research projects off the ground in areas relating to agriculture, health, social development, population, things which would seem politically innocuous and perhaps interesting. The research was done by graduate students under the direction of various faculty members. They produced monographs which, in fact, were quite good. The level of expertise at Mohammed V University in the areas that we were concerned with was excellent.

Q: Was there any effect? What were the results of this?

WARD: I think the effect of what the Americans did was to get this thing started. Once a few of the papers had been written and it became increasingly evident to various decision makers in the government, in the various ministries, that perhaps this wouldn't hurt them. Some of this information might actually be useful. AID lost interest. The project was not a high priority. I think it lasted for two years. We didn't renew it. This was after I had left. So, we dropped out. Thanks in part to Fatima Mernissi's efforts the Germans decided to finance the project. After all, the European aid programs, generally speaking, tend to be somewhat less structured and a little bit less meticulously organized and prioritized than the American activities. For that reason, sometimes they are more successful. In any case, the Germans picked it up and kept it going. One of the results is that a number of the beneficiaries of the research grants are now skilled, successful, well-known Moroccan social scientists who have made solid contributions to development. Some of them are running consulting firms. At this moment, VITA is running a micro enterprise financing project in Morocco, which from all reports seems to be doing rather well. That project was designed with the active and very useful participation of a young social scientist at Mohammed V University who was one of the beneficiaries of these grants and who is now a faculty member and is highly reputed. So, little things like this, even though you cannot tell what is going to happen, very often, yield very positive results.

Q: That can be of considerable significance over time.

WARD: That's right. It's like investing in small stocks. You never know whether you've invested in the right one, but sometimes it's worth taking a chance.

Q: Did we have PL 480 programs?

WARD: Yes. PL 480 Title II, in which food was distributed by Catholic Relief Service. I guess that's the main one.

Q: For school feedings mainly or for other things?

WARD: For small community level public works.

Q: Food for Work type programs?

WARD: Food for Work programs, that's right. They were fairly modest, but it worked pretty well.

Q: You thought they worked all right?

WARD: Yes. We had some housing investment guarantees at a certain point. They were not particularly terrific.

Q: Why were they not terrific?

WARD: There were differences of view between the Moroccan government and the Americans as to what an appropriate housing investment guarantee program might be. For example, there was a large industrial slum on the northern edge of Casablanca called Ben M'sik. The Moroccan government wanted to put a superhighway right through the middle of it and bulldoze a lot of the houses out of the way. The American planners thought that was a bad idea for an AID-sponsored sites and services program. Unfortunately, we were never able to agree on the correct way of handling this. I believe the World Bank finally did agree with the Moroccan government on a rather modest sites and services program, but that was after the Moroccan government had decided to suspend their discussions with the Americans.

There was a health program.

Q: What was that focused on?

WARD: The purpose of that was to strengthen and establish rural health centers all around the country. I can't remember if we had a component for training paramedical people. I know there was a mother and child health program. I guess our involvement was partly construction and partly mother and child health. I think we've mentioned the other ones: agriculture, energy, population. We never got very far in education. I have been to Morocco a few times in the last

few years and the program understandably has changed a lot. One of the emphases is on assisting private training institutions (particularly trades training institutions) to train a larger number of people in professions and in trades which will get them jobs. This is playing a very useful role in the context of the ten-year structural adjustment program which the Moroccan government has been pursuing together with the World Bank.

Q: That was not going on when you were there?

WARD: No, that began in the 1980s.

Q: You mentioned that the Hassan II agricultural college was particularly successful. Why did it stand out as a successful project?

WARD: There was a lot of competition among foreign advisors for the hearts and minds of the students and faculty at the Hassan II Agronomic Institute. The Belgians were there. The French were there. The Americans were there. Each one of them wanted to make sure that they called as many shots as possible. Because of the long duration of the University of Minnesota contract, which carried out this project, the Americans pretty well won. There were long-term relationships forged between the graduate students and faculty members at Hassan II and the University of Minnesota or other universities to which Moroccans were sent under the University of Minnesota contract. So, this institutional linkage which was created was an important aspect.

Q: Do you remember what the scale of the program was roughly? I'm talking about the total AID program.

WARD: It was pretty small during the period that I was there. I think we were under \$10 million for the technical assistance program most of the time.

Q: What was our interest in having a program in Morocco?

WARD: Again, fundamentally political. There were questions about whether Morocco was perhaps too advanced for an AID program. It was not one of your poverty stricken sub-Saharan countries. Morocco is a great place to live. The restaurants are excellent. The climate is terrific. The people are charming.

Q: But you mentioned that 80% of the people were in rural areas.

WARD: Correct. King Hassan II had over the years played a facilitative role in Arab-Israeli politics in the Eastern Mediterranean. He has encouraged back channel dialogues at the encouragement of the United States government. He has performed rather useful services. I guess that this program was part of a symbolic recognition.

Q: Did we have the bases there at that time?

WARD: We did, that's correct. There were U.S. bases, a couple of them. There was one in Kenitra, which was north from Rabat in the direction of Tangier. It was phasing out about the

time I arrived in the late 1970s. It was turned over to the Moroccan government. By the time I left, there were no longer any bases there. But surely the economic assistance program was part of a total aid package.

Q: Did you feel in any way that the development program was influenced by our political security interests in terms of being oriented in any particular way?

WARD: Not the content of the program. In fact, it was quite the reverse. We tend to have, as I mentioned earlier on, in Burma, we have this tendency to make a commitment to provide some form of economic assistance because of some political reason. Then we tend to argue about the kind of economic assistance. We want to do it our way and the local government wants to do it their way. Arguments go on forever. In this particular case, in 1977, the economic aid program by and large, because of its relatively small size and the fact that certain parts of it were not particularly popular with the Moroccan government (for example, the dry land agriculture aspect), was a program which we wanted more than the Moroccans did. The Moroccans accepted the program, but without much enthusiasm on the implementation level. They thought there were some marginally useful things in the dry land farming program, but it was not something that they really thought was high priority. They had a possibility of getting a lot more money from the World Bank.

Q: That didn't interfere with the political rationale for having a program because you were somewhat at odds on the contents?

WARD: The people who were concerned with the political basis for the program, generally speaking, were different people from those concerned with operating the program. This is a tension that I'm sure you've seen in many countries. The AID people want to run a program which they honestly believe is going to yield some economic development results. The State Department political officers don't really care very much about that, but are more interested in a program which will make the local government feel good. Sometimes there is a contradiction.

Q: How did you find that evolving in Morocco?

WARD: At one point, I wrote a paper about a year after I got there outlining three or four possibilities for the program, one of which was to phase it out. The paper rejected the idea of just phasing out the program. First, it pointed out that the Moroccans don't really care all that much about the program as a whole. There are some parts that they think are okay, but they don't give it very much priority.

Therefore, it's not really serving our political interests, so why not phase it out? Well, if you phase it out, it would give an unintended political signal, so you shouldn't do that. Don't increase it unless you want to carry out a program which the Moroccans want, but that wouldn't really work very well because what they want isn't by and large the same as what AID will buy. Therefore, straight-line it. Just let inflation gradually reduce its real value. This paper didn't please anybody in AID. I thought it would be helpful to clarify people's thinking. In the end, I think, what we did was to increase the program slightly. AID happened to get a little bit more money that year. So, we did increase the program. But it just kind of floated.

Q: It was sort of tolerated by the government, but not particularly...

WARD: Yes, there were certain elements about which the Moroccan government was quite enthusiastic. They were very enthusiastic about the renewable energy, for example. In the meantime, however, the Moroccan government found it rather more useful to deal with the World Bank, which had larger loans to provide. Generally speaking, their interlocutors, the people who spoke for the World Bank in discussions with the Moroccan government, were considerably more sophisticated than the people who spoke for AID. Quite a few of them were French. One of their key people was a former functionary in the French ministry of France. He knew all the policy level finance officials in the Moroccan Government. The Moroccans felt more at ease dealing with the World Bank people. They could get more money for it, for their efforts. So, AID was kind of a back burner operation with the exception of Hassan II Institute. That was a part that they liked. As I said briefly, the renewable energy, population was okay. Agriculture was not. That is, the dry land agriculture. So, it was a mixed bag. I don't have much of a sense about how it is now. There are some lessons to be learned about how you should handle aid programs so as to ensure that they work and perform whatever political objectives they're supposed to perform. It's sometimes very difficult to do.

Q: How do you find working with the Moroccans in such a situation?

WARD: Very good actually. I had very collegial relations with the people that I was dealing with on the renewable energy front since, in the absence of an actual energy expert, I became the resident energy expert in the AID mission. I got on very well with the people in the Ministry of Finance. I liked Morocco and they understood that. I spoke good French. So, we got along just fine.

Q: How about the relations with the embassy? Did you have any particular interaction with the embassy?

WARD: Oh, yes, particularly with the economic counselors as they came and went; naturally, the agricultural attaché, who was always involved in negotiating the PL 480 agreements. Then, one day, after Ambassador Robert Anderson left, Ambassador Richard Parker appeared, our old political counselor from Cairo. In the meantime, Dick Parker had been the DCM during the 1970s in Morocco. He had then gone on to be ambassador in Algeria. Now he came back under the Carter administration to be ambassador in Morocco. As one of the State Department's leading Arabists, and a man of wonderful wit and humor, he was very attractive to Morocco and attractive to Moroccans. He also was a very perceptive analyst of the inner workings of the Moroccan government. The relation between the palace and other political forces, the Makhzen, which is the Arabic word for the palace authority. Dick Parker wrote a classic dispatch outlining the dynamics of the palace, very much like some of George Kennan's essays written from his period in Moscow as the American ambassador there before he was PNGed. Parker compared King Hassan II with François I in Renaissance France, who maintained his power by a kind of balance of power operation in which he played off the various other political regional forces and individuals against each other and maintained himself as the primary authority. The King of Morocco still does that today. In any case, it became very clear when Dick Parker came back as

ambassador in 1979 that he knew too much. King Hassan II and the palace didn't want to have an American ambassador who could see through them quite so easily. So, the White House was persuaded to remove Ambassador Parker. He was replaced by somebody else. But Dick Parker was very interested in economic development. He came over to the AID mission a couple of times and expressed considerable interest in what we were up to. If he had stayed, I'm sure that he would have been very interested in seeing that there was a good AID program there.

Q: Anything more on your Morocco time?

WARD: I think that's about all. I had one amazing experience in our probing around for the small hydro sites. In my acquaintance with André Fougerolles, the former chief engineer of the National Electric Company, I went on a few skiing trips with him, this person who knew the high Atlas mountains like the palm of his hand. We went up into the mountains south from a place called Beni Mellal, south of the Bin el Ouidane dam, which Fougerolles had helped construct, south from a place called silal, up into a high mountain valley, which is totally inaccessible from December until May because the mountain passes are closed with snow. This is where we put the one site for the small hydro. On one trip we went even further up into the mountains to go skiing. It was an absolutely superb area for mountain skiing, probably the most remote part of the High Atlas mountains. We stopped to visit some of the village head men. Some of these village head men in that area, had been troops - goums berbères - in the French army during World War II under Fougerolles when this engineer was a young lieutenant. They had fought the battle up through Italy. They had been at Monte Casino and had sustained a 20 percent casualty rate. They had come up through Northern Italy. In the final days of the war, they liberated Stuttgart, my wife's hometown. My wife and André spent one evening in conversation comparing his memories and my wife's memories of that period. André remembered exactly coming down the hill on which my wife's family's house was located.

When we went up skiing we were warmly received by these village head men. We took donkeys to carry our skis and our packs up to the top of the mountain and then we skied down. I got about half way down to the bottom of the snow area and I hit some ice. My ski binding refused to release, my foot turned around 180 degrees and I broke my left leg just about four inches above the ankle. It didn't hurt. I grabbed it and I twisted it back around in place and it still didn't hurt, amazingly. Two Berber guides were behind us. We found a place to stay, a refuge of stones that some sheep herders had put up there in the summer. We built a fire and stayed until about two o'clock in the morning. Somebody had gone down and told the people own in the valley, where we were, and a mule driver came up with his mules in the middle of the night. I was tied on a mule and wrapped in blankets. My leg still didn't hurt. We got down to our base in about two hours. With a few shots of Valium, I was trundled into the back of somebody's station wagon and taken back to a hospital in Rabat, where there was a wonderful Norwegian doctor who was practicing there. He said, "Norway promises that you will ski again." He fixed my leg up and it was all right. I had to pay money to this mule driver - \$50 or something like that - for transportation. I got a signed receipt and sent all my bills and everything into my Blue Cross/Blue Shield coverage for reimbursement. Some weeks later a note came back saying, "We reimburse for ambulances or other normal transportation. This is not normal transportation." So much for the bureaucratic inflexibility of modern society. That's an experience that André Fougerolles and I have thought about a number of times. Since he retired (he is now 85 years

old), he has kept his finger on the pulse of ecotourism French training program. He has gone back to Morocco as kind of counselor emeritus to advise the Ministry of Tourism and the Ministry of Electricity, and he is always welcomed back there as a big brother and local hero. He is still very vigorous, living in the mountains west of Nîmes in Provence.

WARD: During my period in Morocco, I managed to learn enough about energy so I could come back to AID/Washington and be the Energy Advisor for the Africa Bureau. I worked very closely again in Washington with Alan Jacobs in the Energy Office. I was working in the office of John Blumgart, who retired from AID in 1982. I replaced him as chief of the Special Projects Division in the Office of Technical Resources in the Africa Bureau. That was a rather interesting period because we were looking at our renewable energy activities, but getting more involved in environmental activities and forestry activities. The fad of renewable energy was waning. We no longer had the oil crisis. We thought it would be a good idea to examine the various renewable energy activities which existed, many of which AID had put in place in Africa. We signed a contract with hired Associates in Rural Development of Burlington, Vermont. Together with Molly Hageboeck, then AID's guru of evaluation, now with the Management Systems International consulting firm, we concocted a rather well designed scheme for fanning out teams to various countries in Africa and examining - in the manner of the impact evaluations which Doug Bennet's started when he was AID Administrator - some of the renewable energy projects. The result was a report on what appeared to be working and what appeared not to be working.

Q: What were the conclusions of the report?

WARD: Some of the conclusions were that there was a lot that didn't seem to be working. There was a major French presence in the former French colonies of West Africa, and French firms had received French government financing to install flat plate collectors and other renewable energy devices. Unfortunately in many cases not much thought had been given to maintenance so a lot of these things were falling apart. We found some of the projects for getting gas from organic waste seemed to be working, but only under very special conditions where you had lots of pigs around to produce organic waste, for example. There was considerable enthusiasm in the AID/Africa Bureau for more efficient wood stoves. We found that a whole range of foreign donors (European, Canadian, American) were pushing various kinds of wood stoves in different countries, but the programs didn't seem to be working all that well because there were the perennial problems of marketing. How do you convince people that they ought to use these things? Sometimes, the wood stoves didn't work all that well anyway.

Q: What were the characteristics of the wood stove?

WARD: There were wood stoves which you could make out of metal and then there were other wood stoves which you could make out of clay. The idea was simply that they were supposed to be an improvement over the open fires that many people were using and that they would burn wood more efficiently and you could concentrate the heat on your pots better so that you would reduce the amount of waste. That was fine as far as it went. But there were a whole range of educational and marketing problems which really weren't being addressed. They never really were effectively dealt with. So, we were rushing about with various experimental pilot projects to try to do things in the renewable energy area. It was a distinctly mixed bag. So much depended

on the kind of institution that was trying to run things. For example, in Rwanda, the Swiss were running a very good project for drying fish so that you wouldn't have the fish rot. You could sell them and market them and, in some cases, even export them. That worked pretty well. Some of the wood stove projects were okay. But the more we looked at the wood stove business, we began to see that it was intimately related to forestry problems. How do you encourage people not to cut down trees prematurely? I remember one of the roads out of Ouagadougou in Upper Volta, Burkina Faso. We were told that three years before all the trees had been cut for a perimeter of 30 miles outside of Ouagadougou. "This year," we were told, "it's 50 miles outside of Ouagadougou. Next year, it's going to be 70 miles." So, there was a shift of focus to forestry. Social forestry- We had a great forester in the Africa Bureau Office of Technical Resources who is still practicing - Tom Catterson. He is an independent consultant now. He had an excellent network of fellow foresters, European and African. He helped to focus our attention on social forestry, how you encourage people to live with forests without destroying them, or live with trees without destroying them. For example, growing certain crops and trees in the same field can help each other in a symbiotic relationship. We became more interested in forestry and, to some degree, also in environmental affairs. It would be interesting to ask someone like Tom Catterson what his perception of how the foreign aid approach of the Europeans and the North Americans has changed, what lessons have been learned in the past 10 years or more.

Q: At that time you were working there, did you develop some sort of a policy paper or a strategy paper?

WARD: Yes. The energy advisor for the AID mission in Kenya had up until that time been Weston (Wes) Fisher, who came to work in my office in Washington as the energy advisor when I stopped being the energy advisor. He worked on an energy policy paper, which tried to apply some of the lessons that we thought we had learned from our evaluation and to make some suggestions about other things to do.

Q: What was it broadly, do you think?

WARD: Pay more attention to replicability and to the economics of things, the exact opposite of what I would argue for Moroccan small hydro; try to think more about the marketing aspects and the education information aspects of things; try to involve the private sector more in production and marketing. I'm sure there were some other useful lessons.

Q: What about social forestry, was that part of it? That came later?

WARD: That came a little bit later. But there was an energy strategy statement which exists and can be found, I'm sure, in the CDIE library.

In our Africa/Technical Resources office we had three foresters, three energy people, and three environmentalists. Tom worked closely with the late Fran Gulick, a wonderful woman, who had spent time with her husband, Clarence Gulick, also now dead, in India at the time John Lewis was leading the AID Mission there. One of Tom Catterson's notable accomplishments, in any case, was organizing a conference in Abidjan of foresters who were quite familiar with the Africa scene. There were a couple of volumes which were published when you were running the

evaluation operation in AID/Washington, a couple of big, yellow volumes on African forestry. It would be interesting using those studies and recommendations as kind of a baseline just to see what, if anything, has happened or been learned since then in the same area.

Tom Catterson was an Adjunct Professor at Syracuse University. In our office, we had three people at one time or another who were brought in under the Intergovernmental Exchange Act, which permitted people who were at state universities or state level governments to spend some time on detached service in a federal government agency. Tom had gone to Syracuse University College of Forestry. He had served several years with the Food and Agriculture Organization. He then spent some time in AID/Washington, after which he went to work for the Burlington, Vermont consulting firm of Associates in Rural Development, run by George Burrill. Tom was his chief natural resources advisor for several years but has since become an independent consultant. He has lately been doing work in Haiti, certainly a place that needs help with forests.

Q: How did you find working in the Africa Bureau? What was the situation in the Africa Bureau at that time?

WARD: We had the good fortune in the Office of Technical Resources of being led by Lane Holdcroft, who was a very good, very wise, strategically astute, technical person.

Q: Did you find that the mission was receptive to what you were promoting?

WARD: Sometimes. What we found rather interesting was, when Tom and I began to realize that it was important to try to encourage a better relationship between growing crops and growing trees, that they were not necessarily competitive, we had trouble with our own agricultural people. Agricultural people say "Trees are the enemy. Get rid of them so we can grow crops." The foresters, naturally, take a different view. So, I would be interested to know what state of play that is in now. You read more and more and more about the mutually supportive relation that must exist between food crops and other crops, but I don't know how that has played itself out in the AID world.

Q: Did you have special funding for your activities?

WARD: Not much. We had to depend pretty much on what was built into individual country programs. This was the beginning of the period where you could have buy-ins to centrally funded activities of one kind or another. There was some of that. But that was mainly like venture capital to get things off the ground. But to continue anything, you needed to have something in the country program. So, that took care of the period up until 1984, at which point I left the Africa Bureau to join the United Nations Division of the Office of Donor Coordination in the Bureau for Policy and Program Coordination. There I reported to Joan Dudick Gayoso.

RICHARD B. PARKER
Ambassador
Morocco (1978-1979)

Ambassador Richard B. Parker was born in Kansas in 1923 and received a bachelor's degree in 1947 and a master's degree in 1948 from Kansas State College. His Foreign Service career included positions in Australia, Israel, Jordan, Washington, DC, Libya, Lebanon, Egypt, and an ambassadorship to Morocco. Ambassador Parker was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy in 1989.

PARKER: I said, "I would like to go some place in Europe."

"Well, there is nothing open in Europe. There are two posts coming open, Rabat and Tunis."

I said, "Well, I have been to Rabat. I would much rather go to Tunis."

But the Department, in its wisdom, decided to send me to Rabat thinking they were doing me a favor. I left to go back to Beirut from consultation thinking I was going to Tunis in the following spring.

What happened was the Department pulled me out and sent me to Rabat in October. Sooner than I was ready to go and quite unwillingly. I didn't like the way the king treated ambassadors. Rabat is not an interesting town. I didn't want to go back. I didn't really know that I was the man for the job, and I wasn't because it turned out very badly. The king, after initially giving agrément, apparently didn't realize that I had been there during the two previous coup d'état attempts in which he suspected the Americans had some role. I think he became convinced that I had been sent by Jimmy Carter to pull the plug out from under him as he thought Jimmy Carter had done with the Shah.

Q: *This is the Shah of Iran.*

PARKER: Shah of Iran, yes.

Q: *Just about that time.*

PARKER: Yes, in early 1979, he arrived in Rabat essentially as a refugee. To make a long story short, in effect, the king asked for my recall, and I left there in June of '78 --

Q: '79.

PARKER: '79 after eight months. And that was, in effect, the end of my career.

Q: *Was this such a short time or were there any themes we should try to develop while you were there?*

PARKER: Well, it's an interesting case study in what happens to an area specialist in a place like this.

The big issue when I got there was arms. People in the Department, the Assistant Secretary Hal Saunders and my predecessor in Rabat, Bob Anderson, thought they had settled it in a conversation with the king during the summer. The question was arms for use in the Sahara.

When I was talking about Algeria, I should have mentioned the move of the Moroccans into the western Sahara in 1975. The Algerians opposed this and began supporting the Polisario guerrilla against the Moroccans, and the Moroccans found themselves bogged down in a guerrilla war which was getting nastier and nastier and quite serious by 1978. They had gone in the Sahara, I am convinced, with encouragement from Kissinger. I think the historical record will show that some day.

The Carter administration came in. Vance came in. We got a regional approach as opposed to Kissinger's global approach. The regionalists in the Bureau of African Affairs were very concerned because the African countries were concerned about this Moroccan expansionism into the western Sahara. They opposed the use of American arms -- and we'd long had an arms supply arrangement with Morocco. They opposed the use of these arms in the Sahara.

The legal advisor of the Department, Herb Hansell, who has been a member of my board in the Association for Diplomatic Studies, issued what I call a fatwa or decree; it is what a mufti issues. It was a decree saying, in effect, arms we supplied under our military assistance program for the defense of Morocco could not be used in the Sahara because we did not recognize Moroccan sovereignty over the Sahara yet because there had been no act of self-determination for the Saharan people.

I had no idea this rain cloud was gathering when I went to Morocco. But it burst almost as soon as I got there over an issue of helicopters ordered from Augusta Bell, the Italian helicopter company that manufactures helicopters under license from Bell U.S.A. And because they are under license from an American company, our munitions control people still had a veto over their final export. The Department, in its wisdom, had informed the Italians that these helicopters could not be exported to Morocco unless the Moroccans gave us the commitment they would not be used in the Sahara.

This made the king very unhappy. At one point, he summoned me and the Italian Ambassador to Marrakech. Pretending he was talking to the Italian Ambassador -- the two of us in the same room with him, sitting on the same couch -- but actually talking to me saying in effect, if the Americans didn't give him these helicopters, they could forget about any kind of military cooperation with Morocco.

Although I had earlier opposed the Moroccan move into the Sahara, I thought it had been a mistake and I thought we should have opposed it. I knew Secretary Vance -- because I had heard him say it -- like Secretary Kissinger, thought that the creation of another mini-state there would be a mistake. And I felt, as long as I'm working for the Secretary, I've got to support his position. I am going to be a good soldier about this. After this conversation with King Hassan I sent a telegram saying, "You know, you people are expecting the Moroccans to do this and that for you. You are expecting them to send troops to Zaire to support Mobutu. You are expecting them to give security advice and training to people in the Persian Gulf area. You want some limited

facilities out of them. You expect continued cooperation in terms of intelligence. If you want those things, the price of them is these helicopters. And you are going to have to release them."

Well, the Department changed its view and released the helicopters which I got credit from the Moroccan military but not from the King thanks in part to the country director in the Department who told the Moroccan Ambassador about it before telling me. So the Moroccan Ambassador could report it as though it was his accomplishment rather than mine.

ROBIN WHITE
Economic/Commercial Officer
Rabat (1978-1980)

Ms. White was born and raised in Massachusetts and educated at Georgetown University. After graduation she worked briefly on Capitol Hill before joining the Foreign Service in 1973. A Trained Economist, Ms. White served at a number of foreign posts as Economic and Commercial Officer. In the State Department in Washington, she occupied several senior positions in the trade and economic fields. Ms. White was also a Japan specialist. Ms. White was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy in 2005.

Q: When were you in Morocco?

WHITE: 1978 to 1980.

Q: What was the situation in Morocco at the time?

WHITE: King Hussein was a strong ally of the U.S and generally popular with the Moroccans, who greatly respected him, but there were human rights problems. It became politically very interesting when the U.S. Embassy in Tehran was taken over in 1979 because shortly thereafter the Shah of Iran came to Rabat and spent some months there and then in Marrakech. There was concern that Morocco would be a target for the people who opposed the Shah. This was at the time when our embassies in Algeria and Pakistan were attacked.

That was the first experience most of us had had with any type of terrorist concerns, so embassies across the Middle East and North Africa were told to prepare plans. The planning was pretty basic compared to the anti-terrorist steps embassies are forced to take today. Embassy Rabat was a lovely and quite open building which at least at that time would not have been very defensible. In case of an attack we were supposed to grab our classified files, run out the back door, and put them in barrels the marines would then put gasoline on and light. It was suggested that we then go over the back fence and find our way to the British or Canadian ambassadors' houses. It was a nerve-wracking time because of our concern about what was happening elsewhere, but we didn't have any sense of real danger from the Moroccan people. We were all very worried about people in the embassy in Tehran, one of them being the security officer from

Morocco who had gone there; his photo appeared right after the takeover, so we did take it personally.

Q: Yes. What was your job in Morocco?

WHITE: I was an economic/commercial officer. It was a small section with three people.

Q: Did you have much contact with the Moroccans themselves?

WHITE: As I didn't speak Arabic, my contacts were with the French speakers, so I'm not sure how representative they were of the general public. It was an urban elite. I met more working class Moroccans because my daughter had friends in the neighborhood. She made friends with the children of the maids and we occasionally went to their gatherings where we were warmly welcomed. We didn't communicate a whole lot, since most of them didn't speak much French or English, but it was still very interesting culturally to go to these little parties in the back of the big houses.

Q: Who was the ambassador?

WHITE: Richard Parker was the ambassador, a respected Arabic scholar, an excellent leader, and it was a pleasure to work for and learn from him. We had the sense that the king didn't really like him because he knew too much about Arab society and had his own sources of information outside government circles.

Q: Yes, one of the things said about King Hussein is that he liked political appointees because he usually ended up co-opting them.

WHITE: Ambassador Parker was followed by Ambassador Angier Biddle Duke, a political ambassador but a good one. He had a very good presence and great contacts in Washington. I was often invited to the residence by him and Mrs. Duke because the Moroccan guests didn't bring their wives to dinner. It gave me, a relatively junior officer, a chance to meet a number of interesting people.

Another point about being a woman in Morocco is that I think my life was made easy by being a mother. Sarah and I traveled all over the country. We went to Marrakech, Fez, Chaouen, down to the desert a couple of times. I never felt threatened or harassed verbally while I think a single woman on her own might have felt uncomfortable. Because I was there with a child I was a respectable woman. My daughter adored Morocco and it had a great deal of influence on her life. Morocco is a wonderful country for traveling and the people we met were very gracious.

Q: Was there a significant expatriate community in Morocco at the time?

WHITE: There were a lot of French and a small American community. There was an American school that then went to 8th grade and many of the teachers were American women married to Moroccan men. That was another way we met Moroccan families. The American community

more than doubled around 1979 because Westinghouse came in with a large number of people. They were setting up a communications project so a number of new families arrived.

Q: Had the hippie movement died off by that time?

WHITE: That was not visible in Rabat. I think probably Tangier and Marrakech got the hippies. I didn't do consular work. I feel they saw a lot more of that side of the expatriate community.

Q: Tangier seemed to get a lot of European and American hippies.

WHITE: To me, Tangier was the least attractive city in Morocco. Unfortunately a lot of Europeans and Americans came over just for a day from Spain and they got a negative impression of the country from that city. There were many aggressive men wanting to be guides and a lot of people trying to sell things so the mood was not at all typical of other cities which were welcoming without that edge of hostility.

Q: What was going on economically in Morocco at that time?

WHITE: The country had a lot of potential that wasn't really realized. Several trade missions and some high level visits were set up but American interest wasn't high. The U.S. Generalized System of Preferences (GSP) was in place at that time and I worked to educate Moroccan officials and businesses about the opportunities that tariff-free treatment for certain goods might bring. The major resources were fisheries and phosphates, but not much developed while I was there. Phosphate development was complicated by the long war with the Polisario in the Sahara.

Q: What about dealing with Moroccan officials? Did you find them competent in the economic sphere, was there much to talk to them about?

WHITE: I found it somewhat frustrating because at my level of bureaucracy, my contacts were not very forthcoming. The economic counselor was able to approach the more senior people and found them more willing to discuss details and make commitments. At my level there seemed to be an uncertainty and nervousness about talking to foreigners. I think that is a problem for junior to mid-level officers in countries where people don't feel that they can speak freely. I didn't really feel like I got inside the bureaucracy nor had very good sources.

Q: It seems that Morocco is a country with good ties to France, good ties to the United States and the West and yet like many Islamic countries, they don't seem to have developed a good working infrastructure that fits into the 20th or 21st century. There isn't the kind of economic development like in East Asia. Did you look at that?

WHITE: It seemed that there was not a strong entrepreneurial spirit. The impression I got from some Moroccan business people was that they put more emphasis on knowing the right people rather than developing a plan individually. There was a fairly small business elite in Rabat, which was not the business center. Casablanca was the big commercial city and there probably was a good deal more entrepreneurship there. Morocco is a rich country agriculturally with fertile hills and fields. There was great potential, but there didn't seem to be the infrastructure to

support trade. For example, we saw huge piles of melons by the road for sale. All the melons ripened at the same time and they'd be sold for just about nothing. If they could have been shipped to Europe there would have been a lot of money for the farmers and a processing industry might have developed.

ANGIER BIDDLE DUKE
Ambassador
Morocco (1979-1981)

Ambassador Angier Biddle Duke was born in New York, New York in 1915. His Foreign Service career included positions in El Salvador, Washington, DC, Spain, Denmark, Argentina, and an ambassadorship to Morocco. Ambassador Duke was interviewed in 1989 by John McKesson.

Q: Would you describe the political and economic conditions when you arrived?

DUKE: To go back a bit, John, from 1969 to 1979 I was out of government, working in the private sector in England and then as New York City Commissioner of Public Events (Chief of Protocol) in Mayor Beame's administration. In 1979, as President of the National Committee on American Foreign Policy, a non-governmental agency, I was in my office at the Waldorf-Astoria when Cy Vance called me from the State Department to say that there was a problem with King Hassan II and would I accept an appointment to be Ambassador to Morocco. It seems there had been a difficulty between the King and Ambassador Parker; Hassan would not receive him. They knew that I had had a good relationship with King Hassan dating back to my Protocol days and that I had kept up that relationship. I was really thrilled to be asked to come back into the State Department and, after consulting with my wife, said "Yes." The problem with my predecessor, Richard Parker, I soon found, was that he was an Arabist, spoke perfect Arabic, but he had also been stationed in Rabat some years before when a coup against the King had taken place. There were vague rumors circulating that the American Embassy, when Parker was then DCM, was in some way aware of the coup plot beforehand. It was also held against him that he had been Ambassador to Algiers previously and thus came from the "enemy camp". Just because of the eccentricity of the Chief of State this very able Foreign Service Officer had to leave. Due to that I was called into the breach and I resumed my relationship with Hassan to get things going again.

Immediately after arrival in December 1979 I was plunged into the arms sale issue and the related question of Morocco's war against the Polisarios in the western Sahara. I got into the first series of conversations with the King when I presented my credentials and I told him quite frankly that the conditions under which Congress would release arms for sale to the Moroccan military were tied to Moroccan willingness to negotiate with the Polisarios. As these monthly and sometimes weekly conversations with the King wore on, he began to take the position that indeed de facto negotiations were going on. In January 1980 he told me categorically that one of his most trusted and closest councillors was at that very moment meeting with high leadership elements of the rebel forces in Geneva. My cabled account of this assertion prompted my recall to Washington for consultation. I met with Secretary Vance, Walter Stoessel, the Under

Secretary for Political Affairs and the relevant Assistant Secretary and Bureau Chief. They encouraged me to confer with key members of Congress, who turned out to be Senators Javits and Stone, and Congressman Solarz, among others. The upshot of all this was to take the King at his word and in return relax the arms sale ban. When General Haig succeeded Cy Vance in January 1981, I requested permission to stay on until the first arms delivery was made; and I was asked to do so. Accordingly I did not resign and leave my post until the first fighter plane was delivered in late March. Subsequently the new administration completely abolished the condition on arms sales.

When I retired from Morocco in 1981 I organized the Moroccan American Foundation, went on the board of The American Legation Museum in Tangier and have returned for royal weddings and the King's birthday ceremonies.

KENNETH N. ROGERS
Principal Officer
Tangier (1980-1985)

Kenneth N. Rogers was born in New York in 1931. He received his BA from Ohio State University in 1953, and his UJD from George Washington University in 1958. His career includes postings abroad in Hong Kong, Saigon, Luanda, Kingston, and Tangier. He was interviewed on October 21, 1997, by Charles Stuart Kennedy.

Q: Today is December 15, 1997. At the end of June 1980, you went off to Morocco. You were in Morocco until when?

ROGERS: To July 1985.

Q: Wow. Was this just a regular assignment or had you sought it? How did it come about?

ROGERS: It was one of many listed and it sounded interesting. I was then in the Bureau of Human Rights and Humanitarian Affairs. I bid on that one. I had to go overseas. I had been in the States eight years. It sounded exceedingly interesting. It was just routinely assigned.

Q: Did you have any feeling that you were on somebody's shit list for being in the Bureau of Human Rights?

ROGERS: That is theoretically possible. Somebody could have been annoyed because I wrote about the country for which they had great affection or concern. I thought that would be a nice assignment.

Q: I would think it would be a very good assignment. I was just wondering whether places like the Middle East were out of bounds because of the human rights reports.

ROGERS: I wasn't aware of that. Of course, I didn't speak Arabic, so a significant assignment in the Middle East wasn't realistic.

Q: What was your job in Morocco?

ROGERS: I was principal officer in Tangier responsible for that portion of Morocco which used to be Spanish Morocco, everything from the Atlantic almost to the Algerian border. I had five large provinces plus, for interesting reasons, Gibraltar and the five Spanish so-called "places of sovereignty" in northern Morocco: Ceuta, Melilla, the Charafina Islands, Pena de Gomez, and Al Huceima.

Q: When you arrived there, what was the situation in your consular district?

ROGERS: My predecessor had already left, and retired to Florida. I never did know him. The main problems at that time were mostly consular, but some political reporting. The consular problems were mainly associated with young Americans getting in trouble with drugs, which is true in many, many areas of the world and particularly so there. Kif (converted hashish) was readily available. Folks would sell it to young Americans and get a reward from the police for turning them in. It was just a vicious cycle. Moroccan jails were not attractive. They were really hard. I had visited a Moroccan jail while in the Navy when I went there in 1953 waiting for a plane to take me to my ship. I was asked to go see a U.S. Navy enlisted man who had murdered somebody. He was in the French prison in what was then called "Port Lyautey." It now has a different name, Kenitra. I went into this enormous prison deep underground. There he was. He was a medical corpsman, so they put him to good use in their hospital ward. It was interesting that many years later, I went back and visited jails in Morocco.

Q: Tangier had the reputation for being a place where you had a really dissolute foreign society of British and other remittance men and women and sort of a wild sexual life and so on. Had those days gone?

ROGERS: No, there was still a little of that, but I think their wild days had long been over. They were pretty old by then. But some very famous people lived there. Paul Bowles lived across the street from us. We were good friends. There was a handful of other minor luminaries in the literary world. Paul was the most interesting.

Q: What were Paul's works?

ROGERS: "The Sheltering Sky" was one. There were many, many others. He was a very pleasant and rather frail man. He was always interesting. He was married to Jane Bowles [Note: Bowles died in 1999], who died some months before we arrived, so I never knew her. She had a literary following of her own. But obscure American literary talent was never of great interest to me, except a few of the Beatniks that I happened to meet in the early 1950s, such as Jack Kerouac and Alan Ginsberg.

Tangier also had the old legation diplomatic property. It is now a museum, still operated by the Foreign Buildings of the Department of State. It is a beautiful old place of maybe 50 rooms on

Zankat America. It was the gift of a sultan in about 1820. It is a museum operated by the Tangier American Legation Museum Society. Ben Dixon is the U.S. agent. That was an interesting small aspect of it, to help keep that running.

One major responsibility was Gibraltar. Access from Spain to Gibraltar did not exist. It was closed until 1984. Therefore, because no American consul from Spain could have access to it, theoretically it was the responsibility of London. Nonetheless, we did it from Tangier because we were neither British nor assigned inside Spain, so it worked out very nicely.

We had major ship visits. That was another huge project. Tangier is at the Straits of Gibraltar. When major units of the Mediterranean Fleet would transit in and out, they would stop at the Straits of Gibraltar, exchange various things, and go their opposite way. Years ago, I had known on a submarine a fellow who then became the Chief of Naval Personnel. I wrote to him and said, "Why don't you have them come in and stay, buy a rug and have some fun?" So, many, many ship visits occurred while I was there. His name is Lando Zech. He later became head of the Atomic Energy Commission (The Nuclear Regulatory Commission). So, we enjoyed those visits. It was a good break for the Navy instead of going straight back. They could bring some souvenirs home. At one time with one visit, we had the largest ever group of nuclear powered warships ever in one post at one time. Normally, that doesn't happen because they are such an enormous target. We had four cruisers and two aircraft carriers and two submarines all at once. All were nuclear powered. It was such an interesting event that the Chief of Naval Operations came from Washington to visit. We had a reception at our government residence for him, the Commander of the Sixth Fleet, the officers of the various ships, and the senior naval officer of COMSOUTH. It was a lot of fun for all.

When I arrived, Angier Biddle Duke was ambassador. I really appreciated him. He did such a wonderful job. He, tragically, was killed while rollerblading in New York last year. Marvelous person. He was very, very kind to me. He was replaced by Joseph Verner Reed. Just before Joseph Reed arrived, my wife became critically ill. She contracted a disease called "Guillain Barré," which is named after two French doctors who identified it. She became totally paralyzed from the neck down. A local doctor said it could be polio. Unlikely. She had had a polio vaccination. But he said, "You have to get her on a ventilator." I said, "Okay, get one over here." He said, "None exists in northern Morocco, not one. No hospital has one." So, I put her into a car and drove her to Rota, Spain, which had a good naval hospital. She was there for a long, long time. So, Joseph Reed, whom I had never met, called me up in the hospital and said, "What do you want to do? Do you want to go home or stay there and tough it out?" I said, "I'll stay here." I stayed with her in Spain for some weeks. He said, "Fine, we'll do what you want." While I was in Rota, a telegram chases me down. It said, "Do you have any objections of being named chief of mission in Guinea Bissau?" I said, "Sorry, I can't do it." So, that was the end of that. I thought it was weird that Guinea Bissau - GB - and Guillain Barré - GB... She suffered terribly. It was just miserable for her for many, many weeks. Then she spent many months in a wheelchair. Mercifully, today she is in very good shape, although a bit frail. We eventually got her back to Morocco. Happily, because we lived right next to the office, I could go back and forth and check on her during the day.

Q: How did you find dealing with the Moroccan officials?

ROGERS: No problem, quite pleasant. They were enormously cooperative. When I showed an interest in a particular person, we had quick access. Sometimes, they let people off a little bit easily if they were young and stupid if they promised not to come back (I'm talking about the hashish nonsense.). I never had difficulty. I became very good friends with many of the officials. Similarly with Gibraltar. I reported on the internal elections of Gibraltar. The elections have always been fascinating to me. I predicted that after many, many years, finally a new person would be elected Chief Minister, of a totally different party: Joe Bossano, an obscure dock worker/labor leader. He was allegedly a communist. I said, "Well, we're going to work on that." With the blessing of Embassy London, I got him on a travel grant around the States. His escort officer was Perry Stieglitz, a retired USIA officer. Bossano did become Chief Minister. He embraced democracy and capitalism. Perry Stieglitz is now and has been for some years the representative of Gibraltar in the United States. Fun story.

Q: How did Spanish sovereignty in these little enclaves work at that time?

ROGERS: Two were significant: Cesta and Mellowly. For years, there has been tension, enormous combat in the 1920s between Morocco and Spain in northern Morocco. A lot of fictional stories and movies have been produced about them, but they are 80% nonsense. When Spain gave up northern Morocco to Moroccan sovereignty, many thousands of Spaniards who lived in northern Morocco migrated to Cesta and, to a lesser extent, Mellowly. So, they still have very important relations. They are free ports. They have very strong military emplacements there. It would be very tough for the Moroccans ever to take those two. On the others, Pena de Gomez is a peninsula with a tiny fortress, a small chapel, 16 soldiers, and one sergeant. At high tide, it is an island. It has been there for centuries. All these places were originally Portuguese. The Portuguese and Spanish crowns merged. They became Spanish and have remained so ever since. The Charafina Islands... There are three. One is a cemetery and the other two are just a few fishermen. That is very near the Algerian border, visible from the shore. The other interesting one is the island fortress of Al Huceima, which is in the Bay of Al Huceima. It looks like an old stone battleship. You can visit all of those places if you want to by taking a small vessel from Cesta, which makes its mail run.

Q: Were the Moroccans making noises about taking them over or did they really care?

ROGERS: I think they didn't care. It's income generating. Cesta and Mellowly are free ports. No one can enter those other places at all except by sea. When Spain would make a lot of noise about reversion of Gibraltar, Morocco would say, "Oh, we can't have the same sovereign nation state on both sides of the Straits of Hercules. Thus, the British better stay there." Yes, they would rattle sabers, maybe every few years, but no one ever took it seriously. They are all charming places and well worth a visit.

Q: In that area, was there pressure from the Algerians within your consular district?

ROGERS: No, there was no pressure, but there was minor smuggling on the frontier, just local tradesmen selling mostly local products (food and beverage) across the frontier. I did have one interesting incident on that border. I had a call from the embassy saying, "Please get in your car

and go to the Algerian border. You will be allowed to cross the border and you will pick up somebody and take him to Rabat." I said, "Who?" They said, "When you see him, you'll know him." So, I zipped over there, crossed the border, sat in the customs area on the Algerian side, and in walked Vernon Walters. I knew who he was. Everybody knows his face. I drove him to Rabat. When he arrived, we got across the border and he said, "I am so glad to be with a safe driver." Apparently, the Algerian police had driven very fast. He said, "There must be something very important done first." I said, "Yes, Sir. What?" He said, "Take me to breakfast." I took him to breakfast. I said, "What is this important thing we have to do?" He said, "We just did it: breakfast!" He was a lot of fun. I really enjoyed him. He was a great storyteller of endless comic tales. If there was such a guy as THE raconteur, it is Vernon Walters. I took him to Rabat and we have been friendly ever since.

Q: Where does he live now?

ROGERS: Arlington.

Q: Did Libya in its confrontation with the United States ever intrude on what you were doing?

ROGERS: When the shutdown in the so-called "Death Zone" between Benghazi and Tripoli in the Gulf of Sidra occurred, the Moroccans were thrilled. They thought that was great. That showed power. During this time, and to a lesser extent today, the Algerians strongly supported the Polisario and what was the Spanish Sahara. That struggle was going on all the time I was there. I believe it is in the cease-fire stage now and a plebiscite to be administered by the United Nations, the key issue being who really is a Polisario person, who is a resident, voter eligible in Western Sahara. Some say that Algeria wanted access to the Atlantic, which would have been a strategic concern and something that, thus, with the Eastern Bloc would have access to the Atlantic for obvious value reasons. That no longer matters. As with so many of these things, the hot items faded into ashes when the Cold War cooled down. Joseph Verner Reed was a fascinating ambassador.

Q: What was his background?

ROGERS: He was a senior official in Chase Manhattan Bank, a big Republican supporter. He was very close to David Rockefeller, who often visited. He was a very gracious person. He would travel a lot, worked very, very hard. Many people found him too colorful, but I found him delightful. David Rockefeller was not colorful. He was very bland and quiet. Joseph Reed was very flamboyant and full of endless ideas and designs. When he left in 1985, he took a job for the administration at the United Nations as Under Secretary for Political Affairs on the UN staff. George Bush had visited Morocco, and they were good friends. When George Bush became President, Joseph Reed became Chief of Protocol. At the end of that assignment, he went back to the UN and has had several different jobs there. He still has more or less a protocol historical job at the rank of Under Secretary.

Q: Where does he hang out now?

ROGERS: He has a home in Greenwich, Connecticut and also an apartment in New York City.

Q: One of the things that I've gotten through these interviews has been that there seems to be a slight pattern. That is, our Arabic-speaking career ambassadors who have gone to Morocco usually don't get along too well with King Hassan, whereas our political appointees get to the point where they're practically talking about "our King." They become very defensive about Morocco and King Hassan. These are the stories. I have never served there. He much prefers people who are more amenable to identifying with Morocco from the ambassadors than sort of a cold-eyed professional. With Reed, did you see any of this overidentification with Moroccan interests or not?

ROGERS: I think he saw Morocco and King Hassan [Note: King Hassan died in 1999] as good friends of the U.S., very helpful in delicate matters, especially in regard to Israel, and as a good counterbalance to the more radical Arab nation states. It is interesting historically to turn the clock back a few centuries. Morocco was the only country in North Africa that wasn't conquered by the Ottoman Empire. The Ottoman Turks stopped at what is now the Algerian border. They were defeated there and never went in. Thus, my theme is that Morocco is different from all the others that had this overlay of Turkish hegemony and is very proud of that. Of course, they have a very ancient civilization. Fez was founded in about 600. There is a very ancient university there. It is relatively tolerant of westerners and has vigorously suppressed the sharp fundamentalist inroads. When I was there in 1984, there was severe rioting in several parts of Morocco. Some of the worst was in Tetouan, which was in my consular district. I drove over there. The Moroccan gendarmes were machinegunning groups from helicopters. It was a general revolt that was sharply suppressed. And brutally. It didn't get too much press play.

Q: What was the reason for the revolt?

ROGERS: My memory is that it was a number of things. One was a reduction in a subsidy on basic foodstuffs (tea, sugar, oil, and flour), which meant that real market prices jumped radically and right away. That was the straw that broke this camel's back. There were other issues, such as suppression of various elements that wanted a different system, probably some aspects of religious fundamentalism, too.

Q: I think it was 1982 when there was the invasion of Lebanon by Israel and the expulsion of the PLO from Beirut. It was a full-scale war between the PLO, the Lebanese, and Israel. How did that play when you were there in Morocco?

ROGERS: Let's have a little background. Many of the Moroccan families of prominence for six or seven hundreds years had lived in southern Spain. When the "conquest" occurred, they moved back into northern Morocco. At the same time roughly, Queen Isabel kicked the Jews out of Spain.

Q: 1492 is when they were expelled.

ROGERS: Yes. Many of those Jews went to Morocco. There are synagogues all over. Most of the artisans and book binders were Jews who were not Arabized, but had lived in the Andalusian context with the Moroccans and had been there for centuries. Now go up to 1982. There was a

big reaction against Jewish centuries old residents. The rabbi in Tangier was stoned and hurt on the street because of that incident you're talking about. There was a lot of unrest. As a result, many of the Jews in Morocco who had a long, long heritage moved - some to Israel, some to Toronto, where there must be some kind of an extended family of Moroccan Jews in Toronto. Some went to the U.S.

Q: Did you find yourself dealing with the governors of the provinces put sort of on the stand regarding our relations with Israel?

ROGERS: Not at all.

Q: It just didn't come up?

ROGERS: I certainly didn't bring it up and they never asked me. They were very proud of good relations with the U.S. They loved the ship visits. They brought in a lot of money. They were very proud of the fact - and I had to research it - that, as they contend, they were the first nation to recognize the United States after independence. Other scholars assert that it was the Netherlands.

Q: This is a debatable thing.

ROGERS: They were within the first few. My research could support that. There is a book about Holland, "First Salute," that it recognized us first by lowering the flag to the first American warship that came by some Caribbean islands. In general, they are very proud of their relations with the U.S. and feel that they are a bridge between the Arab world, Islam, and the West.

Q: Was there any concern when Ronald Reagan was elected President? Here was somebody that most people knew as a movie actor and was coming from the right wing. Did this raise any apprehensions in the people, the Moroccans that you knew?

ROGERS: I don't recall any such reaction. In fact, Hassan II got along very well, eventually, with Reagan. There is a famous photo of the two of them riding horses together, I think, in Arlington. We were given a big copy of that to hang in the lobby. I think it was at Fort Myers that they rode the horses.

Q: You didn't end up with any gifts like two lions or something like that which had plagued one of your predecessors way back around 1850. When you have some lions and you're waiting for transport, you have to feed them and everything.

ROGERS: We're not allowed to take gifts dead or alive, so there was a free lunch maybe, but no gifts.

Q: What about the Soviet Union? How was the Soviet Union seen during this particular time?

ROGERS: Aeroflot, the Soviet airline, landed at Rabat. That was an important overnight stop for them. I would go to Rabat at least twice a month for country team meetings, sometimes three

times. Aeroflot used the same hotel that I did. Soviet ship visits were very common. I always photographed ships, especially what we call "space support ships." I took excellent pictures of all their radar and other electronic antennae, etc. The Yuri Gagarin was one of them, a huge space support ship. I often went down and walked on the ships and visited. I don't recall ever seeing a combat vessel, but there were many auxiliary ships. Once, a Soviet nuclear submarine ran aground off the Moroccan coast, lost part of its bow and thus couldn't submerge. I got photos of that as it was being towed out by an oceangoing tug. But it's not all one sided. The U.S.S. Sturgeon lost its anchor in Tangier harbor. The anchor is flush with the hull. Thus, when the anchor is lost, the underwater sound signature is very obvious. You can't hide yourself. The Navy sent in a marvelous team of underwater demolition fellows. They had to find the anchor. They said, "Where do you think it is?" By triangulation, I showed them where the ship had been moored, where it had dragged during a big storm, and they went out there and found it immediately. I just happened to get it right. It took a few days to get it up. A special airplane came in to take it away. That captain of that ship later became an admiral. But there were frequent incidents of that nature that were illustrative of the constant utility of the support that the Foreign Service can provide to the Armed Forces and their needs. Unfortunately, as with many other posts, Tangier was closed in roughly 1988 or 1989.

Tangier is still used by the Voice of America, which built an enormous new relay station just outside of the city. That was also exceedingly interesting. The chief engineer of the Voice of America came to Tangier and said, "We want a new station to relay from South Carolina." Then they rebroadcast to the Eastern Bloc and China. He said, "We want a place which is near a railroad, not too far from the coast, has about six or eight inches of salty or saline water in it." I suppose these were engineering needs. And he wanted it flat. I said, "Come with me." I took him out and showed him such a place called Briech and that is where they built it. It's there now.

Q: You left there in 1985. Were there any other major incidents that happened (earthquakes, disasters, coups, presidential visits - all of these are of the same measure)?

ROGERS: George Bush visited while he was Vice President. There was no presidential visit. I got to meet him. I think I touched on all the major points of that time.

WILLIAM HARRISON MARSH
Counselor for Political Affairs
Rabat (1981-1983)

Born in Pennsylvania in 1931, Marsh graduated from Cornell University in 1953, and obtained his Masters Degree from Princeton. He served in the US Air Force from 1953-1955 as a first lieutenant overseas. His postings included Saigon, Brussels, Paris, Jeddah, Rabat, Geneva and Rome. Lambert Heyniger and Vladimir Lehovitch interviewed Marsh on December 3, 1997.

Q: Okay, so now we are in 1981. You are up for transfer from a hardship post, where did you want to go?

MARSH: Well, I was very eager to find... to get a chief of mission position or something of that sort. I did not want to go back to Washington after only two years out. I was asked to go to Morocco. That was not my first choice but then I thought, well, alright. It would be interesting.

Q: You would be going there as what?

MARSH: Counselor for Political Affairs. I had had senior level jobs, so I was still a Three, which is not technically a senior officer. I had had senior level jobs for years. I had served above my pay grade for a long, long time. I knew I was going to be promoted to the senior ranks that fall and the job of counselor for Political Affairs was graded at the Three level. So for the first time I was going to be working below senior levels.

Now I'm going to have to be careful, very, very careful, in dealing with the time I was in Morocco because it was very difficult.

Q: Why?

MARSH: It was very difficult because there was a political ambassador who tended to consume the whole mission, the whole embassy, the whole staff.

Q: Name, please?

MARSH: No.

Q: Consume in what sense?

MARSH: He had to monopolize every activity, every talent all the time in every person. I'll give you certain examples.

I could get a telephone call from the Marine Guard who would say that the deputy chief of mission...

Q: Who was that?

MARSH: That was Ted Curran, who was a man about whom this very garrulous person speaking to you now will say absolutely nothing, which is my way of indicating that the gentleman deserves nothing but total silence on my part. In any event the deputy chief of mission told the Marine Guard that the ambassador wanted everybody in on Sunday afternoon for an urgent meeting within fifteen minutes. The ambassador was a very dapper dresser all the time. So that meant coat, tie, and full regalia, you see, to go over there to the residence.

Q: Sunday afternoon?

MARSH: Sunday afternoon. And so we would get over there and there would be a meeting that would be eight to twelve minutes long. The ambassador would say that the purpose of it was to

discuss whether the ambassador from the Republic of Banana in Central America should be invited to a reception two weeks afterwards, because that ambassador “had not been very nice” to our ambassador.

Q: And the whole staff? On a Sunday afternoon?

MARSH: The whole senior staff...on Sunday afternoon at the residence.

Q: You are talking manic compulsive-ness here!

MARSH: Yes, yes we are! We’re also talking about a person who simply has to have everybody’s attention all the time and has to be the center of everything all the time, and who spent most of the time alone in Rabat. His wife came out very rarely. I can well understand why. And so he had to have somebody dancing attendance.

Q: This is a Reagan appointee?

MARSH: That’s correct. Just for curiosity afterwards I counted the number of times I had been to the residence for official events during the first six months of 1982. January 1 to June 30, 1982, I had been there 203 times for an official event or meeting or what have you in half a year!

And another time, for example, my wife, and my children (Both of the boys were back from school in the States.), and I were planning to go to Fez at Christmas time. At the last minute the ambassador instructed us to take along the chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee and his wife, who were going to be visiting.

Q: And this is a private family Christmas vacation? And here you have got the Chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee and his wife coming along with you?

MARSH: That’s right, and the Senator from Illinois, Charles Percy, and his wife, Lorraine! Absolutely marvelous people, wonderful people, but the ambassador would lean on anybody for anything!

Q: Why did they want to go to Fez in the first place?

MARSH: Well, they were en route to Tunisia where they had a daughter in the Peace Corps, or something, I’ve forgotten what exactly, something like that. But at any rate, incidentally, I was never paid back. I was told to pick up the bills for them and be reimbursed. I was never reimbursed for that.

Q: Wow!

MARSH: Another time I was given about three hours notice in Rabat that I was to fly up to London, meet the ambassador, fly back with him to Fez from London.

Q: Why?

MARSH: Because there were papers he wanted translated into French and he just loved my French. Well, it was the only effective French, except for the administrative officer, John Garon, who was a very good administrative officer, by the way, another exception. He was Corsican in origin, so he had French, but he wasn't a writer of diplomatic French, but I could write French and put everything before the King.

Q: But you had to speak French to serve in Morocco, in theory.

MARSH: Hah! Hah!

Q: Every position in the embassy would have to be language designated, I would think.

MARSH: This is terribly funny. Language requirements were largely a thing of the past. Only for certain hard languages was there was somebody on hand who has been especially trained for that.

Q: Okay, Bill, you have been a counselor of embassy before, in Jeddah, you are now serving sort of your second post as counselor of embassy. You have made your promotion to Class Two. Give us some of the contrast between a political-military counselor in one Arab country and a straight political counselor in another.

MARSH: But you are missing the point. The point is not the dictates of the job; the point is the dictates of the dictator.

Q: Okay.

MARSH: So I wrote speeches by the carload.

Q: For the ambassador?

MARSH: That's right, and all that sort of thing.

Q: It does sound like sort of a one man band and everybody is dancing to his tune, which is strange because I would assume he didn't know that much either about diplomacy or about Morocco.

MARSH: He had disdain for diplomacy and had the weirdest view of Morocco that there ever was. He had a certain disregard for facts in situations. Thus he maintained in his remarks at his swearing-in that when he was a child at their family estate in Florida, that his nurse had said to him, "One day, you are going to be ambassador to Morocco" pointing East. Well, in that case, she was pointing at Senegal, not at Morocco. But in any event these things really challenged one's credibility!

Q: Is there anything that you would like to add about Morocco, your impressions of Morocco? What life was like there?

MARSH: Not really, I think I'd just as soon pass over it because finally things became unbearable so I curtailed, I cut a three year tour to two years. So I went back to the Department and in effect was overcomplement for most of the year, but did manage to find a Special Planning assignment, and then in '84 I was asked if I would go to Belgium again, this time as political counselor. The name of the game was to persuade the Belgian government to permit the installation of cruise missiles.

ROBERT THEODORE CURRAN
Deputy Chief of Mission
Rabat (1981-1984)

Robert Theodore Curran was born in New York in 1931. He received his bachelor's degree from Haverford College and his master's degree from Columbia University. During Mr. Curran's career he had positions in Germany, Jordan, Yemen, Mexico, Afghanistan, and Morocco. Mr. Curran was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy in November 1998.

CURRAN: Morocco has had diplomatic relations with the United States since the American Revolution. It is a beautiful country and is generally peaceful. In 1982, King Hassan II had been on the throne for two decades and, as monarch and chief religious leader, ruled over a backward but peaceful country.

Of course, there were problems: a rapid population increase, limited resources, resultant unemployment, and a resource devouring war in the south with the Algerian-backed 'Polisario' over the long-term sovereignty in the former Spanish Morocco. Nevertheless, King Hassan appeared to enjoy widespread support and, certainly in comparison to neighboring Algeria, Morocco was a picture of tranquility.

U.S. long-term interests in Morocco increased markedly during the Reagan period. Prior to this period, especially under the Carter presidency, we had maintained a VOA relay facility in Tangier and conducted a few modest education and AID programs. On the Moroccan side, the King cultivated friendships with a wide spectrum of Americans including David Rockefeller, Alexander Haig, Henry Kissinger, Kirk Kerkorian, and especially General Vernon Walters. However, the Carter administration was cool to the King and worried about human rights and the anti-'Polisario' campaign.

But the increasing danger to U.S. interests in the Gulf and an extremely helpful role by King Hassan in the Israeli-Arab conflict combined with a new government in Washington to raise the level of bilateral engagement. Chief among the American goals were: opening Morocco's ports to fleet visits; making available the old SAC bases for refueling and resupply in case of a war; use of bombing ranges east of the Atlas mountains for NATO pilot practice; a major modernization of the transmitter facilities in Tangier. All of these goals were met under the leadership of Reagan's appointed ambassador, Joseph Verner Reed. Reed was a protégé of David Rockefeller with a very colorful personal style. The Moroccans (including the King!) seemed to

appreciate his swashbuckling approach to diplomacy. It took the embassy staff longer to get used to the unusual hours and highly personal side of Reed, but by the end of his tour, most of the official Americans came to admire his panache and his results.

Ambassador Reed was very attentive to me personally, as was the King and - aside from difficult personnel matters tied to changes made to adapt to the new style in the embassy - my last posting was one of my best. Promoted to career minister in 1983, I turned down an offer to be ambassador in Abu Dhabi and retired in 1984 to serve in Munich with Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty.

Q: Today is the 16th of March 1999. Ted, we're off to Morocco.

CURRAN: Like Webster's Dictionary-

Q: We're Morocco bound, yes.

CURRAN: Well, just to go back, I had had a good personal relationship with Secretary Alexander Haig when he was in the White House and I was working for Rogers, and we maintained a good personal relationship over the years. And we went on his Middle East trip together. As I said earlier, I think it was in the December-January timeframe, 1981- 82, and at that time he asked me if I would leave Washington and would be DCM in Rabat, and he said there was a political appointee going into Rabat that there was a lot of concern about, and they wanted to have a senior officer who had some background in the Middle East and in politics in Washington between the various agencies. I was very pleased, and got them to give me some French, which kept getting interrupted, but anyway, I managed to get about three months in before I went to Rabat.

During the later winter, early spring of 1982, King Hassan came to Washington on a visit to see Ronald Reagan, and you might be interested in something that probably isn't too well known. The White House advance man was Charles Tyson, a politico from somewhere in the Southwest. And we had a series of meetings with the Moroccan counterpart, whose name was Mohamed Assad, who died later in a tragic car crash. And we were talking about how to manage the schedule.

Q: This was in Washington.

CURRAN: In Washington. And these state visits, you know, are all pretty cut and dried ahead of time. You have the arrival ceremony, you have a little lunch, then you have a big state dinner hosted by the President, and the next day you have a big dinner hosted by the ambassador and the visiting head of state. During the advance talks we had, and we got to be pretty good friends all of us, Tyson let slip that Reagan hated formal dinners and didn't say anything more about it. But I got to thinking about that, and I'd done some research on Hassan, and so at one of the next meetings, I said, in Michael Deaver's presence (Michael Deaver was one of the triumvirate along with Meese and Baker who guided the first Reagan years), I said, "Well, why not scrub the

dinner and let the two principals go on a nice horseback ride?” And everybody haw-hawed at me and that was that. Anyway, we finally went into the Oval Office with the President. Maybe it wasn’t the Oval Office. It was fairly large. Maybe it was the Cabinet Room. And Reagan came in, and I’ll have a few things to say about him, but anyway, he was very alert and interested, and when it came to the state dinner in the White House, he wrinkled his nose and said, “Boy, I wish someone would figure out some way to not have me do all these damn dinners.” So everybody started to say, “Well, Mr. President, you know, this is the way it’s always done,” and Deaver said, “Well, you might be interested, some sort of far- out idea that instead of dinner we’ll do a horseback ride.” And the President’s face lit up. He said, “What a great idea!” So believe it or not, they scrubbed the dinner and my colleagues in the State Department were unkind enough to say that my role was to walk behind the horses and clean up, but that isn’t true.

But anyway, it gave me a chance to meet the King, who was a very bright person and remembers everything. He remembered me then later when I got to Rabat. And I wanted to say a few things about President Reagan; then we can go on to the rest of this. Four or five times I was in the room with President Reagan in a relatively small group of people. Of course, I was never one-on-one with the President. He was really an amazing character. Everybody said he wasn’t intellectually engaged. I mean, that was the conventional wisdom. And people said he would fall asleep in meetings. He was certainly laid back, and he certainly wasn’t terribly interested in a lot of detail. In fact, there was a great scene at the bilateral with the King, before they went on the horseback ride, and the President, as everybody knows now - maybe all Presidents - but Reagan was notorious for being given a set of white index cards with notes of the various things to raise with visiting leaders. So when everyone sort of settled back, and the President said, “It’s wonderful to have you here, your Majesty, and hope you have a good visit.” Then he said, “Now I’m supposed to raise a bunch of stuff with you, but you know, I’m not too familiar with this, so what I suggest is that I give you my cards, and our advisors can work on these issues and tomorrow we can figure out what, if anything, needs our attention.” (Actually, it’s quite a sensible approach.) And the King was thrilled, and he pulled some papers out of his pocket and said, “Here are my notes.” I don’t think they were, but anyway...

I just wanted to give an impression. President Reagan was very self-assured. At another one of these meetings - I think it was a pre-visit meeting when everybody was briefing the President - some junior aide spilled a cup of coffee or something like that. Everybody was aghast. But Reagan said, “God, I’m glad to see somebody else does that once in a while. Boy, oh, boy, come on, let’s clean up.” And he just acted as though it was natural. And I think it created a terrific atmosphere in the White House.

Q: Tell me, how did the horseback ride go?

CURRAN: Well, I can’t tell you. I wasn’t - contrary to rumor, I wasn’t cleaning up. No. It must have gone very well, because it went an hour and a half longer than planned. I think the only problem with the horseback ride was it gave the King the idea that he was really on the inside with Reagan, and Reagan was just enjoying the ride - and he was an expert at making people feel comfortable.

Q: Where did the ride take place?

CURRAN: There's an agricultural farm out in Virginia someplace, and they had the horses out there. The King's a damn good rider, and I guess Reagan is too. They had a wonderful time. It's one of the great unsung triumphs of foreign policy, which I'll never get any credit for. Anyway, I'll try to get it into this tape.

So off I went to Morocco with, I would say, not very good French.

Q: *You arrived when?*

CURRAN: May of '82 and left in April '84, so about two years.

I might say that FSI did its best. The French program is one of the best programs there are. They worked me very hard, but it's hard in three months, particularly for an older person, to get up to 3/3 in a foreign language, and I didn't. But I was very fortunate, because my wife took a job at that time, so I was more or less of a bachelor in Rabat - and the two or three people who were in the DCM house spoke no English, so in fact, I had to use French all the time, and the level of conversational French got quite up quite early, and I got up at six every morning to take some tutoring. So my French came along, and I was able at least to do business.

Morocco's a delightful country. I don't know if you've ever visited. It's southern France climate and friendly people, and it's clean and neat and everything works. If you think of it in north-south terms starting at Gibraltar and going south, there's an arc to the east, which is the Atlas Mountains, and inside that arc is where the heartbeat of the country is. Lovely farms and fruit and grain and so on. It was one of the breadbaskets of the Roman Empire. Morocco was different than for example Algeria and some of the other French colonies because the French had, for some accident of history, decided not to "occupy" Morocco but to declare it a protectorate. And even though that might seem like a rather subtle difference to some people, in fact, the Moroccans took their independence quite seriously, and the monarchy was maintained. In the '50s, the French decided to give Morocco its independence, but instead of letting Moroccans decide who was going to be the king, the French decided who was going to be the King. And they picked a rival family to Hassan's Ailed family and exiled Mohamed V, who was Hassan's father, and the crown prince to Madagascar. And there was a huge 'uprising' in Morocco, and the French were forced to allow Mohamed V and Hassan to come back. And it gave Hassan and his father, Mohamed V, a tremendous *cachet* in Morocco, that they kind of stood up to the French and had been installed by the people. Mohamed V died in 1961, and Hassan then took over the throne. Hassan had something of a reputation as a Prince Hal when he was Crown Prince, but one thing memorable occurred: there was an incident when Eisenhower came to Morocco to give the bases back, the SAC bases that we'd had there, Sidi Slimane and the base at Casa, which is now the airport. There was to be a return visit. And as Mohamed and Hassan were either in the plane or on the ground ready to take off or they were already in the air, Eisenhower had his 1959 heart attack. And the Moroccans, having made a big thing about the visit, naturally, were terrified that it would be canceled. And Nixon said, "No, we're not canceling it," and he assigned General Walters - I don't know, he was probably Colonel Walters then, Dick Walters, legendary figure - to be the liaison. So Walters met the plane in New York or wherever they landed, explained the circumstances, said the visit would go forward, and the Moroccans never

forgot that. Even in my day, 25 years later, they were still talking about the courtesy that Vice President Nixon and the Republicans and now General Walters had extended to them.

The downside of it was that the Moroccans got in the habit of dealing with the White House directly, and therefore, the embassy was pretty well left out of any of the important stuff going on in the country. So when I got to Morocco, this was a post with a "history." I mentioned that relations with the King and the Palace and the fact that the embassy, and particularly the ambassador's Democrats, were pretty well left out of any kind of dealings. The Spanish Sahara issue, which in my opinion, and still my opinion, was really not a major issue for the United States. What happened was that the Spanish pulled out of the Western Sahara. They had I guess a protectorate or colony there, and I think the United Nations made some noises about a referendum. Anyway, the Moroccans preempted the referendum, and Hassan himself in 1975 led what they called the "Green March," and the Moroccans went in and just took it over. And the Algerians were pretty cross about this. Why, I can't imagine, since it's a useless piece of territory except for some phosphates. But anyway, the Algerians organized something called the Polisario. It's an acronym for "freedom fighters" of some kind. And so again, in 1982, there was contention between Algeria and Morocco over who owned the Western Sahara. Actually, there was no contention on the Moroccan side, but the Algerians were angry, and for some reason they enlisted the interest of Steve Solarz, who was a congressman at that time, from New York, and Solarz and the Democrats and the staff on the Democratic side - and they were a majority, you know, in the foreign relations then - just gave us the dickens of a time over this, and kept sending people out to, you know, examine whether the people in this area wanted to be part of Morocco and so on and so on. As I say, it always baffled me as to why we got so excited about it.

Q: There's a certain history of this type of thing. Biafra got support, including support from sort of the glitterati, some of whatever passes for intellectuals in the United States, which is almost an oxymoron as far as the way we use it, and I think there have been a couple of other causes. God knows why but it happens.

CURRAN: Well particularly, I mean, the Algerians weren't exactly our cup of tea. They're really extraordinary. The did help us get our hostages out of Iran, we all grant that. I don't know if I mentioned on my last tape - I'm sorry to be a little disjointed - but did I mention the dinner we had in Algiers?

Q: I don't recall that.

CURRAN: Let me go back quickly. Actually it bears on this business because Warren Christopher, who had really done the heavy lifting along with Hal Saunders to get the hostages out.

Q: He was-

CURRAN: He was Deputy Secretary - had done the heavy lifting on getting them out, and the Algerians agreed to fly them out of Teheran, and Christopher had developed what he thought was a good personal relationship with the Algerian foreign minister. And after we went to Frankfurt and welcomed the hostages and got them all set up, Christopher and Saunders and a

couple of others flew down to Algiers to thank the foreign minister.

Q: This is Hal Saunders who is the-

CURRAN: -was Assistant Secretary and was pretty well thrown overboard by the Reagan people, which is sad. In any event, we went to dinner, and Christopher made this lovely toast about how grateful we were, and he said he looked forward to continued communication and better relationship between our two countries. The Algerian foreign minister said, "I don't know what you're talking about. This had nothing to do with U.S.- Algerian relations. We're not interested in better relations with you." He went on and on and on. "This was a gesture we made to international peace, and it had nothing to do with you, and goodbye." So this mental set between Algeria and the U.S. may have played some role in our willingness to support the Moroccans in this Western Sahara thing - unofficially anyway - but what I've never been able to figure out is your glitterati theory as to why anyone was interested in supporting Algeria in this.

Anyway, first of all, the embassy, up till the arrival of the new ambassador, Joseph Reed, had never had much time on the screen in the Palace. They were ignored by the Palace. You had the Spanish Sahara issue with this funny domestic spin, and the American embassy had really become a parking lot or an R&R post for officers from other parts of the world who were tired and needed R&R and Foreign Service personnel offices had wanted to put them somewhere.

Q: R & R being a military term for -

CURRAN: -"rest and rehabilitation." So the whole mission had pretty much become a reactive place and ineffective. Now I'm speaking personally. But there were some examples of some of the sloppy administration going on. For example, officers from the U.S. mission were regularly getting official travel orders and going up to Paris, picking up an automobile, a Peugeot or something like that, and driving them back, and getting per diem for doing this. Fulbright money was being diverted from its authorized purposes and being devoted to special projects supported by American, quote, "friends of the monarchy." There was no significant - that I could discover - accountability in terms of what happened to the food aid that came in to Casablanca. The wife of one of our senior officials got herself a no-competition major contract with AID to do some studies in an area that she was interested in on gender politics or something. There was very poor oversight of the binational center. A binational center is something that USIS does with local cultural types, usually to teach English and have a little library. And an employee there absconded with about \$100,000, and the USIS people, instead of saying to the Moroccans, "Look, we have to sit down and settle this," came back to the U.S. government and said, "No questions asked, we should make the money good." And then we had too many Peace Corps volunteers living all over the country with nothing to do - you know, Afghanistan all over again.

Now into this mix, the Administration assigned Joseph Verner Reed as ambassador, a very politically charged and very Republican (capital R), protégé of David Rockefeller, a knee-jerk anti-Democratic (large D), and suspicious and hoping to ignore the Foreign Service. It was a "great" combination. He arrived in late 1981, and was received by the King within hours of his landing in the country, the King signaling that he was happy with this appointment. And when Reed got started - this was prior to my arrival - he made several things clear to the embassy. He

expected everyone to work around the clock, which he did. He expected everybody to show up and work any time he gave a dinner or any official representation at the residence. Now most Foreign Service officers are pretty good about mingling with guests and so on, but Reed wanted literally people there an hour ahead of time to talk about who was who and what was going to be done with whom, and then stay afterward. And it was just really more than most people were willing to do, particularly since there was no gratitude or grace on his part, or thanks for this. In other words, he treated officers like servants. He didn't want to have anybody around the residence when he was there, and that was very hard on the community because the residence pool was the only pool that you could swim in. It was quite warm in the summer in Rabat. He also, sort of, adopted a kind of British surprise inspection. He'd go around various places in the U.S. mission and show up unannounced and go around with a notebook and take notes on what he didn't like, particularly the dress of some of the employees. And the Peace Corps was especially sensitive, because they make a point of being very informal, and Reed hated this.

He told the substantive officers that he would take over all the high-level dealings with the King and the King's chancellor, a very prickly elderly gentleman named Moulay Hafez. And all in all, this *modus operandi* didn't sit well with the mission. When I arrived in '82, there was-

Q: Question, normally an ambassador has right of selection of his own DCM. Here you have Haig saying, "I want you to go out." How did this work?

CURRAN: Well, Haig called him and said he had just the DCM for him, and I met him, and we got along, and it was okay. But you're right, that was something to think about. Anyway, the morale was really awful in the embassy, and the ambassador was defiant. We had an inspection coming up in July, two months after my arrival, and some of the American officers were busy leaking anti-Joseph Reed stories back to Washington where they were the talk of the corridors.

Q: I heard them.

CURRAN: I'm sure you did.

Q: I heard them. One of the big ones was that he referred to the King as "Our King," and that, I mean, that was all over the place.

CURRAN: He was also a top ten dresser and very kind of waving off people who would try to talk to him about something they thought was important. He'd just say, "Oh, well, we're not going to discuss that now."

Now I just want to interject here - we'll certainly have an opportunity to discuss how difficult he was - there were a couple of things which were really admirable. One was he paid for all his own representation, with never a question asked.

Q: Where was his money?

CURRAN: Well, his father was a silver baron, and his wife was the sole inheritor of Beyer's

Steel in Pittsburgh, so I don't think money was a factor. Reed also was scrupulous in the use of the airplane, which we had, and there's a footnote on that; I hope I remember to get back to it. And he was capable of extraordinary generosity. One example, which I don't think many people know about: one of the AID junior officers' wives' father had a heart attack. The call from the States came at about ten in the morning, and it was too late to get out of Morocco, because the overseas planes left Casablanca at nine in the morning. So the wife was frantic, and everyone was very upset about it, and I mentioned this to the ambassador - I don't know - very much in passing - I didn't expect him to be interested - and he said, "Well, why doesn't she go to Paris and get the Concorde and get home?" I said, "Well, Mr. Ambassador, first of all, I don't know how we'd get her to Paris, and who can afford the Concorde at that salary level?" "Well," he said, "call the Palace, tell Colonel So-and-so to set up the Gulf Stream, and I'll pay for the Concorde." And it all worked and the lady got home and saw her father. The father did pass away. It was a very, very generous gesture. He said, "The only condition is don't tell anyone at the embassy." So I never did - till now.

Anyway, there was a side to him which was appealing, but there were many sides which weren't too appealing. I had heard, of course, quite a lot before I got there. I assembled a small group, Joe Spiro, Val and Rusty Graham, Colonel Jim Hogan, a couple of other people that I had been told were complete professionals, and we went off on a weekend, and I said, "Look, we have to do something to save the embassy." And they agreed, and so we developed a blueprint - it must have been about, oh gosh, about the 14th or 15th of May, just about exactly 27 years ago - and what we decided was we would try to focus on what the mission was of the U.S. embassy, not on personalities. And they nominated the DCM to be the main interface with ambassador and be available to him 24 hours a day. And since my wife wasn't there, that worked all right. And also as a corollary to that, I made it a point to really control ingoing and outgoing communications, including the back channel traffic, which was a particular problem.

Q: Why was that a problem? Could you explain what it was?

CURRAN: Sure. Well, all communicators can send messages back and forth to each other without necessarily putting it in the regular embassy series, and the intelligence people also are able to do this. And it's important that the senior - I considered myself a senior career officer at the mission - knew what was being said back and forth, so I made a special effort in that direction. And because of my work in S/S, I knew pretty well who could send what when and so on. I'll make a diversion now, because the inspection came along about two months later, and here was a new DCM suddenly making decisions and, in my case, apparently getting along with the ambassador, there was a certain amount of muttering and grumbling. Somebody went to the one of the inspectors and said, "You, know, Curran is playing around. His wife isn't here, and he's got women," and so on, which is a very silly thing to allege. Anyway, the chief inspector came over to see me one morning - well, actually, he made quite a point about finding a time when he could see me privately, so I said, "Well, the best time to see me is about 6:30 on the morning, if you don't mind getting up that early." Otherwise, I'm off for my language and so on. So he came over and he floated this rumor, and I said, "I don't remember the inspector's name anymore, very nice guy - I said, "Number one, it's not my thing, but number two, it would be impossible in this atmosphere and environment to have an affair, because the ambassador pops in any time of day or night, and I wouldn't really care to have him find me in the sack with a

dame.” And literally the words were no more out of my mouth than in came Joseph Verner Reed with a stack full of papers, ignored the inspector, sat down, went through some stuff, left again. And this inspector said, “I’m sorry I even asked.” Actually, the allegation of impropriety was especially amusing since my daughter, Diana, was living with me. We had a great year together.

The second thing our small group did, after we kind of set up a way to begin to focus on real ideas and not on baloney, I sent a message to PER in Washington asking them to freeze all assignments to Rabat so we could undertake a review of the kind of people who were coming out. We also undertook an urgent review of some of the administrative problems, and it was awkward because the administrative staff was very weak and we had several months where we had to deal with this weakness and it took a lot of individual time by our little working group. Joel Spiro took over the preparations for the inspection. We also set up a system that I also used in Afghanistan so that each incoming visitor in Ambassador Reed’s high level visit program had an action officer assigned to the visit. That officer was responsible for everything about the visit. And it took the burden, then, off everybody else, and they could go on doing their jobs.

I had to do a lot of counseling with the CIA people, who were very, very uncomfortable and unhappy because the ambassador dealt with the Palace and they couldn’t. The King was not very helpful to the CIA; I don’t think he trusted them. And so as a result, they were really feeling that they just weren’t being assisted in their work. And a couple of times during my tenure there, this frustration was expressed by trying to bypass the ambassador and the DCM in communications to the Palace, and it was kind of Keystone Kops stuff, because General Moulay Hafez didn’t want to have anyone bypassing the ambassador, and so he’d send these messages to me and ask, “Who’s sending this stuff over?” And then I’d find out. It was a bad scene. But eventually we had a good chief of station there, and we managed to work it out.

Also, when the ambassador was away, which was very often - he traveled back to the States a lot on political business - we opened the residence up so people could use the pool and have picnics in the back yard, and got everything cleaned up before the ambassador got back. Now it sounds like this was all done overnight, but what I’m describing is a process that took about six months, and it really worked pretty well, if I say so myself, and the ambassador actually came to see he could depend on certain people, and he began to enjoy the system. And I always allowed everybody - if he/she wanted to see the ambassador - I never insisted on being present. So he loved having officers for each visit and he got to know some of these officers a little bit and came to understand that they could be productive.

I’m going to jump around a little bit, but this anecdote fits in here. Secretary Shultz came to Morocco in December ’83, almost at the end of my tour, and he’d heard a lot of the corridor stories about Reed and the embassy. The advance team from the Secretariat (S/S) came to Rabat. They go through a book, a checklist, how everything is supposed to be arranged. I had a meeting with Skip Gnehm, the head of the team, and I said to him, “You know, I really think that it’s okay to prepare for the staff and the support people, but I counsel you not to try to plan the Secretary’s schedule or his arrangements because the King will do all of that.” And you know these advance people all say, “No, no, no, we know how this works.” So there was a little bit of a tussle because they insisted on talking to the Palace, so the Palace sent over a junior protocol person and we went through that checklist, including the Secretary’s rooms at the Hilton, his

meetings, and his briefings. Well, anyway, literally as the Shultz plane was on final, wheels-down, coming into Rabat, the King called me in the car at the airport and said, "I'm looking at the schedule and I don't like it and so we're going to change everything, and just tell the Secretary he can't possibly stay at the Hilton. I've made one of my villas available, and we're not going to have any substantive meetings. We'll play golf tomorrow, and then tomorrow night I'll have dinner with him. The second day, we'll have another game of golf, and then in the afternoon we'll have a press conference and that will be it." And so I found Gnehm and I said, "Well, the King has just called, and here is the schedule." Gnehm was *furious*. He said, "You've done this deliberately. You've botched this up." And I said, "Well, I know it's embarrassing, but you just have to explain to the Secretary that this is the way the King operates." So, anyway, the plane landed and parked. The color guard was there. And no Shultz. Everybody waited for about 10 minutes. Then Gnehm came out of the plane and he said, "The Secretary wants to talk to you." So I went up the ladder, and there's George Shultz, who is a very nice person. The Secretary asked, "What's going on? My staff tells me things are all screwed up." I explained what happened, basically that the King had intervened. And Shultz said, "Well, that schedule doesn't sound too bad to me. Let's do it." The S/S staff was upset, but it's important to remember that their job was to serve the Secretary according to a plan. So the embassy was perceived as intervening in their responsibilities. It helped me to have been in the same spot and I didn't really mind the fuss. The Secretary and Mrs. Shultz had a lovely time and were beautifully taken care of. Shultz loves golf, and he and the King played together. The King had *the touch*. Anyway, the Secretary and Mrs. Shultz, "Obie," had a really good rest. As we were going to the airport, Shultz said to me, "You know, this is one of the best run and creative missions I've ever had anything to do with." He said, "I'm really glad I came here and saw for myself." And what he said to me, "What's going to happen to you next?" I said, "I don't know. What would you suggest?" thinking, you know, that I was certainly going to get an ambassadorship or something. He said, "If you want my honest advice, you should get out of the Service, because you have people carping at you from all parts of Washington, and I just don't know," he said. "I don't even know whether I can force them to give you a really good job. You know, it's just something to think about." I thanked him a lot, and anyway, we'll come to look what happened later.

To come back to managing the embassy, Joseph Verner Reed was an extremely difficult person, and he went out of his way to be difficult, and he went out of his way to show his dislike of the Foreign Service, and particularly the assistant secretary at that time, Nick Veliotis. And believe, me the enmity was mutual. But the other side of this was that Joseph Reed served his president and country with distinction. As a result of his (Reed's) work, the U.S. obtained port visiting rights for Navy ships; landing rights for strategic aircraft; and modernized VOA transmitters and firing range rights for NATO aircraft. It also helped that it was possible to add some officers in the first year to the mission, people that I think very highly of. One was Richard Jackson, who was in Morocco for many years, first as political officer, then as consul general in Casablanca, and then back as DCM in Morocco - a wonderful, wonderful officer, now retired and president of an American college in Greece at Thessaloniki.

Q: Yes, who's working with our organization and whom I have interviewed.

CURRAN: Alex Wolff, who now works for Madeleine Albright, joined us. I've mentioned that Joel Spiro and Colonel Jim Hogan were already in place. The new consul, David Whittlesey, was

brilliant, and the new administrative counselor named Coleman Parrott was hard-working and flexible. Now this team understood the basic premise, which was, "Yes, we have a very difficult ambassador here, but he has assets. Let's use them and let's get some things done." I'm sad to say that this professionalism of the field officers in Rabat was not shared or reflected in the NEA Bureau, where they just went on sniping at Reed and, I guess, me the whole time I was there.

Well, I just want to repeat, the NEA people, one reason they were cross with Joseph Reed was for his role in bringing the Shah out of Iran to the States for medical treatment. Reed was blamed for the takeover of the embassy.

Q: In 1979, not too long before he became ambassador.

CURRAN: Well, '81 he was ambassador. I'd like to say, and I'll try not to overdo this, that JVR, Joseph Reed, really turned State's hatred back on the Department and spread the word around the White House how difficult and how bad the State officers were, and so on. There was quite a bit of petty harassment from Washington about not paying vouchers and purchase orders - really childish stuff - and it didn't really end until Dick Murphy became assistant secretary in late 1983. I might say that inadvertently - well, maybe it wasn't so inadvertent - I contributed to this problem because on my first visit to the King when Reed was away somewhere, the King said he had a personal message for his dear friend President Reagan and had a scroll in his hand and said, "I'd like this to be sent to Reagan, but I don't want a lot of people reading it. How are we" - how are *we* - "going to manage this?" And I said, "Well, your Majesty, the only way to do it is to have it go by courier." He said, "Well, I want a very special courier. Will you do it?" Well, I said, "Okay, I'll do it." So the King flew me into Paris, to Orly. I prudently made a copy of the message on the Xerox in the Pan Am lounge there and flew on the Concorde to Dulles, handed the scroll to Bud McFarlane, got the same Concorde back to Paris, and was back in my office by the next morning. Assistant Secretary Veliotis called and said, "What's going on? Some person came over here with a scroll from the King to the President. None of us know what's in it. What kind of an embassy are you running? Who did it?" I said, "Well, Nick, why are you asking me? I'm in my office in Rabat. How come you aren't able to ask the White House?" He said, "Well, nobody knows who it was." He never found out till some time later who it was, and he was pretty cross about it. And I don't blame him.

Anyway, the general policy directions from '82 to '84, which Reed really carried out - regardless of all the critical things I've said, he was a genius at cultivating the Palace and getting the Palace to do what the government, Reagan, and the National Security people, wanted done. As I mentioned above, to open Moroccan ports to our Mediterranean and U.S. fleet so that they could do port calls and even bring those big carriers in to be serviced and let the men off the ships for a while. I must say, it wasn't till I went through a couple of those ship visits that I realized the economic benefits to Morocco of having a major battle group around for a week or so - and not just the red-light districts. Sailors spend like sailors when they're in town and eat and buy souvenirs and so on.

The landing rights protocol permitted us to modernize two of the airfields that had been set up originally under the Strategic Air Command, when we were having piston engine bombers flying around. The main one was Sidi Slimane, and as I mentioned, in my last Washington assignment I

spent some time in the Central Command working on something called Operation Bright Star, which were the original dress rehearsals for moving troops and tanks into the Gulf. And so I knew quite a lot about that. It's a credit to the American engineers of the '40s and '50s that the airstrips needed no repair or maintenance. They were magnificently constructed. But the fueling pumps and ramps, obviously, all that had to be changed.

On the VOA front, the U.S. was able to expand the Tangier relay station, again a huge strategic asset for us, because they're used for not only broadcasting but they're used for other types of communication. And that was very fortunate because Liberia went down the tubes not too long after that.

Finally, the King, at our urging, helped with the first tentative contacts between Israel and the PLO. And I think, before I got there, and before he died, Moshe Dayan actually came over to Morocco for a secret meeting. The King was able to do that because he had a network of palaces around the country with jet airfields so that visitors and officials could fly in and out without going through some civilian airport. That was a very, very interesting operation. It continued while I was there. It's still, I think, fairly highly classified, so I really don't have too much more to say about it. I will say that I think it did lay the groundwork for Baker's visits in Madrid, which were in the mid-'80s, late '80s.

We did have a lot of visitors, and I want to mention several of them.

The first major visitor group that I remember, and I remember it particularly acutely because of a problem I caused, included Henry Kissinger, Phil Habib, Ambassador Robert Neumann, and Neil Armstrong. They all came at the same time, and they all wanted to see the King. I don't think they wanted to see him all at once, but it was set up so they all had to go together. And the King usually had his audiences at one in the morning, which is very trying for potentates like Kissinger and Habib and so on. Neumann had been ambassador there, so he was not so uptight. Anyway, everyone was sitting around the ambassador's residence getting increasingly edgy about the appointment. And Joseph Reed, as often is the case, vanished. I guess he went over to the Palace. At about 12:30 or quarter of one in the morning, I really thought it had gone on a little bit long. We kept being told, "Another 15 minutes, another 15 minutes." So I called one of the people I knew really well at the Palace, a really nice guy, a colonel in security, and I said to him, "You know, things are getting a little sticky here. Can't we figure out a way to get this cavalcade moving." He said, "Well, I promise I'll get back in five minutes and tell you." So in five minutes, he called back, and he said, "Go out to the commander of the motorcycle team, and I'll give the order, and you'll hear it." So I went out, and you know, I heard his voice saying "Get moving." Of course, everybody got in the cars, and off they went. So I went home to have a shower and a Scotch, and while I was in the shower, my daughter, who was living with me the first year I was in Morocco, rapped on the door and said, "You better come to the phone. Somebody's very upset." So I ran dripping to the phone, and it was the stammering protocol guy at the Palace, and he said, "General Moulay Hafez wants to talk to you." So the general came on the phone, and he read me up and down. He said, "I'm the only one who gives permission for motorcades. Who told you to send the motorcycles?" I said, "Oh, well, it's entirely my fault. I'm so sorry." "Oh, you're going to be more than sorry. I'm going to fix it so you never, etc..." Well, you know. He was just absolutely about to have a stroke. Anyway, you can imagine it really

raised my blood pressure as well. He tried to get me to say who did I talk to, and I wouldn't tell him. So anyway, it was a big fuss, but the King was charming when the delegation arrived, and everything went fine. They all had a good time, but I was a wreck the next day. And I went down to see one of the prominent banking people whom I'd gotten to know a little bit named Ali Benjelloun, down in Casablanca, and I said, "Did I really screw up here? What do I do?" He said, "Well, Moulay Hafez, you know, is very jealous of his power, and he either thinks you screwed up or he thinks there's someone in the Palace who screwed up." So I said, "How do I get a message that I'm really sorry?" So he said, "Well, we'll see." That must have been the late fall, maybe even mid-November, and around Christmas the King called me, and he added, "Well, I want to wish you a merry Christmas," and he said, "We'll expand permission for you to use your airplane, and I want to say a personal thing to you," he said. "I know that sometimes people get angry about little protocolary things, and I also know that it wasn't your fault, and I'm also always glad to hear when people are willing to take responsibility and not blame somebody else." I said, "Well, thank you very much." I felt quite a lot better after that, but it was a pretty bad month until I had that conversation.

The next visitor we had was Alexander Haig, who came in a private 707 with none other than Kirk Kerkorian, and they arrived at about two in the morning in Rabat

Q: *Who's Kirk Kerkorian?*

CURRAN: The big Armenian billionaire. He's in show biz, a big producer, I guess, a mogul.

Q: *Like Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer and so on.*

CURRAN: That's right. So he had arrived, some film project he had, but the thing that lit up the night was that first Kerkorian came off, then Haig, and then a very prominent actress - gorgeous actress - came off, Yvette Mimieux, who was Kerkorian's current girlfriend. She was just radiant, you know. How anyone can look that good at two in the morning I don't know, but the whole embassy staff was just thrilled. We had a wonderful evening, and she was just charming.

Anne Armstrong, who had been ambassador in London, is a Texas politico, came over with her husband. She was a lovely guest and was very helpful to us in talking to the King about the basing arrangements. The King was quite startled to have a woman get into substance, but she did it very gracefully, you know, liberally salted with quotations from Reagan. The chief of Naval Operations, General Watkins, came, a three-star person, great gentleman, very helpful on military matters. The attorney general, William French Smith, showed up; it was not such a happy visit because he was presented by the Moroccan attorney general with some kind of ceremonial sword, and as he was touring the Palace, he saw a sword he liked better, so as he was leaving, he handed me the sword he'd been given and said he wanted the sword that he'd seen. I tried to explain that trading gifts didn't happen in Morocco. "I don't care," he said, "I want that other sword." And no matter how many times we told him it wouldn't work, we kept getting these irate messages from the attorney general, and finally, thank God, he left government. I just can't believe the petty level to which some people choose to descend.

David Rockefeller made what amounted to a state visit while I was there, and there's another

story you might enjoy. I went over to the little villa in which he was staying, a beautiful place, and he was having breakfast. The King always had everything supervised, so he was giving him whatever David Rockefeller loves to have for breakfast, and we were sitting there talking about the day's events, and the steward came in, who by now knew I was either notorious or well known - anyway I was known around there, and he says, "The King usually likes to have his guests have *harira* for breakfast. Now *harira* is sort of a ghastly bean paste, which is very high protein and is used to break fast, particularly during Ramadan or in the morning for breakfast, and I couldn't stand it. Anyway, I said, "No thanks." I rustled with my papers and so on. The steward said, "Yes, but His Majesty always instructs that his guests are to have this." And I said, "I really like it, but I'm just not interested and I'm on a diet." So anyway, finally, clucking, he left, and Rockefeller and I went on our merry way. Well, the last event of the day, in the middle of the night, was a buffet in honor of the King's birthday, and usually someone of my minor rank wouldn't have been invited, but Reed was away, and I was with Rockefeller. Let's say there were 50 people in line to wish the King happy birthday, and I was the last one, by protocol and every other reason. So the King looked at me, and he did something very extraordinary. He took me by the arm, a very intimate gesture, and walked in to the party. Everyone was buzzing about what this meant. The King was asking about my daughter, and by then I'd played golf with him a couple of times, and he was very attentive. And we went to the buffet, and right in the middle was a large bowl of this glop, *harira*. He said, "I understand you really like this and you couldn't have any this morning, so I've reserved this whole bowl for you!" (I was flattered at the attention, if not the food.)

We had then Vice President Bush as a visitor. He came and there was another interesting sort of clash of cultures. We had mentioned to the Secret Service that it would be a problem they would have to handle very carefully, the amount of weaponry they could bring in. They chose not to keep us informed and a C-140 arrived, again very late, two days before the visit, and I was telephoned and the Moroccan security people said, "There's an airplane full of weapons here, and what's going on?" And so I went out to the airfield. The pilot was a fairly junior person and the crew were mostly military guys and their manifest included everything you can imagine - Uzis, grenades, stun grenades, all kinds of stuff, all for the Bush security detail. The Moroccans said, "You know, the King will never let this stuff into the country." The Moroccans made the plane take off. They had to go back to Spain, work the issue through with Palace security. It was very delicate.

There had been two assassination attempts against the King, one at his summer palace, so called, at near Rabat [Skhirat] and once when he was flying back from an overseas trip.

Q: I was wondering, though, the one near Rabat was at his birthday party, and I was wondering whether there was a certain nervousness about going to the King's birthday parties thereafter.

CURRAN: Well, I never had even the slightest sense of insecurity in Morocco, but I'm sure people did. Anyway, Bush did very well. You know, he's a very good people person, and he and the King got along very well.

Charles Tyson, who was a White House functionary, came on a separate visit. And he had a bee in his bonnet about visiting a port in northern Morocco in the Rif. It was a, quote, "closed" city

in the sense that ordinarily visitors didn't go there because the Moroccans had a problem with drugs, particularly hashish. They didn't encourage, you know, our drug people to go snooping around. But Tyson wanted to go there, so we took off in an airplane, and General Moulay Hafez had said to him he could go anywhere he wanted to, so he told the pilot, "I want to go to this port." And the pilot, as they were required to do, wired back and said the passenger wanted to go to this port. And the head of the Air Force said, "He can't do it." And Tyson said, "I insist." So while we're circling around over northern Morocco, a fight was going on at the highest levels of the Moroccan government, and I think finally the King got into it, and we were allowed to land. But we spent the better part of two hours circling in the air, and I was beginning to wonder what was going to happen when we landed. In the event, it went pretty well, and there was nothing to see there. (By that time, anything you might have found that was wrong wasn't at the airport.)

The Shah's son came to Rabat, a very personable young man, and his mother, Fara Diba, a very large and elegant woman. I was quite surprised. She was very tall and statuesque, a charming person, but no particular insights about Iran, but I must say I didn't go out of my way to talk to her about it.

We had two senators pass through, Senator Hatfield and Senator Eagleton; that's a story which might bear some telling. The senators were in East Africa somewhere working on a project which they were hoping to support which had to do with a trans-African pipeline. We got a message from their staff saying that they wanted to make a Marrakesh rest stop on the way back to the U.S. after checking with the Moroccans to get clearance, the visit was set up. Then we got a message saying, "Well, not only did they want to stop in Marrakech, they wanted to see the King." And the Moroccans said, well, that wasn't possible; there was a meeting of the Organization of African Unity and the King wasn't available. The senators were insistent and there were some really very intemperate messages. So I went down there myself to meet them and explain things to the senators. Hatfield was okay, but Eagleton was - basically, I'd have to say - out of control - whether he had had too much to drink or whatever. He did have some instability in his background. In any event, you couldn't pacify him, and not only that, when it came time to pay their hotel bill - you know, ordinarily a CODEL pays its bills - they refused to pay the bill, went back to the airport and took off. And the embassy sent a message back to Washington - I think it was a little on the indignant side - but I thought it was really outrageous behavior. Senator Eagleton wrote a note to Secretary Shultz and said, "Just had the misfortune of visiting this miserable place in Africa, Morocco, where we were abysmally treated by the embassy staff and that eight-carat idiot, Joe Reed." Eagleton quote "got out into the papers, too good an anecdote not to repeat." There's probably a moral to that story, but it escapes me.

And the last special visitor was Charles Z. Wick, who came in connection with the Tangier modernization, and he met the King, and in good movie mogul fashion, he thought he had - he and the King had shaken hands; (you never shook hands with the King) - but anyway, he and the King "had a deal," quote-unquote, and off he flew. Well, as soon as the Moroccans generally heard that we were going to buy land and build a new relay station, land prices around Tangier began to go up, and the price for the whole project went through the roof. And Charlie Wick would call me, and with a lot of nice gutter language, tell me what to tell the King about the deal and what was going on, and so on and so on? And I kept trying to explain what was going on to little avail. We had a wonderful attorney from USIA named Norm Poirier, and he was

understanding and sympathetic. And finally I sent a personal letter to Wick, and I said, "Mr. Wick, your conversations are all being recorded. We're on open telephone lines, and I'm very nervous that the Palace is going to let the King listen to some of these conversations, and I really think we'll have to communicate on another channel." And after that he did do his ranting and raving to his staff and not to me on the phone. Years later he was reproved - you're not supposed to record conversations, you know, without the other person knowing - he had to write me and tell me he was very sorry, and would I like a copy of the tapes? I didn't accept them.

Well, I'd like to talk a little bit now about my own relationship with the King. I didn't really have a relationship. I mean, the King was very friendly to me, mostly because I was there during an administration that he thought was in his camp. But having said that, even if I knew I was being treated as a thing and not a person, it was very nice to be around. One of the things I had learned early on was, the King would say, "I think I'd like to see the American chargé" without being specific about time. So the staff would call and say, "The King wants to see you immediately!" And the King was often all around the country in the various palaces he maintained. Before we used the airplane regularly, it meant one had to drive five, six, or seven hours. You'd get there at one or two in the morning. The staff might say, "Well, the King has changed his mind about today; maybe tomorrow." And then you'd have to drive back. So I asked General Walters how to deal with this. It was very trying. And he said, "Well, what you do is, when you get to the city where the King is, you don't go to the staff. You go to the hotel" - they always had a nice hotel in the cities where he had his palaces - "and you check in there, and you get yourself the best of everything - and then you call the staff, and you say you're here at the hotel and you're staying until you're called." And it just worked like a charm. I was always called within an hour or a half an hour, could get some sleep, and check out the next morning. You know, when you're running up bills at their expense, it was a different deal. Then when we got the airplane, it was terrific because you could get anywhere in an hour or less, and Jim Hogan, who was one of our original working group, was really skillful at getting us in and out of these airports at all hours.

Another time that was very engaging was I got a message in the middle of the night, the King was going to be in such-and-such a village at two a.m. and wanted to see me. And I routed my driver out, and luckily he knew where the village was, and we went off. And the driver was really a grumpy guy, Hamidou, and all the way he was grumbling to me about, "Oh, I don't know... Who ever goes to this village? Nobody lives there... Aw, I can't believe it... Somebody's playing a joke on you, etc." So we got there, and it was a tiny little provincial village with a rather large square and a mosque, but there wasn't a creature stirring. So he said, "See, *voilà!*" So I said, "Well, we'd better wait till two o'clock." At a quarter of two, sort of like *Close Encounters of the Third Kind*, a moving light came over the hill and down, and in came the King's party, and they set up a tent and started tea brewing, and then in came H.M., driving his own Jaguar. And he got out of the car and in the most matter-of-fact way said, "Glad to see you're here for the meeting." And he had something he wanted to send to Washington. And we had tea. So we walked back to the car, and the King said, "Why don't you drive with me to Rabat?" So we went to the car, and they have right-hand drive cars - I mean, it's like the States, you drive on the right-hand side of the road. So the King goes to the left side of the car and reaches out, and the door's locked. And then he tries the back door. Anyway, his courtiers are falling all down in terror. So anyway, I was on the other side of the car, and I looked - I don't

know too much about Jaguars - and it looked to me as though the door was open, and it did open, and I leaned across and pulled up the little knob, and the King was able to get in the car, and everyone was able to get up off the ground. So anyway, now the light's on in the interior, and the foreign minister is getting in the back seat, and I look down at the car, and it's just *awash* in weapons - pistols and grenades and God knows what else - and, I suppose, all immediately available in case of emergencies.

So we started down the road, and the King's driving and talking, on narrow country roads talking to me in French, and I'm a little uncomfortable speaking French, and the foreign minister is yakking in my ear from the back seat, and so on. It was a pretty uncomfortable hour all the way back, but we all survived. I'm darned if I can remember what the message was.

Another thing that happened when I was with (General) Dick Walters once, in Fez, and the King, again, being very gracious and so on, asked if we'd like to see the palace that he'd set up for the meeting of all the Arabs in the fall of '82 to talk about the Palestine problem. (The first time I'd ever seen Arafat face to face.) In any event, we had this walking tour of the Palace - just three of us and no security around that anyone could see - and he turned the lights on, showed how the microphones worked - I mean, he was really like a proud papa, occasionally saying, "What do you think of this, Mr. Curran," and so on.

And the last thing that happened several times was I'd be summoned for a golf game in the middle of the night. They had a par three course inside the walls in Rabat with night lights, and I went over there and played golf with him, and he was very cordial, and usually we had a foursome, and since I was the worst player in the group (the King played very well.), I would be the King's partner. The tradition was the King never putted anything, you know, so he'd get on the green, and someone would say, "*Donné (Given)*." So I started doing that, and he made a big joke about that. He said I was making his fortune on the golf course.

One exchange with King Hassan wasn't so pleasant. In the aftermath of a mid-air assassination attempt in the mid-1970s. (The pilot saved him by saying, the King's dead. Let the rest of us live and land. So they did.) Moroccan security mopped up a lot of people who were either alleged to have been or were involved in the plot, and a lot of people were shot. One officer, who was in the control tower, Lieutenant Taweel, and his involvement was at worst peripheral - but it was close enough so they gave him 20 years in the salt mines. And that wouldn't have mattered to us much except he had an American wife. She was tireless in trying to help him. And under Moroccan law, he could receive mail, but he couldn't communicate with anyone outside. So his senator was Chuck Percy, and the Senator's office really tried to get us to intervene on behalf of Lieutenant Taweel so that he could write to his wife. Well, I'd been there about a year, and the King's head of security was an officer named Dlimi, and I was up in Fez with this instruction: "Would you please go to the King and find out what's going on with Lieutenant Taweel?" And so Dlimi and I were having coffee before the audience, and I said, "Well, General Dlimi, I have these instructions. Do you have any advice for me on how to bring this up?" Dlimi said, "Well, if you're going to bring it up, I'm not going to the meeting." He said, "And my counsel to you is to tell your government you brought it up, but don't do it." I said, "I can't do that." He said, "Well, *adios*, because the King just hates that subject, and he'll be very cross with you." So anyway, we had this meeting, several things I had to bring up, and then I said, "Uh, your Majesty, I have to

ask your indulgence, but I've been formally asked to ask you about Lieutenant Taweel." God, he just turned to ice. He said, "Didn't someone tell you not to bring that up?" I said, "Yes, Sir, but I was under instructions, which take precedence over advice I might get in Morocco." He said, "You may tell your government that Lieutenant Taweel is being treated justly, and that's all I'll have to say now or ever!"

So I would say in overall it was fun to be in Morocco. There were great things to do in Rabat, it's a lovely country to travel in, the Moroccans were friendly. I got to be on the board of the biggest golf club in the country, the Robert Trent Jones Course. The King let us use his golf course in the fortress in Meknès, and we played in Fez. So it was a good life, but I was never exactly captured by the magic of monarchy. I think the country was in good shape. It was well run, pretty well. The King kept national security and internal security in his hands and lets everything else be run by the parliament. It seems to work pretty well. They have some civil services relatively equitable. I'm speaking now of the '80s; I don't know what it's like now. (King Hassan died in the fall of 1999. King Mohammad VI now rules.)

We did have one major spy problem. That was with the Russian embassy. They had 195 officers in that embassy, and no visible programs, so we figured they must be doing something with their spare time. One of the Marines was dating a Moroccan girl. We didn't allow fraternization. But youth will be youth and they were spooning, or whatever, over in her neighborhood, and a car came up behind them, and the Marine guiltily thought it was the girl's father coming up, so they both ducked down, and the car went past and pulled over, and the Marine looked up to see what was going on, and he recognized our Moroccan budget officer from the embassy who handed some papers over to a car with diplomatic plates, which turned out to be a Russian embassy car. So the next morning we summoned the budget officer, and we asked him whether he would like to tell us what was going on, or whether he would like to have us turn him over to Moroccan security. He wisely decided he would tell us what was going on. And he told us about his relationship with this officer, who turned out to be a very high-ranking KGB officer. I don't know how the CIA did this, but they somehow got word to this Russian that he'd been fingered and that we were going to do something about it with the Moroccans, and the man defected. We got him out of the country, and he provided a lot of material about KGB operations in North Africa. That was sort of the big final excitement.

My departure from Rabat in the spring of 1984 was very sudden. First of all, I'd had an offer from former Senator James Buckley, who was running RFE-RL in Munich with Jay Gildner, a USIS colleague. Gildner knew about my German experience and some of my management jobs, and he got Buckley to ask me if I wouldn't join them there as an administrative officer.

Q: Would you explain what RFE/RL is.

CURRAN: Radio Free Europe-Radio Liberty in Munich were the émigré radios set up to broadcast into communist East Europe and Russia and bring news and events to people living there who did not have access to the free world. Coincidentally, I had had my only really major run-in with Ambassador Reed. I don't even remember what it was about any more, except I gave him some advice he didn't like and he asked me who I thought was running the embassy - that kind of conversation - and he was so cross about it and so unpleasant about it and so personal

that I really was thinking about leaving Morocco. And then I got the advice from Secretary Shultz. So, I called Buckley and I accepted the job. And then I went to the ambassador and said I'm very sorry but I'd have to leave because I'd accepted another job. He was flabbergasted, but that was it. Interestingly, the sudden parting did no particular damage to our relationship. He has had a great career and has been unfailingly friendly.

When I went back to Washington, I was quite surprised at how anticlimactic it was to leave the Foreign Service. Nobody paid too much attention.

Q: *Well, this is true of everybody.*

CURRAN: Well, I didn't expect any champagne and roses, but it's quite startling.

Q: *It really is. Nobody asks about what do you think about... You've got all this information. As a matter of fact, I might add here, I think these oral histories serve a sort of therapeutic function, among others. We do come out with a hell of a lot of inside information which is never asked anywhere, so I feel I'm performing almost a medical functions as well as a historical function.*

CURRAN: Well, anyway, it was a great transition to Munich, because a lot of people, when they leave the Foreign Service, "don't have anything to do." But I was handed a lot of challenging stuff in a country I loved and a language I spoke, and I had a wonderful three years there.

Q: *Well, I would like to talk a bit, first, before we leave Morocco, and then I'd like to talk a little about Radio Free Europe. One of the charges that's been laid on Reed that I think NEA spread around but I've heard from ambassadors of other posts around the area used to get incensed at Reed because supposedly he would take a very strong pro- Moroccan stand and also side with Morocco, and this famous charge that he used to talk about "our King." Did you find yourself on the reporting of what was going on under constraints, or how did this work?*

CURRAN: No. Dick Jackson had to carry most of the burden of the substantive reporting, and he, as you know, is a total professional; and he was very skillful in guiding the ambassador about how to formulate his messages. Most of the problem came the first four or five months he was there when he didn't have anyone who was really counseling him. Reed used hyperbole, and he used to describe his meeting with the King in sort of Arabian Nights style, and referred to "our King," and all this business. All that was pretty well toned down. Reed had all his cards on the Moroccan table, and he played them in the interest of the U.S. A colorful man in a unique place. Reed was a near great envoy.

Q: *Radio Free Europe. Was it Radio Free Europe or Radio Liberty?*

CURRAN: It's hyphenated. It's two operations. Radio Free Europe was for Eastern Europe, and Radio Liberty was for the Soviet Union, USSR.

Q: *I've just finished interviewing John Richardson-*

CURRAN: Oh, yes.

Q: *-who was involved with that for some time back in the '70s.*

CURRAN: A long time ago, yes.

Q: *How did you find dealing with this? Because one always thinks of these radios as being very tricky organizations, because they've got U.S. government money - I think it was CIA money - or whatever-*

CURRAN: Originally.

Q: *Originally, but the fact that you've got émigrés doing this who will all come out with their own agendas - I mean, was this a problem?*

CURRAN: Yes. It was less a problem with East Europeans because they were, first of all, generally very erudite and intellectual people who understood the nuance and the role of the radios.

Q: *And I guess the trauma of 1956 and the Hungarian Revolution-*

CURRAN: All past.

Q: *-had set up some standards.*

CURRAN: Right, that's right. And the News Bureau was independent. So I would have said that in general terms the Eastern European services, while there might have been a hiccup or two were balanced and effective. The Russian service was more difficult, because there had been several waves of émigrés coming out of Russia. I'm not sure this is strictly correct historically, but in general terms you had the anti-communist wave, the nationalist wave, the Solzhenitsyn type, the pro-Jewish types, and so on? And they were competing with each other to get their points of view across, and it was a headache trying to manage that Russian service. My responsibility was personnel modernization, equipment resource management, buildings and stuff like that. I didn't get into editorial things very much, but I know it was one of Jim Buckley's major headaches.

Q: *Was there concern about Soviet penetration, Soviet efforts to do anything about what you all were doing, not just sort of the broad efforts and all?*

CURRAN: Well, there was some terrorism. I think there was an assassination of one of the Rumanians just before my time there, and certainly we had rigorous security around the radios and the antenna fields and so on. Sure there was concern.

Q: *Did you feel the hand of the U.S. government, or were things pretty much run?*

CURRAN: I think it was pretty clear that the U.S. was paying the piper and was calling the tune, and I don't think anyone was embarrassed about that. The émigrés understood, particularly again

the East European, the Radio Free Europe services. By the way, you mentioned the CIA. I think the CIA funding ended when Clifford Case revealed the covert funding operations. Most of these were ended, and radios were one of them. But there was still a large U.S. subsidy.

Q: What about dealing with the Germans during this time?

CURRAN: Franz Josef Strauss was the Minister-President of Bavaria, and we could do no wrong.

Q: You talk about a hard-line right winger, wasn't the CDU - was it Christian-

CURRAN: Christian Socialist Party.

Q: Christian Socialist Party-

CURRAN: CSU in German.

Q: -which was always a joint party with the CDU, but it was even more-

CURRAN: It was very Catholic and very conservative. Strauss was very supportive, and when he died - and, of course, the end of the Cold War occurred - the Germans began to suggest maybe we could find another place for those radios.

Before we conclude, I would like to make some final points. I was thinking this morning looking back forty-five years, it seems to me that the three things that really make a difference in an effective Foreign Service are well qualified people; knowledge of language where you're working; and a trust relationship with your colleagues and superiors - those three things. And I don't think you can achieve that with computer-run personnel systems. And I wish I knew what the answer was, but I think this is not getting the attention it deserves, and that the leadership of the Foreign Service, the succession of Secretaries, are so busy traveling around the world being diplomats that nobody's really paying attention to essential management. And I think that this is really an important thing. Bob Oakley this morning in the *Post* has a piece on the lack of resources in the Foreign Service, and he's absolutely right on. But resources is only part of it.

I used to try and devise a way in which recruitment would be possible to develop a system maybe much more based on interviewing and that kind of selectivity. Maybe when someone like Tom Pickering retires, who understands the Foreign Service from bottom to top, he could run a special commission to reform Personnel. It would have to be done in conjunction with Congress, because if you didn't get Congress to sign off on the results, you'd never get the money or the backing to do it. So it may be a Utopian idea.

Q: Well, I think one of the problems that's developed over the years has been, with the series of lawsuits and all, that in order to have a personnel system that seems to be devoid of personal judgment and is sort of automatic, that they have gone as machine-possible and tried to remove human hands from the whole process, mainly as a reaction to courts. And for that I'd blame the goddam lawyers.

CURRAN: And then I have a final footnote which I hope that every young officer or any officer I run into who has a problem in the Service and with an efficiency report will note. When I was doing the transition at USIA from bringing CU out of State I had quite a run- in with the Deputy Director of USIA, who wrote what I considered a very unfair rating, and after a lot of thinking and jogging and advice, I wrote a one-sentence comment on my rating, which said, "I'm sorry he was disappointed. I look forward to continuing my career." Well, I was promoted to career minister in 1982, and Ambassador Neumann, as I mentioned earlier, was on my panel, and he congratulated me, and he said maybe I would like to know why I was picked. There were only a couple every year. And I said, "Yes, I would like to know." And he said, "It was that reply you made to that obvious attempt to screw you in 1978." He said, "If you'd gone into a long harangue about who was right and who was wrong, you would have joined everybody else; but just by being matter-of- fact, that tipped the balance." So my advice to everybody is that if you have a bad rating, don't fight about it. Make an academic comment and go on with your life.

Q: As a matter of fact, that box, for those who have dealt with it, they call it the suicide box. If you make a rebuttal, you're dead - I mean a real rebuttal. Okay, well-

CURRAN: Stuart, this was very pleasant. Let me close with a few comments about my family, who were very supportive during my Foreign Service career.

Marcia, my lovely wife, is now an Inspector at State/OIG and continues her career with some of the perspectives obtained as a Foreign Service spouse and, of course, many other talents. During my 25 years at USIA and State, Marcia made and remade homes in a wide variety of places so that our family could keep together and share the experiences from Germany to the Middle East to Mexico and to Afghanistan. In our first eight years of marriage, we moved seven times.

Sara, our oldest daughter, was born in Beirut and is now teaching at Princeton after work and study in the Peace Corps, farm relief programs in Illinois, and a Ph.D. at Chapel Hill, as well as a research grant at the University of Seattle. Her husband, Ralph Coolman, also has a doctorate - in soil science - and is now at Rutgers. There is no question that Sara's life was influenced by foreign service.

Diana, our second daughter, is a physician (OB/GYN). She and her surgeon husband, Laris Galejs, live in Dayton, Ohio. Laris' parents came from Latvia and he has close associations with Latvia and the Latvian community. Diana's year with me in Morocco was special for both of us and she was able to have a unique experience on her own with the Moroccan and non-U.S. community in Rabat. During one of her medical incarnations, a few words of Arabic picked up in the family were of help in dealing with Chaldean immigrants to Detroit from the Basra area.

Without the constant support from wife and daughters, I believe it would have been impossible to stay in the government for a quarter of a century and I am very much indebted to all of them.

RICHARD L. JACKSON

**Political Counselor
Rabat (1983-1985)**

**Consul General
Casablanca (1985-1989)**

**DCM
Rabat (1989-1991)**

Richard L. Jackson was born in New York in 1939. He received his Bachelor's Degree from Princeton University in 1962 and his Master's Degree from the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy in 1964. His career has included assignments in Mogadiscio, Tripoli, Thessaloniki, Athens, Rabat and Casablanca. Mr. Jackson was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy on August 17, 1998.

JACKSON: In 1983, I went to Morocco and stayed eight years.

Q: How did you get to this long period? This is one of the longest involvements in a country other than, say, the Soviet Union or Vietnam, that I have run across. How did you get assigned to Morocco? Let's start in 1983.

JACKSON: Well, in 1983, I had been back in the States for six years. It was time to go abroad, both in a career sense and also financially to compensate for the years in New York. I had two children, one then in college and one approaching college. To keep them there, I clearly needed to be abroad. There was an opening in Morocco, and I was certainly interested in North Africa. It was a place close enough that the children could visit on vacations, and so I would be able regularly to have my family with me. And so I applied, conscious, however, that among Arabists in the mainstream of NEA, Morocco and the Maghreb in general were regarded by many as left field. Morocco, in particular, was viewed as not as authentically Arab as the Mashreq. It was looked at askance as a place where people spoke French, and was, I think, not a place that ambitious Arabists (which I was, in any case, not) steered themselves toward at that time.

Q: This would include Tunisia, Algeria and Morocco, more or less.

JACKSON: Yes, it would, more or less. I think there was always that perception, perhaps more strongly about Morocco because it was a Kingdom. It was also known as an extremely pleasant place to live, not requiring the sacrifices that service in other parts of the Arab world entailed and that are enshrined in the NEA culture. In any case, I did speak French rather than Arabic, so I was never really part of that crowd.

At that time, there was a high profile political ambassador who by all accounts evidently had experienced a somewhat difficult year of settling into Rabat. He was Joseph Verner Reed, a protégé of David Rockefeller at the Chase Bank who, with his help, had come in as a political ambassador under the Republicans. I had heard reports from people coming back from Morocco of various ups-and-downs, and difficult morale. I met briefly with the then-Assistant Secretary for NEA, Nick Veliotes, when I was assigned to Morocco, who rolled his eyes and observed that

I certainly had my work cut out for me. But I frankly was delighted to get to Morocco. I picked up a car, a Peugeot, in Paris, with my two children and drove south to Morocco, which was a wonderful approach to that country, watching the terrain change and Moorish influence grow as one traversed southern Spain, then crossing from Algeciras to Tangier, and arriving late at night in the midst of Ramadan. It was a wonderful introduction. En route, we stopped, by prearrangement, for lunch with my predecessor, Bill Marsh, who briefed me at some length on pitfalls ahead.

Q: What was your job there?

JACKSON: I was Political Counselor. We had a strong section of motivated young people. Michael Parmly, my Deputy, who went on to be DCM in Luxembourg and Bosnia and is currently Political Counselor in Paris, Doug Green, who's since been Consul General in Dhahran; and Alex Wolf, who's currently one of the Deputy Executive Secretaries. They were a talented team which was great for me to work with.

Q: Before you went out, I imagine you had a little time to read your way into the files back on the Desk and all. What were American interests, as you saw them, before you went out and what was the situation there before you arrived?

JACKSON: Well, Morocco, as, John Waterbury wrote in his book, "Commander of the Faithful," in the late 1960s, was still "a country waiting for an explosion that never comes." That is, there was, still tremendous power concentrated in the hands of one man, King Hassan. Inequalities of wealth in the country were quite striking, and there was always the issue of internal stability. This was, of course, still the midst of the Cold War, and Morocco was perceived as a moderate, Westernized country. Next door was its rival, Algeria, supported by the Soviet Union. They were pitted against each other in the Western Sahara, a conflict which had festered for many years. At the time I was there, it involved a major part of the Moroccan army occupying static defenses behind an earthen wall called a berm, which stretched around most of the towns of the Western Sahara. There was continuing fighting, during my time there, in the form of a succession of lightning strikes by Land Rovers and light armed vehicles with machine guns against the berm, occasionally punching a hole through it. It was a sporadic conflict that festered in a depopulated and moon-like desert region, but it occasionally involved cautious sorties by the Moroccan Air Force.

Q: Ambassador Reed, I never served with him but I remember there was something about - maybe it was a crisis while you were there and you will come to it - but he was away from his post and people were saying it was not a good thing and all that. In other words, he was one of a few political ambassadors that gained particular notoriety during this period. I wondered if you were picking up, other than rolling eyes, any feelings about him.

JACKSON: Well, yes, of course. Ambassador Reed was a larger-than-life, still is, a larger-than-life character, given to dramatic gestures, unorthodox in his approach to diplomacy, and with very strong detractors and supporters. Before my time, there was a bulletin board in the Operations Center with egregious messages from the Reed embassy. It was often the case that those were not messages that he had ever seen or had any part of. It was also the case, however,

that many of his detractors, including a number of the ambassadors from the neighboring countries who would bad mouth him incessantly, were the first to write him for recommendations and his personal intervention in seeking their own next assignments. I know that personally, because I heard at least two of them bad- mouth him and then I saw their obsequious letters seeking preferment.

I was, of course, in his time the Political Counselor. I wasn't DCM and did not have any responsibility for managing his interface with the embassy or, beyond the Political Section, how the place ran. That would have been a much harder job than I had. I had the feeling sometimes that a few who served him in that capacity may have made themselves indispensable to him by perhaps exaggerating the downside and faults of others in the Mission, rather than necessarily building them up. That was certainly not true of all, however. By the time I arrived there, as is the case with many political ambassadors taking "ownership" of their first embassy, he had evidently settled into his role. At least the kinds of stories I had heard about, I did not personally observe. Ambassador Reed was hyperactive, and his day consisted of innumerable calls, social events, meetings, and outreach to Moroccans. He frequently did not get to write those up in the form of telegrams or reports, so often his meetings, even with the King, went unreported, or only sketchily reported to Washington and that did not, perhaps, inspire confidence there or reinforce his credibility. As I and other newcomers gained his confidence, however, I believe we can take some credit for persuading him that he would be better served to take one of the younger FSOs along as notetaker and to write the cables. As a result, Michael Parmly, from my section, went to most meetings and provided a detailed record of what, in fact, was said. Reed traveled constantly throughout the country and, while being ambassador is by no means just a popularity contest, he was clearly better known to Moroccans than most of our ambassadors, before or since. Certainly he saw far more of King Hassan. Frequently he would take along some special gift to the King to augment his collection of exotic fountain pens or perhaps a golf item that he was able to have inscribed for him from the President because of close ties to both the Reagan and Bush White House. That helped with the King, who valued small gestures. A fault of Reed, or JVR, as he was known, was that he would rely overly on a small cadre he came to trust in the Mission and tended to exclude others whom he didn't. That generated some resentments. We had a C-12 aircraft in the Mission at that time, and there was fairly constant conflict about use of that plane since it was a DOD asset. I think many of the Defense Attache Office pilots, who were responsible for it, did not have an easy time.

Q: Would you divide the time you were there into different periods or was it much the same thing in relations with Morocco during this period? Should we stick to chunks of time, do you think?

JACKSON: I think it's better to take it chronologically, because I was in three quite different jobs. In that initial period, we had innumerable high-level visits to Morocco that were stimulated by the Ambassador. I believe there were more members of the Cabinet and congressmen who visited than for almost any other post, worldwide, except the biggest ones like London, Paris, Bonn, and Tokyo. For quite awhile, there was practically a Cabinet-level visit each month and innumerable other visitors. It was a great exposure and I was very involved in visits of both Haig and Shultz. At one point, both the Ambassador and DCM were away and, as acting Charge, I accompanied Attorney General Ed Meese to call on the King, and spent half a day at the Palace.

I went with the ambassador on a particularly memorable trip to Mauritania and Western Sahara, stopping en route in Senegal. I think his frenetic style surprised our hosts, Charlie Bray and Ed Peck, but it was a very interesting trip, and at the conclusion we visited Laguerre, an outpost across from the Mauritanian port of Nouadhibou, and a vital point in the Western Sahara dispute. I remember at the conclusion of that trip, we had a dinner outside Nouadhibou with a leading businessman who honored us in local custom, pulling liver from a living camel calf and serving it fresh with Johnny Walker Black Label. Another anecdote occurred when Reed was entertaining the young Shah of Iran who, because of threats against him, was jumpy about security and had requested that nobody else be present. By mistake, an advance security team was just then scoping out the residence for a visit from Vice President Bush, and as the Shah looked around the garden, there were literally men in every tree. The major development of that period was, however, what you were referring to, Stu, that is, the union in 1984 of Libya and Morocco, the treaty of Oujda. It is true that the Ambassador was at that time on leave in Maine and that the announcement of the treaty, uniting as it did our closest ally in North Africa, Morocco, with our perceived enemy, Libya, came as a major blow and was not in the least understood in Washington. There had been fragmentary indications that such a union might be in the works, but no timeframe was attached to it, and basically the embassy and the announcement caught us flatfooted. In fact, at that exact moment, we were having a periodic consultation with Embassy Algiers and, altogether with the DCM and the section heads from that embassy, we were all in the classified embassy conference room, discussing North Africa as the announcement of union with Libya came across the wires. More improbably, we had seriously considered having this joint meeting at Oujda, near the Algerian border, where the Moroccans and Libyans actually met to sign their treaty. It was interesting for colleagues from Algeria, with its heavy-handed control of information, to see that there were also obstacles to getting information in a monarchy like Morocco. In fact, the union was a logical step for the Moroccans to take. Qadhafi had been funding and supplying military hardware to Polisario guerrillas in the Western Sahara and, through this union, the King terminated that supply relationship with one stroke. He bought himself several years of relative peace in the Sahara, during which Morocco consolidated its hold, and then conveniently abolished the union when it suited him in 1986, by accepting the visit of Israeli Prime Minister Peres to Morocco.

Q: There was a period where you had the United Arab Republic, where Egypt joined up with Syria and then with Yemen. There were various permutations of unions between countries which never amounted to much. I heard of this Moroccan/Libyan thing--this strange Middle Eastern thing. What does it mean? Were you looking at the UAR as an example to see if this was another one of those?

JACKSON: The impact of it was just what you said. It was superficial and nothing lasting, but try telling that to Congress. They didn't buy it and could not appreciate that it was a paper union only and a very shrewd tactical move on the part of the King. He used it to dramatically extend the berm, the earthen wall around the Sahara, until ultimately it walled off 90 percent or more of that vast area. So, I think it was a bum rap that the Ambassador was criticized to the extent he was for being out of the country at that time. It was presented that he was at a resort, or something, in the States, and not working sufficiently hard at his post. He was, in fact, as hard-working a person, in terms of hours spent on the job as any that I have worked for. More importantly, in the aftermath of Oujda, emissaries like Vernon Walters arrived from Washington

to inform the King of strongly negative U.S. reaction to the union, but failed to deliver the message as bluntly as intended. Reed ultimately did so, documented by an embassy notetaker.

The ambassador could also be receptive to ideas from the staff. I remember, when the ambassador in Paris, Evan Galbraith, issued a shameful and self-serving blast against the career service, I suggested to Reed that he do a rebuttal. He published a strong letter taking sharp issue with Galbraith and defending the Foreign Service in "The Wall Street Journal" within two days, the only ambassador, political or otherwise, to be heard from.

Q: During this short-lived union between Libya and Morocco, were there any real government exchanges or was it only on paper?

JACKSON: No, it was really a largely paper agreement, although there was always talk about joint councils for this or that. Qadhafi was such an unpredictable character that I'm sure the Moroccans had reservations about getting too close. At the popular level, my impression was that Qadhafi was largely dismissed as a buffoon and figure of ridicule. At least his appearances on Moroccan television walking alongside King Hassan in his pseudo-Bedouin get-up were usually met with laughter in the cafes. Moreover, their overriding objective, as I said, was to terminate, at least for an extended period, his support of the Polisario, and that was achieved. Later, there was, of course, a wider Maghreb union called the Ummah Union, which was formed involving the five countries of North Africa, that is including Mauritania. But that too, despite elaborate organizational schemes, foundered on two obstacles - the unpredictability of Libya and deep-seated Moroccan-Algerian tensions.

Q: How was this union between Libya and Morocco received from what you were gathering in Algeria?

JACKSON: The Algerians were suspicious of anything involving Morocco. This was before the rapprochement that occurred later in 1987-88 between King Hassan and Chedli Benjedid. So, yes, they were suspicious. The Maghreb is, after all, two evenly-balanced powers of roughly equivalent militaries and roughly equivalent populations - that is, Morocco and Algeria - and then the surrounding smaller states of Tunisia, Libya, and, to a lesser extent, Mauritania, that periodically jockeyed to maximize their influence in a kaleidoscope of changing alliances. So the Algerians were definitely concerned.

Thinking about this period - and I stayed on a total of eight years in Morocco - I was able initially to meet through the Ambassador's contact and access almost everybody in the Moroccan government, albeit on the periphery. As I stayed as Consul General in Casablanca and DCM back in Rabat, many of the same officials became useful contacts in my own right. Morocco, in particular, is a place of long history and long memory. In our usual Foreign Service pattern of two or three year assignments, frequently lasting contacts aren't made, so I found by staying eight years there that I began to be looked on as some kind of expert on Morocco, which, of course, I was not. I don't even speak Arabic, but the important thing for me was the continuity and length of stay. I'm a great believer in that and found that there and, earlier in Greece for five years, I got far more out of the longer assignments and I believe gave more to the taxpayer in return through broader contacts and more in-depth knowledge.

There were some things in that first period in Rabat that were interesting. The Consul General in Tangier and the headmaster of the Tangier American School got into, for one reason or another, a non-speaking relationship, so I was assigned as the embassy member of the school board, which was a wonderful pretext to get out of the capital city about every other month and visit the northern part of the country, quite a different atmosphere. It was a neglected region of the country which the King had not visited for several decades. We had a policy of not traveling to the contested Western Sahara at that time unless we accompanied members of Congress. In retrospect, it was a strange policy that Foreign Service officers responsible for reporting on the region were prohibited while Congress, both members and staff, could travel at will, but I was an escort for congressional delegations on several occasions and got a fleeting sense of the situation down there. I was also sent as the embassy's delegate to a conference on security of embassies that was held in Abidjan. The main Washington speaker was Oliver North before he became a household word. There was also a summit of the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC), which King Hassan hosted in Casablanca. I was sent there to monitor it as a consequence of my previous assignment at the UN. In fact, many of the Third World delegations there came from New York and were precisely the people on whom I had drawn in writing my book on the Non-Aligned, so I was able to effectively cover the conference, at which Egypt gained readmission into the OIC after the break following Camp David.

Q: When you arrived during this first period, what was your impression of King Hassan and his way of operation, both within his own government and also towards the Americans?

JACKSON: Hassan is a master politician, who has operated for years by cooptation. He is also - if it is a question of defending the interests of Morocco or of the Alaouite throne - ruthless. He had two close attempts on his life in 1972 and '73. He has subsequently acted as his own intelligence chief and minister of defense and personally controlled the issuance of live ammunition to the army and police. It's a complex country with deep social, ethnic, economic, and tribal cleavages. He has controlled it with a firm hand and - one has to say - brilliantly, looking at his survival and that country's relative prosperity in comparison to much of the rest of the region.

Q: You surprised me by saying that there had been some decades since he'd gone up to the north, which would include Tangier and Casablanca and all?

JACKSON: No, by the north I meant the Tangier region and the Rif Mountains, the locus of unease, economic hardship, narcotics production, and possibly Berber separatism in the mountains. It was to those areas that the King was sent as a crown prince to quell unrest. But more broadly, I think that since World War II, there has been a basic shift in the power base for the monarchy in Morocco. Throughout four centuries of Alaouite rule - that is the family of this king - the primary support for the monarchy was in the Makhzen or imperial cities. Government was traditionally located wherever the Sultan happened to be, and he moved about in a procession - or Harka, as it was called - throughout the years. Moroccan history has been an ebb and flow in a continuing power struggle between the Makhzen or central government in the cities and the outlying territory or bled, comprised of adjacent, pacified, and friendly tribes and an outer rim or bled-as-siba of less subjugated, more independent-minded tribes. Since roughly

World War II, that pattern has been reversed and stronger, more fervent loyalty to the throne today comes from the bled, the countryside. Support for the monarchy is less obvious in the larger cities which have mushroomed. Casablanca, for example, went from 250,000 at the time of World War II to between four or five million today. The King still does continue the Harka pattern, in the sense that in a given year he rotates through the Kingdom, perhaps wintering in Marrakesh, moving in the spring to Fez, back to Rabat, for his birthday in Casablanca in June, and in the summer to the beach palace in Skhirat. So tradition hasn't changed in that sense. Tangier and the North, however, are conspicuously absent from the itinerary.

Q: I would imagine that a political officer there would have problems in that decisions were handled by the King, whom only the Ambassador saw. You could make your contacts, but perhaps these weren't involved in the action.

JACKSON: That's a fair enough assessment, Stu. It's particularly true, in my view, about Rabat, because Rabat is much more a government town than even Washington is. If you're a division director in the Foreign Ministry, for example, you may not know the King's real thinking on issues in your area of responsibility. You're in a difficult position when the American embassy political officer comes in. You don't want to seem ignorant, but you certainly don't want to be quoted on something that isn't the policy. The embassy officer may also be privy to information from the ambassador's audiences with the King, so most MFA directors tended toward caution and a bureaucratic response, although on a personal basis, they were fine colleagues. So, you're right, it was not always an easy dialogue, and it isn't the easiest place to get information. The Moroccans frequently are reluctant to answer questions where it would help their image to be responsive in areas like human rights or various prisoner issues - whether Polisario or Algerians held in Morocco or Moroccans held in Algeria. They could easily provide basic answers, but they don't. I was thinking, earlier in our conversation we were talking about getting one of the political officers into the Ambassador's meeting with the King.

Q: Reports that came out of Embassy Rabat were said to include references to the equivalent of "our King" and were cited by some as examples of the disease called "localitis." Was this something you had to keep an eye on, to see that we weren't over-reporting the Moroccan point of view and losing the American perspective? Was this a problem?

JACKSON: Well, let me say, Ambassador Reed was somebody who spoke at high speed and often what first came to his mind. He had great enthusiasm for Morocco and a bit of an "if-it's-good-for-General-Motors-it's-good-for-the-country" approach to his assignment and role. He did use the phrase, "our King," occasionally, but I think too much was made of that. I don't feel that in saying that flippantly there was necessarily a confusion of Moroccan and U.S. interests. I think this was seized on by detractors. As we said, before, there was a feeling that this was a place of creature comforts, traditionally a post reserved for political ambassadors, and too good for the career service. It somehow went against the NEA puritan ethic, and the career COM's sweating out their time in Mauritania or Algeria envied and resented perceived imperial trappings and "high living" in Rabat. But, as I mentioned, the louder they carped, the quicker they'd write for assistance in landing next jobs. There was also the famous comment of Senator Eagleton before my time that Reed was a "24-karat nitwit."

Q: The reputation of Morocco - this wasn't just me but others - was that King Hassan really liked to have political ambassadors as opposed to professional ambassadors because he could win them over, whereas a career ambassador maybe had been around the Arabic-speaking world for a while and was more jaundiced about it. This may be one of those professional stories put out to knock the non-professional. What do you feel about that?

JACKSON: It's definitely the case that the King appears to have a strong preference for political ambassadors. There have been career ambassadors - Dick Parker was one - who had difficulties in Morocco. Basically, I think, the King's preference in this regard reflects the tendency of Moroccans to personalize and for the King to assume that a political appointee will be an intimate of the President through whom Morocco will have a more direct pipeline into the White House. Through such a conduit, diplomacy by secret mission and exchanges of gifts is more feasible. Perhaps also in his mind is the calculation that, with the right intermediary and the right personalized approach, a hidden door will open to Camp David levels of U.S. assistance. The average career ambassador simply will not have those means at his disposal. The King is probably also more at home and congenial with a political ambassador, typically someone of means, like Reed or Angie Duke, who might share his interest in racehorses or luxury automobiles.

Speaking of horses, later when I'd come back to Rabat as DCM, I accompanied Armand Hammer of Occidental Petroleum, in the year before his death, to see the King. He was convinced that the last great, unexplored, geologic basin that would be petroleum-bearing was the Draa Valley running through the Western Sahara. He was determined to get a seismic concession from the King. Mr. Hammer must have been in his late 80s or even 90s and the King in his 60s. There was obvious appreciation in the King's eyes of the sheer energy of Hammer, who was still a major player and recently returned from Moscow. I think it gave him great hope. Hammer began the meeting by tabling what looked like a deck of cards with photographs of prize racehorses, and much of the conversation dealt with horse flesh. It was inevitable that Occidental would get the seismic concession, and the finesse with which it was done was interesting to watch.

Q: You mentioned all these visits coming to Morocco. Morocco is really not very far up on our priority list, so I would assume it was a fun place to come to. I mean, the King and all made it that way.

JACKSON: Well, it was the Cold War, and U.S. interests were still very much defined in those terms. We had some tangible assets in Morocco. There was an access and transit agreement for use of certain airfields in Morocco in the event of military emergency. In fact, that agreement was not exercised during the Gulf War. It wasn't needed because of facilities in Spain, but also nobody wanted to test it by making a request to the Moroccans and being turned down. We also had under construction in my years there the largest radio transmitter in the free world at an extended VOA site outside of Tangier. That was a major investment, able to beam radio programming across the Soviet Union, Africa, and the Middle East. Its value, of course, was open to question later, with the collapse of the Soviet Union. I recall going up to the VOA site with Senator Moynihan, who did not appear particularly convinced by VOA staff answers to his tough questioning on why we needed that kind of investment in the post-Cold War era.

Q: Dick, what you're saying sounds as if it could apply to many countries. I mean, every country has an importance. One could say this about Indonesia or Pakistan. I mean, you can always work up rationales for strategic importance. But Morocco does seem to have been sort of a center for the glitterati. Wasn't it Mr. Forbes of "Forbes Magazine" who had big parties at which he flew in guests from New York and that sort of thing. I mean, was there an underlying attraction to see and be seen, that this was a good place to go if you were somebody?

JACKSON: Well, you're falling, with all respect, into the trap I mentioned earlier of not taking Morocco seriously because it's there on the western edge of the Arab world and a very pleasant place to be. It's not a central player, perhaps, and not a crucible for regional conflict like the Mashreq. It's, in your words, a place of glitterati. And, yes, it's an extremely hospitable place to be. Yes, many people like Malcolm Forbes, Yves St. Laurent, Mark Gilbey of Gilbey's Gin, Princess Sabah of Kuwait, Guy de Rothschild, or Barbara Hutton have made very elaborate resort homes in Tangier or Marrakesh. But that does not detract from the fact that this is still an important chunk of real estate and a place with which the United States has enjoyed friendly, bicentennial relations. There's a famous letter from George Washington to the Sultan that the Moroccans love to quote - it's republished in the Moroccan newspapers every July 4 - in which George Washington says something like "We are a small and struggling nation, but with the passage of years and if God favors us with prosperity, we hope one day to be able in small measure to repay Morocco's generous assistance to the United States." It's a country, in other words, that we have a lot of common history with. Morocco put substantial military on the right side in the early Congo crises, Shaba I and II. They fought with us in Italy during World War II and bore the brunt of the assault on Monte Casino. They fought with us in Korea. They also participated in the Gulf War, one of the few Arab countries alongside Egypt to do that.

Q: I have to say that last year, we're talking about 1997, there were Moroccan troops in Bosnia. I'm asking these questions to get you to respond, which you're doing.

JACKSON: Let me say, also, Stu, when you say it's a playland for glitterati, that it's one thing to have an estate and go for a few weeks annually to play in the sun, and it's something else again to live and work in a country and culture for three years or, in my own case, eight years. Over the longer term, you find that many of the superficial, identifiable similarities between Morocco and the West are deceiving, in that the reality of Morocco's culture is entirely different. Paul Bowles quoted in one of his books, perhaps "The Spider's Nest" about Fez, lines that capture the ultimate unknowability of the place: "You say you're going to Fez and when you say you're going to Fez, it means that you're not going to Fez, but I happen to know that you are going to Fez. Why have you lied to me, oh you who are my friend?" It suggests to me the many levels of the Moroccan onion skin. In that sense, it is truly an exotic country, where as a foreigner, the longer you stay, the more you begin to realize what you don't know.

Q: My question of why you had so many visits there is not really about lifestyle, but the fact that you had so many members of Congress and others going there and I would suspect that there would be a sybaritic impulse to go there as opposed to the Congo, or somewhere else. The people who came--I'm talking about the government people--were they on real business, including Senators and all?

JACKSON: With the volume of visitors we had, I have to say that you saw all kinds. Morocco is imminently accessible. It's a very useful rest stop at the beginning or the end of a long trip through Sub-Saharan Africa. It's on the way to the Middle East. It's easy to combine with Europe. Geography explains a lot. There were a number of delegations who simply would go to Marrakesh because of its Palm Springs-type climate, palm trees, and the world-famous Mamounia Hotel. They somehow assumed that the King would bestir himself, fly there, and accord them an audience. Naturally, the role of an embassy in brokering those kinds of expectations was often a difficult one. Among delegations, there were serious, worthwhile ones from the Congress who had done detailed homework and were prepared. In that category, I recall people like Senator Lugar of Indiana, or Steve Solarz when he was Chairman of the House Africa Subcommittee and was fact-finding on the Western Sahara. Such visitors contributed a great deal to our dialogue with Morocco, and the embassy encouraged their visits. There were others who, frankly, did not. I recall a large delegation headed by Howard Wolpe and including the late Mickey Leland who spent so prodigiously in the Marrakesh souk on rugs, furniture, and sculpture that their U.S. Air Force jet couldn't take off because of the added weight and had to jettison some \$3,000 of fuel on the tarmac and refuel en route to make their next destination. I thought it was a disgrace and flagrant waste of taxpayer money. Such abuse, in my experience, is not uncommon, and yet the Department's lavish focus on the annual budget appropriation in practice enforces a conspiracy of silence.

Q: What about during your first tour here? The Israeli equation at that time - how was that treated?

JACKSON: Well, Morocco has had a major Jewish community for centuries, and it is still the largest Jewish community in the Arab world. After the Moors were thrown out of Spain in the 15th century, much of the Jewish community there also fell back to Morocco, although large groups went to places like Thessaloniki, Greece, where vestiges of their ancient language, Ladino, still survive. Many Moroccans, typically with names beginning with Ben, originally were of Jewish origin, from Spain and, by and large, have coexisted over the centuries with Muslims in Morocco. The King's father, Mohammed V, was a staunch protector of the Moroccan Jewish community against the Germans and Vichy French during World War II. While the Monarchy still prides itself on being a protector of the Jewish community, in actual fact, with the independence of Israel, most Moroccan Jews went there or settled in France, Canada, the United States, Brazil, or elsewhere. Today there are probably eight to nine thousand Jews living in Morocco, largely in Casablanca. The King, however, retains a strong interest in and contacts with the several hundred thousand Israelis of Moroccan origin, hoping that they could one day play a decisive role in Israeli politics. Because of conditions when they settled in Israel, most joined the Likud rather than Labor and have in no sense been a Moroccan fifth column. Former Israeli Foreign Minister David Levi is a case in point. When I arrived in Rabat, Moroccan-Israeli ties were kept under close wraps. They existed, but were not publicized. It was difficult to telephone to Israel, and there was no direct travel between the two countries. The situation evolved with the 1986 visit to Morocco of Israeli Prime Minister Peres and later exchanges of inconspicuous diplomatic missions which functioned as interest sections.

Q: Was Morocco part of the Non-Aligned Movement?

JACKSON: Morocco was represented at the founding Non-Aligned Summit in Belgrade in 1961 and has always remained a member of the Non-Aligned, but has never been a major actor in it, primarily because of strong Algerian influence in the Movement. By the time Algeria became Non-Aligned Chairman and hosted the Algiers Summit in 1973, it was also the head of OPEC and was able to mastermind a tripling or a quadrupling of world oil prices. Algerian influence was unparalleled in both the Group of 77 and the Non-Aligned and was exerted to shore up support for the Polisario. Morocco could not compete and remained on the periphery of the Movement. The same thing later occurred in the Organization of African Unity from which Morocco disassociated in 1983, although it has since come back in.

Q: Well, did the issue of Zionism equals racism come up during your time there? I mean, were we making representations to the Moroccans?

JACKSON: Sure. That was one of the issues on which we would focus during the annual pre-UNGA dialogue with Morocco. Morocco had a relatively moderate voting record in the UN, but there were many issues, particularly dealing with the Middle East, on which they diverged from us.

Q: Then shall we move on to the next phase? You were what, Consul General in Casablanca.

JACKSON: Well, Ambassador Reed finished his tour in 1985 and was followed by Tom Nassif, a labor lawyer and businessman from California. I worked very well with him as Political Counselor for most of the first year he was there. I'd known him before in NEA, when he was the political DAS, and found that the Moroccan contacts I had already accumulated were useful and that he looked to me for help and advice as he was getting his feet on the ground. Tom's family were originally of Lebanese origin, making him the first Arab-American ambassador in Rabat, and I think the Moroccans valued that. He made good personal contacts, although different ones than his predecessor, which is always healthy. He was a sportsman and outdoor person, and I remember being part of several golf foursomes with the Minister of Interior, Driss Basri, and also boar hunting with Basri. Through those kinds of pursuits, he established very good ties.

In any case, I had not particularly planned to stay indefinitely in Morocco or much beyond my first tour, but the Consul General in Casablanca, Dan Phillips, was selected as ambassador to Burundi and Nassif asked me to take his place. The timing was good, and so I moved one hour down the road to Casablanca, the first time I had had a post of my own. Having been in Rabat, I was able virtually to have as much or as little to do with the embassy as I wanted. I came back for weekly country team meetings and special events, but skipped the endless housing board meetings and other that go with embassy life. The consulate general, at that time, was one of the larger constituent posts with a number of regional offices. We were headquarters for the regional Marine Security Battalion, headed by a colonel with a couple captains and a supporting staff. There was also an Engineering Services Center, which covered southern Europe and the Middle East for technical security repairs and maintained a complex workshop for repairs on Delta barriers, safes, and all manner of security devices in the basement of the consulate. We also had the Regional Security Office, headed by Chris Disney, who went on to be a senior DS officer. It

seems a surprising number in today's climate of austerity, but there was a total of 42 Americans and 27 FSNs in Casablanca, which for the first time in my career entailed genuine management experience.

Casablanca was and is the business center or New York City, if you will, of Morocco. Proportionately, however, the concentration of Moroccan industry and banking--70 percent or so--in the greater Casablanca area gave the city even greater weight in the national economy. The challenge was to penetrate a very sophisticated business and banking structure, to which the existence of consulates was basically peripheral. It was the kind of place that, if you stayed in the office, the phone would not ring off the hook. Once you got a foot in the door of the larger banks and insurance companies, for example, people spoke their minds and had opinions to a much greater extent than government officials in Rabat. There was also a degree of political interest, since Casablanca had experienced serious unrest in 1981 and been divided into six separate governorates, all reporting to the Ministry of Interior. There was a perception that, with four to five million of Morocco's then 25 million population, its struggle with urban and social problems would be predictive; as Casablanca went, so would go the Kingdom.

Casablanca was, nevertheless, also a post where you had to justify your continued existence in a period of cutting consulates around the world for presumed budgetary savings. Each bureau had to give up posts on a hit list and we were pitted in a head-to-head contest, within NEA, against Alexandria, Egypt. It was plain that one post would be sacrificed to make the quota. So we were, naturally, busting to prove our worth. When the issue came up for decision, we were probably not harmed by the fact that Ed Djerejian, the NEA Assistant Secretary, had once made his name as the labor reporting officer in Casablanca at a time of labor unrest in the early 70s.

I feel very strongly that it is a tremendously short-sighted policy to close consulates and pocket the petty change. First, posts like Casablanca or Alexandria, now defunct, represent essential and unique windows on countries important to the United States. The reality you get in Casablanca or Alexandria is not that of Rabat or Cairo, cannot be covered from the capital city and is important to take into account. Second, such posts are training grounds for leadership in the Foreign Service. All too often today, people end up as DCMs or ambassadors having managed at most half a secretary, and it clearly shows. If one had the luxury to go back in time and interview General Marshall, let's say, on how he acquired his leadership skills, he would probably not point to a two-week course at Leavenworth, but instead to the progressive expansion of command responsibilities as he came up through the ranks. By insistence on short modules of leadership training and closure of remaining consulates, State is again missing the boat.

Q: Were you in Morocco at the time when we attacked Libya?

JACKSON: I was in Morocco, still in Rabat as political counselor. That would have been in the spring of 1986. I was, in fact, with my daughter on a week's trip in southern Spain. We heard the news and returned via Tangier with some trepidation about what to expect. Frankly, there was surprisingly little local reaction, and a number of Moroccans privately told me that it was too bad we had not polished off Qadhafi himself. If we were going to do it, why had we missed him, they asked. That does, in a way, answer your earlier questions about union with Libya and how deep it really was, because it was still in effect during that period.

Q: When you were in Rabat and Casablanca, what were you getting from your contacts about Algeria? I would think that there would be concern about Algeria.

JACKSON: There was, although there was an ebb and flow in Moroccan sentiment about Algeria. There was extreme suspicion, of course, on anything to do with the Western Sahara, but, on the other hand, this is not like India/Pakistan or Greece/Turkey, where you have centuries-old enmity, nor are there differences of religion or ethnicity. These are the same people of the same Sunni Muslim religion and the same Arab and Berber mixture. Much of their mutual misunderstanding came, in my view, from their diametrically different styles of government. On the Moroccan side, you had a very powerful monarch with total and immediate decision power, while in Algeria a vast and slow-moving bureaucracy with vestiges of the Soviet bureaucratic model. It was very hard for those establishments to communicate in a meaningful way. Whether the issue was establishing an agenda for a potential meeting or agreeing on logistics, the problems were legion. When things began to improve with the 1987-88 Hassan-Benjedid rapprochement, I was then in Casablanca and was surprised by the number of Moroccans who were eager to do business with Algeria and rushed over there to conclude deals and exploit a potential market opening. That hasn't gone forward as we all hoped because of the way Algeria has evolved and been immobilized, but over time I don't think the situation is hopeless.

Q: Was there a perceived problem of Islamic extremism--fundamentalism--in Morocco during the time you were there?

JACKSON: That was one of the questions that everybody would ask: How strong are the fundamentalists? Who is a fundamentalist? It's a loose term, and there are many different types of fundamentalists. There were a few outright, foreign-inspired agitators, most of whom had been identified and sentenced to death in absentia and were living outside the country. There was a second group of religiously-motivated Islamic fundamentalists that were in organizations like Justice and Charity who centered around figures like Sheikh Yassin in Sale. They were under close scrutiny and often subjected to penalties for violations such as publishing newsletters without permission or holding gatherings without authorization, and a number were jailed--people like Sheikh Yassin-- for two or three years at a time, or put under prolonged house arrest. There was also a larger body of younger people who were having trouble getting a foothold in society and were influenced by Western media, mostly TV coverage from Italy and Europe. They were bombarded with images of conspicuous consumption and Western material wealth without access to it or any prospect of getting it. In a country of 16 percent official unemployment, and unofficially maybe as high as 25 percent youth unemployment - including university graduates - dissatisfaction was rampant and for some the beard and the veil were a form of protest. This, of course, included protests against the United States as the model of consumerism that they wanted and couldn't aspire to. This is reflected differently, perhaps more positively, in the number of American tee shirts among the young or in the length of visa lines. At that time, the fundamentalists seemed to me not particularly strong or organized. They were there. They were agitators. When economic difficulties or unrest from other causes erupted, they surfaced to stir the pot. In fact, at the time of the Islamic Conference Summit I mentioned in Casablanca, all of the police force was there to provide security for heads of state and economic unrest boiled over elsewhere, particularly in the north in Tetouan and Oujda, although to some

extent also in Marrakesh. Without police on hand, the army was called in to calm things down and reacted quite ruthlessly, with 25 or so deaths at that time. Some of the troublemakers were probably fundamentalists, and a typical profile might be someone who had worked in a Peugeot plant in France, picked up a more radical brand of Islam in the local mosque and, when the French cut back on foreign workers, returned to Tetouan. There with no auto plants to employ him, those skills weren't transferable, disaffection grew and only a spark like these protests over increased bread prices was needed.

Q: I thought this might be a good place to stop. Is there anything else we should cover on the Casablanca period, and next time we'll pick up when you returned as Deputy Chief of Mission.

JACKSON: If we have a minute, I'd like to say a couple of things about Casablanca. One of its fascinations was being the center of the Jewish community, as we have mentioned. They had a unique annual festival, called the Mamounia, where the houses of the Jewish community were open to all and people, Jews and some Muslims as well, would go from house to house celebrating. They also had in the countryside, a few hours from Casablanca, an annual pilgrimage that I attended for several years where Moroccan-origin Jews from around the world would come to feast and celebrate for two or three days at the shrine of Ait ba Ahmed. Casablanca was very interesting also as a melting pot of Arab and Berber business interests. Fez has always been the business center of Morocco until the last 30 or 40 years when the Fezzi Arab families moved their centers of business to Casablanca, but there is strong competition from Berbers from the Sousse area around Agadir. Rivalries in the business and banking sectors were interesting to watch, as were different and colorful traditions at weddings and the circumcisions.

From the Casablanca period, I would also like to mention involvement with the Casablanca-American School (CAS), which, at the time I arrived, was on the verge of bankruptcy, operating from two residences with under a hundred students. With the arrival of a dynamic new director, John Randolph, the school soon turned around. I was, for a time, President of the CAS Board, which included Moroccan businessmen, and we were able to get prime land in the upscale "California" suburb free from a real estate developer who calculated correctly that to build his development around a prestige school would increase the value of the homes. Then we raised about three million dollars through the business community, a large part of it from a benefit concert by Dizzy Gillespie which packed the largest Casablanca theater. Dizzy said it was the best concert he'd ever given in Africa, and it really did raise the roof, with some tickets to construct the school selling for as much as \$1500 each. It shows you the wealth that existed in that community, although Morocco is sometimes described as having a population of 25 million with only a million consumers. In retrospect, the experience of being involved in building the CAS school which ended up as a state-of-the-art facility for 500 kids, now being further expanded, was tangible, unlike much of the reporting that we do, and was a highlight of the Moroccan years. The level of teamwork in the committee - there was a farsighted Moroccan professor and businessman, Abdullah Alaoui, as Vice President and others like Abdelhaq Laraki and Abdelwahab Benkirane who were able to get things done in the Moroccan context and helped to establish linkages to the Palace - really made the new school possible and was a great satisfaction.

Q: Were there any problems with schools with religious purposes, because I'm familiar with

problems, say in Saudi Arabia, where you couldn't send children of the country to the school. I mean, was it open to Moroccan children?

JACKSON: Morocco is an immensely tolerant country. Their brand of Sunni Islam of the Malachite rite is a most tolerant religion. Moroccans comprised 60 or 70 percent of the student body, and we had students of many other religions in that school - Christian, Jewish, Hindu, perhaps others - with no problems on that score at all.

Q: Your next post was as DCM in Rabat. You were there from when to when?

JACKSON: I was DCM in Rabat from January 1989 until August of '91.

Q: Who was the ambassador then?

JACKSON: The Ambassador was Michael Ussery. Let me say, when I first went to Morocco in 1983, in my wildest dreams I had no thought of remaining eight years. Had I known that I would stay that long, I would have spent much more time on Arabic. But as it worked out, Mike Ussery, a political appointee, who had been a staffer in the Congress, worked in the Department in IO, and then as the political DAS in NEA, where he was responsible for North Africa, arrived at mid-year (I think a recess appointment) as our new ambassador. He was quite new to diplomatic life and living and working abroad and apparently wanted somebody with continuity in Morocco as his DCM. It was a time of considerable staff turnover, and I guess I fit that bill. It was certainly an agreeable move one hour back up the road from Casablanca to Rabat. I was given the choice of a two or three year tour but felt that, from a career planning perspective, I had already overstayed and that two was probably sufficient.

Q: The French had been the former protective power, I guess, or what was the official term?

JACKSON: Well, Morocco was a protectorate of France for most of this century, from 1912 or 1913 until Moroccan independence in 1956. On the other hand, it was a relatively benign colonial experience, at least compared to Algeria next door, which became not a colony but a province of metropolitan France. Every one in four inhabitants there was a Frenchman. In Morocco, the French, particularly in the initial years, chose to rule through indigenous structures. The governor responsible for putting those in place, Marshall Lyautey, was quite adept, unlike some of his successors, so the Moroccans retained a sense of their own culture and identity, unlike the Algerians. That isn't to say that in the period of Mohammed V's exile to Madagascar and return in 1953, there were not some fighting and ugly incidents leading up to Moroccan independence, but the special relationship with France survived independence. There was a very strong identification--love-hate, if you will--with France. King Hassan is a great admirer of French language and culture, and by and large the more educated Moroccans and professional people feel an affinity with the French and France. On the other hand, the feelings are ambivalent, and I recall, during international soccer matches in Morocco, extraordinary booing and animosity towards the French team, which was not expressed towards others. The French have a much trickier, more difficult time in their relationship with Morocco than we do. Certainly being a superpower also calls forth ambiguous feelings, but the French, with their particular history in North Africa and proximity, have more prickly issues to confront. I can

remember one of the French ambassadors practically having to leave over issues of the interpretation of history in textbooks in use in the French schools in Morocco--those kinds of nitty-gritty issues. But the French also were everywhere and the linkages between France and Morocco made it difficult for us in a number of areas. Some of the Royal Councillors, for example Reda Guedira, now dead, were on the boards of dozens of the largest French corporations. That made it very difficult to compete head to head with the French when it came to the major projects, whether it was a new airfield or access to prime coastal areas for tourist development. There was a feeling among many American businesses that you had to go through France to do business in Morocco. That, of course, wasn't true, and handicapped them further, but it was an uphill fight in which the French did not hesitate to call in their chips when the stakes were major contracts.

Q: Looking at this time, 1989-91, we're talking about the winding down of the Cold War. Did that have any implications in Morocco for us, or was this a European thing?

JACKSON: It had overriding, major implications for all of us, but to finish up on the French, their difficulties and tribulations tended to be bilateral and often of their own making. For example, in the Mitterrand period, Mrs. Mitterrand--Danielle--was very involved in human rights issues. Publicly, she appeared to side with the Polisario on issues such as Polisario prisoners held by Morocco. Her outspokenness was perceived by the Moroccans to be chastising and lecturing publicly, which did considerable harm to the Moroccan-French relationship in those years. It was restored later by Chirac, with whom the King had close relations over many years. In general, the Moroccans, and particularly the King, tend to be more comfortable with conservative Western governments. That's also true of us. I think they have had a predilection towards the Republicans, and certainly have a long memory for the human rights and other difficulties they had with us in the Carter era.

Q: What about the Gulf War that started in 1990 and ended in 1991?

JACKSON: The Gulf War dominated my second tour in Rabat, but I'd like first to answer your earlier question on the impact of the end of the Cold War. It was profound in the sense that Morocco, over the years, had maximized its strategic importance in the Cold War context as guardian of the southern approach to the Straits of Gibraltar. It was considered strategic real estate, and was aligned with the U.S. and the West in the Cold War vis à vis Soviet-backed Algeria. The King, very adeptly, played on Cold War themes to maximize aid levels, which in my time in Morocco were at the level of combined military and economic assistance of about \$140 million a year. With the end of the Cold War and the collapse of the Soviet Union, all assumptions of strategic importance were called into question, and with them aid levels plummeted. I think our assistance to Morocco now is below \$20 million a year and falling. The value, as we said before, of a Voice of America mega-transmitter in Tangier built in the Cold War context, was in doubt and looked more and more like a white elephant. The Moroccans were also deeply concerned that the focus on reconstruction and development in Eastern Europe would preempt them in the competition for U.S. resources. So the redefinition of the world order was very critical, I would say, to Morocco.

Q: Did you find as DCM and being with the Ambassador, were there any sort of philosophical or

substantive talks with the Moroccan officials about what this all meant? It was all new to everyone. I mean we were all having to readjust. Was this a subject?

JACKSON: There were talks, but Morocco remained a very centralized state with tremendous power and authority vested in the King. In those years, the King, having survived traumatic attempts on his life in the late 1970s, and the departure through death or illness of his most stalwart confidantes over the years - his uncle, General Moulay Hafid, his brother, Abdullah, and others - was not the outgoing, accessible figure that he had been to the diplomatic corps in earlier years. Most ambassadors in Rabat saw the King when they presented credentials and when they took their leave. The U.S. was, of course, an exception, and there were others, but it was not a regular dialogue. The King was a strategic thinker and loved to discuss broad strategy, so that when we had visitors of such a bent - Jeane Kirkpatrick comes to mind as somebody whom he enjoyed talking with - we took advantage of the opportunity for broad discussion. Discussion of such issues at the Foreign Ministry level, however, was usually less productive because the vision was in the palace, I would say.

Q: I was wondering whether you ran across the American practical way of thinking versus the French, I'm not sure I'm using this correctly, the Cartesian way. There are wheels within wheels and there is a plan for everything. There is a reason for everything, whereas we don't think that way. I was wondering whether this ever showed up in your experience in Morocco in the embassy dealings with Moroccans.

JACKSON: Morocco is a multi-faceted, complex country. The French overlay is very strong, but there are many other facets as well. In some areas of Morocco, French is not spoken, and the inhabitants are very much Arab, or Berber, in their identity. So it's a unique culture in its own right, of which the French is only a superficial overlay. Many Moroccans will tell you privately that they feel they have the worst of French bureaucracy. In fact, we had cases of, for example, environmental laws inherited from the French still on the books in Morocco after they had been jettisoned in France 20 years before. Archaic regulations, high unemployment, and bloated bureaucracy conspired against change. The embassy was in no way trying to compete with the French in Morocco and considered our efforts complementary, for example, in the development area, but the French were and remain sensitive to U.S. presence in what they regard as their backyard, or *chasse-garde*, as it's sometimes called.

Q: A term that comes up all the time.

JACKSON: Right. In any case, it was very interesting to me to return to Rabat from Casablanca, to get a sense of the relative weight in that society of private sector versus government. Foreign Ministry directors, for example, often had more successful relatives in the business capital, and I found that a word from or just friendship with the latter would cut a lot of ice. The private sector, at least in the upper reaches of Casablanca, seemed to have a higher standing in Morocco than government.

Q: Let's go into the Gulf War. You might explain first for somebody who might be reading this sometime down the road, what we meant when we talk about the Gulf War.

JACKSON: By the time that came up, I had been in Rabat for about a year as DCM. I had come back and taken the DCM course in Washington and had listened carefully to the kind of conventional guidance that they give. That is, as DCM, you're there to make the trains run on time and do the inside job, and the ambassador is the outside man. I attempted to follow that, but as I got to know and came to work closely with Mike Ussery and gain his confidence in me, I found that there were aspects of the outside job he was very comfortable with me taking on. I frequently did some of the traveling and meeting with governors in the provinces and prolonged ceremonial sessions with Moroccans, at his request. We had a wonderful partnership, thanks to his encouragement and urging me to expand and take on contacts. So, I had taken the measure of the job by the time of the Gulf War, which exposed some very important cleavages in Moroccan society. During the six months build-up to the Gulf War, before Desert Shield and Desert Storm, there was a good deal of turbulence in Morocco. There were, for the first time, marches, in which fundamentalist groups dared to show themselves by marching publicly. The first one, which I recall, was on the main street in Rabat outside the Parliament, in which four or five hundred fundamentalists marched with placards. That sent shockwaves through a society already troubled by the specter of radical Islam in neighboring Algeria. In the buildup to hostilities in the Gulf, in December of 1990, there was also a demonstration in Fez during which a five-star hotel, the Hotel Merinid, was burnt to the ground by fundamentalist protestors. So this was a time of turbulence that needed close watching.

One amusing episode occurred after the Iraqis went into Kuwait. The ambassador was away, and I was temporarily in charge. I got a call one evening about six o'clock from the Palace asking if it was true that Defense Secretary Cheney and General Schwarzkopf were coming to Morocco. It was the first I'd heard of it, and I was dubious. Naturally, I called the State Department Operations Center and they told me, in effect, "Go back to sleep." A few minutes later, say about 6:30, I got a call from Richard Haas at the White House, who told me not only were Cheney and Schwarzkopf coming, but they would be landing in half an hour, at seven o'clock, not in Rabat but at a military field near Kenitra, normally a 45 minute drive away. I was to have cars and be organized and assist in their visit. We drove there at 80 miles an hour and arrived just as the plane was landing. It was as smooth a visit as one could have had.

Q: Could this have been set up unknown to you? I mean, was the King involved in this?

JACKSON: Nobody was involved. Cheney and Schwarzkopf had been elsewhere in the Gulf, had concluded a visit in Egypt, and were on their plane flying back to the States. President Bush got the idea that it would also be well to consult with Hassan and phoned their plane to ask that they put down in Rabat. They were practically by then flying over Morocco. We went right to the Palace, and they had an important conversation in terms of Moroccan cooperation in the Gulf War. Morocco, as you know, was one of the few Arab countries, along with Egypt, to send troops. They had a significant military contingent which, at the Saudi request, guarded one of the key oil facilities. So, we had an evening meeting. Secretary Cheney and the General came back to the embassy to use the secure phone. They reported to the President and took off probably around one in the morning.

Q: Who were they meeting with?

JACKSON: They met only with King Hassan. We set up the meeting after they were on the ground. The King was immensely hospitable.

Q: Trying to get this in time perspective. It was August 1990 when Iraq invaded Kuwait. This was before Moroccan troops went to Saudi Arabia.

JACKSON: Yes.

Q: So this was preliminary to bringing them on board.

JACKSON: Yes. That's what it was about. The Moroccans, of course, made the important distinction vis à vis their public opinion that they were not part of Desert Storm, but were in the Gulf at the request of the Saudis to guard a refinery. There was very strong support in the street for Saddam Hussein throughout the region, although not as turbulent in Morocco as next door in Tunis, where there was more violent reaction. Things were largely peaceful in Morocco, which was a point of some controversy for us in the embassy as the timetable moved towards Desert Storm and Shield in January of 1991. People in Washington were clearly under pressure to cover themselves and show that they were protecting staff and evacuating dependents from the Middle East. On the other hand, it was very politically sensitive to evacuate from places like Israel or Saudi Arabia where people might actually get a SCUD missile on their heads. So, in order to make a quota for evacuees, it was decided to pull staff from the Maghreb. We began steps toward a voluntary departure. On the other hand, while there had been that episode in Fez, the burning of the hotel, there had been no further violence in Morocco. Moroccan contacts were continuing as normal. People in the embassy were relaxed, were playing golf with their Moroccan contacts, schools were functioning normally, and no one chose to depart on a voluntary basis. So, in the event, we got a mandatory evacuation order. Tunis and possibly Algiers had already carried out voluntary departures because they had more threatening situations and people chose to leave. It appeared from the record, therefore, that Morocco, the only North African country with a mandatory evacuation, faced a more menacing situation than neighbors in the Maghreb. In any case, that was an experience to work that through. I think we were given only two or three days to effect the mandatory evacuation of about 600 Americans. As events unfolded, our judgment proved to be entirely correct, and the evacuation was unneeded and wasteful. That's something that has lasting, human impact when a large embassy community is suddenly evacuated on a mandatory basis. American schools, in the middle of their school year, for example, had very serious difficulties. The Casablanca school, that I was particularly close to, kept its doors open and had no problems, but it was tough because some of the teachers did leave, following our example. All dependents were evacuated and most went back to the States. My family was in Finland, since my wife is of Finnish origin. Even though the situation was dead calm, it took some four months to get Washington's permission to bring them back. The then-Under Secretary for Management, Ivan Selin, used the return of dependents as leverage to bargain for further reductions in the embassy ceiling with a bottom line that dependents could come back but only with a 10% reduction in the personnel ceiling. We had already been through a series of those reduction exercises. Anyway, it was a turbulent period, and after such a long evacuation, it was a management challenge to knit back together what had been a very close-knit community.

Q: This decision was made in Washington?

JACKSON: It was a Washington decision that we opposed to the extent we were able to, although the people making it, like Selin, had probably never served abroad and seemed to have little grasp of the human and practical dimensions.

Q: I've heard in some countries, as in the United States, people were sort of glued to the TV sets, kind of watching the war on TV. Did it play that way in Morocco, too? The war was January through March.

JACKSON: Well, it did, Stu. We were not given from Washington the exact starting time. Of course, from the urgency of carrying out the evacuation on such short notice, we knew that it was imminent. I remember being at home in the middle of the night and getting a call from the Canadian ambassador, who had received word of the starting gun from Ottawa. Then, as you say, it was all in the papers. Everybody was watching it, mesmerized. Once it started, the situation in Morocco remained calm, but up to that point, local reaction was basically an unknown. We had never been involved in a major war in the Middle East against an Arab enemy, and it was unpredictable. The Moroccans, as I said, were immensely cooperative on all matters of security at that time. I went to the Interior Ministry and worked out with them that we were issued for all of our people normal license plates, because the diplomatic plates had a 17, which meant U.S. Mission and stood out. There was a single main road to the suburbs in which most embassy families lived and, in a hostile situation, that could, of course, have become a shooting gallery, but nothing untoward of that kind occurred.

Q: I would have thought that in the Arab world, there would have been a bit of ambivalence for many during the Gulf War, which only lasted two months, I think--both the air and the ground action was an overwhelming defeat of this Arab army. Although the Moroccans had troops on the winning side, I would have thought that this would have in a way hurt Arab pride to see what was considered the mightiest of the Arab armies brought down to its knees within a very short time. I mean, I would have thought it would have been ambiguous.

JACKSON: Ambiguous is the way it was. There was great pride, particularly at the popular level, about this macho Saddam standing up to the United States, the only superpower. But the Moroccans also were well aware of who Saddam was and what Iraq was at that time. The Iraqis were very blatant, even in Morocco, in their behavior. In that six-month build-up, there was one person at the Iraqi embassy, my counterpart, the DCM, who was open--maybe this was just before Iraq's invasion--but he had been quite open and privately questioned where Iraq was going. I remember some long discussions with him. Unlike any of the others, he was open-minded, a person you could talk to. He had good contacts also in Morocco. The Iraqis sent a hit team out from Baghdad, took him down to the Plage des Nations, a beach outside Rabat, tortured him and then murdered him, dumping his body and the weapon - a kind of a signature calibre the Iraqis use - for all to see and fear their brutal methods. He had a young family, kids, a wife that we all knew. Things like that did not endear Iraq to the Moroccans or anybody else.

Q: Was there any concern about Iraqi hit squads going after the Ambassador at that time?

JACKSON: Well, of course, we were on security alert. We had very good, augmented security cooperation from Morocco. Even in normal times, the Palace has always made available a special detail to the American ambassador. I think we felt quite secure and well taken care of. It is the case, however (and one thinks of this in light of recent tragedies in Kenya and Tanzania), that we did not have Inman standards or Inman setbacks. The Ambassador's residence was very close to the street, but given the physical environment we were in, we felt as secure as we could be at that time.

Q: What about relations from the embassy point of view with Israel and the Peres visit and when did this take place?

JACKSON: The Peres visit was in 1986, in the summer. I was then in Casablanca. I think, as we said earlier, this was the "straw that broke the camel's back" in Morocco's union accord with Libya. There was a great deal of hope about the direction Morocco was moving in with Israel, symbolized by that visit. Morocco has always had quiet ties with Israel and, as you know, helped to set up the arrangements that made Camp David possible. Subsequently, when Peres lost the election and a Likud government came in, things clearly slowed down.

I know, Stu, you are very interested in the consular area and would like to say that one of the interesting challenges I faced as DCM was consular management. We were a large embassy community in Morocco, for the most part delighted with the advantages of that country - that you could go to the beach or up in the mountains and ski in a hospitable environment for families - with an abundance of outdoor things to do. But the consuls, typically, because of the pressures on them for visas and the degree of visa fraud and high refusal rate, perceived the country in very different terms. The reality for them was that they often just couldn't go for the week-end to Marrakesh or Essaouira, or any of the wonderful places, because there would be people who had been turned down or had family turned down for visas and would besiege them. It was therefore a constant effort to make sure that their attitudes didn't become too negative. I remember one who was so close to the frustrations of his work, that I think if the Crown Prince of Morocco had come in for a visa, he would have grilled him against the wall and refused. (Laughter) It was always also a last minute thing when members of the royal family would decide to travel to the United States, and there would be a rush of emergency Palace visa requests at eleven o'clock at night for a departure the next morning.

There were other preoccupations that you would have in any embassy of that kind. We had a very active housing board and lots of tensions among the agencies stemming from different standards that some agencies have. Some would make available air conditioning for residences; others not. Housing was very important because, as Western as Morocco is as an environment, there are still many things that some people found lacking - for example, access to English-speaking cinemas, things of that kind. Morale tended to be highest among families, particularly those with young children, where they could get help in running the household and the gardens were safe for children, and probably lowest in the single community. Single women, particularly, sometimes found it difficult when they visited places like the Marrakesh medina and were hassled by young males. People who lived alone did not find the cohesiveness that you have in a more hardship-oriented embassy, nor the advantages at your disposal in a European embassy. It was neither one, nor the other.

Q: Back to the consular side. Were there still problems with Hashish and that sort of thing?

JACKSON: Morocco is a major marijuana and hashish producing country, particularly in the Rif Mountains behind Tangier. Most of that, however, is destined for Europe, and by far the largest number of people who are picked up, jailed and sentenced to long prison terms, are Europeans. It's a very difficult game. It's frequently the case that the local vendor of marijuana or hashish will finger his client to the police and collect a reward. We did have periodic Americans who were arrested and jailed. Generally, after a few years, they were quietly released. It was a problem, but not a major one.

Q: Were there any other issues that involved the embassy during your DCM period?

JACKSON: The DCM job is one of constant short-fuse crises, and there were new issues. Clearly, the watershed was the Gulf War, which changed the alignments in all of that part of the world. We continued to have a reasonable visitor flow. I remember in the last days, as I left Morocco in August of 1991 or perhaps the last days of July, Secretary Baker arrived for a visit and consultation with the King. I was his control officer, which I enjoyed, but it added to the pressure of getting out of the post. If you've been in a country for eight years, particularly a country like that, you make many close friends and people kill you with hospitality when you leave. At the conclusion of the visit, I think the King wanted to make a gesture Baker would appreciate by recognizing the embassy. After their meeting, he asked the Secretary if he would object if he decorated me with the Order of Commander of the Alaouite Throne, which he then did on national television. Mr. Baker, who I hadn't previously known, was somewhat surprised, but couldn't say no, and I was allowed to keep the decoration, which I still wear on Moroccan occasions with a great deal of pride.

I think, Stu, as we leave this period, I'd note that, in the years I was in Morocco, a shift occurred in our thinking about it. In the earlier years, there was a perception in Washington that, vis à vis Algeria, Morocco was a country with its revolution still ahead of it, some people even equated it to Iran. I think they largely underestimated the sense of history, tradition, and stability in Morocco. That isn't to say that its future is clear, but, as things have worked out in Algeria, I think they probably had it quite wrong. Morocco has more or less been on its own for centuries. It did not suffer the Turkish occupation that others in the region did. I think there is a sense among Moroccans of who they are that is rare in that part of the world. I think that our relationship with Morocco, a friendly one in which we often extol our bicentennial ties, is a little bit threadbare. Listening to the toasts, which draw on the same shopworn cliches when we have high reciprocal visits or when the King was here about a year ago, leads me to conclude that it needs reinvigoration and working at. I think we need to be doing more than smugly saying that the private sector will take over as official assistance and involvement tapers off. While there are opportunities for investment in Morocco, it is not obvious that U.S. investment will fill the gap. It used to be the case that a new investor, to start up in Morocco, would require 56 different documents from 13 different ministries. It's better now, but there are still significant barriers.

Morocco traditionally was an agricultural country. It shifted, and for the last 10 years or so, has been more than 50 percent urban in its population distribution. Yet it is in many ways still

agricultural in its thinking and make-up, so that the popular sense of well-being and adjustment is still very closely related to harvest and rainfall. In a country of cyclical drought every six or seven years, it was my observation that there is also a cyclical welling up of criticism and political discontent which corresponds to rainfall. This is hard to put into perspective in a diplomatic service like ours, where people serve for only two or three years in a country. Suppose you're there as a new political officer, eager to make your mark and you're beginning to pick up for the first time in your short experience these echos of discontent, there is a temptation to report that the sky is falling. We tend to do this every few years, and yet Morocco has a rather long history of this cyclical pattern and then things, as often as not, come back together as they were before.

Q: Before we leave here, during this time you were DCM, how about Algeria? Were events there reverberating in Morocco?

JACKSON: For most of my eight years, there was a hot war in the Western Sahara with periodic Polisario attacks and retaliation by Morocco. There was a pattern of restraint on the Moroccan side in not hitting the Polisario camps inside Algeria in the Tindouf area. It was always said that the King was under pressure from his Army and from the nationalists of the Istiqlal Party to hit at those camps and that it was his moderation and leadership that prevented it. That may or may not be the case, but was a general perception. Things began to improve as the Algerian political situation and economy spiraled out of control in the late 1980s. The King and Chedli Benjedid held several meetings, which led to understandings that created the Umma, the grouping of Maghreb States, and that, more importantly, by late 1991 - after I'd left Morocco - permitted a cease-fire in the Sahara and establishment there of a UN force (MINURSO). That was set up, as you know, with an 18-month mandate to culminate in a referendum which now, in late 1998, is still to come. The cease-fire has, however, held since 1991, and that - though the UN Mission has been constantly criticized - is a major accomplishment.

JAMES D. PHILLIPS
Consul General
Casablanca (1984-1986)

Ambassador Phillips was born in Illinois in 1933. He received his Bachelor's degree from the University of Wichita in 1957 and his Master's in 1958. After serving in the US Army from 1953 to 1955, he entered the Foreign Service in 1961. Postings throughout his career include Paris, Elizabethville, Luxembourg, The Gambia, Copenhagen and Casablanca. Mr. Phillips then became the ambassador to Burundi and Congo. He was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy on May 5, 1998.

Q: When were you in Casablanca?

PHILLIPS: I was in Casablanca from 1984 until 1986. How I got there is another story. When I came back from the UNESCO conference in 1983 Greg Newell had assigned a woman who was

a political appointee to work on my staff. She was a very pleasant person but totally unqualified for the job. I don't want to sound mean spirited but before Reagan was elected she was working as a waitress in a Howard Johnson's restaurant. All she had going for her was complete loyalty to Newell. She had no experience in international affairs. Newell of course knew that I had opposed getting out of UNESCO. He also understood that media leaders, not the editorial writers for the Washington Post or the New York Times, but leaders like Leonard Marx and Leonard Suskin had agreed with me that the U.S. should try to defend free press values from within UNESCO. Newell did not trust me and informed me one day that this unqualified woman who was working for me would soon be my boss. He was promoting her to one of his Deputy Assistant Secretary positions. I told him that was not acceptable to me because the woman was unqualified. He could appoint her but I was not going to work for her. He did not want to push it with me because he was already on shaky grounds with higher-ups in the Department for making her a DAS. Everyone knew she was unqualified. But it was easier for the Department to let him have his way than to spend the time it would take to oppose him. As a career Foreign Service officer I felt it was wrong and I couldn't go along with it. This was the only time in my career I flatly refused something like a direct order. So I was shunted off to a small office with no staff. Newell couldn't fire me so he did the next best thing from his point of view; he assigned me to work on a meaningless study. During this time I started looking for another job. I knew I wasn't going to get an embassy without Newell's support, which was certainly not forthcoming.

Casablanca was open and I bid on it. I wasn't an Arab specialist but I spoke French and was qualified for the job. The system wanted me out of IO and Casablanca seemed like a good solution for everybody.

Q: And you where there from when to when?

PHILLIPS: I arrived in the summer of 1984. I was divorced in 1980 and I married Lucie Colvin Gallistel shortly before going to Morocco. Lucie and I and her two sons, Charlie and David, arrived in Casablanca in early July. Then in the middle of my tour I got an ambassadorial assignment so I only stayed until 1986.

Q: What was the situation in Morocco when you arrived and what did the job entail?

PHILLIPS: Joseph Verner Reed, a political appointee, was Ambassador. He had been an assistant to David Rockefeller and was from a prominent New York family. Rockefeller had the clout to suggest one or two appointments to a Republican President and he suggested Reed for Morocco. Vernon Walters had by now replaced Jean Kirkpatrick at the UN and Reed was also a close friend of Walters. King Hassan II was trying to move Morocco into a closer alliance with the West. He had taken some bold steps. For instance, he was one of the few Arab leaders who had met with an Israeli Prime Minister. Morocco was a monarchy with some embryonic democratic institutions and it was an important country for the United States, both in terms of East/West issues and the Middle East. So Ambassador Reed had every reason to try to strengthen our relations with Morocco. As far as I was concerned, he made it clear that as Consul General I was his man in Casablanca. He didn't want me to act independently.

Casablanca is to Rabat what New York is to Washington. It is the economic capital of the

country while Rabat is the political capital. I saw my role as following Moroccan economic developments through my contacts with business leaders. It wasn't hard because they were friendly towards Americans.

A major problem for Morocco at that time was the Polisario revolution. My district included all of southern Morocco up to the Sahara desert so I followed political developments in the south. The Polisario was fighting for control of the western Sahara.

Q: I have talked to people who were involved in Morocco and Africa at this time and one thing that was told is that Reed was supposedly in the hip pocket of the king. One joke said that he would draft telegrams speaking about "our king." Did you see this or did you find an extreme case of localitis?

PHILLIPS: Reed was a flamboyant character. He always had a supply of ball point pens to pass out to Moroccans. At all of his stops he would have hundreds of pictures taken with people he met, which he would then autograph and send to them. He was close to the King but he wasn't operating outside of American policy guidelines. Developing close U.S.-Moroccan ties was clearly part of his mandate. The Polisario was backed by Algeria and some did feel Reed crossed a line in his unqualified support for Morocco in the Saharan war. Some U.S. Senators visited Morocco and got the impression that Reed cut a rather ridiculous figure because of his picture taking and glad-handing. He did constantly refer to Hassan II as "our King." He got burned a little in the end because the King certainly wasn't in Reed's pocket and he of course had his own agenda. Hassan II decided in 1985 to enter into a special alliance with Qadhafi, largely to balance Algerian influence with the Polisario. But Libya was the U.S. *bête noire* and the King's move flew in the face of U.S. policy. Reed was especially embarrassed because the King gave him no warning. He got blind-sided on an important issue and he never operated again with quite the same bravado. On the whole I don't think Reed in any way damaged U.S. interests in Morocco. He was a lightweight politically and diplomatically, but he was effective in keeping U.S.-Moroccan relations on an even keel. The King was trying to insulate Morocco from Islamic fundamentalism that was taking root elsewhere in the Arab world, and Ambassador Reed helped him by ensuring that he had U.S. assistance and support.

Q: From your perspective during this 1984 to 1986 period could you explain what the Polisario movement was?

PHILLIPS: The Polisario was an indigenous group of people who inhabited the desert area of southern Morocco, or northern Mauritania, depending on your point of view. There is nothing in that area except sand and phosphate deposits. I suppose you could say it was worth fighting for, but it was mostly just pure desert. The Polisario were desert people, not more than several hundred thousand, who believed they had an historical identity separate from Morocco. They wanted to form an independent state which they thought would be viable because of the phosphate. They were supported by the Algerians who claimed to see an analogy between Algeria's struggle with France and the Polisario struggle with Morocco. They also offered Algeria a low cost way to keep Morocco off balance. Algeria saw Morocco as its main rival for leadership in the western part of the Arab world. Hit-and-run warfare simmered on for years. The Polisario had its bases in Algeria and the Moroccan army could not pursue them across the

border. At the same time, King Hassan II used the war as a rallying point for Moroccan nationalism. I think the country would have been much more difficult to govern had it not been for the war. It was a low maintenance war in terms of economic costs and casualties. Body bags were not coming to Rabat or Casablanca from the front in significant numbers. You could not meet a Moroccan from the left, right or center of the political spectrum, including communists, who did not believe fervently that the southern Sahara was part of Morocco. The war brought Berbers and Arabs together and made Algeria the focus of popular discontent.

Q: What about Algeria? What emanations were you getting from them?

PHILLIPS: In Casablanca, the Algerian Consul General was my next door neighbor. He was just about persona non grata within official Moroccan circles. He would come over sometimes to have tea with me because he felt so isolated. I was happy to see him. He contended that Algeria supported the Polisario for purely altruistic reasons; he said Algeria was defending the principle of self-determination. The U.S. was closer to Morocco than Algeria but we had good relations with Algeria. We were trying to get the two countries to resolve their differences through negotiations. Our position on the war in the Sahara was that it was a territorial dispute that should be settled through elections. I think to this day James Baker is working as a special UN envoy to try to resolve the problem. Everyone agrees there should be elections to determine whether the territory should be part of Morocco or independent. The difficulty is to determine who has the right to vote. Moroccans from the north have been moving south into the area and it is now difficult to tell who is Saharan and who isn't.

Q: What about consular problems? Did you find any young people heading to Morocco to live well and play with hashish?

PHILLIPS: Not in Casablanca so much. There was also a Consulate in Tangiers and it had a lot of problems of that kind. I didn't have many consular headaches, no Americans jailed or anything. Maybe one or two got picked up by the police, but nothing serious. There were the normal problems of Moroccans fraudulently applying for visas. I had a good Consular officer who would only come to me with a problem if he couldn't deal with it, which wasn't very often.

HARMON E. KIRBY
Deputy Chief of Mission/Chargé d'Affaires
Rabat (1984-1987)

Ambassador Harmon E. Kirby was born in Ohio on January 27, 1934. He received a bachelor's degree from Harvard University. His career included positions in Geneva, Madras, New Delhi, Brussels, Khartoum, Rabat, Washington, DC, and an ambassadorship to Lome. Ambassador Kirby was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy on August 31, 1995.

Q: Well Harmon, where did you go in 1984 after you left the Country Directorate?

KIRBY: In April of 1984 I went to Rabat, Morocco. I was there from April of 1984 to June of 1987.

Q: Who was the Ambassador when you got there?

KIRBY: It was Joseph Verner Reed, Jr., who, as it turned out, was in his last year there. During the 13 months that we worked together, he was at post altogether exactly half that time. So, by definition, half the time I was Chargé d'Affaires. Then he left in May of 1985 and along in August or September, his successor, Thomas Nassif, came out to Rabat. Nassif had been Deputy Chief of Protocol at the State Department. Reed would go to the UN for several years and then later would become President Bush's Chief of Protocol in the Bush Administration. Both Reed and Nassif were political appointees, of course.

Q: Talk about Reed...his relations with King Hassan and also his relations with the Department of State. Because he was to put it kindly, a controversial figure. I mean one of those people who kind of stood out, at least I heard about him although I never dealt with the man.

KIRBY: I don't know what you've heard. I think Mr. Reed went out as Ambassador in 1981, and, as I said, was there until mid-1985. I went in April of 1984, so I saw him only during his later period in Rabat. I'll take your questions in order. First, I think his relations with the Moroccans were clearly excellent. He had very good relations with King Hassan and as nearly as I could tell, with Prime Minister Karim-Lamrani and other senior people in the Moroccan Government. Of course, Reed moved around a lot. He has a very good feel for, a very good touch for public diplomacy and public affairs. I think his was a fairly high but positive profile in Morocco and that the American presence was prominent and well-regarded during his time. While it is neither here nor there, and doesn't imply anything one way or the other, I might note that while Mr. Reed and I are very different personalities, it was my perception then, and is now, that we worked very well together in Morocco. When he was at post I thought that we meshed satisfactorily and well. During the times he wasn't there, I was in charge of the Embassy. I don't have much knowledge of what the post was like or what Washington or he might have thought about each other prior to April, 1984. I've heard only fragments. There have always been rumors that the shake-down period at the Embassy after he first arrived in Rabat was somewhat unsettled in personnel terms, and maybe some of that had bounced back to the Department. Perhaps that's what had occasioned the chit-chat. I have no idea what the cause and effect relationships, or considerations, were. But just to complete that thought, certainly by the time I arrived, the Embassy was well set and well established in personnel terms, and I thought it was functioning as a pretty good operation. Although I gave it very direct hands-on direction during my time, I think the Embassy functioned well and I don't think we had any real problems with the Department. Indeed, during that period we often received kudos on our work from the Department of State and Defense.

Q: I'll tell you what I heard. And again, this is from somebody who was sitting in Washington having no direct responsibility and that was that Reed, as had almost every other political ambassador to Morocco, was sort of absorbed by the King where as I had heard stories like...you never quite knew when something would come from Reed where he would say "we" or something like that where he was referring to what the King thought or what the embassy

thought. In other words, I suppose one would say the reputation, and again I say just vague rumors was that he succumbed to "localitis" which was sort of a speciality of King Hassan, II. I'd like you to comment on this.

KIRBY: I'll comment to the extent that my knowledgeability permits me to. Clearly, Mr. Reed liked Morocco very much, but then we all did. I'd like to come back to that in a minute. If the things that you say you've heard occurred, I think they must have occurred largely before I arrived. I didn't see any great evidence of that during my time. I saw an Ambassador who was clearly fond of the place but I didn't sense that...well first of all, during the time I was there, the Ambassador did not dictate to me or others what we should put into our analysis or our cables to Washington. Again, this was the end of his period as Ambassador and I don't know what had gone on earlier. I was the one who authorized the transmission of all telegrams on substantive matters to Washington and I never did find him second guessing me on those. I tried to ensure that we did keep U.S. interests uppermost and called the shots as we saw them. I never had any real problem with him on that.

Q: This may have been heard incorrectly.

KIRBY: The thing I wanted to add is that Morocco is a very seductive place. It is a delightful country for anyone who is interested in history, colorful countryside, tribal life and what have you. It's just a wonderful place. My wife and I had always felt we would like to serve there and fell in love with it immediately. This will sound like an aside, but it makes the essential point. Françoise and I have often said that we were among the happy few in that we had not run out of steam when we went to Morocco. We had been in the Foreign Service together a very long time, but we had not reached a plateau of the "blahs". But if we had reached such a plateau, if we had needed something to recharge our energies and cause us to renew our first love with the Foreign Service -- that first experience in India of the sights, sounds, and colors -- had we needed that, Morocco would have given us that further jump start, I think. That is because it is a fun place, there is enough real work to keep people at the Embassy busy and there were major substantive issues...to be resolved. The U.S. and Morocco have an important bilateral relationship, a fact which is sometimes overlooked. So there was enough to justify our presence. But then in terms of things that make life agreeable on earth, e.g., local dances and wedding feasts, and hospitable people -- it's a nice place to live. Part of the struggle is to remind yourself everyday what it is you represent...the government and people of the United States of America in order to maintain balance and objectivity. As I said, I'm not in a position to judge or comment on events that might have occurred before my time in Morocco. In any case, Mr. Reed is certainly a 100% red, white and blue American and I'm sure that he felt that all his activities in Morocco were undertaken in the broader U.S. interest.

Q: What were the major developments and concerns when you got to Morocco?

KIRBY: I think the major developments and concerns related to maintaining, and strengthening the historic U.S.-Moroccan bilateral relationship. We believed that a stable Morocco is one of the keys to a stable North Africa. North Africa isn't very stable, and you thus want to build on what pillars there are. In some ways, this is more important for the Europeans than for us, since North Africa is their back-yard, it's just across the Mediterranean. But this also had implications for the

United States. In an uncertain world, we wanted to be sure we maintained good relations and an ongoing dialogue with Morocco about our strategic concerns, including transit needs to East Africa and the Middle East should the need arise, not quite knowing what was going to happen in the Middle East, we wanted Morocco to remain open-ended on a range of issues relating to political and strategic matters. While I was there we negotiated an expansion of our Voice of America transmitter station in the Tangier area. Similarly, we negotiated emergency landing rights for our space shuttle in Morocco, to be invoked as necessary.

In some ways, one of the most dramatic negative developments in my time, which overshadowed our bilateral relations right through the mid-80's, was the dramatic, unheralded, somewhat unexpected announcement in August, 1984, that King Hassan and Libya's Qadhafi had met at a border town near the Algerian-Moroccan border and signed a merger agreement. You remember, ever since Qadhafi came to power, he's had brief merger agreements with several Arabic countries, although none of these mergers ever came to anything. At a time when the Reagan Administration was already looking for ways to put the screws to Qadhafi, the Morocco-Libya merger hit Washington like a bomb-shell. I was Chargé d'Affaires at the time of the announcement, and I took it very, very seriously. Even before I received instructions from Washington, I raised unholy hell with the top levels of the Moroccan government. I told them the merger was going to play very bad in Washington, that there were very rocky times ahead in the bilateral relationship, and that they had brought it upon themselves. But I also said in a cable to Washington, that while the Embassy didn't want to minimize the symbolic importance of the "merger," and took the announcement as badly as Washington would do, our relations with Morocco were important and we should keep the merger in perspective because I was profoundly convinced that "there is far less to this merger than meets the eye". People around the State Department circuit quoted that for a very long time since that indeed turned out to be the case: the Moroccan-Libyan merger never had any practical effects, and was relatively short-lived. Hassan undertook the "merger" for reasons of temporary expediency -- i.e., to take Qadhafi out of the Polisario equation in the Western Sahara, at a time when Morocco was girding up for the next round in the Western Sahara with the Polisario, supported by Algeria. Morocco wanted to take Qadhafi himself away from further support for the Polisario. That was how King Hassan saw it. The U.S., however, saw the merger in high symbolic terms. I think Washington's reaction was very understandable. We saw it as giving aid and comfort -- even if only symbolic -- to our enemy at a time when as Secretary of State Shultz said, we were trying to put Qadhafi in his box and keep him there. This overshadowed U.S.-Moroccan relations for a very long time. But if I may say one further word about it...The Prime Minister and other senior government officials were not witting until Hassan put them on a train and took them to the border for the meeting with Qadhafi. Many of them were privately against the move, but it's a place where the King's word is law. So, upon the senior officials return to Rabat, I immediately asked to see the Prime Minister. I told him first of all, just how badly this merger was going to play in Washington. The Prime Minister seemingly played devil's advocate and said, in effect, "It's not as bad as that. Mr. Chargé d'Affaires, don't make a mountain out of a molehill. I'm glad to see you...let's have a cup of coffee, things aren't that bad." My response was, "Mr. Prime Minister, all hell's going to break loose in our relations in about 24 hours." What happened after that was very, very interesting, and I've appreciated it to this day. Without telling me what they were doing, the Prime Minister and his inner team apparently decided this was very serious and should be explained further. Without warning I got a telephone call exactly 24 hours later from the Prime Minister's top

political assistant saying, "Can you come over and see the Prime Minister? He wants to see you right now." "That's funny", I said to the man on the phone, "Is this not when you have your normal weekly cabinet meeting?" He paused and said, "He just wants to see you right now." So I went over and was astonished to be paraded in before the full Cabinet. The Prime Minister looked across with a very saturnine countenance and said, "I've already told the Cabinet that you were in to tell me some exaggerated things yesterday, and I'd like to see, Mr. Minister, if you feel as strongly about them today as you did yesterday. I think you ought to tell them too. They ought to see if it's serious or not." I immediately got the message that he had taken it seriously and was giving me a rare opportunity to make the U.S. case to the whole Cabinet. It was a pretty risky thing for him to do, in a way.

Q: Because this was the initiative of the King.

KIRBY: Yes, it was. And so I played my role, and said, "Mr. Prime Minister, it's even worse than I thought. I had an opportunity to be in direct contact with Washington since yesterday. I've received some cables and talked to some people on the phone, and you really have brought something down on your head that shouldn't happen to our bilateral relations, which have been strong and enduring." etc. I went on for some time, sensing that there were a number of people in that room who wanted to hear that. I knew most of those Ministers and many wanted to hear what the U.S. really thought. The Prime Minister then, as he had to, went through his drill with me again. He said his message, and he thought the whole Cabinet's message for me, to convey to Washington was that the U.S. should not take the Libyan mergers too seriously...that there wasn't as much to it as we might think. And while they could understand U.S. chagrin, we should please remember that Morocco was a good and faithful friend of the U.S., etc. So we were all playing our expected roles. But it was gutsy for the Prime Minister to do it, very, very gutsy. When I left the Cabinet room, Moroccan television was there to see me emerge and the Prime Minister showing me to the door. That night the state-run television reported that the American Chargé, on Washington's instructions, had expressed concerns about the merger with Libya and that the Prime Minister had reassured the Americans that Morocco continued to take its relations with the United States very, very seriously. It was a very dramatic time. The top aide to the Prime Minister told me subsequently that following my representations to the Prime Minister the first day, he had consulted his associates, and thought it useful for all sides to give me an opportunity to explain to the Moroccan government why the U.S. government took the "merger" so seriously. The Prime Minister's aide noted privately that the Moroccans placed great value on their relations with the United States.

Q: Let's talk about this. He probably discussed it with the King.

KIRBY: And, the King must have told him to go ahead and do that, i.e., have me meet with the Moroccan Cabinet.

Q: There have been a series of so-called "mergers". The biggest one, the last was called the "United-Arab Republic" between Egypt and Syria...were all together, all one nation. This was going on again and again all through this whole area with absolutely one result -- that they lasted a very short time. After the collapse of the United Arab Republic, I don't think anybody has taken it very seriously.

KIRBY: Nobody in Morocco took the merger very seriously. Of course, they had a view they wanted to put across, but the Moroccans are very sophisticated people and, public and diplomatic relations aside, they instinctively understood what a hollow shell this merger would turn out to be. Privately, the civil servants, and the people in business, shrugged it off the day it was signed, the merger would have no content. They noted that the King didn't like Qadhafi personally, he was not his type of man, not his type of Muslim. They noted that the move was related to their struggle in the Western Sahara, and suggested that even if it only temporarily took Libya out of supplying arms to the Polisario, it was still a good thing. They continued that, Qadhafi, and with Morocco's interests being very different from Libya's, the merger: a) would not last long and b) would not mean very much. And, so, they understood it for what it was. And that is what it was. Analytically, it was clear at the time that the merger was designed to divide Libya from the Polisario, that it wouldn't last long, and that it wouldn't be very important. But still, given what the U.S. was trying to do in the world, it was predictable, and understandable, that we would react negatively to the announced merger.

Q: While you were there, when did this happen?

KIRBY: This happened August-mid August 1984.

Q: This happened pretty early on during the time you were there. Had we already bombed Qadhafi or did that happen later on?

KIRBY: No, I think that would happen in the spring of 1986.

Q: So, in the time you were there we had shot down some Libyan planes, and at one point because of a bombing in Berlin that Qadhafi's hands were tied to we had bombed Qadhafi's headquarters?

KIRBY: All of that happened while I was in Morocco, but sometime after the Morocco-Libya merger we have been discussing. If memory serves, our retaliation against Libya because of the Berlin bombing incident, came in April, 1986.

Q: But anyway, Qadhafi was, after the Soviets, number one on our blacklist.

KIRBY: Yes. We had publicly said this. Although I don't know if there was anything behind them, there were rumors in the early 1980's of Qadhafi sending hit men to Washington, and we were also angry at Libya because of other Qadhafi policies and actions. One way or another we had indicated publically several times that Qadhafi was high on our public enemies list. That was well known. And that was the reason for the intense U.S. chagrin in seeing Morocco, one of our oldest friends, seemingly line up with an enemy like Qadhafi. The whole matter was more symbolic than real. But, in politics -- international politics -- symbolism and imagery are extremely important.

Q: What were you getting from Washington when this happened?

KIRBY: That it was going to be taken very seriously and it would be a setback in our relations with Moroccans. Washington made representations here to the Moroccan Ambassador and instructed me to make further representations in Rabat.

Q: Did it have any long term consequences?

KIRBY: The merger itself did not really have any great consequences. I've forgotten all the details, but the two sides set up a little Secretariat and there was a building housing offices of the merged entity in downtown Rabat...a very modest building. I've forgotten now what the name of the merged entity was...but this was its local headquarters. And they were to have periodic meetings and they did send people back and forth between the two countries but it didn't lead to anything, so it really had no effective follow-up or substantive life. As I noted earlier, the fact of the merger did cast something of a pall on U.S.-Moroccan relations for the next 2-3 years, although our two countries maintained generally useful relations throughout that period.

Q: The Polisario movement which was over some desert territory, the old Spanish Sahara, was sort of a constant theme for some years. What was the situation during the time you were there with the Polisario?

KIRBY: There was some active fighting during the time I was there. The Moroccans had marched into the Western Sahara during the Peaceful-Green March of 1975. Nine years later when I arrived in 1984, at various times, and usually without warning, there were some fairly sharp engagements when the Polisario would come in and attack the Moroccan army which held the berms, which constituted the Moroccans' defensive perimeter. The Polisario was able to inflict some sharp casualties on the Moroccans. I don't want to overplay it, but there were some fairly substantial losses on a couple of occasions during my time in Morocco. And, it (the conflict with the Polisario in the Western Sahara) was very much a matter of public cognizance, if you will, in Morocco. It was often in the news, with declarations from the King that Morocco was in the Western Sahara to stay. That's where most of the Moroccan military was stationed -- almost all the Moroccan military was packed down in the Western Sahara. Moroccan civilian administrators and Moroccan citizens were encouraged, and given special perks, to settle in the Western Sahara. The Moroccans were busy building cities and infrastructure in the region all through that period.

Q: At one time, the Polisario movement had much the same status as the Biafra Civil War, in other words in the United States it had attracted liberals and all and even in Congress you had people...I think it was because it was against the King...

KIRBY: Yes, such people often supported the Polisario politically as a gesture against King Hassan, whom they considered to be an autocrat.

Q: Had this pretty well, as I call it, the support of the left which might not be quite the right term...It's more the liberals, still held sway in the United States at this time?

KIRBY: There was still some small pro-Polisario sentiment in the U.S. at that time, but it wasn't a front and center issue. I think American intellectual and political circles were seized with so

many other issues at that time that the Polisario cause was not a major concern. But, it was still an issue for a few...oh, Congressional staffers and the like.

Q: I was going to say it seems like the type of thing that a staff member of a key Senator or Representative would take as his or her thing and push.

KIRBY: There were a couple of staffers who didn't care much for Hassan's Morocco and who felt the Polisario should be given a chance to pursue their national aspirations. But although this element existed, it was never sufficiently strong to control policy in Washington. You'd get a Congressional hearing or two, or an occasional published article, but it would never control politics or policy. Most of the public and Congressional focus in the U.S. on the Polisario, however, occurred before I went to Morocco.

Q: You have some Congress people coming up with staff making visits?

KIRBY: We had an enormous number of visits to Morocco proper both from the Executive Branch and the Congress. Morocco has always had a lot of visitors from Washington, in good times and bad, partly because it's such an agreeable country to visit. Interestingly, although we had large Congressional delegations visit, my memory is that we didn't have any visitors zeroing in specifically on the Polisario question during my time. I think I remember that before I went there, there were a couple of staffers who went out and felt very strongly about the Western Sahara. More recently, as the UN has been trying to broker a referendum, I have read an article or two in the Washington Post on that issue, and I think there have been staff members who have gone there within the last year or two. But during our time, Congress was not very much focusing on the Western Sahara and the Polisario.

Q: Did we have any policy on the Polisario situation?

KIRBY: Our policy line from the beginning, and it's been a fairly steady one, is that we recognize Morocco's de facto but not de jure control, and that the Western Sahara's final status should be determined through an acceptable early UN referendum. And that is sort of where we still are today. King Hassan had agreed to a referendum. The issue now, today, as it was 10 years ago when I was in Morocco, is who's to be allowed to vote. The Polisario believes that the old Spanish population list should be the one applicable. That would tend to favor them and their progeny. But Hassan says, "Yes, but you have to allow everybody who has moved in over the years, including the Moroccans who have gone down to settle there." And that's been the sticking point, and that's why the UN hasn't been able to go forward with its referendum. It's a question of voter lists. Yesterday the Washington Post suggested that in this time of budgetary stringencies, Boutros-Boutros Ghali, the UN Secretary General, who knows that he can't keep a UN presence there forever (and they have been there for several years now, at a cost of about 5 million dollars a month), could just cut through it and go on and have a referendum and get it over with. The article said that. Now whether or not the Secretary General has indicated that he is leaning in that direction, I don't know. Thus, the issue is still there.

Q: You had, after Reed left, another Ambassador who came, Thomas Nassif. What was his background and how did he operate?

KIRBY: Mr. Nassif was a lawyer from California. He had been, I understand, active in the Republican party organizations in whatever part of California he lived in and then sometime after the Reagan Administration came in, came to Washington and took a job as Deputy Chief of Protocol, where he was very active. I think, from everything I heard, that he did a good job. I ran into him when I was Country Director for Pakistan, Bangladesh and Afghanistan during the Zia Ul-Haq state visit that we referred to earlier in these interviews. At that time I had quite a lot to do with Mr. Nassif and his Chief of Protocol, Selwa Roosevelt. We worked closely together. It was as Deputy Chief of Protocol that he visited Morocco. I think he also visited Morocco on holiday while Mr. Reed was there. It was at about that time that we heard that he was going to replace Mr. Reed.

Q: How long did you work with him?

KIRBY: Let's see...about 2 years. My memory of it is that he arrived in August or September of 1985, and I left in June of 1987.

Q: How did you find him as far as his work in Morocco?

KIRBY: Well, he was an agreeable man. I think he got along well with the Moroccans. Perhaps he didn't move in as many circles as his predecessor had done. He seemed to like Morocco and the Moroccans. He may have been more interested in sports and the countryside than in his work. I don't know if that judgment is valid, but it struck some people, both Moroccans and Americans, that way at the time.

Q: Was there any other situations while he was there?

KIRBY: I think that during the nearly 2 years we were together the bilateral U.S.-Moroccan relationship went forward all right. Mr. Nassif's incumbency was not a negative factor, as I said. He had correct relations with the Moroccans. We were still operating under that shadow I mentioned earlier, the 1984 Moroccan merger with Libya. There was a certain coldness in Washington's reaction to everything that happened in that period. But still, Administration visitors came to Morocco, people in Congress came. They came to lecture the King on Qadhafi a bit if you will. Deputy Secretary of State Whitehead came out. He had a very good meeting with King Hassan and talked about the Libyan matter. He also talked about more positive U.S.-Moroccan matters. Bilateral relations were "OK", but both sides recognized we were experiencing a bit of a pause in our relations, although not a deep trough or anything like that. King Hassan wanted additional U.S. military and economic assistance for Morocco, but it was clear that that wouldn't be on for a while, not until the U.S. saw how they worked out their merger with Libya. But, relations went on all right.

Q: You had three years there?

KIRBY: Yes, a little more than 3 years there.

Q: What was your estimate, at that stage in his career, of King Hassan as a person, as a leader?

KIRBY: I had and have great respect for King Hassan and his adroitness, his suppleness, and his staying power. It's important to recall that within weeks following his accession to the throne in 1961, there were many observers -- many well placed Moroccans and reasonably well placed foreign diplomats from various countries -- who were predicting that the King wouldn't last more than a year or two at best. In March of this year he celebrated the 34th anniversary of his accession to the throne.

Q: Hassan and King Hussein of Jordan are the two great survivors despite the famous "Garden Party" of Hassan. I can't remember when that was. There was a garden party -- his birthday or something -- and an assassination attempt.

KIRBY: There were two serious assassination attempts from within his own entourage in the early 1970's. One came at a garden party celebrating his birthday at the beach palace at Skhirat and the other attempt -- I've forgotten which came first -- occurred when his plane was coming back from abroad and one of his own Air Force planes tried to shoot him down. My impression was, and is, that the King is very intelligent and politically skillful. He has wide-ranging interests and is interesting to talk to on a variety of subjects...literature, Islam, Christianity, architecture, history, politics, international affairs. He is well read and well-traveled. As noted, he is politically shrewd and adroit...not just in domestic political terms, but obviously with respect to the Mid-East and North African politics. His staying power hasn't been an accident, I think. He is a very able man. I'm not passing judgment here on how he governs the country; I recognize that there is a wide range of views on that issue. But he is certainly an interesting man who has great dexterity and mental agility.

THOMAS A. NASSIF
Ambassador
Morocco (1985-1988)

Ambassador Thomas Nassif was born in Iowa. He was the Deputy Assistant Secretary in the State Department before he was appointed as the Ambassador to Morocco in 1985. He was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy on November 19, 1998.

Q: Were there any visits or incidents in your experiences that particularly stick in your mind?

NASSIF: Oh yes. My worst visit was the visit from the King of Morocco. When Mrs. Annenberg left I took over as acting chief of protocol before they hired Mrs. Roosevelt, Lucky. When she came in she didn't want to come in too fast. She wanted to sort of watch for a while. The first visit was a Moroccan visit and she was sort of sitting on the sidelines participating but not taking over. I was still sort of running things at the time. The Moroccans were absolutely horrible. Joseph Verner Reed was the ambassador. If you know Joseph he is a very special sort of...

Q: I don't know him but I've heard stories about him.

NASSIF: They are all true.

Q: He suffered very much from what we would call clientitis.

NASSIF: He spent a lot of time in Morocco with the Rockefellers so he knew them very well and he was close to the King. He had a very special relationship. The Moroccans, when they came, wanted everything. It wasn't the King, it was his people, his chief of protocol. They'd say "We don't treat people like that when they go to Morocco." I said, "You are absolutely right and I wish we could treat all of our guests the way you treat us. The fact is we have to do the same for everybody. We can not give anyone special treatment whether you are a prime minister, or the President, or the King, it doesn't matter. We treat them all the same. You get three limousines and that's it. The rest of them you pay for. You get six nights, seven days. You get one state dinner, one lunch at the White House, a south lawn ceremony, a lunch with the Secretary of State. You can throw a return dinner that the Vice President will attend and the Secretary, but not the President, that's it."

They didn't like that at all and they tried to get around everything at the White House. Even at the last minute just as we are getting ready to go over for the south lawn ceremony, they said "We have some present we have to take over." I said, "No, you can't take any presents. You've already taken your presents over. The President doesn't like any surprises and they all have to be cleared. We can not do that." They said, "We're not going without them." I said, "What do you mean?" They said, "If you don't let us take them we're not going." I said, "You mean you're just not going to show up?" And they said, "That's right." It's like five minutes until we have to be over there. I said, "Okay, fine. We'll just cancel the visit." They got panicky finally and said "OK, we'll go."

After we are at the White House for about an hour the Secret Service calls me and says "There are a bunch of people in the West Wing and they've got all these gifts on the floor. I don't know how they got to the White House. You've got to take care of this thing." They managed to get around it.

Then at Blair House, the President's guest house, we were there and we had our security and our staff there. They said "You can't have your staff there, we want our staff." So we had to restrict our staff to the first floor. They said, "We don't want any of your security." "You have to have security. We are responsible for the safety of the King while he is in the United States." "No, we are responsible for the security, you're not." I said, "Do you mean you want me to take all the Secret Service out of Blair House?" They said, "They can stay outside." "Oh, so you mean they can stay out on the street but they can't be inside the house? Absolutely not." They said, "That's the only way we will do it." I said, "All right, fine."

I sat down with a pencil and paper and drew up an agreement. I pulled out my old lawyer tricks and said "Just sign this agreement and I'll be happy to walk out." Basically the agreement said that the Moroccan secret service was taking responsibility for the King and if anything happened to the King it was because they had refused to allow the United States government to protect him. They would take all responsibilities for any assassination attempts and anything else that

happened to the King. I said, "Just sign this and date it and I'll walk out right now." Well of course they weren't about to sign it so they finally gave in and said we could keep the Secret Service there.

When Joseph Verner Reed left he said "Tom it was a wonderful visit. Can I do anything for you?" I said, "Yes. Promise me one thing, never come back." When I got appointed ambassador to Morocco I thought this is my fate. This is my punishment now. I am going to go there and they are going to remember all these things I did to them, all the arguments we had and they are going to make life miserable for me. That was probably one of the worst visits I ever had. Two of the most interesting were Sadat and Indira Gandhi.

Q: The F-16 is a relatively advanced fighter aircraft of the period. What about Libya, you mentioned Libya, do they still have those C-130s sitting on the ground somewhere?

NASSIF: I don't know. We broke our diplomatic relations with Libya when I was in protocol. Of all things this was like our first assignment, it was to go ahead and shut down the Libyan embassy. They wanted us to go man it and make sure nobody came in or out. I said "Why would you have protocol officers doing this for goodness sakes? Why don't you have policemen or somebody else out there? I don't want to risk the lives of my protocol officers to make sure that the Libyans don't go back into their embassy?" It just seemed sort of absurd to me but they insisted they do it with protocol because they wanted it to be not a military, not a security thing, it was more of a diplomatic thing. That was my first taste of Libya and of course lots of things happened after that with regard to Libya and how we might have to act in the region should something occur. Then of course when I was in Morocco, we bombed Libya.

Q: We will come to that but how about Morocco from your perspective, anything involving Morocco?

NASSIF: The relationship was pretty good during the Reagan years; it wasn't so good in the Carter years. I think the relationship was very good. Aid was increasing, the AID presence was increasing. Our military assistance was increasing although we tried to keep the Moroccans from buying a lot of sophisticated aircraft. They always wanted F-16s and we always said, "What for? Feed your people. Don't buy F-16s for goodness sake because then the Algerians are going to want F-16s and all those people should be using their money for better uses than military weapons." General Dynamics didn't necessarily like that position but that was our position.

Q: When you left NEA you went to be ambassador to Morocco?

NASSIF: Yes.

Q: How did that come about?

NASSIF: It's a very interesting story. When I went into NEA as I said I was responsible for congressional relations. After about a year Arnie Raphel came in as senior deputy to Dick Murphy who was the Assistant Secretary. The traditional role of the principal deputy in NEA was, in addition to being an alter ego to the Assistant Secretary, that he had policy

responsibilities for North Africa. Arnie was very active, very political, and later became ambassador to Pakistan and was killed in the assassination of President Zia al-Haq of Pakistan.

When Arnie came in I went to see him and said “Arnie, I know you’re too busy to take on North Africa and I’ve got all of the congress, I’ve got international labor, I’ve got USIS.” Basically I had every dog and cat that nobody else wanted in NEA that I could get. I said, “I would like policy responsibilities for North Africa.” He looked at me and said, “Tom, nobody is going to give a political appointee policy responsibilities for a geographic area. The Congress is one thing. But let me just talk about it because I really don’t want to do it.” So he started talking to people and I guess he got some very positive feedback about me and he said, “You’re the only one in the whole bureau that wants more work. Everybody else is trying to do less.” He said, “OK, I’ve talked to people and they like you. You’re respected and they think you can do the challenge so we’re going to do it.” I took on policy responsibilities for North Africa which gave me Morocco, Tunisia, Algeria and Libya.

When it came time to making selections of ambassadors and making suggestions I made suggestions for Morocco, Algeria and Tunisia; we had no relations with Libya. All of the deputy assistant secretaries got together talking to Dick Murphy making our recommendations. My career Foreign Service officer colleagues all said “The obvious choice for Morocco is you. The King would rather have a political appointee, someone who is close to the President. Nobody knows more about Morocco than you do. You’ve done all the protocol stuff, all the congressional foreign aid stuff and now you’ve done all the policy stuff. You’ve met everybody. You’ve traveled with the Moroccans, the Algerians, the Tunisians.” I knew all the heads of state, all the cabinets, and all the governments in North Africa, most of the people in the embassies and all the people in the U.S. government in every bureau that basically dealt with Morocco. They said, “You’re the obvious choice.” (end side one)

Q: I’ve never had any dealings with Ambassador Reed but from what I’ve gathered he was considered very close to the King and it was difficult dealing with him from Washington. Sort of the devil they knew was better than the devil they didn’t know as far as if they were to turn the process loose. They knew you, you knew the policy and all that, and otherwise they might end up with another political appointee who could get off the range. Morocco is probably the easiest country in the world to get absorbed by the King and that’s why he likes political appointees.

NASSIF: That’s right and many Foreign Service officers had very bad experiences there.

Q: Dick Parker.

NASSIF: Poor Dick Parker, he was a very qualified guy but he didn’t have a very good time there. I think that is exactly right. We had some very important issues. When I went out, Morocco and Libya had a union agreement. They had the defense [agreement], they had foreign policy, they had everything. The President said “I want you to break that back.” Second of all they had a war going in the Western Sahara which he wanted to get quieted down. And third, they had no diplomatic relations with Algeria, which they wanted to establish. I had a big job.

Of course Morocco had the largest military exercise program in the world outside of Germany.

You had all the navy coming through the Med. You had all the carrier activity and all the airplane activity off the carriers. You had all the beach landings with the army and the marines. You had all the low-level flights that took place in the north of Morocco. Morocco was an ideal sight for military exercises and because it was becoming more and more difficult to do these things in Europe, Morocco was a natural because we had bases right there and in Spain and Germany.

Q: You were in Morocco from '85 to when?

NASSIF: '88.

Q: Did you have any problems getting confirmed?

NASSIF: No. My confirmation was held back because Helms held back everybody because he had somebody he wanted to get confirmed in the State Department that wasn't even nominated so he held everybody up. Finally they let a few of us go through and I was one that they let go through. I had no problems with my confirmation.

Q: Could you talk about the political-economic situation in Morocco when you arrived in '85?

NASSIF: The relationship of course was very good because Ambassador Reed had been a very successful envoy to Morocco from the perspective of the Moroccans. It is just that we had so many difficult issues that we were dealing with at the time and the question is exactly what are we going to do and how are we going to do that? I think in the beginning the King was a little bit leery of having the U.S. send out an Arab-American. It was almost an insult to him I think but in Morocco you make your reputation within the first six months. I think after the first six months he realized that I really wanted to help Morocco and I was really interested in doing something for the U.S.-Moroccan relationship.

They were extremely good to me when I was there. They gave me the access I needed. I could call the foreign minister at any time of the day or night and see him. I even had the French ambassador tell me he had a hard time getting appointments to see him at all. I could call him at a moments notice and be down there five minutes later. They were that good about the access. I had extremely good access to the King. Everybody had talked about this relationship that Joseph had with the King, but he was very good to me.

Of course, the King is always very interested in the Middle East and the peace process but he had no real issues because he had no border in dispute so it was hard to become a player in the peace process. What he did was he decided that he would use the fact that the largest minority in all of Israel is a Moroccan origin Jew. Unfortunately from his perspective they were Likud and he was supporting Labor because he felt it was easier to get peace with a Labor government than with a Likud government which obviously is true. At the time Peres and Yitzhak Shamir were sort of tied for the job so they took a couple of years each and split it up.

When Peres took over he decided that he was going to have a summit meeting, the first public summit meeting in the history after Sadat, between an Arab and Israeli head of state. Tom

Pickering was ambassador in Israeli at the time so Tom and I had to put it together. We had to keep it very, very quiet for security reasons obviously and to make sure that it happened, and we did. I told the Moroccans, "I don't want to read about this in a cable from Tel Aviv. I want to report it first. The minute there is anything to report, please let me know so I can send a cable in."

I get a call at midnight from one of the marines from the embassy and he says, "Mr. Ambassador, the King is on the phone." I thought, he means the palace. I get on the phone and say "Hello. Hello. Yes." "Mr. Ambassador?" "Yes, who is this?" He said, "This is His Majesty." I was absolutely shocked that the King is on the telephone placing this call himself. He gives me the whole layout and tells me exactly what is happening, the whole thing. I woke up everybody, ran to the embassy and put a secure backchannel to the State Department. I was the first to report the meeting between the two so that was very exciting. But that was the kind of cooperation I had got in Morocco.

When we were going to bomb Libya I was told, not details obviously, very specifically that if we discovered that the Libyans were behind the disco bombing in Germany that killed a couple of our soldiers, we were going to retaliate and we were going to be looking at Morocco to see how they responded since they had a union agreement with Libya. I told the minister of the interior and I don't think he took it too seriously. After we bombed Libya of course they called me immediately and said, "We didn't realize what you were saying. My god, we've got to make a [statement], we've got to send a letter, there's going to be a headline and all of this. We would like you take a look and see what you think of the letter that is going basically from the King to Qadhafi." That was really the beginning of the end. Between that and the fact that the King met with Peres, that basically ended the relationship with Libya and they broke relations.

Q: This relationship was in place before you arrived. It is such a peculiar one. How serious were people taking this?

NASSIF: The United States government was taking it very seriously because here we had our ambassador that supposedly had the best relationship of any ambassador, that was Joseph Reed. While he was home on vacation or on leave, this thing happens and he knows nothing about it, so we took it very seriously. Everybody understood the reason for it. It was because of the threat from Algeria to the Moroccans in the Western Sahara. That's what happens in that whole region is the enemy of my enemy is my friend so they end up making these sort of alliances. The Tunisians had done the same thing with the Algerians against the Libyans for years and that's basically what was happening here. Because Morocco was so strategic for us, we didn't want to have a relationship that was strategic with Morocco when Morocco had a strategic relationship with Libya.

Q: When you arrived you said one of the things was the hope this relationship would break up. That's a very tricky thing to go in and try to destabilize a relationship. What could you do?

NASSIF: It was very interesting. One time I was called in by the King to a meeting. Instead of the meeting being in the palace we met in a little building out in the garden. It was very cozy, just the two of us. We were there speaking and it was one of the few occasions where he spoke

all in English to me, which he speaks very well. All of a sudden in the middle of the conversation the phone rings. His Majesty gets up and goes answer the phone. This just doesn't happen. He's talking in Arabic and all of a sudden he comes back and says, "Mr. Ambassador, it's Qadhafi on the telephone. He would like to have a meeting with the President of the United States. He would like to get over this problem that you've got. He would like to speak with you." I said, "Your Majesty, I'm not authorized to speak with Mr. Qadhafi. I can only relay to the President what you've said, which I will do."

As we were walking out of the garden he is trying to convince me how important this is. Probably because I was not as experienced as most Foreign Service officers are when they go, I looked at the King and I said, "Your Majesty, you have to understand, one of the reasons I was sent here was to ensure that the relationship between Morocco and Libya ended." The King looked at me absolutely in shock and didn't say another word. It was really interesting because it was probably something I shouldn't have done but it was probably very useful because I don't think he ever understood how serious we were about this. I was really fairly un-diplomatic in the way I did it but I think he appreciated the honesty of it.

Q: I think often this does help put things into real perspective rather than the diplomatic niceties may cloud over where we stand.

NASSIF: Exactly. It was perfectly clear to him after that and I think he couldn't believe what I had said.

Q: What was the impression of Qadhafi of the people both when you were in NEA and when you arrived at the post?

NASSIF: He was always a pariah and no one ever had any sympathy for him. No one ever wondered why we didn't have a better relationship with him. Everybody understood why and that there was no percentage in trying to cozy up to this man because he couldn't be trusted. Nobody trusted him. His neighbors didn't trust him. His relationship with Egypt, his relationship with Tunisia, his relationship with Algeria, his relationship with Morocco, he was a pariah to them.

Q: While you were there did the actual union of these two countries dissolve?

NASSIF: Yes, absolutely.

Q: How did it come about? Did it just sort of kind of happen?

NASSIF: As I said the thing that precipitated it was when we bombed Libya. That's when the King knew that we were absolutely serious that there was no future in the relationship with Libya. I think the King knew that if he met with Peres that would end that, so he could kill two birds with one stone. He could show the West and the United States what a good friend he was because he was trying to promote peace with Israel and he was willing to meet and take all the risks of being alienated and ostracized by the Arab world, which to a certain extent he was after that. It would also cause a rift between him and Qadhafi which it did because basically after that

Qadhafi said, I don't want to shake the hand of the man who shook the hand of the enemy. Those two things really led to the demise of the union agreement.

Q: Did Qadhafi exert any sort of political pressure or even subversive pressure at all? Was he playing around in Morocco?

NASSIF: He was certainly active in Morocco. They had their office, especially for their airlines, they were using quite a bit. Of course right after we bombed Libya, the embassy and myself we were under high alert. I had more death threats and bomb threats. My security was really rather terrified. What people don't realize is that U.S. ambassadors don't have any security to speak of. We don't have marines guarding us. They don't realize that the marines are there to protect property and not people, and that the Marines don't guard my house, Moroccans do. I only had bodyguards because the King gave me Moroccans, his own CIA, to be my bodyguards, otherwise I wouldn't have any protection. That is really all the protection we have over there. I don't know why that fact isn't better known. People were constantly shocked to find that out.

Q: How did you respond to these threats?

NASSIF: After the bombing of Libya, we took them very seriously. Basically only essential personnel ever came to work and we wouldn't allow our families to go out even to shop for quite a long time. But we never closed the embassy one bit. No bomb threat, no threat ever, closed our embassy. For about two weeks there we were sort of on high alert just to make sure that everybody was protected.

Q: How did the newspapers, broadcasts, and all that react right after the bombing?

NASSIF: Basically the headline in the newspaper was the letter that didn't show much sympathy for Qadhafi. Anyone who knew how close the relationship was supposed to be, when they read it they said this is the beginning of the end because His Majesty was more interested in satisfying us than in satisfying Qadhafi. I'm sure that offended Qadhafi because it didn't condemn the United States and that's what Qadhafi was looking for. He got sympathy but he didn't get any condemnation.

Q: Moving to the Algerian-Moroccan relationship and the Polisario thing during the time you were there, could you explain who the Polisario were and the Algerian and Moroccan connection to this?

NASSIF: Basically Polisario is an acronym that is supposed to designate people that were the indigenous people of the Western Sahara. The Western Sahara had been the Spanish Sahara. When the Spanish got tired of arguing over it they basically gave the southern part to Mauritania and the northern part to Morocco. The Moroccans didn't quite agree with that so finally the Mauritania gave it all up and the Moroccans took it over. It is that whole desert region south of Morocco and along the coast of the Atlantic just north of Mauritania and west of Algeria, that's basic desert there.

There are people who felt they were the indigenous people there and should have an autonomous

state. They were supported by the Algerians both politically and financially. They would have these little guerrilla activities that they would conduct in the Western Sahara against the Moroccans. It was a way for the Algerians to put political pressure on the Moroccans. The Algerians basically wanted a warm water port on the Atlantic. From the Moroccan perspective, to have the Algerians on the east and the south in the Atlantic and west and then Mauritania on the north was absolutely impossible. You can't get landlocked like that given the state of the relationship with Algeria.

There were constant little wars going on all the time and what was happening was that the whole world through the United Nations was trying to get the two countries and the Polisario together to have a referendum. Basically the issue was, who is entitled to vote? They knew that depending on who was on the list, they knew who would win so no one was ever going to agree to a list that was going to cause the other party to be victorious. To this day the issue still remains outstanding but the Moroccans control it all.

Q: What was your impression of the view from the Moroccan side of the Algerians and what the Algerians were doing to their country?

NASSIF: There was always a very strained relationship with the Algerians. The Moroccans never trusted them. They never were very friendly with them. Even after they reestablished diplomatic relations they tried to do a number of things but nothing ever worked out. They have never resolved their border issues. They were always afraid that Morocco was going to have the kind of fundamentalism that was present in Algeria and that they saw in Tunisia. They were afraid that that might bleed over so they were very cautious about what was happening in the mosques. They monitored obviously what was said by the imams in the mosques to make sure that no one was propagating fundamentalism or as the King used to say, integrism. He distinguished between what was an integrist and a fundamentalist, that most good Muslims were fundamentalists; they were just conservative in their religion. The integrists were someone who went beyond that into the type of activity that we've seen in Algeria and elsewhere.

It was always a strained relationship, always nothing friendly. Even when they'd meet nothing good ever really come of it. Trade agreements never really meant very much. But there was obviously a lot of communication between the two because they had common problems. But Algeria wanted to have F-16s and that was a threat to Morocco. We had to lobby very hard to keep the Algerians from being able to get F-16s and of course Algeria could afford to pay for it because they had a lot of natural gas reserves.

Q: Were you and the embassy watching the religious movement within Morocco closely because we got burned so badly in Iran before '79? Here you have a monarch who also was a direct descendant of the prophet and all that. Was this a concern?

NASSIF: It was a concern but the Moroccans were monitoring it so closely because they were so concerned about it that it did not become a priority issue with us because we never felt that there was that much threat. The only problem would be a succession question.

Q: How well do you think King Hassan knew the United States? He had been over a lot of times

but do you think he really understood the political pressures and how we operated?

NASSIF: I think he had an appreciation for it but still not a real understanding of it because he didn't spend much time in the United States unfortunately. He knew the French much better than he knew the Americans. It was always difficult because people in foreign countries always thought the President of the United States had more power than the President of the United States really has. They just didn't realize how many limitations there were. So when they wanted something, if I couldn't deliver it, even though the President was for it, it was hard for them to understand. I was constantly trying to make that clear to them how our system worked. Of course, it was convenient for them to feign ignorance anyway but I think there was a certain lack of understanding.

Q: How did we feel about the political system in Morocco at the time: democracy, human rights, what have you?

NASSIF: I think basically we were fighting very hard to open up the country. We were trying to get the government to become a more democratic government. The parliament was elected but basically the results were cooked and we knew that. We were trying to move that into an honest election where whoever got elected actually took office. We were trying to get more powers in the local areas so there was a decentralization that we were trying to do. We were trying to open up the economy so that everything wasn't held by the government or by a preferred few. It was a very difficult process and we could only go as fast as the King would allow us to go. We could only put so much pressure on because Morocco was important to us strategically. We always used to refer to it as the soft underbelly of the earth and of course a very strategic country like Spain and France.

Q: French influence?

NASSIF: The French were very active, the largest aid participant. They gave more foreign aid than we did. But they still never had the kind of influence they used to have or the kind of influence they wanted. We were still sort of the best friend to the Moroccans. It was a very strained relationship with the Spanish because the Spanish were supporting the Algerians and the Polisario. I used to go to Spain and meet with the government there and tell them how crazy they were for doing that and how that was not in their own interests. They insisted that's what they should be doing. Then of course they finally came to their senses and realized that that was not what they should be doing and became more neutral on the issue. The French were very jealous of our relationship to Morocco, our access.

Q: I've talked with people who said in the foreign ministry, Quai d'Orsay, that the French believe strongly that we are trying to replace them throughout Africa. In Morocco I suppose there could be some justification because Morocco is important but the rest of Africa, as long as the French are playing a positive role, we're delighted.

NASSIF: Yes, go to it. That's absolutely true but Morocco was different and we obviously were very active there. At the time we had an aid program of about 120 million dollars. Compare that to what they've got now, it is probably ten times.

Q: Any problems with our military going in there? When you fill a lot of troops into a place, they are young men and particularly in a pretty fundamental country...

NASSIF: During my time most of the military presence was just military assistance group so it was a small group. They were there only to deal with the military to make sure that they got the right parts for their airplanes or whatever other equipment we were selling them, and to help counsel and advise them on what to buy, what to repair, and what to maintain. We didn't really have active troops there except during the exercises and they were always kept out of the city so there was never a problem. The fact is, when there was an active troop presence from World War II and after World War II, history is wonderful. You talk to Moroccan people and they love the Americans. They miss the Americans and wish the Americans were still there in the bases.

Q: What about Soviet influence at this time? We are talking about really the waning days of the Soviet empire and Reagan and Gorbachev were getting closer together, things were changing. Had there been any residue of activism by the Soviets?

NASSIF: Absolutely. A lot of spying was going on. Most of our time was spent basically with the Russians looking at what they were doing, and what their surrogates were doing, and they were looking at what we were doing. We were cautious and not very friendly with them, or with any of the Eastern Europeans as a matter of fact. When I made courtesy calls I purposely didn't call on the Russians or any of his Eastern European colleagues except Romania. Later on the relationship started to change and we became more friendly.

Q: Were there any other countries that were active, politically or economically, in Morocco or was it pretty much the Americans and then the French?

NASSIF: It was probably mostly the Americans and the French but of course we were very active with the Germans, the British and the Italians when we were there. There was a certain amount of South American presence there but no real trade going on. There was hope of some trade with the Europeans but nothing significant.

Q: Spain wasn't much of a player at that time?

NASSIF: Spain was a player but there wasn't a lot going on. As I said there was this friction between Spain and Morocco. What happened was that the King was very close to Juan Carlos but he wasn't close to the prime minister, that was the problem. Juan Carlos didn't have the power of the government. The government was socialist though I think the friendship with Juan Carlos helped.

Q: Was it Gonzales?

NASSIF: Yes, Felipe Gonzales.

Q: Is Ceuta in Morocco?

NASSIF: Yes, Ceuta and Melilla were the two Spanish enclaves.

Q: Did that cause any irritation at all?

NASSIF: In fact if you ask the King about it he'd say "I'm sure that when the Brits give Gibraltar back to the Spanish that we'll get Ceuta and Melilla." How can the Spanish complain about Gibraltar when they've got Ceuta and Melilla? They've done the very same thing.

Q: How about your consulate? You had one in Casablanca at the time and nothing in Tangier?

NASSIF: We did at the time but we had to close it. The State Department recommended closing it.

Q: Was that a problem? Tangier was probably one of our first consulates.

NASSIF: We hated to see it go but we couldn't defend it because we needed to cut back for economic reasons. We really didn't need it there but it was nice to be there.

Q: How about Casablanca? That was more of a commercial area wasn't it?

NASSIF: Yes, very strategic. That was a very important post for us because some of these very important people in Casablanca, there was so much going on in Casablanca that it was very important to have a relationship. Dick did a terrific job.

Q: You're talking about Dick Johnson?

NASSIF: Dick Jackson. Dick Jackson was my consul general. He had been my political advisor and I recommended him for the consul general position in Casablanca. He was just terrific. He got to know everybody there was to know there, all the important people, and was always excellent at giving me advice. I knew I could count on Dick. Whatever he said I knew it was an honest and accurate response.

Q: Do we have many commercial interests?

NASSIF: We didn't. We were starting to have more but it was still very difficult to get anything done there. U.S. companies would come and I would try and help them but not a lot was going on. I think much more is going on today than ever went on there at the time I was there.

Q: Was the problem making deals, or cronyism, corruption, or just the approach to how one did things?

NASSIF: No. Unfortunately, we never got to that point. Americans just weren't interested in doing business there. There were too many places to make money without going to Morocco. They kept saying to me why would I go to Morocco when I've got all these opportunities in the United States or I can go to China, Taiwan, or Thailand, why would I go to Morocco?

Q: Speaking of going to Morocco, what the French or the Italians call the glitterati, these are sort of the fancy people with too much money, Americans and all. For Forbes and others, Morocco was sort of a place to go. It's exotic but it's sort of safe and all. Did you find that this sort of absorbed more time than you liked?

NASSIF: It didn't absorb more time than I liked but this certainly was a presence. But it was not the Americans, it was the Europeans, the French especially. Anybody who was anybody in Paris was in Morocco. You would meet some of the most glamorous people from all over the world so it was kind of fascinating in a way. It didn't take a lot of time out because you only saw them during social events or activities like that, the anniversary of the coronation of the King, those kinds of activities where you would see the Hermes and all the famous couturiers of Paris coming in there. There were the would be Kings and would be presidents of other countries, the pretender to the throne of Bulgaria was there, and to Egypt the former king's son who was living in Paris, all those people would come. The young Hapsburgs from Austria would come. You would meet these people but it was really rather comical. Those were the friends, that was the inner circle.

Q: What about at one point there were real problems with young Americans going and getting caught up with drugs and stuff like that. Had this time sort of passed by?

NASSIF: We never had a problem with it. We never even heard of incidents when I was there.

Q: I understand that earlier on this was one of the points where the kids would come. They would be sold some hashish and then the hashish dealer would report them to the police. It was a real mess.

NASSIF: I'm sure that there were a lot of drug dealings going on especially up in the north there in the Rif area. Their marijuana was called keef, keef from the Rif, and I'm sure that there was a lot of that going on. There was cooperation with the U.S. at that time on drugs. I know the Europeans were very sensitive about anyone coming into Europe from Morocco because there had been a lot of drug trafficking.

Q: How did you find dealing with the Moroccan bureaucracy and all that?

NASSIF: It was never a problem for me. They were just so good to us. We had access to anybody and anything any time we wanted it. We could get almost anything done that we needed to get done so we never had a problem.

Q: Did you find Americans want to have something done and they want it right away and all and I would think the Moroccans would be more laid back, or not?

NASSIF: Moroccans could get things done faster than we could. When they want to do something they get it done overnight, what might take us six months to do. You could actually get decisions made much quicker in Morocco than you could anywhere else because the King makes all the decisions himself.

Q: So it mostly went right up to the King?

NASSIF: If it was important, it went right to the King. You would be amazed at how many decisions I would ask them and they'd go ask the King and I'd say, "I can accept it from the minister." They'd say, "Oh, no, His Majesty wants to make those decisions."

Q: Any visits?

NASSIF: Nothing but visits.

Q: Did the King make any visits or did the Vice President or any President visit?

NASSIF: No, the King didn't make any visits to the United States because he had already just been there. He was supposed to go again then canceled at the last minute and that was quite an embarrassment but we got over it. Vice President Bush wanted to come just after Peres had been in Morocco but the King didn't want to see him because he didn't want it to look like he was being repaid for being the lackey of the U.S. government. He wanted everybody to know that it was his idea, and it was his idea, so he basically told Bush thanks but no thanks.

Q: You said the King canceled his visit at the last minute. What precipitated that?

NASSIF: I don't know why he did. He just said basically it was difficult for him to go at the time and he'd changed his mind. It may have been perception. It may have been that he was thinking about this visit with Peres. He didn't want it to look like he was going there to set it up with the President, and then he was going to come back and have a visit with Peres, and then there was going to be a visit by the Vice President. I think he was trying to distance himself from the leadership in the United States before and after the visit with Peres.

Q: When Peres came, did we get involved at all or were we kept somewhat removed?

NASSIF: We were fairly well removed from it even though we set the whole thing up.

Q: Transportation and all?

NASSIF: Yes with everything, keeping everything a secret. Basically we set the whole thing up but none of us were present, none of us were around. We didn't have a part to play in the agenda or anything else.

Q: Were there any other major issues you were dealing with when you were there? We've covered quite a bit.

NASSIF: We had the Western Sahara, Algeria and Libya and as I said we had a very large aid program. Of course we were very active in wheat sales at the time competing with the rest of the world, especially the French. Everybody was trying to undercut us. Basically we developed the policy that whatever anybody else does we'll sell for a dollar cheaper. If you want a price war we will give it to you but we weren't going to get cut out of the wheat market worldwide. We did it.

We were very aggressive in protecting U.S. agriculture during that period of time and trying to set up a lot of banking facilities.

We then got very active on the aid side and immunizations because most children in Morocco were dying basically from dysentery. We were trying to set up health programs and that sort of thing for them. We got very active in the Peace Corps. We probably increased the Peace Corps presence to one of the largest, maybe top ten in the world was in Morocco.

Q: How effective did you find the Peace Corps?

NASSIF: Very effective. They were very well received. Everywhere I went I had very positive feedback from everybody about the Peace Corps.

Q: What were they doing?

NASSIF: They were doing things on potable water, to electrical generation, to teaching English. They were extremely well received. These were hard working people who had learned the most remote Berber dialects and lived out in the countryside. They were just wonderful and very well received. I played a very active role with the Peace Corps because I thought they were doing a dynamic job.

Q: When you left there in 1988 was that because of the election and getting ready for it, or had you had enough?

NASSIF: I had had enough. Getting ready for the election I was going to go back and I wanted to help President Bush. I was asked to stay; the King asked me to stay. I thanked him. He even brought it up to the Secretary of Defense, Frank Carlucci, why aren't you staying, so he asked me, "Doesn't the President want you to stay?" I said, "No, I can stay as long as I want. I don't want to stay. I'm ready to go home. I've done enough." I need to start making some money again and get back in the real world. I'll never retire in the Foreign Service so I might as well do it now before the election and get a head start on it. It was very positive but I was ready to leave at the time. Three years is a good amount of time.

ARNOLD SCHIFFERDECKER
Political Officer
Rabat (1986-1993)

Arnold Schifferdecker was born in Missouri in 1935, and received his BA and BJ from the University of Missouri. He served in the US Navy from 1958 to 1964 overseas. During his career, he was assigned to Istanbul, Tel Aviv, Kabul, Ankara, Lahore and Rabat. Mr. Schifferdecker was interviewed by C. Edward Dillery on May 14, 1996.

Q: A good thing in itself. You were there for three years and in 1986 moving on to Rabat. How

did that come about?

SCHIFFERDECKER: It happened through the bidding process and a little bit of lobbying on my part. My family seemed interested in going to Morocco. The job attracted me. It was not necessarily a move up but it was a good substantive job being political counselor in another Muslim country. I had the French language necessary for the job, although I didn't have Arabic which would have been equally if not more helpful in some settings. I heard after I arrived that the ambassador had reservations about me because he felt having been a principal officer I might consider it a bit of a comedown to be political counselor in his embassy. I assured him when I arrived that I didn't consider it so.

Q: Who was the ambassador?

SCHIFFERDECKER: The ambassador was Tom Nassif, a political appointee who had been a Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Near East Affairs in the Department before he took this job.

Q: Was he there during most of your time?

SCHIFFERDECKER: Almost all of it except for the last seven months when he was replaced by Michael Ussery, another political appointee. Morocco seems to get political appointees or attract them. Apparently the King of Morocco, King Hassan, likes to have ambassadors from the United States who are plugged into the political apparatus in Washington, not necessarily professional diplomats.

Q: There have been a number of them and, of course, it is a very pleasant place to be.

SCHIFFERDECKER: It is a very pleasant country, a very beautiful country. It is very well set up for tourism, very tightly controlled, a little more orderly than some countries, although they have had some very brief bouts of violence and political instability.

Q: I assume this time the move was relatively easy and there were not security problems?

SCHIFFERDECKER: We hardly had any major security concerns during my whole time there, for a change. My wife and stepdaughter were with me again. Rabat had an American School and ample opportunities for family recreation including riding, which I had become very fond of after assignments in both Turkey and Pakistan. One of my family's criteria for assignment was that there be access to stables and riding.

Q: So, living conditions in Rabat were pretty comfortable?

SCHIFFERDECKER: Yes, they were very comfortable. Rabat is right on the Atlantic coast and has a very pleasant climate. It has good facilities for tourism and visitors.

Q: What were the relations like between the United States and Morocco at that time?

SCHIFFERDECKER: They were very close. We always have been close to the Moroccans for their moderation in Middle East politics and support of accommodation with Israel. King Hassan had made several moves in that direction, both before and during my time there. We have, and still maintain, a small military assistance program, primarily training of Moroccan officers in the United States. There was some talk of expanding military cooperation with Morocco while I was there but for one reason or another it did not change greatly during my three years there.

Q: You were in charge of all aspects of political reporting--domestic and international?

SCHIFFERDECKER: Yes.

Q: Is there any domestic politics in Morocco?

SCHIFFERDECKER: Yes, but quite different from the kind of domestic politics I was used to seeing where it was more wide open and more openly contested democratic politics. Morocco has and did have then an elected parliament, a liberal press, although not nearly as free and uninhibited as I found in Turkey and Pakistan. The politics are of a different order. The populace breaks down between the have-nots versus the five percent elite that have thrown in their lot with the king. So far, the have-nots have not challenged the elite. Basically the system takes care of everybody; no one starves. In parliamentary debates there were minor differences with the king about his policy vis-a-vis Israel and other Middle East questions. But debates on domestic issues, such as the state budget, were pretty tame. The big foreign policy issue for Morocco was the Western Sahara and Morocco's claim to the Western Sahara which had been evacuated by Spain much earlier and which Morocco was trying to settle on its own terms. That is, through a UN sponsored referendum that would have no risk of voting in favor of independence rather than union with Morocco. This had been challenged during my time there by Algeria and the Saharan Polisario Front which was attacking Moroccan positions in the Western Sahara. Western Sahara is a fairly large strip of land south of Morocco proper which contains mineral deposits, primarily phosphates.

Q: What was our position on the Western Sahara issue?

SCHIFFERDECKER: Our position was that we would like to see the problem settled by a United Nations sponsored referendum.

Q: Did the Moroccans like that idea?

SCHIFFERDECKER: King Hassan had agreed in the early '80s to a referendum, however, the dispute was always over who would be registered to vote. Morocco claimed, of course, that many Saharans had left there for economic reasons for Morocco proper for jobs and whatnot and should be allowed to return to exercise their right to vote. The opposition, and the Algerian sponsored Polisario Front felt that Morocco should not be able to register these large numbers of alleged Saharans to vote in a referendum. That dispute is still outstanding.

Q: What about relations with Algeria?

SCHIFFERDECKER: That was another concern of ours. We wanted to see Algeria and Morocco talk to each other. When I arrived they were not doing much talking to each other about their bilateral problems and about the Western Sahara dispute. There were tensions from time to time. But there were proposed regional projects such as a gas pipeline from Algeria that would go to Morocco. Morocco, not having a lot of oil or gas deposits, could benefit by this. The pipeline would go through Morocco in the north and Morocco, of course, could obtain supplies from that pipeline. The pipeline would then transit the Strait of Gibraltar and go via Spain into Europe. This project is one of those dreams that may take many, many years to realize, if ever.

Q: It is natural gas we are talking about?

SCHIFFERDECKER: Primarily, at least for now we are talking about natural gas.

Q: Did the United States have any other economic interests in Morocco?

SCHIFFERDECKER: We did not have a large stake in the economic field either through investment or through trade. We have, as I mentioned, a small development assistance program.

Morocco, not having gas or oil, has turned to agriculture as its main export income earner. Citrus and agricultural products, and cut flowers, which provide a significant amount of income for Morocco, are exported to the European market. Other agricultural products, such as fresh vegetables, which are produced in Morocco during the winter in Europe have also found a niche in that market.

The other major foreign exchange earner had been phosphates, but the market for phosphates dropped considerably because Morocco tried to raise the prices too high and it didn't work because there were other sources, namely in Jordan, to fill the gap at a more reasonable price. So, that policy backfired on Morocco and the industry was struggling during the time I was there.

Q: How did Morocco fit in with the rest of Africa? I'm thinking sub-Sahara. Any relationships at all?

SCHIFFERDECKER: King Hassan prided himself on developing relations with many sub-Saharan African leaders, including his immediate neighbor to the south, Mauritania. Over many hundreds of years considerable trade and cultural relationships had existed between Black Africa and Arab and Berber Morocco. King Hassan promoted these relationships vigorously. He has also cultivated relations with most of Francophone Africa, including Ivory Coast, Senegal and Zaire and several other countries that have given Morocco a modest role in trying to promote peace and development in Africa.

Q: So, Morocco plays a positive role?

SCHIFFERDECKER: Yes, Morocco provides modest economic assistance to some countries of both Saharan and sub-Saharan Africa. I am thinking here of Mauritania, of Chad. Morocco has also flirted with Libya and we were always concerned that those relationships be confined to the bare minimum. Morocco, in an effort to gain support of its position on the Western Sahara, has

tried to assist some of those smaller Francophone African countries in development projects. These are modest projects, as Morocco doesn't have a lot of resources to play a large role.

Q: What is Morocco's relationship with France?

SCHIFFERDECKER: Generally good but sometime uneasy over perceived slights. For example, Morocco had some problems with France over the treatment of North African immigrants, Moroccan immigrants in France. There have been, from time to time, feelings by Morocco that the French cultural penetration was overly strong or not to the benefit of Morocco. But, those problems were more of the nature of perceived slights than they were serious bilateral issues. I would say the most serious problem was dealing with the Moroccan immigrants and France trying to curb illegal immigration from North Africa much as we have tried to curb illegal immigration from Mexico.

Q: Do the Moroccans try to play off the United States against France? I wondered if there was any tension there?

SCHIFFERDECKER: Not that one would notice or make too much of. During my time Moroccans seemed to be turning more to the United States for education. More Moroccans seemed to be learning English and wanting to be educated in the United States, whereas prior to that most Moroccans got their higher education in France. So, there seemed to be a tilt in the direction of the United States, but not one that we consciously exploited at the expense of France.

Q: Any other reflections on Morocco?

SCHIFFERDECKER: One of the problems that Morocco is going to have to face is the succession problem. Whenever you have a traditional monarchy and a very tight rein on government and the levers of power, questions will arise as to the fitness of the designated successor, in this case the crown prince. Many educated Moroccans and even those with a very modest amount of education, feel that a monarchy is really outdated at the end of the 20th century and believe that there should be perhaps a constitutional monarchy, a reigning monarchy rather than a ruling monarchy.

Q: Do you think there is any possibility of that happening?

SCHIFFERDECKER: Yes, and I think there is always the potential for instability to rear its head in Morocco. There were incidents, from time to time, of students or unemployed workers from the rural areas. There was a major riot in Fez while I was there and just recently there was a riot in Tangier according to a press report. So, there is a considerable undercurrent of tension and potential for violence, especially if there is a succession situation in Morocco that could cause a terrific amount of instability.

Q: How old is the king?

SCHIFFERDECKER: The king is in his late '60s now, I believe.

Q: And the crown prince?

SCHIFFERDECKER: The crown prince is in his early '30s. Many view the crown prince as not suited to succeed King Hassan.

Q: Who would be rivals?

SCHIFFERDECKER: His brother or one of the cousins some view as a more viable successor to King Hassan.

Q: Do they follow strict primogeniture?

SCHIFFERDECKER: In this case the crown prince is the eldest son. It is designated in the constitution that he will succeed his father. Morocco is a constitutional monarchy. However an amendment could be made by a compliant legislature if need be. And, there could be rivals who are not members of the royal family, of course.

Q: Okay, that brings us to the end of Morocco and you are about to return to the United States.

JOHN E. GRAVES
Public Affairs Officer, USIS
Rabat (1987-1990)

John E Graves was born in 1927 in Michigan. He received his Bachelor's and Master's degree from the University of Michigan, and served in the US Navy overseas from 1945 to 1946. Upon entering the Foreign Service in 1962, he was assigned to Leopoldville, Bukavu, Antananarivo, Rach Gia, Lomé, Yaoundé, Tehran, Montevideo, Sidi Bou Said, and Rabat. Mr. Graves was interviewed by Richard Jackson on January 12, 1999.

Q: So, you came out of your education bilingual in English and French and then taught for a time at the school and university level.

GRAVES: My first experience overseas, other than with the Navy at the very end of World War II, came as the result of a Smith-Mundt Grant which took me to Morocco to teach at the university in Rabat. From there, I was seconded for a summer to Besançon, a university in France. I returned to the U.S. with a new-found interest in foreign affairs. What with six children it also occurred to me that I would probably make a better living in the Foreign Service than as a teacher and writer.

Q: We will be talking about Morocco later on. How was it in those early years? You were there three years after independence and seemed to have been there at the time that Mohammed V died and Hassan became king. How was that process as an observer?

GRAVES: We were worried because many people who had lived in Morocco for a long time, who had been born and raised there, mostly French, were much concerned that the whole country would come unstuck. Hassan didn't dare go on the radio, for example, speaking Arabic. His colloquial Arabic wasn't adequate to the occasion. His education was in French and he may even have had a French wife, who had somehow to disappear. In any case, it seems he was married to a Moroccan within hours after his father's totally unexpected death and he eventually learned to speak excellent Arabic.

Q: This was Hassan II?

GRAVES: Yes. But I should qualify what I just said. It was commonly believed at the time that he was married very quickly to a Moroccan. Nonetheless, people were concerned that there would be disorder and riots. The left was strong. Remember Ben Barka who was condemned in absentia and eventually killed in Paris.

Q: What was the reaction that you remember among your students at the university to the death of Mohammed V?

GRAVES: Almost none. The students themselves didn't seem to be much concerned, which surprised me. They were not, however, a representative group. Many were Jewish Moroccans, as the university had not yet managed to figure out how to attract Muslims. There were a great many French students. I had a few Muslim students, one of whom I have maintained contact with all these years, but he was of Algerian extraction. At this point, I was a professor rather than an experienced Foreign Service officer who knew how to ask leading questions. Thus my knowledge of what was going on in Morocco was limited to what I happened to hear.

Q: So, the university was really a legacy of the French period and not the mass production institution of today with thousands and thousands of students?

GRAVES: Right. The traditional university was in Fez, while the university in Rabat was a French creation.

Q: Being there in those years, how did the country then seem to you? Did you anticipate that it would follow more or less the course that it has since?

GRAVES: After a few months, it seemed to calm down. I had the impression that Morocco was probably going to become fairly stable, but stay very French. As long as Hassan II remains on the throne, I think it will remain very French as compared to the rest of the Arab world.

Q: The French were out of Morocco officially with some bitterness.

GRAVES: Meknes and all of that, yes. There were uprisings and some deaths. Quite a number of French left during the time that we were there in the late 1950s-early 1960s. But I had the impression that the French were still pretty well running everything. There were a great many businesses, for example, in French hands, not to mention all the French in the government. The

whole system was French. This has changed very gradually. The last time we were in Morocco, we noticed that French influence was reduced. But even now, educated Moroccans often talk to each other in French, which is always startling to people coming from the outside. They use their version of Arabic in family, but it's not the language they communicate in for most business purposes.

Q: What did people think of you in 1959 as an American there shortly after Moroccan independence? There must have been some curiosity on their part.

GRAVES: A little bit. I think they were very favorable to Americans and hoped to play America off against France. There were three or four fairly big American military bases, one near Rabat. Americans certainly weren't ill-viewed. I was comfortable, as were our children who went to French school. Educated Moroccans heard my Canadian accent and knew that I wasn't French.

Q: Did you have any interaction with the embassy at that time? Did that have any role in steering you towards a government career?

GRAVES: Very little. There was some contact with the cultural affairs officer, but apart from that, almost none. I didn't understand embassies and wasn't much interested. I didn't know why certain Americans in the embassy invited me and my family. I later found out that our hosts were mostly CIA trying to keep tabs on the university. I was naive and innocent.

Q: You knew when you were there that you were headed as PAO to Rabat, Morocco. You were there from 1987-1990. That would have been working with Ambassador Tom Nassif. I know I was then in Casablanca and we worked together.

GRAVES: Right. Nassif was a political appointee.

Q: You had been in Rabat years ago, from 1959-1961, teaching at the university. What did you find when you got there?

GRAVES: The first thing that struck me was that it was much less French than it had been. Certainly the population had changed. Especially in Tangier, which had been a prosperous cosmopolitan city, but predominately Spanish. I was surprised to find that all the Moroccans I needed to deal with in Tangier now spoke French, so even there I had no need to use the very little Arabic that I had learned. I found the experience of working with a political ambassador who was essentially a political animal and a good businessman, enlightening. He was of Lebanese extraction but didn't speak fluent Arabic or French. I watched him operate and found that in certain cases he did very well, which impressed me. I was always amazed how he got on with the Minister of Interior, for example. He only took me along to see the Minister when he had something specific to confirm and wanted to be sure he understood. I had the big advantage of being on the inside and knowing what was going on. I was present at high-level talks even when I wasn't interpreting. Present to listen and afterwards to clarify and confirm what had been said.

Q: Are we talking here about King Hassan II?

GRAVES: Yes. I had known him earlier.

Q: You interpreted at some of the meetings with him?

GRAVES: Yes. He knew me well. Even called me by my first name. He was always glad to see me, glad I was there. For example, I was the interpreter when Senator Dole and his wife visited the palace. It was an interesting experience because Malcolm Forbes, along with Elizabeth Taylor, was there for a birthday party. So I was interpreter for them as well when they talked with the King. Forbes had a sumptuous house in Tangier and a famous collection of toy soldiers, which I never saw. I was never invited to his extravagant parties, which brought celebrities from around the world to Tangier.

At the time of Senator Dole and his cabinet-rank wife's visit, we had a new political ambassador. His wife, an able young woman, had never been allowed to go to the palace, which annoyed her. I suggested to the Ambassador that, since Mrs. Dole would be participating because of her cabinet rank, we could probably get away with including the Ambassador's wife in our party. She thoroughly enjoyed the experience.

Q: I am getting the picture from both Uruguay and now Morocco with the three successive political ambassadors that perhaps you found as a professional that you had more influence and more fulfillment working with political ambassadors who brought other skills and contacts.

GRAVES: I also had the good luck to work with some really first-rate career ambassadors. I learned a lot from them. Michael Ussery was the first political ambassador with whom I got on immediately. He had good contacts at the White House and knew Washington, but didn't have an agenda which put me off. Nassif, on the other hand, was involved in promoting personal business deals which disturbed me. A lot of diverse experiences, but none of them was more exhilarating than working in Uruguay with Rick Melton, a fellow career officer.

Q: You had career DCMs in Rabat, probably for most of that time Harman Kirby or John Hawes?

GRAVES: I didn't get on with Hawes. I found him rigid, in one case so rigid that I finally brought the problem up with the Ambassador. Our chief consular officer was young and inexperienced. He adamantly refused to issue a student visa to a young woman because she had lied to him. She was more capricious and flighty than dissembling and the daughter of a very influential Moroccan. Her father called me and laid out the case, admitting that his daughter was wrong, but was nonetheless a legitimate student who fully met all our criteria for a student visa, even though she hadn't gotten around to applying properly. She had already spent several years as a student in the U.S. I argued that her lies were silly fabrications, an attempt to cover up the fact that she had been too lazy to fill out the renewal forms correctly and before the deadline. But the important thing is that we're trying to promote American interests in Morocco and it's not in our interests to refuse entry to this young woman, thereby incurring the wrath of her father. Hawes and the consular officer would have none of it. She was in direct violation of one of the principal rules of our consular service. I finally laid the case out to the ambassador and he got the

visa issued. The father was grateful to the Ambassador and became a useful contact. But to get back to Nassif, there were moments when I was not comfortable with his business dealing. You must have seen more of that than I did.

Q: I was in Casablanca.

GRAVES: And he was often in Casa wheeling and dealing.

Q: I wasn't aware...

GRAVES: And he came back after he was no longer Ambassador to do business in Casablanca.

Q: His business.

But, John, you mentioned that Uruguay was the only post where you felt in accord with U.S. policy. What were the points of difference in Morocco?

GRAVES: We had considerable leverage, what with our aid programs, but we didn't use it to encourage the king to build lasting institutions as Juan Carlos was doing in Spain. Hassan II ran Morocco like a feudal kingdom, playing one power group off against another. He improvised to keep everyone except the palace weak. He had brains, education, experience, and *baraka*. I think he could have been more of a Juan Carlos than he was. I could be very wrong because Moroccans aren't Spaniards and the two cultures are not all that similar. Sometimes he seemed needlessly arbitrary and mean-spirited. There were a lot of political prisoners. Of course, there were several terrible shoot-outs. The king's miraculous escapes from assassination attempts. Skhirat and the airplane attack.

Q: The attempts of 1971 and 1972.

GRAVES: Oufkir, the very close collaborator that he apparently personally shot. In any case, I didn't feel I was doing anything terribly useful in Morocco. Whereas in Uruguay, I had the feeling that what the embassy was doing was worthwhile. In Morocco, I guess my chief satisfaction came from teaching my young officers our business.

Q: You were in Morocco at a very interesting period. The world was changing. The Soviet Union was collapsing. North Africa and Morocco were no longer the strategic points in the Cold War that they had been, with the Straits of Gibraltar. Aid levels were beginning to fall. The Moroccans were becoming concerned about where they fitted into this threadbare bicentennial relationship. There was a bit of smoke and mirrors to convince them that they were important to us. You must have played a big role in that.

GRAVES: Right, but I didn't feel terribly comfortable with the show. I was well aware that it wasn't in the cards. American support for Morocco was going to gradually diminish. But I thoroughly enjoyed the opportunity to really get to know the Russians in Rabat, have frank talks with them. They were Gorbachev fans and welcomed the exhilarating changes in the Soviet Union. They invited us and we invited them. (I had a much tougher time trying to get to know

the Chinese, even though the Chinese ambassador's wife spoke French and invited us to their residence.) The Russians were eager to talk about anything and everything. But it was time for me to do something else. I was no longer fascinated by the job.

Q: You were looking towards retirement. There wasn't fire in your belly. Still, that was a big operation you were in charge of there. It was one, if I remember, that had been moved away from a prime location in the center of the town out to the suburbs, which you were opposed to, as part of a worldwide movement. You were trying to keep up interest in the library and in the center.

GRAVES: I was trying to open a store-front operation in downtown Rabat similar to what the Russians had, but our security people quashed my plans. They knew nothing about our priorities and goals. Also, I had horrendous personnel problems. All those folks in the VOA operations.

Q: Were you not constructing the largest radio transmitter in the free world?

GRAVES: We were building an antenna farm near Tangier. But by this time, I was convinced that short-wave radio was dead. A waste of money. I had been involved, when I was an inspector, with the VOA antenna farm in the Philippines. All the security and logistic problems. In Tangier it was the personnel problems that worried me. All those Americans who probably shouldn't have been sent abroad, couldn't get on with foreigners, couldn't even get on with each other. So I often had to go to Tangier to get someone out of jail or go to the antenna farm to attend gripe sessions.

Q: These were basically technicians building a half a billion dollar project.

GRAVES: And I was responsible for our negotiations with the Moroccans. There were some 180 employees. Any group of that size is bound to produce personnel problems, but this bunch were problem-prone.

Q: And there were difficult the negotiations of turning over the prior station to the Moroccans along with some of the equipment.

GRAVES: Right. But we were giving them training and equipment that wasn't worth much. Too hard to operate and maintain, too hard to get replacement parts. And even more important, by this time short-wave was no longer attracting listeners. In years past, short-wave had been a prime source of information, especially in countries where information was reduced, distorted, or just plain fabricated by the government. But by this time, people were listening to medium wave or watching television rather than twiddling short-wave knobs to tune in the latest static. In Latin America we had long since gone to placing post-recorded VOA programs with small, local medium-wave radio stations. It's easy to get such stations to use VOA material because they are always short on stuff to fill broadcast time.

Q: You also were involved in perhaps starting, or at least maintaining a branch post in Marrakesh. There was Jim Mandros. Or had that been closed by the time you...

GRAVES: It was closed later when Jim Mandros' replacement decided he didn't like living in Marrakesh. Mandros was a fellow who liked to make his opinions known. Sometimes his opinions were a little kooky, but he was a great field hand and was doing a superb job in Marrakesh. The operation under Mandros was well worth maintaining.

Q: I felt that, as a one-man band at that branch post in Marrakesh, he was giving the French Cultural Center, the largest that they had in Africa, a fair run for the money.

GRAVES: Mandros loved Marrakesh and ran a really effective USIS program. It was a much better operation than the one that you knew in Casablanca, which was better located to promote our goals. Still, our International Visitor program in Casa was especially effective. Do you remember the journalist sons of the entrenched Communist leader? We sent them on a visit to the U.S. and they came back to write reams of intelligent commentary on the virtues of America.

Q: Those were the twin sons of the Communist leader, Ali Yata?

GRAVES: Exactly. They became great fans of America.

Q: A propos of the mention of the French Center in Marrakesh, the French presence was less than when you were there before, but still, there were a lot of Frenchmen. It was regarded by some still as a French chasse gardée. What was your perception of U.S.-French cooperation or noncooperation in Morocco?

GRAVES: I didn't find any animosity. On the contrary, the French cultural center in Rabat was cooperative, inviting us to participate in their shows and contributing acts to our programs. They had more assets than we did so it was a good deal for us. They had a tougher time in Tangier so we helped them there. We didn't have a cultural center, but we had the old consulate, the legation which had been turned into a museum with good space for exhibits, shows and receptions. The director was good at public relations. So we were helpful to the French in Tangier and they were helpful to us in Rabat.

Q: You were involved in some of the planning for a so-called American university at Ifrane and the back and forth with the Consortium of the University of Texas in setting that up. Eventually, the Saudis put in \$50 million and it became El Aqawain University. What are your thoughts on that?

GRAVES: It was only the outset and I was very skeptical that it would get off the ground. I knew the University of Beirut, the only thing I could connect it with. Beirut had been very effective because of the missionaries, but I couldn't see at that point that American support would remain steadfast. You need people. Money is important, but people who are really committed, who are really convinced that what they are doing is important, that I couldn't see. I couldn't see how it would work. I wasn't against it. When I left, it was just at the beginning.

Q: John Waterbury wrote in his book in the late 1950s that Morocco was a country waiting for an explosion that never comes. With your own 30 year perspective on it, what are your thoughts on its stability, future, succession?

GRAVES: I didn't know Sidi Mohammed, the Crown Prince, well. The few times I saw him, he was unimpressive. All I heard about him was unfavorable. I knew his cousin, who was educated in the United States, much better and was impressed with him. But I didn't see how the succession could be changed. However, I recall that the same things were said about young Moulay Hassan when Mohammed V died. Forty years later, Hassan is still very much in charge. The country, relative to other Arab countries, is stable. I think the Moroccans have done a great deal better than most other Arabs. Take Algeria, for example, which is a disaster. The Moroccans may well be the happiest of Arabs, even though there is a great deal of misery. I would have liked to see viable institutions installed while there was power to install them. Still, having been dead wrong about Moulay Hassan's staying power gives me pause. Maybe Mohammed, a young man I don't really know, will prove to be a capable leader.

Q: With the experience you had had before, particularly in Iran with students close up, what did you think about the Moroccan students? There is periodic student unrest, frustration among them, but perhaps not the same political temper that you saw elsewhere.

GRAVES: Moroccans don't have the same religious fervor that I have observed elsewhere. The fundamentalists are a small group in Morocco. The main thing that concerns me always with Arab students is that they tend to want to study the wrong things. They are interested in law but not in technical studies such as engineering. They just don't seem to be oriented, which is strange when you think of Arab history, toward science, technology or management. They all want to be in law school.

Q: As we wind down this Morocco segment, I was struck that, as you talked about it, clearly Montevideo was much more of a high point. This last post, the golden post before retirement, somehow didn't match it. Was that just simply that you were ready to go or do you have some regrets about Morocco, things you never got to there?

GRAVES: I think it was a combination of things. It was the end of my career. At that point, it was a great luxury to be able to choose my next assignment. I asked for either Rabat or Ottawa as my last post. It turned out to be Rabat. (I had not anticipated the year in Tunis, but I enjoyed it.) As for Morocco, I probably arrived there with nostalgic expectations based on my experience as a very young man.

Q: This has been a very interesting oral history. As we wind down, you have had some extraordinary career highlights. Is this something you would do again?

GRAVES: As Edith Piaf sang, *je ne regrette rien, non rien de rien* [French: I do not regret a thing, nothing at all]. I had a marvelous career, certainly not planned, not of my own doing, just felicitous bad luck. I never requested assignment to any of those hot spots. Remembering the security officer's comment when first I arrived in Iran, I stood up on the plane coming out of Iran and called to him, "Al, would you serve with me at another post?" He shouted back, "Hell, no!" And a whole chorus of joyous ex-hostages echoed him with, "Hell, no, never!" A fitting comment on my career. Al, knew something of my experiences in the Congo, Vietnam and Equatorial Guinea and had greeted me on my arrival in Tehran with, "Well, I knew things were

bad here, but I didn't know they were that bad."

Q: You have reflected throughout this interview a skepticism about U.S. policy and the U.S. being able to get it right wherever it may be abroad, through the bureaucracy and blinders we have. Your career has also coincided with, the polls show, a tremendous loss of confidence in U.S. government.

GRAVES: Sad but true.

Q: The public, in a sense, shares this skepticism that you voiced. How did that change in public perception affect you or your own perception of a Foreign Service career?

GRAVES: Increasing public skepticism may, without my having been conscious of it, contributed to my own skepticism, but more important was my hands-on participation in dubious operations, especially Vietnam. But I should redress the balance. In my view, U.S. policy and interventions abroad were often ill-informed, even nefarious, but I doubt that any other country in the same circumstances with the same power would have done as well. I think we made a lot of grievous mistakes, but relatively speaking, I can't see where anybody else would have done better. The reason we did so badly is also the reason that I admire America and Americans. We are pluralistic and all the disparate interests get heard and exert pressure. What is in the interest of the general public, in the country, in humanity is not at all what is in the interest of the people exporting factory chickens or arms.

Q: That was very much George Kennan's bottom line conclusion in his recent "Foreign Affairs" article.

You were in USIA. That was your career focus. What do you think about it in the modern world and how do you feel about its merger completely into the State Department now?

GRAVES: I remember when cultural affairs and information were lodged in the Department. Like commerce they got short shrift. What with the advent of the Cold War it became clear that cultural affairs and information were potential arms in the battle against Communism. USIA was born. But once the Cold War ended, I think it was inevitable that USIA would decline and disappear into the Department. Unfortunately, the Department's traditional preoccupation with political reporting and government to government relations makes it difficult to take into account changing circumstances and priorities. I think we should be putting our marbles into consular services, especially American services, and into commercial services. Consular services and the image of America are important for American business abroad. USIS was in the image making business. I think it is a big mistake to do away with an entity which has experience in creating image. American embassies and consulates should be restructured to better serve American travelers and American business, which includes creating a good image of America in the minds of foreign people. Finally, the priorities involved in having effective representation abroad need to be emphasized in the battle against the security nuts and the support syndrome. Ambassador Briggs was absolutely right when he warned against our sending people abroad who couldn't survive abroad. Such people require support services so we now have people in our embassies and consulates supporting the support people who are supporting the support people. Most of the

people in an American embassy or consulate are not involved with the priority business of the post. They are involved with serving the other Americans in the mission.

The security syndrome is as detrimental to good American representation abroad as the support syndrome. I got myself into difficulty in the Department when I was invited by Lew Hoffacker, who was then head of the anti-terrorism office, to talk to a group of JOTs about security. I told them that there isn't any way to avoid risk. Much of what we spend on security benefits the beltway bandits but it doesn't do much by way of making life abroad less risky. The most secure embassy configuration involves renting several stories in a very important hotel occupied by lots of people who aren't Americans. We rent the middle floors and severely control access to those floors. To get the Americans, terrorists have to risk harming a lot of non-Americans. Hardly a prestigious representation, but more secure than our sumptuous buildings turned into bunker operations. But the beltway bandits who have a lucrative monopoly on providing concrete and gadgets (no foreigners can bid) shame Congress and the American public into spending billions to protect their representatives abroad. The support people supporting support people supporting support people know little about the primary business and priorities of the embassy. They demand that the U.S. government assure their safety and take comfort in all the junk the beltway bandits load on the embassy. They are not willing to accept what I told the JOTs. If you go abroad, you are going to take risks. The Department was unhappy with what I told the JOTs, claiming I scared hell out of them and upset the assignment process.

Q: Still, that is a tough message now after Nairobi and Dar Es Salaam.

GRAVES: True, but what could we have done to prevent those attacks, short of giving up the sumptuous digs which add to the prestige and effectiveness of our representation? The truth is, nothing. But we can't say that because many people would be frightened off and refuse to go abroad. So we can't tell them the truth, namely that there isn't any really effective security. All the window dressing doesn't really protect us. As I knew always in Vietnam, if the Viet Cong want to pay the price to get me tonight, there will be no morning.

FRANKLIN E. HUFFMAN
Director, American Cultural Center
Marrakech (1989-1990)

Franklin E. Huffman was born in Harrisonburg, Virginia in 1934. In 1955 he graduated from Bridgewater College and immediately joined IVS. From 1967 to 1985 he was a Professor of Southeast Asian languages and linguistics at Yale and Cornell. His second career was as a Foreign Service Officer with USIA where he was posted to London, Rangoon, Marrakech, Paris, Washington, Phnom Penh, and Wellington, with subsequent WAE tours to N'Djamena (Chad) and Phnom Penh. Mr. Huffman was interviewed in January 2006 by Charles Stuart Kennedy.

Q: Okay. Well then you went to Morocco. This sounds like at last you were getting out of the Southeast Asia box you had been in for many years. You were there from when to when?

HUFFMAN: Well, I was there from 1989 to 1990. As it turned out I was there only one year because I curtailed. During my second year in Rangoon I began the bidding process and I bid on Kinshasa, where they needed an IO (Information Officer). Of course, in those days Kinshasa was a more desirable place than it is now, plus it had a number of things going for it from my point of view. It would have been a two grade stretch for me so career-wise it would have been good. There was plenty of opportunity for spousal employment in the Embassy. It was a Francophone post and I had French. It suited me from many points of view and in fact the director of the Africa bureau called me up and encouraged me to bid, and said "I'd like to have you in that job." But Personnel didn't go along with it. They objected that it would be a two grade stretch, even though it was clear they had no other bidders at the time. Then I tried for Lima until my career counselor pointed out that it was a danger post.

Q: Because of the Shining Path rebels?

HUFFMAN: Yes, the Sendero Luminoso. Then one morning I had a call at three a.m. (Washington never quite figured out what time it was in Asia) and they said, "How would you like Marrakech?" It was totally unknown to me and, as you say, out of my field of experience, but my wife was delighted because it sounded quite romantic and exotic. And interestingly, as I look back on all my posts, which were London, Rangoon, Marrakech, Paris, Phnom Penh, and Wellington, Marrakech stands out as the most exotic. Now if you'd asked most people which they consider more exotic, Morocco or Burma, they'd certainly say Burma, but for me Morocco, being in North Africa, and being a Muslim country, was very different from the laidback Buddhist cultures I was familiar with in Laos, Thailand, Cambodia and Burma. The job was to be director of the American Cultural Center in Marrakech. We no longer had a consulate in Marrakech. We had a consulate in Casablanca, but former consulates in Tangier, Marrakech and Fez had been closed.

So I agreed to go down there as BPAO (Branch Public Affairs Officer). What this entailed was putting both of our kids in the French lycée because there was no American school. My wife, being European and Francophone, was all for this. My daughter was seven years old, my son was 13. My son had been in the French nursery school here in Washington, Lycée Rochambeau in Bethesda, but he had been in an English-speaking school in London and the American school in Burma. My daughter, who was seven years old, took to French language like a duck to water because she didn't know any better. It was as if she thought, "So that's what you do in school, you talk in this funny language." So she did quite well, but my son did not adapt well at all to the French system. For example, in math class he might get the correct answer but if he didn't go through the steps prescribed by the French system or if he didn't put his name at the right place in the upper right hand corner of the page he'd get zero. Age 13 was the worst age to take a kid to into a new system, and he just couldn't deal with it. He became very upset and withdrawn and was doing things like breaking out windows with a baseball bat. I wrote to Washington and I said, "You know, it's not working here. After our first year I want to curtail." This was not looked on favorably by NEA (Near Eastern Affairs). The area office said, "Look, you bid on it knowing you would have to put your children in the French school, so now why are you complaining?" I wrote back and said "Well, you know, I made a mistake. And intelligent people, when they make a mistake, take steps to correct it." I pulled what few strings I had and got a job

in Paris. But the director of NEA, who was an old Middle Eastern hand, the son of missionaries and a bit puritanical, was reported to have remarked that it sends the wrong signal when an officer can bail out of a job and land in Paris.

Q: Well let's talk a bit about Marrakech at the time.

HUFFMAN: Yes. Whenever you mention Marrakech people say, "Oh, my favorite city in Morocco!" Well, yes, it is a fascinating place to go visit. With its souk (market), its desert, pink palaces and all the rest, it's very mysterious – where North Africa blends into Sub-Saharan Africa. We had a nice house set in a "palmeraie" (a grove of palm trees, but rather pitiful compared to the lush tropical vegetation we were used to in Southeast Asia). Marrakech had about 30 tourist-class hotels, and received flights of tourists directly from Paris, Madrid and other cities in Europe. We were about an hour from skiing in the Atlas mountains to the south and an hour and a half from the beach at Agadir.

Q: What did the job involve?

HUFFMAN: As Director of the American Cultural Center, I was the only official American in the city. Dar America (America House) was located on a palm-lined boulevard in an area of hotels, and was a quite pleasant place to work. We had a marvelous USIS library with 8,000 members. Students and teachers from the universities relied on it heavily. We had programs, we had speakers, we showed American films. It should have been an ideal post. One problem, however, was that since we didn't have a consulate I was the embassy's man in Marrakech and the king, Hassan II, would spend three to four months a year in his palace in Marrakech (he had 16 palaces but was partial to Marrakech), so when he was in Marrakech, the capital of Morocco was Marrakech so that visitors to the embassy, CODELs, everybody else came to Marrakech and I was in a sense the control officer for the embassy in Marrakech.

Among the visitors I received were Secretary of Defense Caspar Weinberger and his party – I helped brief him on Moroccan culture in the luxurious Mamounia Hotel before his visit to the palace. I received Senator Daniel Moynihan and his delegation as well, and served as interpreter for Mrs. Moynihan during their visit to the royal palace. I organized a reception for Moynihan and the American ambassador with all the movers and shakers of Marrakech, and about two hours before the reception Moynihan's chief of staff called to say that Moynihan was too tired to attend the reception. I pointed out that the most prominent people from Marrakech and the palace had been invited, and it would have serious repercussions for U.S.-Moroccan relations if the Senator were not to attend. Finally Senator Moynihan did attend, was quite gracious to the guests, and the evening was saved. Frequent congressional delegations included Congressman Charles Rangel of New York and a party of 37 – their primary interest in Marrakech was shopping in the souk. But the other thing was that almost every weekend, along about 5:00 p.m. on Friday afternoon, I'd wait for it, the call from the ambassador, who would say something like, "Frank, you know, my mother's in town and we want to come down to Marrakech and I wonder if you could arrange a tour for us like you arranged when my cousin was over here, and make reservations at that restaurant there in the souk where they have the performance of the belly dancers, and get a guide for us to go into the souk." And he'd say, "Of course I'd like to invite you and your wife to come along." Well, you couldn't use representational funds to accompany

the ambassador and his American guests to an expensive restaurant. We did it two or three times and then decided we couldn't afford it any more. So the job was kind of half USIS work and half tour guide, and I wasn't terribly happy about that.

Q: Well, you say 8,000 people belonged to your center, but where did Marrakech fit in the scheme of things, looking at it as a Foreign Service officer? Were we reaching the movers and shakers or did this seem to be kind of a localized thing where the commercial and political people would be in Rabat or up in Casablanca?

HUFFMAN: Yes, that's true except for the three or four months of the year when Marrakech was essentially the royal capital and the movers and shakers came to Marrakech. But you're right; the clientele for the USIS center were primarily university students and faculty. They had a major university in Marrakech as well as several lycées. In addition we had a number of Peace Corps volunteers in Marrakech and surrounding towns and villages where we worked, and they liked to rendezvous at the American Center. The French, who of course for historic reasons had a heavy presence in Morocco, had built one of the largest Alliance Française installations in all of North Africa in Marrakech. But they charged a membership fee and they didn't have as many members as we did so it turned out we could collaborate very effectively. All we had was a small colonial-style house painted pastel pink (as most everything is there) with a library and offices upstairs and with a very small program area, so I would arrange with the French to hold programs in their magnificent auditorium and they would that way have access to our membership and get them into the French cultural center.

The other thing about Marrakech was that just north of there was an alternative back up landing site for the launching of space shuttles from Cape Canaveral. So whenever there was a launch, about 60 NASA people arrived in town, and in case of an emergency landing, my office would become the press center for the event. That never in fact happened during my tenure there, but during the Atlantic space shot to Jupiter, the astronaut Dick Covey came over and we had him to dinner. My son Christopher was thrilled to meet an actual astronaut, and was even more pleased when Covey gave him an autographed picture.

Q: Did we have much of an exchange program? Were many students going to the United States as opposed to heading for Paris?

HUFFMAN: Yes. Of course the major operation was in Rabat but it was my job to identify and nominate promising candidates for Fulbright exchanges from the southern Morocco region. And whenever Rabat would have a U.S. speaker he would come down to Marrakech if it was relevant to our audiences. And I had the option of asking for specific kinds of speakers and specialists that I thought would be useful in Marrakech. We had a number of commercial interests that I had to deal with. Marrakech was a popular center for conventions and conferences, and I was frequently asked to represent the embassy at conventions concerning tourism, the environment, or trade relations and things that USIS officers didn't normally get involved in. So as I say I was kind of a general factotum down there and that was sort of interesting as well.

Q: Well did you find yourself having to do the equivalent of consular work, protection and welfare?

HUFFMAN: I didn't get into that very much, other than helping the occasion tourist report a stolen passport to the police. But we were kind of a rallying point and a refuge for the Peace Corps who were there. They would come to our library and our programs, and we gave them the privilege of checking out books and videos. As a matter of fact, there was an older couple in the Peace Corps who became our good friends. They lived in a colorful traditional Moroccan house in the souk. The husband had been a professor of German literature, a music teacher, a mutual fund administrator, and was in addition an excellent tennis player and bridge player and was teaching American studies at the university. I used him as a speaker. He would give marvelous lectures about the controversy over Christopher Columbus (hero or villain?) and American studies in general. I would send him around to our American Cultural Week presentations in outposts over in Agadir and other towns in the area. In addition, he was performing a marvelous service to us by directing a chorus made up of Moroccan university students who practiced at Dar America, and who would sing American show tunes. They'd go around and perform in various venues, including Dar America.. Thus they became an arm of our public diplomacy.

Q: Did the king ever reach out to you? Did you ever have any contact with the king?

HUFFMAN: Well, yes, when I would accompany CODELs to the palace, I would come in contact with the king and I shook his hand and so on. But not a great deal.

MICHAEL USSERY
Ambassador
Morocco (1989-1992)

Ambassador Michael Ussery was born and raised in South Carolina and educated at Newberry College and Georgia State University. Joining the State Department in 1981, he worked in the Bureau of International Organizations before moving to the White House where he served as Liaison with the State Department. He returned to State in 1985, becoming Deputy Assistant of State for North Africa. In 1989 he was appointed Ambassador to Morocco and served there until 1992. Ambassador Ussery was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy in 1998.

Q: Today is the 16th of February, 1999. Just to put me back in the picture, you were in Morocco from when to when?

USSERY: I arrived the first week in January of 1989 and left January 16, 1992.

Q: Okay, Mike, would you talk a little bit about tourism and the care and feeding of tourists and sort of the American expatriates and that sort of thing?

USSERY: Well, Morocco has certainly been an attractive tourist destination, though much more for the Europeans. The numbers when I was there were up to two million tourists a year, but only

about 100,000 Americans -- still a sizable number -- and we didn't really see the tourists so much. We only had a few incidents while I was there. We had some woman who basically was having a psychological incident, going crazy and running down to the embassy telling us that she had been barricading herself in her hotel and the Moroccans were trying to kill her. And we tracked down her family in the States and got her out of there. We had one woman in her 30's die in her sleep at a hotel, so we had to do a little investigating, an autopsy and all, to make sure there was no foul play. And we had a couple of other tourists who were scuba diving in the Mediterranean, near Tangier, and got swept up in some current, brought them up too fast, gas filled their lungs, and they died in that incident. But otherwise, there weren't too many things happening over on the tourist side. Before I'd gone to Morocco, in fact when I was working on Libya and in the aftermath of the Libyan bombing raid, some Moroccan came up in the bazaar in Marrakech, pulled out a knife, and attacked some tourist yelling something about the Americans, and did fatally wound a British tourist. But in the last 15 years that's the only incident against American tourists that I know of, other than many of them overpaying for rugs and trinkets, as they tend to do.

Q: What about drugs?

USSERY: In Morocco that's a good question. Morocco was a destination of legendary proportions in the 60's and 70's -- the road to Marrakech, for druggies around the world, for the drug culture, and for hashish. But drugs had not been a real problem in terms of the tourists. I mean, the tourists weren't over there doing large drug dealing or sizable drug dealing. There weren't incidents. There weren't overdoses reported of tourists. But what happened, though, was that there was still a considerable amount of hash trade in the northern part of Morocco going into Europe. But since it wasn't really coming to the US, it actually made it a lower priority drug country for ourselves, plus it wasn't a transit point for heroin or anything like that. So the opiate up in the north, called *kif*, we were always trying to come up with substitute farming programs and trying to get drug acreage eradicated and then converted into farmland, but even over a long period of time we haven't had a lot of success. It's a relatively minor problem.

Q: I understand kif -- I think in Somalia or something -- the whole country sort of goes on a mild high in the afternoon, and you really have to get your business done in the morning.

USSERY: Yes, thank God, I have the impression that for the Moroccan youth of the day, most of them growing up without ever having experienced *kif*. Probably 15-20 years ago, probably most Moroccan youth at some point had tried it, but thank God it wasn't a national pastime or a national high, certainly more so in the rural countryside of the north. I thought Morocco, compared to the US and other places, managed to keep a fair amount of control and the scope of their drug problem down. It seemed that they were probably less attentive -- which always suggested the possibilities of corruption -- in allowing *kif* to go out of the north of Morocco into Europe, and better at controlling the distribution of the drug inside their own country.

Q: What about Tangier? Tangier used to have the reputation of having a really dissolute expatriate community, Brits, Americans, Europeans and all that. In your time was it?

USSERY: The heyday of the expatriate community in Tangier had definitely passed by the time

I arrived on the scene. What was left was a very small, dwindling, and aging population that hadn't been replenished by younger *avant garde* types. And some of the cult icons from the earlier days -- and most notably Paul Bowles -- were still in Tangier. Bowles was there. When I met him he was in excellent condition and a very interesting individual, but well into his 80's at that point in time. He had just had sort of a reawakening about his work, because the movie The Sheltering Sky was being made at that time based on his novel. I found Paul Bowles not the least bit interested in fame or any high level of attention on his very private life; at the same time, I also found him, interestingly, very distantly removed from what life is in America today. I forget he told me how often he'd visited the US and the last time he'd visited it. It wasn't very often. I really felt in some ways that he was a man who offers marvelous insights and who lived a fascinating life, but he was totally out of touch with what life in America was in the 1980's and 90's.

Q: Well, what about going through some of our list here? How did you find relations with Algeria, Libya, and Mauritania -- let's take Algeria first -- during the time you were there?

USSERY: There were definitely border problems with Algeria. While the age-old problem between Algeria and Morocco has been the Sahara and Algeria's support of the Polisario's claim to the Western Sahara, a new problem has been cropping up, which is fundamentalism. And I think, as I talked to you about earlier, fundamentalism in Algeria seemed to catch most of the governments in West Europe and the United States by surprise. And while we're all watching Tunisia and Egypt, a very virulent form of fundamentalism burst open in Algeria. And as you look back at it, certainly the breeding-ground conditions for fundamentalism were there and ripe in Algeria -- the poverty, the unemployment, the feeling of disenfranchisement all in a Muslim country. Morocco started closing the border with Algeria as a way to control fundamentalists from entering the country. And, in fact, Morocco was worried it was starting to get the contagion up around Oujda and around the Algeria border. So relations for the most part were pretty poor all during that time, though at the beginning the king and the Algerians worked pretty closely on trying to get a new agreement for Lebanon. But that was very sporadic. At the same time, they were also trying to balance this and form the Maghreb Union. Its nexus required the Algerians and the Moroccans to cooperate. But the seesaw was always up and down on that one, between a little bit closer and then a little bit more distant relationship between the Algerians and the Moroccans. To date it's been something of a futile effort to really create an open market throughout North Africa.

Libya -- it was very interesting. The first few months were maybe the most fascinating for me in Morocco; arriving there and in my first months going to a state dinner for Margaret Thatcher. The king walking Margaret Thatcher out and over to introduce her to my wife and me and say, "This is the new young ambassador from the United States." We were there as we changed our rules and dialogue with the Palestinians. And early on, also in early '89, the king managed to pull off an Arab summit in Casablanca -- no small feat, given all the animosities in the Arab World, to get all the heads of state together. So there I was sitting in a balcony, finding it hard to believe that I was 60 feet away from Assad, from Saddam Hussein, from Muammar Qadhafi, from Arafat, some of the great adversaries, if not enemies, of the United States. And after the summit broke open, I was outside, and all of a sudden, ten feet in front of me, maybe six, was Muammar Qadhafi. He comes out, stops, starts talking to the press right in front of me. Of course, he has no

idea that I'm the American ambassador, much less that I'm somebody that's been involved in the confrontation against Libya. It was really an incredible moment for me, to see these people up close, the people that I'd really been plotting against and planning against so hard, to really see them in the flesh was quite the experience. I remember just gazing into Qadhafi's face, just studying his face for a minute there. But for the Moroccans, Libya was somewhere out there. You know, it wasn't a neighbor. It's not their immediate problem. While we think of the Maghreb and Libya and they're all in the same neighborhood, for the Moroccans sometimes Libya was the farthest thing from their minds.

Q: It's a hell of a long ways away, really.

USSERY: Yes.

Q: How did the summit come off?

USSERY: The summit managed to bandage together better words of unity than most have done but, again, like others, to no lasting effect. I can't remember the last Arab summit where one can point to a real accomplishment, other than the accomplishment probably being to assemble everybody in one room together.

Q: Did Mauritania run across -- I mean, you know, it has a border, but did that -- ?

USSERY: Mauritania was worse than the poor bastard child of the region. I couldn't seem to get any attention even in most of our conversations when we were talking about the Sahara. There were occasionally a couple of close skirmishes or accusations of shots being fired between Mauritanian and Moroccan troops, but I've always been told that the truth is, when you're down there on the Sahara-Mauritania border, God only knows where the actual border is, and troops have been known to slip across boundaries, maybe unintentionally. And so, no, very little interest or emphasis on Mauritania in my time.

Q: How about the end of the Cold War?

USSERY: The end of the Cold War was a remarkable period. I think I talked earlier about how the end of the Cold War had the effect of really squashing some rather fantastic plans for military cooperation with the Moroccans -- F-16's and maybe moving an F-16 wing to Morocco, things that would have been quite extraordinary. They lost their *raison d'être* with the end of the Cold War. But certainly, in the fall of 1989, certainly a glorious time for me -- the birth of my son and watching the Berlin Wall come down. Today, of course, with satellite dishes and all, you can sit in Morocco and have your choice of TV channels from Europe. But when I was there, we could only really get one European channel, the Sky News report, and the two Moroccan channels. But I just remember sort of endlessly trying to tune in and watch developments in Czechoslovakia, Hungary, the Soviet Union, and certainly Germany as the Cold War came to a crashing climax. And it was great to be the American ambassador. There was a new aura about being the Americans during that collapse of the Communist empire. So it made for a very interesting and exciting time. I've always thought of my experience in Morocco as being a very good classic case of having an opportunity of being a big fish in a small pond. That was nice. I don't need a

lake or an ocean.

Q: How about the Gulf War? This was a time when President Bush was making an all-out effort of getting as many flags as he could, particularly of Arab countries, to go against Iraq and Saddam Hussein after he had seized Kuwait in the summer of 1990.

USSERY: It was the most interesting work period for me, but it was also the hardest period of time. In the end I always said thank God it was a short war. The Moroccans were in a very nervous position, not liking Saddam but definitely concerned about breaking ranks in the Arab World, offending some of the other Arabs. Of course, the Arabs were divided themselves, as the Gulf Arabs rallied around the Kuwait cause. The king being a monarch, that was his natural instinct too, his natural allegiance. At the same time, he saw little upside to be gained in angering Saddam, other Arabs, and his own population, which could not really understand why he should be with the West against him. In fact, I think one of the interesting parts of being in the region was to really have it driven home how little man-on-the-street sympathy there was for the Kuwait cause. And frankly, for Moroccans, who've had plenty of Gulf visitors from ruling families in the Gulf come to summer homes in Morocco, they have a very bad taste about their rich cousins from the Mideast as arrogant, condescending rulers. I'm sure there was quite a bit of glad-they-got-theirs when Kuwait was overrun. So the king had to do quite the balancing act when his own predilection was very clear to be with the Gulf Arabs and the West.

The strangest part about the Gulf War for us was in December of 1990 as all embassies in the region began to look at their security issues in anticipation of a war. Right up until I think around the second week in January, when Jim Baker met with Iraqi foreign minister Tariq Aziz, there were many who believed we had reason to hope for a solution to head off the war. The State Department started asking us hard questions on our security situation. We consistently reported back that, while we were taking all additional measures just to tighten procedures and brief the American community just to heighten awareness about security out there on the street, that we hadn't seen any threats. Intelligence threats had not come in towards any of us in Morocco, and we seemed very safe and comfortable (certainly with the prewar part) with the man on the street. By early January it became very clear that the operating principle in Washington was don't have another Iran. So it wasn't a very cold, analytical --

Q: You might explain what you meant by "don't have another Iran."

USSERY: Don't have another Iran, don't have hostages taken, don't be the guy who has to sit there and say you let American diplomats and others be taken hostage because you didn't have the foresight to get them out of a dangerous situation quickly enough. And with that becoming the operating principle, we found we were really talking past each other. We were trying to take a very clear, analytical look at what the situation was, and they were trying to really look politically at how to deal with the region. And politically, it was since that we found out that in Israel and Saudi Arabia there was no talk of evacuating dependents, right there where missiles were going to be going off.

Q: They needed them to operate the oil fields.

USSERY: No, they didn't want to send alarm and messages of lack of confidence in the Saudi and Israeli governments and create panic, so their idea was let's keep everybody there. And 1,500 miles away in Morocco and 2,000 miles away from the Gulf War down in India and Pakistan, particularly Pakistan, let's start thinking about getting the hell out of there. And we were sort of in a state of disbelief. We couldn't believe we were having the conversation. I held two public meetings inviting dependents to come because there were so many rumors going around of what was happening. I thought the best way to do it was to have an open forum each time, tell people everything we knew, how we saw the situation, and invite their questions and try to answer them. And I gave people my philosophical view. I said, if we have a war, my view is that if you as a dependent feel that you don't want to be here, you should have the right to leave. If you're not comfortable, I don't think you should be forced to stay. Neither am I in favor of saying people should be arbitrarily evacuated. Well, it was three days before war broke out, we got a call saying pretty much like we want to do a major evacuation of Morocco. I was stunned, and certainly the planning side of Morocco in the United States was clearly ready for war to break out and wasn't going to wait and then go to evacuation. But to be so solid -- it was about a final 24 hours when they said, "Tell us why not. If you can't give us why not, then we're going to get into how many people should be evacuated." And early on a Saturday morning, I got a phone call, which would have been probably the middle of the night in Washington, telling me we're going to evacuate. Now let's get down to how many people. Well, I knew at that point there was nothing to do to stop it other than just register my protest, that we had a big undertaking in front of us. We had people in Marrakech. We had 40-something people in Tangier, a consulate in Casablanca, an embassy in Rabat. And this was also going to apply as an open opportunity for expatriates. What we had to do was: first of all, all dependents were being ordered to leave the post; any expatriate who wanted to leave, organize for them transportation, advise them. I think there was a total of about 1,500 Americans in the country; there were about 600 and something official Americans out of that number, including family members; and Dick Jackson, my deputy, quickly hit on the idea that probably the best way to get everybody out, better than trying to get people on various commercial flights through Europe, was to see if we could charter an airplane from Royal Air Maroc. And we were able to arrange to organize a flight. And of course, you know, it was bedlam to put out a notice, over a weekend, to people that they had 48 hours to leave post, to get them the rules. Then, to add quickly, Dick and I had to deal with how big the official American numbers should be. Washington was trying to plan on under a hundred official Americans left out of the 220 official Americans at post. I went through section by section, agency by agency, slot by slot, and came up with 150 that I would like to declare as essential and to stay through the war. That led to a conversation over the weekend with the Under Secretary for Management, Ivan Selin. He got on the phone and said, "Got to get the numbers down. We thought you could get them down to under a hundred?" I said, "Well, I really did it slot by slot." Ivan said, "Well, I tell you what, I'm going to let you have 125 to start with, because that's the most you can get in one of these helicopters, and so one trip with a helicopter, 125 -- that's what I'm going to give you. Pick them out." So I remember hanging up the phone, going, I don't know anything about helicopters. I don't know what helicopter could hold 125 people, but I knew this: the under secretary was imagining some huge helicopter landing in the middle of an embassy compound under assault by raving, ranting Moroccans, and that only 125 of us could get on there, and that was what he was going to allow. So I wasn't going to bother asking him what the hell this helicopter was, and I sure wasn't going to point out to him that we're located in four different cities in this country, because I think he would have

just cut our numbers more. And as I say, to me it was a hell of a way to run a railroad. As war broke out, many of the people who a week before, families who thought they would stay in Morocco if given an option, wouldn't want to go, really started changing their minds and their mood, and many of the dependents and many of the officers wanted their families to get out. But I'd still say at least for half of those who were leaving, of the dependents, they were very upset about being separated on a forced basis.

The other great issue, though, of course, was the unpleasant issue of trying to tell somebody they're nonessential. And just over half the people who would have chosen to stay, and almost half were being told, in effect, "You practically have nothing useful to do -- go." There was some logic to it though, that I think eased the blow. I mean, it was very hard to imagine what a lot of AID workers were going to be able to accomplish during the middle of a war, and we weren't going to be advancing AID programs very much at that point in time. I remember one of the ones where I was more lenient by far than Dick Jackson's recommendation was the CIA. I only wanted a very modest cut in the CIA force there. I thought the CIA could have a very important role, like the political section and the defense attaché and others. Of course, I found that if you nick the CIA they go crazy. You know for the CIA to take the smallest cut in the embassy, they were probably bellowing more than any other section about how awful and unfair and unwise this was. So I went through a day -- I'd gone through really two rounds with them. I went through one round where everybody had a chance to appeal to the section heads to have the chance to appeal what I planned to do. That was when it was about 150. Then after that I made a few changes to accommodate some wishes, or in some cases, I let them switch another officer for one I was targeting to go out. So they'd let them say, no, it would be better if this one went and this one stayed. But then after we got cut to 125, I went back and said, here it is, here's the final, here's what's got to be. I got the usual amount of grumbling from all around, but in the end, we knew we were headed for this major evacuation. More than 600 people were going to leave out of the whole mix, officers, family, and expatriates -- over 300 of them on one flight -- and my wife and son were on that flight. And at that moment, I felt, Okay, I'm not wise enough to know what lies ahead, so maybe I should be glad they're going back. People had a choice of going back and being put up in temporary lodging in Washington if they didn't have a residence or going anywhere in the United States to stay with family, being given some kind of per diem to cover those costs. Somebody had a family in Europe. They made a case-by-case special request to stay elsewhere outside the United States. We had the administrative section and others working full speed on the evacuation details, issuing orders, paperwork for everybody -- you know, what a monstrosity -- and the administrative team did a great job over the weekend. About a day before the evacuation, I took my wife and son, who was 15 months old at the time, went out to the zoo in Rabat, had a terrific day, and the next day we all went out, scores of us, out at the airport, which was a very sad goodbye because God knows when you're going to see your family members again, being separated. It was hard for me, but I also knew I needed to get around and speak to everybody I could, see how everybody was doing. I remember a new officer, the new head of the USIA there, had only arrived a month before, and there he was just breaking down in tears, and his wife and daughter and son were about to get on the plane. And in my family, my son got sick going over on the plane and had to be taken to the hospital when he got off the plane, with an incredibly high fever and everything. But they put him on antibiotics and he was fine two days later. So as they left, there we were, and I would say that out of 125, there were 110-115 men, about 10 women, there left at post to go about the work.

During the war, two things happened. One is Morocco went topsy-turvy. The people on the street went Pan-Arab overnight, while the King sent 1,600 Moroccans to fight, as a symbolic force, with us in the Gulf. The Moroccan people sided *en masse* with Saddam and Iraq, inflamed every day by very irresponsible papers, which had us deliberately bombing orphanages and killing Iraqis. And so we really did have to huddle up. And we could not get out of the embassy very much. I mean we were very judicious about travel. I went out to have conversations about the Gulf War, but what were we really going to sound out Morocco? What were we really going to produce about the Gulf War? And of course, we didn't have any official notice of when the bombing would begin, so we were awakened during the night to the fact that the bombing had begun and started following that and how much things have changed in just a few years. But at that time we didn't have a TV at the embassy that could pick up international because we didn't have our own satellite. So as I say, that's changed tremendously. In fact, while I was at the embassy, we had one fax machine for the embassy -- this new thing called a fax -- while all my friends in the United States were trying to keep in touch with me by faxes from their homes, and I was like, "Well, how come we've only got one fax? We've got such a big embassy and we have one fax, about 10 computers, and no satellite dish." So now I feel like we were back in the Stone Age. But the Hyatt hotel gave us a room, a permanent room, with a TV, so we could follow CNN. People from the embassy could go over there any time and watch the Gulf War. CNN, as you recall, really ushered in a new era of round-the-clock coverage of a war, something we hadn't seen before.

But the other thing that happened, besides the topsy-turviness of the Moroccans, was total tedium. It was probably the three most boring months I can remember in my life because a lot of other normal bilateral business just shut down, and as I say, there was very little we could do to affect the Gulf War. We sat around bored to tears, and of course, it killed the social night life that all of us diplomats are used to. Very Spartan amount of dinners with other diplomats. The Moroccans, it just wasn't an appropriate time to be out wining and dining with Moroccan officials. We did our business very properly in their offices during the day. So it was a boring time. I remember celebrating my birthday January 20, a few days after my family had left, and my wife, Betsy, and Greg went to stay with her mother up in Maine. And other than the separation and worrying about me, they had a very nice winter up in Maine, enjoying the snow and Greg going out on the frozen lake and feeding the ducks. But for me, I sat there at the house with all the shutters closed and read most nights and started smoking again, and sort of chain smoked at night to pass away the boredom. And to the question of "How did I spend the war?" I'd say the answer is "Very bored."

Q: The Moroccan Government from the king on down, how did they react to this evacuation?

USSERY: That was a very tough thing. I think they never showed that they were upset, but I think that the king had to be disappointed, had to feel like, "My God, are you people really worried here in Morocco and that we can't protect you?" He didn't say that, but that was basically what we knew the reaction would be, find it hard to really understand this and maybe taking it in stride in the sense of "those crazy Americans -- those Americans do things like that." Notifying the Moroccan Government was one of the toughest parts of that whole weekend. I went and saw the foreign minister and told him, and he took it very stoically, very matter-of-

factly, but I knew in his mind he was probably going “Oh, my God, they’re really worried about Morocco, what can happen here.” We saw the reports, huge scores of people being evacuated in Pakistan, very, very large numbers. In the end, Tunisia had about a hundred officers left, which I found disproportionate. Again, there seems to be a rule, that seems to be a manageable number, though a hundred was a much, much higher percentage of that smaller embassy. In terms of percentage of cuts, I’d taken a big whop. So within about two weeks’ time in the war, Washington then started saying, “We really think you ought to get down to a smaller number. We’re now uncomfortable and nervous with 125 Americans down there. Can’t you get down to under 100?” And I finally drew it down to about 90-something. We evacuated 30-something, 40 more people in time. We had a couple of people, of the officers, who came and asked me to be permitted to go, but those were more the case of family hardships. So it was an interesting time to be there as more of a core group with 90-something people, smaller and more intimate, I must say.

Q: What about the fabled Arab mob that was always supposed to . . . that you had to watch out about?

USSERY: I’d say this. By the way, one of the funny little things at the beginning of the war was that of course the State Department has the flash message system, which can get you news in seconds, which seemed to be a terrific thing back before Internet. We had an unbelievable system that could send a message in seconds somewhere around the world, and then alarm bells would go off. I was being roused out of bed the first few nights at around two o’clock and three o’clock in the morning and told please come in, you’ve got a flash message here. So I’d come, I’d drive myself over -- there was no way I was going to take time to get bodyguards (one of them didn’t even have a telephone) -- go over there to find that the flash was saying that a SCUD missile has just been launched at Israel or Saudi Arabia. So finally, after three or four days of this, I sent off a message that said, “I really appreciate the very efficient and timely communication; however, I find I’m unable to do absolutely anything about the SCUD missiles being launched.” So they finally took me off the flash level of distribution. But as we got into it, in addition to our own continued drawdown of people, dependents started raising hell in Israel and Saudi Arabia to get out of those countries. And finally, a few weeks in, the State Department had to cave on its position and start letting people, those who wanted to come out, come out. And people started leaving, especially, as I say, with missiles exploding out there. The masses -- the king was not willing to permit constant demonstration during the war. At the same time, there was a feeling that there was a lot of pent-up feeling, that the people wanted to be able to let out their feeling in favor of Iraq. The king finally blessed one rally, one long parade, to be held on a Sunday early in February. We had some people go down, get on rooftops, to try to see and gauge the reaction, which included American flags and Israeli flags at the front of the parade being burned. But otherwise it was a very orderly parade. Our analyst, our security officer or CIA officer, underestimated the turnout at about 50, 000 demonstrators. Even if they were wrong by a factor of 50 percent, it was about that size. Somewhere between, people said, as low as 30,000 . . . the most responsible estimate that was still probably near the ball park probably said 100,000, some other source. But we woke up to the news on the radio the next morning on the BBC to how there had been a million people in Morocco march, a story which actually was reported about Morocco from a BBC correspondent in Tunisia, who called a couple of the organizers of the parade and then sent the report in, irresponsibly, to a veteran journalist, nonetheless, to

London and then around the world. People in the State Department and others were contacting us: "Oh, my God, do you feel safe? Are you guys okay? We heard about this million-man march." And oh, this is really a dicey situation over there. But no, that was the only outpouring of expression that really ever solidified.

Near the end of the Gulf War, before we got into the land action, during all the small period of air bombing, I was then sending in messages saying that I feel that the king, the risk he's taking with his troops over there, we're not showing enough appreciation for the delicate position he's in, and somewhat the peril he puts himself in with his own populace in Morocco over his position -- because the people don't support him on this. So what can we do? And that led to deputy secretary Eagleburger making a stop in Morocco to talk to the king. And really, to my surprise, we then told the king we wanted to brief him on what our plans were going to be for the invasion and what our strategy was for the land assault. Well, I was very surprised. I had urged that we come out and do a little stroking of the king, but it had never crossed my mind to trust the Moroccan generals and a handful of Moroccans with our most secret of battle plans. That was like, Oh, my God, is this wise? But we did, and they were quite impressed, and of course, it did hold secret.

The other thing I asked was that Eagleburger bring something besides messages of good will. So Eagleburger came and they accepted one of my recommendations, which was they invite the king to a state visit after the Gulf War. Well, I knew the king wouldn't accept on the spot. He didn't know what was about to lie ahead, and if he dared and wanted to be in America in the same year, but he appreciated the invitation. He said, "Well, let me look at it and I'll think about it, and we'll discuss it later." Which he ended up coming seven months later in September. And I'll discuss that later on. But he also, I thought wisely, chose not to see the briefing on the military plans. And sort of in his mind -- I got to understand his thinking and know that he'd personally like to be able to say, "I didn't know what we were doing. I didn't know what was planned. I wasn't briefed on those."

So then was the smashing success of the military operation. We quickly started and defeated the Iraqis. We started saying, okay, send our families back. And not surprisingly, Washington said, well, let's wait, let's see how the residue settles out there. and so we were, maybe disingenuously, sending in a steady stream of "Gee, it's safe and easy" reports, and in fact, what happened that was also truly special was that the Moroccans were just tripping over themselves at our doorstep, every Moroccan official and businessman who could come in, wanting to be closer to the Americans after this great victory. Moroccans in all walks of life told us, "Oh, well, we were wrong about Saddam." And totally, not only were there not hard feelings, but a total psychological flip occurred in the period of 100 days from adamant for Saddam to saying "oh, never mind what we said during the Gulf War; we didn't mean it, we just weren't thinking right, and sure glad you guys won the war."

Q: Well, I'm told that in large areas of the world, the fact that this war was carried on CNN and available -- and of course it was very one-sided because it was just showing what we were doing and all the technical gadgets and a certain amount of manipulation on the military part, showing what these wonder weapons would do -- that in places work almost stopped in a lot of places because people were watching this war. Did that happen in Morocco?

USSERY: The Moroccan elite started getting their satellite dishes up and watching CNN. I met quite a few Moroccans who really learned English by watching CNN and augmenting their little rudimentary English. And they marveled at our technological and strategic success in the Gulf War. I mean, that was part of really being impressed with this great superpower that had won the Cold War: now they see how we've got smart bombs and how we'd destroyed armies that others like Iran had been bogged down with for 10 years, they were very impressed. I mean, they were doing homage to us. Everybody wanted to be closer than how they had been to Americans; they wanted to be even closer still. It was quite a thing to see. And I mean, because of that atmosphere, the king realized very quickly it was easy and in his interest to accept and plan to come to the United States in a short period of time after the war and to take that state visit.

Q: Well, now, what was our analysis at the time of why the Moroccan society turned to violently pro-Iraq?

USSERY: It just tapped into a pan-Arab reservoir that I think many Moroccans didn't even know existed themselves. And that sentiment carried the day psychologically, emotionally, almost without complete logic because, as I say, half the Arab world was on our side.

Q: Was there any sort of anti-Hussein . . . was this an easy opposition and all that?

USSERY: It was an easy way to show opposition to the Gulfies and to the US. In fact, with some of the slow pace of reforms and the inequities of Morocco I think it became a catch-all, a magnet for many kinds or labels of discontent to get under one umbrella and have a little feel-good session. But at most it was a psychological delusion of possible Arab greatness, that Iraq might defeat this superpower and the Arab world might enjoy new respect.

Q: How about Moroccan students?

USSERY: They were the most vocal. I mean, we were definitely told, unnecessarily, whatever you do, don't go on a Moroccan campus right now. We're trying to keep the ferment on campuses there on campus. We're not going to let these wild youth go out and stir up trouble outside the campuses. But, Mr. Ambassador, we don't really claim to have total control of what's going on with these campuses. They're a little scary right now.

Q: How long did it take to get the families back?

USSERY: They all started coming back about the first of April after the war. The war was a hundred-day war, starting in mid-January, so I guess it was about the first of May, excuse me. And about the first of April, those of us at the embassy, went basically in two shifts, for about a week or two weeks each, to go be with our families, and so at some times the embassy was down probably to about 50 officers at a time, as we all went home and visited our families. Of course, these things are not without consequences. I mean a lot of school years were certainly seriously interrupted if not destroyed in some cases. Separation's harsh. But I think more than anything else, while it was very hard for me to be away from my family -- I had a wonderful time when I went visiting them for longer than a week in May -- it really made me appreciate more the kind

of sacrifice that others had made in the previous wars, most notably the Second World War , where to be separated three to four months was nothing compared to what that generation endured. And so I tried to always take it with a philosophical view, and when I felt sorry for myself, to remind myself of my parents' generation, being apart six months, a year, and suffering much more hardship.

Q: What about American business connections and all, the industry?

USSERY: The American business community looked at us as its bellwether for business, the security of business, and all, and so it was a little bit difficult for us to tell them, "A lot of us are getting the hell out of here, but really, we think you're fine, just be careful that you're not . . ." "Certainly we advised everybody to be on heightened security because we didn't want a company to be a symbol of Americanism and become under attack in any kind of way. But at that time, though, the American commercial presence was still very small in Morocco, and many of these American companies operated as joint ventures with Moroccans and had really Moroccan names, and they were not big, visible signs or vestiges of the American corporate world.

Q: Well, then, did things pretty well get right back on course by the time --

USSERY: They were right back on course. The spring was very nice. The summer was very nice. We really rebounded into a special time. Even more than the end of the Cold War, at the end of the Gulf War we were leading a charmed life as the Americans. That really moved into the summer and fall. It was a terrific time for me, I think probably the most stimulating, at least since the beginning of my tenure there. Secretary Baker came through on a Mideast trip in August. It had taken me a long while to argue that he should bother to talk to the Moroccans, and Baker, to my dismay, all his instincts told him to only talk to the core countries of the Mideast and not broaden the circle. That was certainly to the frustration of King Hassan and others who had been involved in the Peace Process for more than 25 years.

We had a great visit with Secretary Baker. The highest level visit I'd enjoyed before Baker's was Colin Powell who came out and stayed, and that was a delightful visit the previous year. But Baker came through in August, and at that time I had an overlap of DCM's for about one week. Dick Jackson on his way out but staying there to organize the paper trip, and Joan Plaisted, my new DCM, had arrived and was there to learn. It was too much to be drawn in and in your first week organize a visit of the Secretary of State. And then, six weeks later, in Washington, was the state visit of King Hassan, the first time he'd had a state visit in nine years, and I think the first time he'd been to the US in about five years. So I was very pleased to have that happen on my watch. It was challenging to prepare for a state visit and to be able to participate in one. It was sort of a crowning achievement in a bilateral relationship that is sometimes marked by a state visit, to be a guest at the White House for a state dinner, my wife and myself, it was really very enjoyable.

Q: I assume it went well.

USSERY: It went well. At that time though, there were a litany of state visits going on with developing countries. We had to finesse them. Five or ten years before, when we had lavish

amounts of aid, being a developing country leader coming on a state visit almost assured you of a new infusion of aid to reward you for your trip. So we had to do much more creative things -- commercial agreements, bilateral investment treaties, feel-good sessions, tie-ins with academic institutions. But it went well. The king was extremely pleased.

One of my predecessors, Joseph Verner Reed, was chief of protocol for Bush at the time. The king had chosen not to stay at Blair House. Instead he wanted to take over a suite at the Willard Hotel after a good inspection by his people. When I was deputy assistant secretary, there was a trip planned by the king (which was later canceled, but I was involved in the planning), and at that time Blair House was closed for renovation, and he was going to stay at the Madison Hotel. I had to go over the preparations of the Madison, and I remember being told that the rules of the day from the king included he never sleeps on the same mattress more than once and that there needed to be eleven other rooms made available for ladies who would be traveling with the king and so on and so on. When he came for his state visit, the king took over this huge presidential suite at the Willard Hotel. I was taking Cabinet secretaries in to meet with the king, the Treasury Secretary, the Commerce Secretary, others; the king wouldn't go out to call on them in their offices, of course; they would come to him. You'd go through this dense incense burning in the room, and once you made it past that first step, you were in there. And I looked around. It was all Moroccan furniture, with a big beautiful mahogany desk with a fantastic H carved on it with a circle around it. And so as Reed and I were getting ready to take the king down, I realized, the furniture's here, and now he's going to New York. So I said, "So he doesn't have anything like this in New York," to which the king's chief of protocol said to me, "No, no. He has another set. It was delivered in New York two days ago. This will now go back to Morocco." I was like, "Oh, okay," because I was trying to figure out, wow, how are they going to get it up there and beat the king to New York on his airplane.

We rode out, and the king was very pleased with his visit, and Reed tried to explain to the king, "But you have to come to the US more frequently. It's being here. It's being seen. It's making the personal contact with the President that is the real greasing agent that makes the relationship go." The king, of course, had been so aloof. He's loath to travel, and he really didn't understand how he could know George Bush for so many years and still have to work the relationship. But as he said to him, you know, King Hussein is coming three times a year, even if some of them were called "private visits," and seeing the President. Mubarak -- three times a year. The king once every few years wasn't going to cut it. And so it ended well, and it was just a wonderful experience to have. I felt fortunate and lucky enough to be an ambassador, but also to have a state visit on part of my watch was something that most don't get to have, so I'm pleased to go through it.

And then I would just say, Stu, just chronologically, so after the king's visit, I stayed in Maine for about three more weeks. I actually started doing some job hunting. My term was about up, and my successor, Freck [Frederick] Vreeland, who had replaced me as deputy assistant secretary of the Near East Bureau was going to replace me as ambassador, so I started job hunting. I went back, and Joan Plaisted was new on the ground; she'd been there less than two months when I returned, and she was ready to throw things back in my lap. She found me in a true transition mode, saying, "Joan, you decide; if it's not real important, don't bother with me. I'm going to really enjoy Morocco before I get out of here." The one question mark was that

Vreeland was having trouble getting confirmed. There was opposition to his confirmation, and we didn't know if it was going to get approved before Congress went out of session. If it didn't, it meant by the time he was confirmed early in 1992 -- because we assumed it would happen, just it was a matter of removing some obstacles -- I would have to be there until summer of '92. If they could get it done in the Congress, I would be leaving in a January time frame. I got the message on Thanksgiving Day, when I had 20-something people over to my house for Thanksgiving. I got the call from Freck Vreeland informing me that he had been confirmed almost at the midnight hour of the night before, which was the last night Congress was in session for that year. So we set the date of January 16 for my departure, and he asked me how long I wanted to be out there, and he wasn't going to rush, so we could work around that. But then I really got into an exiting mode and thoroughly enjoyed Christmas, my last weeks in Morocco, doing the normal farewells and going on a three-day 35-mile hike in the Atlas Mountains. So I should have returned my check to the government the last two months I was there, I was having such a good time.

A lot of the Moroccan history with the United States has always stemmed from the fact that the kings of Morocco had been great protectors of the small Jewish community in Morocco. At one time there were more than 600,000 Jews in Morocco. After quite a few exoduses they now are down to only about 10,000 Moroccan Jews. Hundreds of thousands went to live in Israel after the creation of Israel, and that was the origin of these families. And over a period now of 30-something years, that fact, and the king's been a moderate Arab. That is why he's been very valuable to the Mideast Peace Process. But by the time I arrived there, when there was heated Labor versus Likud politics in Israel, the king imagined, quite wrongly, that he could be some great influence on the Moroccan Jews of Israel. Most of them, a large number, had become members of the Likud Party; about 80 percent of the Moroccan Jews became Likud members. And he always felt that was a big stick he could carry in the Peace Process. The truth is that the king was removing himself so much from the hard work and the travel necessary to make international diplomacy work. He was trying to ride on a good reputation and as one of the first, most forward-leaning Arab leaders -- most forward-leaning to Israel -- and as head of the Al-Quds Committee in the Muslim world. He had the rank, he had the privilege, but he still didn't accept how much you have to get out there and renew that every day. It's the basis, it's the platform, for doing great things, but great things don't just come straight from great ideas. He was always, and I've found him to be, a visionary thinker on the Mideast and other international politics. He was a grand statesman. But the role he played in the 1970's had long become history as he aged and stayed a little bit more reclusive.

Q: Were you ever in a position of being instructed to try to get him to recognize Israel?

USSERY: No, I was instructed a few times to try. . . . There was the Dome of the Rock. There was this major altercation at the Dome of the Rock. There were calls for condemnation of Israel. There were times we tried to get the king to be forbearing or at least help behind the scenes. At that time it was a mix. Sometimes he would, sometimes he was sympathetic, sometimes the answer was "no way," because if the king missed opportunities to really engage -- because it required risk to engage -- we were guilty over time of abusing his position. We continued to see the king solely through the prism of this forward-leaning, reasonable moderate Arab who might some day establish diplomatic relations with Israel. Rather than solicit his advice, solicit his real

engagement, we never did anything much more creative than mindlessly asking him to go out on a limb and “do one for the Gipper” and yell for Israel -- almost to the point of insensitivity about the politics and dynamics of the Arab World. So after years of finding that all Washington could do was ask him to go and praise Israel, I think the king was getting kind of tired of it.

Q: What about when you left there in '92, whither Morocco, whither the king? What was your impression?

USSERY: Ah, good question. In '92, I left with the belief that Morocco was a developing country that could make it. I don't know how to define “make it,” but that it could make it into the developed world, even in my lifetime, if it had the right kind of policies and programs in place or going into place. It was moving in a good direction. It had a very sound economy. It had, and still has, a terribly high percentage of illiterate citizens, particularly women in the rural areas. It needs to be able to make change in the educational area and educate its population for the 21st century. But I left with a great level of confidence. Even though I realized that the monarchy could be in its waning days over the next 10 to 20 years, the path seemed clear: first that the king's death would not destabilize the country; that the country could absorb the shock of losing Hassan after 30-something years quite well, make a smooth transition to the crown prince, who in turn was determined to see Morocco become more democratic. And many have described it as the Spanish model, under king Juan Carlos. I'm not convinced that the monarch would give up that much power that rapidly, but the fact that the Palace, even to this day, has continued to become less important in the daily lives of Morocco, and now, as we speak, the opposition parties, which I came to detest because of their position on the Iraq War and stirring up the population with totally reprehensible stories in the press, are now in power. They are acting responsibly. They haven't done as well as they hoped or the voters thought they would, but they also don't have any experience in governing. But I think what's important is the fact that was in the opposition's and the king's mind that while they were loyal to the monarchy the king has refused to let them at the levers of power for years and years and years now, and the fact that he's done that -- these are all great signs. Great progress on human rights, something we worked on. Moroccans are so close to Europe, and once were politically so close to the United States, and it's a country that understood that you can't have a duality of progress on one hand coupled with serious human rights abuses on the other and be welcomed by the Western Nations.

So I left with a high sense of confidence, one that in seven years has not been greatly disturbed. The longer the king lives, maybe the slower the transition will be because the longer he lives, it seems to be, he's a little bit more removed from the public and understanding their thinking, and change can't accelerate as much as it probably can under the crown prince. But I think Morocco's doing well, and indeed, if I live a long life, it's a country that I'll see make immeasurable progress. And every five years or more, I look forward to continue going back there.

Q: I may have asked this question before. I can't remember. Did Morocco suffer at all -- I'm showing my prejudice -- from sort of the social democratic disease that affects Europeans: you know, over-regulation and the general idea of control over all economic things at the government level rather than letting capitalism raise its ugly but effective head?

USSERY: Good. Well, now I think you've given me the essay question for the day. As a student of Morocco -- and that's all I claim to be; it's so multidimensional and there are so many levels in Morocco, I'm not sure I can live long enough to become an expert. But as a student of Morocco -- I first of all say Morocco came away less scarred from the colonial period than most of the African countries. This was certainly in sharp contrast to the Algerians, who were psychologically scarred, and to great lasting effect, by a horrendous war and, I believe, more than a million or more than two million casualties, with France. A very noticeable difference with what happened with Morocco as a protectorate as opposed to a full colony of France. But Morocco at independence had about eight million people, I believe. Today it's about 30 million. The population has grown very fast. Population growth has been an issue, though not as much as in Algeria, where it's just burgeoning at lightning speeds. The history of the king has been really fascinating. One should remember that he had an instrumental role as a crown prince in securing freedom for Morocco and helping his father come back from exile in Madagascar. He was a tough crown prince and was said to have ordered the execution of some French settlers during the conflict. He made a lot of missteps at the beginning, and by 1970-71, there were two famous assassination attempts on his life: one, where 96 people, including the Belgian ambassador and others, were killed at a state dinner at the palace at the beach, when troops from his army attacked and began firing. It was an assassination attempt or a *coup d'état*. What's not clear, as I understand it, is that some of the troops who attacked may have been loyal to Hassan and were told that people were trying to kill the king, and they went in and started opening fire wildly. The king was hiding in a back room. He was discovered by a young officer who was under clear instructions that this was all about the removal of the king, pulled his rifle up to the king and prepared to fire. To which the king is supposed to have said, "You will not shoot me. I am your king. I am the commander of the faithful. Put down your rifle." The soldier did, and a few minutes later, troops loyal to the king came and rescued him.

Within a period of a year, the King was flying back with his pilot, flying back on his Boeing aircraft, when he was attacked by his own air force coming back into Moroccan airspace from Europe. After a few passes the plane was just riddled with bullets, and the king got on the speaker and said something to the effect of "Stop firing, stop firing. The bastard is dead. Let me land. You've killed the king." They let the king land, and then he had everybody rounded up and arrested who was staging the coup. To this day the Royal Air Maroc airline consists of Boeing airplanes because of how impressed the king was that the Boeing aircraft held up and continued flying under such damage. But it also gave the king, a pilot at the time, a great fear of flying, and has led, almost 30 years later, to why the king doesn't travel very extensively.

But in the '70's the Moroccans became hugely indebted. In fact, one of the problems facing Morocco today is more than \$20 billion in debt, one of the most heavily indebted per capita countries in the world. But they have been working on this problem very seriously and not incurring more debt over the last ten years. The king once said to me, "I've always been pleased that Morocco never had oil, because look what it did to Algeria. It's the curse of oil. Algeria went crazy on social spending. They spent more money than they could. They created all these programs and now they have nothing except more gas in the ground and they can't pay their bills." But yes, Morocco had, in the '70's, gone on quite a social spending spree. I can't make the case about why they shouldn't have. I'm sure there are many good programs. They led to growth in the economy, development of agriculture that wouldn't have happened without that kind of

spending. I don't know what Morocco would have been without it, but I do know that the legacy of that has been a serious debt problem, and cramps the budget.

ROBERT J. WOZNIAK
Public Affairs Officer, USIS
Rabat (1990-1992)

Mr. Wozniak was born in Michigan and educated at the University of Chicago, William College and the University of Indiana. After service in the U.S. Navy in WWII, he joined the United States Information Agency (USIA) in 1963. His service included several assignments at USIA Headquarters in Washington, D.C. as well postings abroad as Public Affairs Officer (or Deputy) in Athens, Nicosia, Damascus, and Rabat. Mr. Wozniak was interviewed by Raymond Ewing in 2001.

Q: Morocco was probably of interest to you because of some of your previous assignments, Syria.

WOZNIAK: It was very much attractive to us. Me, because I had a smattering of Arabic and a taste of assignment in the Arab world. My wife was half Arab; she was born in Syria.

Q: You had some French.

WOZNIAK: And some French, yes. Morocco of course was a wonderful country, with a rich and interesting history. And it was a critical friend to the United States then and now in the context of Middle East politics and policies. So yes it was very attractive to me for all of those reasons.

Q: So you went there in the summer of 1990, right after Iraq's August 2 invasion of Kuwait.

WOZNIAK: No. I arrived interestingly enough before the war, before Desert Storm [editor: The Desert Storm air campaign began on January 17, 1991 and the ground campaign began on February 23] while the Iraqis were still sitting in Kuwait. I arrived one day after major riots in the city of Fez. They were connected to developments in the Near East. They were domestic in nature, but the embassy was of course, consumed with security concerns at the time. That undoubtedly fed the thinking of Washington several weeks later on the eve of Desert Storm when it was determined that Morocco along with most other, not all but most other Near East NEA countries, should evacuate so-called non essential personnel. So I arrived I think probably a week or two weeks before Christmas, left for four or five days at Christmas time to go and fetch my family who did not join me on the trip to Morocco. They stopped in Germany to visit friends and family. I fetched them, brought them to Morocco. They were with me for about two weeks I think, when they were evacuated. It was a very curious time.

Having just arrived I didn't know any Moroccans to speak of, and certainly no friends. My experience however was no different from other Americans who had been there for some time whose Arabic and French were probably better than mine and led to a lot of acquaintances and

friendships. Moroccans are very affable, easy, tolerant people, but they were not at all pleased. They were exercised by the notion of Western powers going to war with a brother, Arab brethren. There was no social contact, and only the most essential business contact with Moroccans during the course of the war which of course was very short, but the evacuation of personnel continued for several months after that. And the atmosphere, the quality of interaction with Moroccans warmed up slowly thereafter. I think, I would like to think, I did think, and I still think that USIS Rabat had a major role in turning things around and returning Moroccan-American relations to the warmth and mutually beneficial cooperation that has characterized them historically.

I said that because we were able to capitalize on some developments that lent themselves to public affairs exploitation. The Secretary of State Baker visited, for example (August 3, 4, 1991). I have to go back and look at my papers, but as I recall, the late King Hassan visited the U.S. shortly thereafter. A book on American-Moroccan relations which had been on the shelf for a long time was ready for publication and needed a little seed money to get it to press. We did that. There were a couple of other deals which I don't recall right now, 13 years. But the media were just chock-a-bloc with up beat stuff about Morocco and the United States. Those opportunities lent themselves to accelerating the pace which the relationship might return to normality I think.

Q: Well that is very interesting because certainly that was a major blow, a major hurdle, a major challenge from the war and the immediate aftermath throughout the entire region. If things returned to normal fairly easily and fairly quickly in Morocco, I think it was probably the exception rather than the rule, because I don't think that happened too many other places as quickly as it apparently did there.

WOZNIAK: I think you are right. Of course we are also building on the Moroccan notion that it is only a body of water that separates us. We are really geographic neighbors and understand each other and have common interests. A solid foundation.

Q: So you were able to resume the work with the press, the library exchanges fairly quickly.

WOZNIAK: Yes, immediately. During the tense period, I can recall two meetings that exemplified the polarity of these two experiences, the normal one with the Moroccans and the abnormal one during the war period. As the PAO, I was a member with the CAO of the Moroccan-American educational commission, the Fulbright activity, which was chaired by the then rector of the University of Rabat. An elegant intellectual who normally had very fond feelings towards Americans and American education as indicated by the fact that he had this position and valued it because he made sure that it worked to Morocco's advantage in terms of scholarship awards in the right fields etc. Willy nilly we had to have several meetings of the board during the Desert Storm period, and I can tell you they were icy. Just really formal and distant and there was nothing, no grace, no graciousness to characterize them. In that same period, then Ambassador Mike Ussery (WHO SERVED FROM January 1989 to January 1992), a political appointee by President Bush, did take me on a number of ministerial calls to meet with officialdom that was important to USIA activities. The then minister of cultural affairs who subsequently was an ambassador to the United States and is now the foreign minister, a man who was educated in the United States and speaks English better than I, that meeting was almost

unique in that he conducted himself in that meeting and in subsequent ones as if the war was not impacting on any of our interests and concerns and that it was a transitory thing. We became very good friends from the get go. I think we remain so. But that was a rare occasion.

Q: Well it was a difficult period for Ambassador Ussery and for you and for everybody until things began to sort out and normalize, and as you say in Morocco sooner rather than later as it turned out.

WOZNIAK: I guess that is right, as I indicated.

Q: So you were there just a couple of years from '92?

WOZNIAK: A very short time, less than two years. That is the story I am not sure we should get into.

JOAN M. PLAISTED
Deputy Chief of Mission
Rabat (1991-1994)

Ambassador Joan M. Plaisted was born in 1958 in Minnesota. She attended America University and received both her Bachelor's and Master's Degree. Her postings abroad include Paris, Hong Kong, Geneva, Rabat and Marshall Island as Ambassador. Ambassador Plaisted was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy on July 30, 2001.

Q: Okay, Joan, today is August 10, 2001. The DCMship is always something which is not a normal assignment. It has to be run through the ambassador. How did you get this assignment?

PLAISTED: I knew the then ambassador in Morocco, my first ambassador was Mike Ussery.

Q: I have interviewed Mike.

PLAISTED: I had first met him when I was living in Geneva through a mutual friend working for the White House. He told Mike to look me up in Geneva. We had drinks together. Do you want me to go into great detail on how I met this person who was later to become the ambassador to Morocco, and to select me as his DCM? It was quite a mishap when we first met. I was very busy that week, so when Mike called I suggested he come over to my apartment for drinks, and we just spend about an hour together. I got home from the office late. I lived in a lovely apartment overlooking Lac Léman. It has one of these old French elevators. I am on the 5th floor. I get back late, I am afraid he might be waiting for me. The elevator doesn't work, so I walk up five flights of stairs to the top carrying my heavy briefcase that has all the work in it I have to do for the next day. I'm cursing, which is something I almost never do. There, leaning against my door, is Mike Ussery, whom I had never met before. I shake hands, introduce myself, and said, "Oh, I can see you are not familiar with French elevators. Once you get to the top, you

have to close the doors or the elevator will never descend again." We did that so the next person wouldn't have to walk up all the flights of stairs. He came in; I gave him a drink on a lovely little balcony overlooking all the sailboats in the harbor, overlooking the jet d'eau, the fountain. We are standing out on the balcony and there are glass doors on the balcony against the wall. He leans against the wall and one of the glass doors broke. So about that time, drinks were over. I thought before anything else happens, I'd best bid him farewell. A year or two later, I am walking down the halls of the State Department. I am always looking at the nameplates to see if I recognize old friends and I see Mike Ussery, Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for the Near East Bureau. So I go in to ask his secretary if this is the same Mike Ussery I met in Geneva and if it is, I will wait until I get additional insurance and I will come back in and talk to him. It was a really funny misadventure when we had first met. I did talk to him again in Washington. So we got back together. When I was leaving for Taiwan he thought he was going to leave the administration and be a consultant. I got a letter from Mike months later that says, "Dear Joan," and it is on the stationery of the American Embassy in Morocco. He said, "It is a long story. I'll have to tell you someday, but I am in Morocco. I even asked the State Department if it would be too late for you if you could bid on the position of DCM. They said you are doing too valuable work in Taiwan but if you would ever like a Francophone vacation, please come and join Betsy - I knew his wife Betsy, too - and me in Morocco." I wrote back and said, "Mike, you are in one of my favorite countries in the world. Be certain you go down to Ouarzazate, to Zagora, to Marrakech." I was just so enthused about his assignment that when the incumbent DCM's tour was over, Dick Jackson...

Q: He had been there forever.

PLAISTED: Yes. Mike again was looking for a DCM. By then I was more of a prime candidate. It got down to three candidates. There had been a discussion at that point about trying to get more women into the Middle East. We did have someone in Iraq, April Glaspie, at the ambassadorial level. Maybe there were others; I can't think of any. But there was a conversation with the assistant secretary, John Kelly, and Mike, I believe, or at least the bureau was looking to place women. They thought that one of the places where it would be easier to be a female operating in the Middle East would be Morocco. There were three of us competing to be DCM. It had been narrowed down to three candidates. One was Ken Brill, who later became the executive secretary who was very talented. I went up and interviewed with him about a job in P in the under secretary's office at that point. I went and talked to him and just thought he was a very impressive individual. Then the second candidate had been our chargé in Iraq during the Gulf War. Very well spoken, and to me he deserved...

Q: Joe Wilson.

PLAISTED: Yes.

Q: Whom I am interviewing now. We are just getting to that point.

PLAISTED: Right. Get Joe's take on this. To me Joe Wilson deserved it if he wanted to be DCM in Morocco. To me he should have become an ambassador and had his own post. He had certainly proven his capabilities. My feeling was Joe Wilson gets to pick his assignment. So

those were my two competitors. I was talking with Mike Ussery on the phone. I had to say to him as a friend and colleague that there is one person on the list from P who is just so impressive. You should seriously consider him. He did tell me that he checked him out too and he was very impressive. But some of the advantages I had, I spoke French very well. Once I got to Morocco I realized what an asset that was because all the foreign ministry officials spoke French. You really had to be able to run over at a minutes notice reading your instructions and translating them into French on your own to get Morocco's support. It really did come down to his selection, Mike's selection. Plus there was another person in the Department with a say in the selection process, because Mike Ussery's term as ambassador was going to be ending shortly at the end of the year, and there was another deputy assistant secretary of state who at that point was the informal candidate to replace Ambassador Ussery. I went in and interviewed with this gentleman, and the interview went quite well. So it was ultimately Mike Ussery's choice. He checked with the person he thought might replace him. I was selected. The person in P may well have found another position at that point because I know he was working on another assignment. We will have to see where our colleague Joe Wilson ended up.

Q: He ended up in places in Africa as ambassador.

PLAISTED: Right, he should have had his own posting immediately after Iraq.

Q: You did raise a question. You obviously were on trade negotiations. You worked out a reputation of your own, but there was this series of suits of women feeling they had been discriminated, I won't say feeling; they were discriminated against. Did you get involved in any of this, or were you sort of off doing your thing? It was called the women's suit or something like that. Did this affect you or did you get involved?

PLAISTED: I wasn't actively involved in it. It was called the women's class action suit. I never wanted to opt out of it. You were automatically part of the suit as a woman unless you opted out of it. I certainly did not want to opt out of it because I really was very interested in seeing how the courts would resolve this issue. I always followed it with interest to see just how the courts would come out. Had women been discriminated against? Had they not? Because there were times in my career when I felt, yes, I was discriminated against. There were other times when I felt it was very much to my advantage to be a woman. In the final analysis did it all balance out? So I followed the case with great interest.

Q: This was not, you weren't a driving force?

PLAISTED: No, I wasn't really active in the case.

Q: Okay. You were in Morocco from '91 to when?

PLAISTED: '94.

Q: First could you describe the government and the situation in Morocco, the economy of Morocco when you arrived there.

PLAISTED: The government of Morocco, the first thing to know about it, Morocco is a monarchy. King Hassan had been on the throne for thirty some years. When I was there he had almost absolute power. I always thought I wanted to be an ambassador, but after serving in Morocco, I thought it would really be much better to be a king because of the absolute power that one can wield as king. I could go into a few examples just to set the stage for politics at the top in Morocco. On the Middle East peace process there would be times when the Secretary of State really thought that something had been lined up. Morocco was set to move forward, and it had been lined up with Dennis Ross, and the Moroccan ambassador in the U.S. and the Minister for Foreign Affairs in Rabat. The Secretary of State goes in, I am with him as chargé, to call on his majesty, and suddenly you know, there is no deal. Whether the king had indeed signed off on it as we thought he had or whether his advisors never dared mention it until the Secretary was actually present with the king, who knows, but at the last moment the king is king. It is his call. His word is what would run the country. How much power you had in Morocco depended on how close you were to the king, what was your access to the king. Even his very closest advisors sometimes would spend days waiting to meet with him. They would all be out at whatever palace he happened to be in. I was always trying to get hold of one of them. They may be there for days waiting to see if the king needed them or if they had something urgent they wanted to present to him. The king was very well spoken, but he had this fabulous interpreter who, if the king was speaking in French and the interpreter would translate into English for congressional visitors or groups that we had calling on the king, the interpreter would make what the king said, which was really quite fine, but when it came through this fabulous interpreter, he was even more loquacious, more eloquent than what the king had originally said. I also thought it would be fun to get an interpreter like that some day who could really say what I truly wanted to be saying.

Another funny incident with the king is that I spent about half of my time in Morocco as the chargé in addition to serving three ambassadors. There had been a bit of a gap - almost a year - after the departure of our second ambassador. The word was going around Morocco that the reason that the Clinton administration wasn't appointing a new ambassador was that we disapproved of Morocco's human rights record. Frankly I didn't think that was a bad rumor to have going around. There wasn't any truth to it, but it wasn't a bad thing to have going around. We were at the palace, with the congressional delegation I brought to call on the king, and he started going on and on about what an absolutely fabulous job Joan Plaisted was doing as chargé d'affaires. I thought this was very strange. The king was citing great details. Somebody has really done the research for him. He must have gone on for ten minutes. You don't always want to be praised too highly by a foreign the head of state. I just didn't understand this at all, but I had been in country long enough to realize the king had something in mind. Finally, I was literally blushing at the praise the king was heaping on me, and finally he got down to what he was really driving at with the Congressional delegation. "But you know, a country as important as Morocco really deserves an ambassador, and I hope you will appoint one soon." At which point I was quite relieved. That is why he had heaped the praise on me.

So you have a monarchy, very much a monarchy with the king at the top. It was at a time when there was talk of democratization, liberalization, opening up. The king was really a master of dosage, where he sort of knew how much or little to give up. This is not Thomas Jefferson, but he understood his country so well. Through this balancing act there was a constitutional referendum in '92 when I was there. There were parliamentary elections and local elections in '93

where I was very active trying to get election observers from the democratic institutes here in Washington, and we did. I had to go over to the palace to negotiate their approval. First the king said no to election observers. Then we explained how so many other countries had election observers, it really gives you credibility in the rest of the world to have outsiders observe your elections. Then the king did come around and say yes to the observers. But then I had to go over to the palace to make the arrangements. They asked me how many observers are coming. You know Morocco is the size of California. I said, "Well, about a dozen." This was the king's counselor whom I had dealt with quite often. He said, "A dozen. That's an army." We got him to calm down and agree to the election observers. It really was a good service for Morocco and for democracy. So the country was just beginning to open up.

Some of the counselors around the king were very good; some of them, speaking frankly, were straight out of Jurassic Park. They were sycophants who had been around for years. Everyone was looking at the next generation. The king, we are all mortal, the crown prince had been named as the heir apparent. Was the crown prince ready? There was no real question of whether the crown prince was ready or not, he would take over when his time came to take over. But there were many discussions at that point, was the crown prince ready. Now, he has spent two years on the throne. Was he ready to take over from his father? In my personal dealings with him I always thought he was quite intelligent, quite witty.

Q: You mentioned a couple of things here. I am sure we will come back to them, but the Middle East process was going hot and heavy at the time. There was the meeting in Oslo and Madrid. The Bush administration in particular was very concerned with this. What was the role of the king? It sounds like he was in and he was out or did we know where he stood on this?

PLAISTED: The king always saw himself as very much involved, he always wanted to be a major player in the Middle East peace process. In the past he had played more of an intermediary role, but now that the two sides, the Israelis and the Palestinians, the Arab world were dealing with each other more directly, Morocco's role as an intermediary was somewhat decreased. The king and many Moroccans had always been very proud of the Jewish heritage in Morocco. Once there were about 600,000 Jews who lived in Morocco, and many had their homes near the palaces. The homes you see now in Morocco with balconies were the Jewish homes near the Medina, because the Arab women couldn't sit out on the balconies. In my time there were only about 6,000 Jewish people left in the kingdom. The king had been in the vanguard in welcoming Rabin and Peres before it was popular. Simon Peres was in Morocco in 1986. You have to give the king a lot of credit for this, for being that open so early.

Morocco was a member of the OIC, the King was the head of the Al Kuds, the Jerusalem committee. In my day we very much sought Morocco's support for the Middle East peace process. At the very top levels, of course, it was done through the Secretary of State. I was cut out like most of our ambassadors in the day-to-day events, what Dennis Ross was doing, but there were issues, and I frankly wish they had kept me more in the loop. I probably could have been of more assistance. But there were many issues when we were asking the palace, I was asking the palace, for their assistance. Morocco agreed to chair one of the Middle East peace process working groups which was very important to us. In general, they were quite helpful in the Middle East peace process.

The one area where we did have difficulty was the Arab boycott. We were always trying to seek the king's assistance because of his contact with both sides to help end the Arab boycott. He just basically said he just couldn't do it, there was really nothing to gain. There would be Syrian resentment. It just wasn't an issue he wanted to take on - ending the Arab boycott. But he was very actively involved in the peace process.

I'll give you another example showing how diplomacy takes place in the days of CNN. It was right after the White House signing ceremony in September. It was about 6:30 in the morning, I am watching all this on CNN in Rabat.

Q: September of what year?

PLAISTED: Of '93, September '93. I am watching all this on CNN as I do my morning exercises at home. All of a sudden I hear that Rabin and Peres are leaving Washington, DC. They are flying back to Israel, but they are going to make a stop over in Rabat in Morocco to see the king. I hear this on CNN. I go, Joan you are chargé. I was chargé. I didn't know a thing about it. Well, it was quite possible it was lined up at the last moment. Anyway I didn't know a thing about it. I thought we have got to get right on top of this. So I called the political counselor, woke him up, and said, "John, do you know anything about this? I just heard this on CNN." He said, "No we had better call the foreign ministry when it opens at nine." I said, "Call the foreign ministry when it opens at nine! We had better track down the king's counselor or anyone we possibly can right now to know the subject of the meeting, what is likely to come out of it, and to be certain somebody gives us a report at the end of all this to let Washington know we are following it." So I, thank goodness, I was able to contact one of the king's closest counselors who was very much involved in the visit. In fact he said that he was just about to head to the airport to greet them and yes he would call me or somebody would let me know what had come out of the visit. Of course we got in touch with the State Department's Operations Center and assured everyone we were following developments, and then did send in an immediate report on this. And at the very end we did get kudos from the Department. State said that President Clinton was watching the developments. The President was watching the developments very closely and our coverage was critical. But I first picked it up on CNN. That is a little aside on the Middle East peace process.

Q: How were American-Moroccan relations during this period? I am sure you could recite line for line the litany about how Morocco was the first country to recognize the United States, one of our closest allies. I mean it is used all the time. Was this taken seriously there?

PLAISTED: Well, it is something we always liked to bring out in speeches. It always was a little overdone, but they really were the first country to recognize a newly fledgling U.S. What I always liked to add, I wouldn't say this in public briefings, but something I would use in our closed briefings, Morocco was also the country we almost first went to war with when the Barbary pirates captured a U.S. ship.

The relationship with the U.S. really was quite good in part because shortly after I arrived, the king was invited to a U.S. on a state visit. It all went very well. I think both the U.S. side and the Moroccan side were very pleased to have this face-to-face diplomacy. There were a series of

high level visits. Secretary of State Baker came through Morocco. I think it was just two days after I arrived as DCM. Secretary Baker came through with his entourage. Secretary Christopher certainly came through a couple of times, but what really helped set the tone for relations I think during my time was the state visit in October of '91.

You may think the most important issue was seeking the king's support for the Middle East peace process which I am certain the President did or discussing the future of Jerusalem or the king's strategic vision. King Hassan always liked to present his strategic vision. What really was the most difficult issue in negotiating the king's schedule and his call on President Bush was timeliness. The king was not a morning person. He loved to stay up late at night, got to sleep very late, and would usually not rise before 11:00 A.M. Well, his call on the President in Washington in the White House was set for 11:00 A.M. The king had kept Queen Elizabeth waiting for 45 minutes at one point. The President did have something scheduled later, and, of course, he wanted to spend time with the king. Our main message was please get the king to the White House on time. He was going to be jet lagged anyway. He won't know what time it really is. Please do have him show up on time. And thank goodness the king did arrive right on the very minute scheduled. The king's motorcade pulled up on time to call on the President, but it could have been an embarrassing incident. I give him full credit for actually showing up on time to call on the President. So the relationship at that point was quite close because of high-level diplomacy, state visits.

Former president Ronald Reagan and Nancy Reagan came through Morocco in 1991 at the king's invitation. In fact I even got President Reagan to come and address the embassy personnel, something they absolutely loved. I have a great photo where I am helping him out of the car showing former President Reagan on one side where to stand and showing the former first lady Nancy Reagan where to stand. I am in the middle of the two of them with my arms outstretched. It is a fabulous photo. I accused the photographer at the embassy of touching it up. I said, "Don't show it to Nancy Reagan. She never likes anyone to outshine her." I was very pleased that President Reagan was able to address the embassy staff. Former President Bush after he left office also came through Morocco to call on the king. The overall relationship was quite positive. Morocco served on the Security Council in '92 and '93 during the time when I was DCM/Chargé. In January of '92 they started serving on the Security Council. You never want that to happen when you are at an embassy because it literally almost doubled our workload, certainly in the political section and very much so in the front office. We were always giving Moroccan officials background on issues that were coming up in the Security Council. We were seeking their support particularly on the issue of Somalia when we wanted to deploy international troops very quickly. Morocco was very supportive. I went in at my level and requested their support. Could they send troops immediately? The President called King Hassan directly, and the king instantly promised the President of the United States that they would send troops to Somalia. They ended up sending 1,200 troops. They even extended their troops service in Somalia. I was also very active in trying to get Morocco to pull their troops out of Equatorial Guinea where they were actually propping up a bad government. Eventually we were able to convince them to pull their troops out of Equatorial Guinea. In general I think Morocco played a very positive role on the Security Council.

Q: Were there other U.S.-Moroccan political issues of concern? What about our economic ties?

PLAISTED: I should just say in terms of the U.S.-Moroccan relations, the one area where we did disagree, where the king had real concerns, was he was constantly warning us against continuing the sanctions in Iraq. He really did feel the impact on the Iraqi people. He would keep talking about the 500,000 malnourished children in Iraq. He had something of a 19th century balance-of-power view of the world that the U.S. should allow Iraq to be a counterpoint to Iran for balancing power in the region. So we did disagree over the issue of sanctions. The U.S. had also requested Morocco's help on Rwanda, on Haiti, and on ending the Arab boycott. We were not successful in those efforts. Before my time, I should say that Morocco was really the first country to send troops to the Gulf, to Saudi Arabia. That probably was a hard decision to make, but the king immediately sent troops to Saudi Arabia to another monarchy. I hope this puts the U.S.-Moroccan relationship in more of a perspective.

You were asking about the economy. From the U.S. perspective, we always wanted to increase U.S. exports. From the Moroccan perspective, they were always asking please send us more U.S. investors. They almost seemed to think that if they just asked me, an economist, please send us U.S. investors the cargo plane was going to drop out of the sky full of Americans who were dying to invest in Morocco. So we spent a lot of time working on the investment climate, trying to improve the investment climate as a first step towards attracting more American investment. When the king was to make his state visit to the U.S. I suggested to the palace that we arrange for him to call on American bankers and businesspeople in New York, which he did. Let them discuss firsthand what the American business community is looking for and what Morocco could offer. In Casablanca at the U.S. consulate we opened up a one-stop business center to make it easier to get the information that was available. I also set up regular briefings with the business community. We launched a business roundtable, something that I initiated with our commercial counselor when I was chargé. These were regular meetings, briefings, open sessions with the business community and me as the chargé with the idea that when our new ambassador arrived it would become the ambassador's business roundtable which it did. We also launched in my time a U.S.-Moroccan trade and investment group which is still ongoing. So there were a lot of efforts to increase investment and to assist Morocco. Economically Morocco had strengths and weaknesses. On a plus side, Morocco has a very diversified economy unlike many other countries. They had agriculture, tourism, light industry, money from phosphates, money from remittances. So it was more diversified, but on the negative side, the real problem is a very high unemployment rate which could possibly lead to instability. There is the rise of fundamentalism, certainly in neighboring Algeria. There is always the question could this spill over to Morocco. The unemployment rate was about 18%. There is a large income gap between the rich and the poor. Corruption was a problem. A very large percentage of the population was under 25. Amongst the unemployed, many were university graduates. So a real key issue was youth unemployment. Europe had a similar problem at that point, and it was really an issue in Morocco too, how do you employ the youth. What does this mean for the long-term stability of the country?

Q: Were there either customs or rules and regulations that made it not a very receptive economy for investment?

PLAISTED: Yes. There were concerns. The whole legal framework was one. You have to have

full confidence in the judiciary in most of these countries before American firms will go in and invest. Was the legal system completely fair and open? The degree of corruption - of possible payouts behind the scenes - was another concern. American firms are bound by codes of conduct, and beyond codes of conduct bribery is illegal for U.S. businessmen operating overseas. So that climate was a concern for businesses coming in. The regulations were something of a labyrinth. You needed to clarify what are the regulations and really have the government itself out there promoting investment. Having the king himself at that level indicate his interest in attracting more investment certainly helps. And then actually carrying it out because often in Morocco the king can want something to happen but to have it actually take place requires action on a number of other levels. So, yes, there were impediments to investment. Something I always point out is, we are in an age of globalization. American businesses can go anywhere, so you had better convince them why they should come to Morocco.

Q: Did you find the hand of France in everything, or had that changed?

PLAISTED: No, I didn't. I think that had changed. In fact I think the Moroccans were almost trying to make a point that they certainly weren't dependent in any way on France, a nationalistic pride in a way. You would certainly see French influence in the culture. I was speaking French at dinner parties, French was our common language. The language of Morocco is actually a Moroccan Arabic, so if you speak classical Arabic, it is not going to get you very far. You had to speak Moroccan Arabic, so the language on the diplomatic circuit that we all shared was primarily French. You see French influence in the culture, but they are trying to move away from France. There was a time earlier when many of the top government officials were marrying French wives. When I was in Morocco there seemed to be a big move afoot to get divorced from your French wife and remarry with a Moroccan wife. In the foreign ministry you were really not supposed to be dating foreigners. So it was a rise of nationalism of sorts and also a degree of paranoia fearing foreigners would learn too much about the Kingdom.

Q: What was your impression of the Moroccan foreign service particularly as you would see it reflected in their ambassador here in Washington? Was the word getting through to the king or was everything predicated on how the king felt about things? Was there a good foreign service that was bringing back information?

PLAISTED: I am not sure how active their embassy here was in feeding back information at the time when I was in Morocco. We weren't working that closely with the embassy here, at least I wasn't in Morocco. It all depends on your access to the king. It depends on who their ambassador is here in Washington. Later their ambassador became someone who had been the minister of culture during my time. Then he became ambassador to the U.S. He went on to be foreign minister. In fact he is still foreign minister today. Mohammed Benaissa definitely had the king's confidence, that is King Hassan's. He is still foreign minister today under Mohammed VI. Someone like that, yes, he does have access to the king, and can probably pick up the phone. Today it very much depends - as it does in the U.S. foreign service, but even much more so because of Morocco's being a monarchy - on the personalities of their ambassadors here in Washington.

I found the officials in their foreign ministry, in general, to be quite highly educated, quite

reasonable. We didn't always agree, but I would lay out the arguments for the position the U.S. wanted them to take, and, depending on the issue, they would often have to bring it to the king's attention. Or I would go and see how close I could get to meeting with the king to talking with his top counselor, if it was really a major issue where we truly wanted the king's support such as troops for Somalia or election observers for their parliamentary elections. They were very educated people, quite rational. I was concerned as a female how are they going to react to a woman making these demarches. Something I have always done, I think I learned it early on, I don't come in and say, "Hi, I'm Joan. Weak woman that I am, please, would you do this for the U.S." Rather I would say, "The President of the United States, President Bush, President Clinton, would like to call this to your attention and for you to consider this course of action." It didn't matter if I were a green frog, or at least I wanted them to think it didn't matter if I were a green frog. I was speaking for the President of the United States. I am the spokesperson for the President of the United States. That I learned early on.

Q: You mentioned human rights. Was there a problem?

PLAISTED: Yes, there was indeed a problem at that point. The U.S. was very active in pushing human rights, liberalization, democratization. I was often over talking to their ministers about releasing some of the political prisoners, about their treatment, about getting access for more of the NGOs to come in and look at prison conditions. A very sensitive issue between the U.S. and Morocco was always the release of our human rights report. And, of course, when it did come out we wanted to get as much publicity as possible within Morocco. It was very much an issue. But there was progress. In fact it was the day after the first ambassador I served left and I was Chargé that their most noted political prisoner was released, actually to the embassy right after the ambassador departed. So it was very good news, but there was also a bit of a crisis on how to handle this. What did we do? We quickly got in touch... I think his wife was in the U.S. We got him in touch with his wife. I believe she came to Morocco. There was some question about whether or not he was really free to leave the kingdom. He had nothing. He was staying at the political counselor's home for a while, wearing his clothes. So it really was something of an issue, but he eventually was free to depart for the United States. We were always asking Morocco to sign the major human rights conventions which they have not done. They did in my time adhere to one of the major human rights conventions.

On the democratization front I set up a working group in the embassy to look at what can we do to promote democracy here, to promote human rights. Morocco had a parliament; they had parliamentary elections, but one of the things we did was to work with them to just set up basic parliamentary procedures. They had a parliament, but it didn't really operate the way a parliament would operate in England or someplace else. We would get experts to come in and talk about the functioning of parliament. Also we sent as many of their parliamentarians as possible on international visitors programs to the U.S. This was another idea the embassy working group on democracy came up with, to really concentrate on the parliamentarians and to show them what we thought they ought to see in the U.S. - the court system, how our congress functions, not that it is always a great model. I was very active in trying to identify women's groups for international visitors programs to come to the U.S. too. At one point we were trying to put together a group of potential political leaders who were female. The political section came in and told me they couldn't do it. The women just weren't out there. They couldn't find any

candidates. Of course I wouldn't take no for an answer, but it was very difficult. I started making calls to come up with this little group of women to send as perhaps future political leaders. It wasn't easy, but we were really working on the hard issues of democracy, human rights, women's rights. I was so pleased. I just went to a reception at the Moroccan embassy here. The ambassador, the present Moroccan ambassador, made a speech. It was the second anniversary of Mohammed VI coming to the throne. I couldn't have written a better speech. He said all the right things. He came out in support of democracy. He mentioned the progress they were making on human rights. He mentioned women's issues. He mentioned opening up the country, economic liberalization, just all the right grace notes. He knew he was addressing a U.S. audience, but he would not have said these things without knowing that the king was on board for his making the speech.

Q: The ideas are penetrating.

PLAISTED: The ideas are there not only in terms of lip service, but also more in terms of reality, they certainly have penetrated in the last six years or so.

Q: You mention prisoners. I can't think of his name now, but he was one of the ambassadors at the United Nations, later he became the assistant secretary for south Asian affairs. But he made a call with some other people and got some prisoners...

PLAISTED: In Morocco?

Q: Maybe it was after your time. But I understand there were a considerable number of prisoners on both the Algerian and the Moroccan side that had been sitting around in the middle of the desert for 20 years.

PLAISTED: Yes. The prisoners from the western Sahara, from the Polisario, right. And the exchange of prisoners was always one of the major issues. Secretary James Baker was appointed as the UN coordinator after my time, he was working with the UN on trying to resolve the western Sahara issue which was an issue in my day. It is still an issue today. It has not been resolved.

Q: Well, what was happening during your time, '91-'94, on the Polisario front?

PLAISTED: The king back in 1988 had accepted the idea of a referendum. The UN was to develop a peace plan. This was UN resolution 609 that called for a settlement plan and created this institution called MINURSO. In September of '91 during my time MINURSO was deployed to the Sahara. Their duties were monitoring, enforcing the cease fire, and organizing the referendum. During the time I was there, September '91 to March '94, it was a period of really false starts, a lot of mutual bad faith where neither side was really comfortable. Both sides wanted to be very certain that if there were a referendum, if it ever did come to an actual referendum, that they were going to win. Well, both sides could not be accommodated. They could not both win.

Q: Was there much of a population to referend with?

PLAISTED: No, there wasn't. But Morocco had been sending people into the Sahara, moving people in so if it did come to a vote, they were going to have more voters down there. It came down to the issue of whom do you count. The Polisario wanted to use the original Spanish census. The Moroccans, of course, wanted a much more liberal definition because there were additional people who were now in this area. So, it was and it still is a very difficult issue. The Secretary General of the UN became involved and came up with a five point compromise. Another UN resolution was passed in March of '94, resolution 907 on the criteria. They moved forward to try to register voters, they did get about 230,000 applications for voters although there were only, you were saying how many people were there, there were only 74,000 people there at the time of the 1974 Spanish census. MINURSO in my time was slowly working its way through all these applications. They had gone through about 10,000. The process could be challenged indefinitely, and it still hasn't been resolved today. I think the bottom line is, no one wants to really have a vote or referendum until you can be very certain it is going to come out in your favor.

Q: Back some time, I think either in the late '60s or '70s, you had considerable support for the Polisario movement. I mean really strong support mainly from Senate staff members for some reason. You know sort of the radicals of the '60s were taking this cause up. You had a king on one side and you had these so-called freedom fighters or something like that. It became a real political issue. Had this died down, I mean was this gone?

PLAISTED: Not completely. There was one staffer in a very prominent senator's office, Ted Kennedy's office, who had this bent on the Polisario, so that was still there. One thing I was concerned with as the chargé was that we didn't have any way to really find out what was going on in the western Sahara. We could only send very low level officers. We would send junior officers down there. This is such a complicated issue. So working with the military, I eventually got Washington to liberalize the regulations so we could send the American military who were stationed at the embassy, the higher level officers, down to look at what is really happening in the western Sahara and to come back and brief us.

Q: The problem being that you couldn't send, you couldn't go down, others couldn't go down because this is a form of recognition. We always get into this.

PLAISTED: I could never go down, the ambassador is not going down. But a colonel at the embassy who follows the western Sahara, who knows the issues, knows whom to talk to, knows the history, he is the one I want to send down there. He's the one, rather than a junior officer. We just didn't have the right to do that in my day. We were able through a lot of banging on the doors here back in Washington to get Washington eventually to come around and agree, yes, someone who really knows the situation, we will let you send them down.

Q: Were you getting any, cooperation is not the right word, but were you working together with our embassy in Algiers? Because they were in a very difficult situation at that time. Fundamentalism was dangerous there. It was not a friendly environment.

PLAISTED: We were certainly in close contact, sharing and reporting what we would pick up on

the western Sahara with our embassy in Algiers.

Q: Did you get into one of these spitting contests between, you know sometimes our embassy Kashmir versus New Delhi or Karachi or something?

PLAISTED: No, no difference, none at all. We had very fine ambassadors in Algiers when I was in Morocco, and we never had any real disagreement with the embassy in Algiers.

Q: After Mike Ussery left, who took his place?

PLAISTED: Frederick Vreeland who had been a Deputy Assistant Secretary in the Near East Bureau. He also had been assigned to Morocco in the '60s. He loves Morocco. He was very farsighted and bought a piece of land in the Palmeraies which is now one of the highest priced real estate areas in Marrakech. He built an elaborate home there that just goes on and on. We held a country team off site meeting there to brainstorm to think more long-term. Afterwards, we were all to board a bus to go to the plane to fly back up to Rabat. I looked at Ambassador Vreeland and I said, "We are short one person, our USIA officer. She's lost. She can't find her way out of your house." So I literally went back in the house and started yelling for her. She was lost. It was so elaborate you couldn't find your way out of there. But that is just to say Ambassador Vreeland, when he came to the post, he knew Morocco very well.

Q: Was he a career officer?

PLAISTED: No, he was a political appointee, but he had spent many years with the U.S. government, so he certainly had a very good background, and was well received in the country. He was so well received that the Fourth of July party which he hosted shortly after he arrived included all his old friends. His wife and I are in the receiving line with him saying you have got to move them along. People were backed up for 45 minutes. Tell your old friends you will give them a call, we will get together. Of course you see your old friends of 20 years ago, you want to say more than hello and move on. So he had many friends, knew the country very well, spoke French beautifully, and was really a fine representative. He very much had his agenda, issues that he was out promoting.

Q: What were they?

PLAISTED: The Middle East peace process, of course, to the extent the embassy got involved in the Middle East peace process, the notion of democratization, human rights. He was very big on women's rights. He always liked to mention women's rights, education, and the Moroccan economy.

Q: He wasn't there too long was he.

PLAISTED: He was there a very short time. I was chargé longer than he was ambassador. He was there for less than a year, just about a year.

Q: Why was that?

PLAISTED: Because it was the change in administrations. He was a Bush appointee. Then when Clinton came into the White House, as a political appointee ambassador, Ambassador Vreeland had to resign after having been there for just a short time. That is when we really had a long period of time from the departure of Ambassador Vreeland until the arrival of Marc Ginsberg when I was chargé for almost a year at that point.

Q: How long did you work with Marc Ginsberg?

PLAISTED: For just a few months before I departed post.

Q: Did you find that you had problems moving back and forth between chargé to DCM and DCM to chargé? Sometimes this can be a very difficult thing for an ambassador to deal with because you have become a power center of your own. How did you play that role going back and forth?

PLAISTED: It all depended on the ambassador I was dealing with. It was always very informal with Ambassador Vreeland. If he would be gone for some period of time, I would literally move into his office and the political counselor would move into the DCM's office. I would just sit at his desk, you know, put my papers inside his desk drawers on top of his papers. That was perfectly fine. It was that type of atmosphere. I could move back into my office in two minutes if I had to, if he suddenly returned. I certainly felt I had his full confidence. I just saw him in Rome; we are good friends, colleagues to this day. There was a lot of trust in the relationship. The first ambassador Mike Ussery too, he was a friend. He was a colleague. He trusted me; I certainly trusted his judgment. He was very clear on what his priorities were, what he expected from me. He knew he was on his way out. There were certain issues he wanted me to keep him abreast on, that he wanted to follow very closely, such as Middle East peace. Other issues he wanted me to handle. The third ambassador had not had that much experience with the Foreign Service, and came on board with more of a concern which is very typical. Is this a group of people I can trust? Who is this DCM? We just didn't have the same relationship I had with the previous ambassadors. There was a very unfortunate incident when he first arrived. My secretary was an absolute pro; she had served many ambassadors. I had drafted a very sensitive cable. I had put the ambassador down for approval, of course. As she had done for the previous ten or eleven months, she saw my initials. Not stopping to think we have an ambassador now, she pushed the button and in the electronic age sent the cable to Washington. He was absolutely livid. We did manage to recall the cable. So I think moving back and forth from Chargé to DCM depends on the relationship which, of course, is built up after you work with someone.

Q: One of the things, it is a theme that ran through other people I have interviewed dealing with Morocco or who have been on the periphery in other posts, was King Hassan really enjoyed having political appointee ambassadors. He felt he could co-opt them more. I mean there was talk about one of our ambassadors there, a political appointee, who started talking about "our king."

PLAISTED: Oh, yes, right.

Q: I was wondering whether this represents a period that had gone, or did you have that problem?

PLAISTED: It was an issue in Morocco. There were times when I really thought should I remind his majesty that he didn't appoint me, the chargé. There were times when you really wanted to say, and I did, I represent the U.S. We would like you to see your mutual interest in this issue, but I am not an appointee of your government. There was still that attitude I think coming down from the palace that the American embassy should be doing the king's bidding. He did, of course, like ambassadors who could in theory pick up the phone and call their good friend the President. And you know very well if an ambassador is that close to the President, the last thing he is going to do is to call up and ask to speak to the President. He may ask to speak to the National Security Advisor or the deputy if the National Security Advisor isn't available. But he knows his friend the President's time is pretty valuable. He is not going to pick up the phone and chat on behalf of Morocco. But the king always did want someone who had that closeness or at least would give him the illusion that he could pick up the phone and call the President.

We had the GATT ministerial meeting to launch the World Trade Organization in Marrakech in 1994. Vice President Gore was there, along with two cabinet officials and a delegation of about 130 people. Vice President Gore wanted to talk to President Clinton about an idea he had discussed with King Hassan over lunch. I had spent weeks with all the White House advance and communications people to line up everything that goes into a vice presidential visit. We went out to the communications truck. The COMSAT communications satellite wouldn't work. So the one time when the king really did have direct access to the President, it didn't work. Vice President Gore couldn't use the phone with all this sophisticated communications equipment the White House advance had so laboriously installed. In retrospect it was really pretty funny.

Q: How did you find Moroccan society? In some Arab societies, you really don't get very far with them outside of the official reception office type thing.

PLAISTED: In general the people I was dealing with, the people I would meet, I really liked the Moroccans as a people in general. All levels of the society were quite interesting. Many were Francophone, the language, the culture was somewhat French. The people you would meet even on the streets in the medina were in general fairly friendly. I have stayed in touch with colleagues in Morocco to this day, everyone from people in their foreign ministry to the people who were the official residence staff because they were just such wonderful people and so delightful. So in general I had very good experiences with the people in Morocco.

Q: Was it a problem being a single woman in this sort of society?

PLAISTED: It was very unusual for a woman to be in such a high position in Morocco. It is very unusual to be single, too. But I considered this part of my role. I have always enjoyed the public diplomacy side of issues. I would make a couple of speeches a day. I think I made six speeches in two days at the time of the Fourth of July in French and English on TV. So I considered it was very much part of my duties to get out there and be seen, in part as a woman. I have a friend who is the chairman of the anthropology department at Columbia University. She was doing research in this little tiny village way outside of Marrakech. They were watching TV. I was at the airport

in Rabat seeing the king off on his state visit to the U.S. On TV, you see all these military officials. You see the king's advisors and his family, and then you see this woman dressed in turquoise shaking the king's hand, not bowing lowly and kissing his hand as they all do. The little girls my friend was watching TV with said, "Who's that?" I really stuck out in the film clips. "Well, she's the chargé, the acting ambassador at the American embassy." They sort of looked again. "She is a woman?" "Yes." "Well, can she do that?" I really did want to get out and make speeches and be known throughout the country.

There was one very funny incident in retrospect. The Moroccans were rightfully very proud. It was the opening of the magnificent new mosque in Casablanca, just an incredible structure - almost all indigenous architecture, indigenous materials. The king, naturally, was going to open the mosque, but women are not allowed in the mosque, or at least certainly not on the ground floor. He did, of course, want to invite the diplomatic corps. What do you do with a female chargé of the United States of America? So this went on, this debate went on, and the mosque was actually to open on my birthday just by coincidence. They couldn't really tell me what was going to happen. Was I going to be invited? They certainly could not invite the entire diplomatic corps, but exclude the United States. Our consul general in Casablanca also should be invited, she was a woman.

Q: Was that Ann Carey?

PLAISTED: Ann Carey, yes, Ann and I.

Q: Was she quite pregnant at the time?

PLAISTED: No. She wasn't. So what they finally decided was that all the diplomatic corps, mostly infidels, would be upstairs in the balcony which is where they would normally have women in the mosque. We would all be up there in the balconies where they placed the women. That way I could be with the diplomatic corps. So we were all sweltering up in the top balcony. Ann and I were completely dressed in black with our heads wrapped in these shawls. We even had to cover our ankles. As we were going out the residence door, of her residence in Casablanca, I said to her husband, "You have to take a picture of the two of us" wrapped in our Arab shawls all dressed in black which he did. It was published in the State Department magazine. I sent a copy to my mother and said, "Now find your daughter's photo in this magazine." There were the two of us completely disguised going to the opening of the mosque.

Q: Well then in 1994 you were up.

PLAISTED: I think of all the things that happened when I was in Morocco we talked about - democracy, human rights, the Middle East peace process, the thing that stands out in my mind the most was when I was chargé, we received which was at the time, a very credible threat. Hezbollah had targeted the embassy.

Q: Could you explain what Hezbollah is?

PLAISTED: Hezbollah is debatable. The French foreign minister almost got thrown out of office

for calling them a terrorist group. To the United States and to me, after living through this threat from Hezbollah, we certainly treated them as a terrorist group - a group originally based in Lebanon operating in the Middle East. We received a lot of specifics: it would be a car/truck bomb. The vehicle would be driven onto the embassy compound, or as close to the embassy compound as possible. The moment we received this threat, we instantly went into action. I was the chargé. Originally we had about 660 people in Morocco. We had managed to cut staff substantially so we had about 500+ people at this point - Americans, Moroccans, and some other nationalities working for the embassy, consulate, and Voice of America. I was responsible for their security, and we had this very specific threat.

The security officer and I, our regional security officer, I remember we were walking the compound the day we received the threat and talking about how we can step up security immediately, which roads to close down. Then I realized I am out of my league. I am not a security expert. We truly have to get more help. Our security officer was very good but we needed all the expertise we could get. I talked to the military base in Germany in Wiesbaden. They were the closest to come to our assistance. They agreed to send down some security experts immediately. The experts were very impressed with the measures the security officer had already taken at the embassy. Of course during this time we are having staff meetings to alert the staff and the community to the threat and to explain to them why they had to park two blocks from the embassy. We closed the whole compound, but we couldn't close the busy road in front of the embassy. I went immediately to the Moroccan authorities, to the palace, to tell them we had received this threat and to remind them it is their responsibility to protect us. The Moroccans were quite cooperative, gave us police protection, closed down any streets you could possibly close down within reason. You couldn't cut off the main artery, the main highway in front of the embassy, but the Moroccans closed down the other streets, and they did give us stepped up 24-hour protection. We brought in more concrete barricades.

Then I even went back to Washington. I wanted to see the head of diplomatic security to do everything possible to protect the embassy against a car bomb. I was told, in the final analysis, if Hezbollah pulls a car with a bomb in it up to your embassy, Lady, you are going to lose some people. You know, it is probably going to be people on the ground floor. You might not die if you are up in your office, but people who are walking into the embassy at the time and in your ground floor offices will die. If Hezbollah manages to pull a car bomb up to the embassy, some people are going to die under your watch. That was a terrible thing to live with. I wanted to talk to the head of diplomatic security. I was received by his deputy, who told me, hey, we have worse threats in the world than the one you are facing. If Hezbollah wants to do this, well, you have to live with it. You are going to lose some people. I was furious. This was just not a very satisfactory meeting at all. You have got problems; we have got bigger problems.

When I look back on my tour in Morocco, and when I retired from the Foreign Service, I think what I was most relieved about was thank goodness this never happened, no one died under my watch in the Foreign Service, because it would be just such a terrible thing to have to live with to have the embassy blown up. Now why it didn't happen we are never really going to know. Was the threat real in the beginning? There was some thought later that maybe the threat wasn't a real threat, but at the time it sounded very specific. Had Hezbollah indeed targeted the embassy? Embassy Morocco probably was a soft target if you are looking for embassies to target. Did they

indeed target the embassy, and then realize that we had stepped up security?

Q: Hezbollah is a group based in Lebanon which has been considered on our part a terrorist organization which is very much involved in attacks on Israel, and is financed by Iran. Although it was done by a different organization, our embassies in Nairobi and Tanzania were both blown up not too many years later by a different group, probably Osama bin Laden. But the point being the security people today I think would take quite a different attitude because, to use a diplomatic term, their ass is on the line in something like this. We had the embassy blown up in Beirut, but that was back in the '80s.

PLAISTED: That had already happened. Ours was exactly the scenario that actually did happen later in East Africa. And it was horrific.

Q: Oh, yes. It is one of these things that isn't overly understood. Did you have an armored car?

PLAISTED: I immediately got the armored car back. I was chargé. The ambassador did have an armored car. I wasn't using it. The ambassador normally had three palace guards that would follow him everywhere, including in a follow car. When I became chargé, I just kept my driver and my car as the deputy chief of mission. That was one of the first things we did to get the palace guards back immediately and use the armored limo. At one point a new armored car was delivered. I had to really fight Washington to hang on to the old one for an extended period of time so we could get the acting DCM in the other armored car.

The bodyguards would follow me everywhere. If I wanted to go to the beach on weekends, here would come the parade of cars, the Ambassador is going to the beach today. I went skiing outside of Marrakech. I was down in Marrakech on business, and I had always wanted to go skiing in the Atlas Mountains. So I went up skiing with these big bodyguards. I had rented a room in a Moroccan-style ski chalet for them. They had two single beds in this little room on the ski slopes. They took one look at it and then looked at me and said, "Is it okay if we come back tomorrow?" Of course they wanted to spend the night in Marrakech. So they turned down the accommodations and left me at the ski resort where I guess I was pretty safe.

I had a German shepherd in Rabat whom I had named "Killer," hoping others would think this gentle dog was fierce. I loved to take Killer out for walks particularly on the weekends. I was not allowed to leave my compound without at least a couple of security guards. So I had to try to explain to the German shepherd why I could no longer take him for walks. It was a very frightening period and very stressful.

Q: These things, they are not idle threats as we know.

Well, this is probably a good place to stop now, so we will pick up your next assignment.

PLAISTED: Which is going to be Office Director for Thailand and Burma.

Q: All right. You really were bouncing around weren't you? You know, you were in Africa, Europe,

PLAISTED: I always think of my tours as going from Europe to Asia, then back to Europe, to Asia. This is the way it worked out. I loved Asia for the future and its future potential and Europe for the lifestyle.

Q: We will pick this up in 1994 when you became Office Director for Thailand and Burma.

Today is August 15th, the 15th of August, 2001. Joan you had something to say about staffing at the embassy in Morocco before we go on.

PLAISTED: I was just very pleased to see by the time I left Morocco we had been able to reduce the size of both the American staff and to a lesser extent the local staff substantially, and also really strengthen the whole planning process of the mission program plan. We cut the American staff by 24%. It certainly wasn't easy. It took quite a lengthy process to do it. There had been an earlier inspection report before I arrived with the inspectors suggesting that the staff could be cut substantially. The figure wasn't quite as high as 24%. To get the agencies to go along was very difficult. With the military, we had them do a military manpower survey which identified where cuts could be made. We managed to cut some State Department positions. And with one of the agencies we had to utilize a procedure called the NSDD 38 where the decision literally goes to the Secretary of State and then to the NSC, because one of the agencies was resisting the cuts. We went through the NSDD 38 process, and Washington directed the agency to get on board and make the staff cuts the chargé was asking for.

Q: It is not hard to guess which agency.

PLAISTED: But we did win out and the agency did cut staff.

Q: There is a natural accumulation of staff in a nice post. You don't find, I am sure, that Algeria had that much of a problem. You know there is a tendency to load it up, and if it comes to a war, it moves beyond just being what is necessary. It becomes sort of a nice place to go. People bid for it and want to go there.

PLAISTED: We were also able to cut the FSN, the local staff, by 17%, but we did that in a very humanitarian fashion, mainly by attrition, not by firing anyone. So I was very pleased when I left we had a right-sized mission and also had a much clearer sense of direction. There wasn't any mission program plan when I first arrived. Because of all the traumas of the Gulf War, Morocco was exempt. There were more immediate things to worry about than setting the long term direction for the embassy. But after the Gulf War, after I arrived, we were able to really sit down with the embassy staff. We held some off-site retreats and began to really think outside the box. What are our long term interests in Morocco. How can we achieve them? What happens under different scenarios?

Q: Did you run into people in the corridors who said you knifed me in the back? What do you mean by cutting out positions in Morocco?

PLAISTED: No, but it was controversial. I think in the end it was certainly what had to be done to downsize staffing. We received very high praise for the work on the mission program plan. I worked three weekends in a row at home. It was cited by State as one of the best mission program plans in the world.

Q: The new king, Mohammed, had not arrived.

PLAISTED: No.

Q: Were you all looking at Mohammed and saying what is he going to be like? Was it obvious that Hassan was not going to be around?

PLAISTED: Hassan had been on the throne for approximately 35 years by that time. He had named the crown prince as his heir apparent. Obviously at some point the transition was going to take place. One of the really lively topics of conversation was is the crown prince prepared to take over or not. I think there were many who thought about five years earlier he wouldn't have been, but he was slowly getting more experience, carrying out more official duties. His father, the king, was bringing him in on more events. The prince was traveling more. During the years I was in Morocco he went to the Rio conference on the environment. He traveled throughout Europe. About that time too he completed his degree from the University at Nice. At that point he was gaining more experience. In my own personal encounters with the crown prince, I always thought he was quite intelligent, engaging. He had broad interests. He was very interested in jazz, and through some friends he borrowed my James Bond movies. He was at that time running around with a very flashy jet set international type crowd. There were some comments about the people in his entourage.

ANNE O. CARY
Consul General
Casablanca (1992-1995)

Anne O. Cary was born in Washington, DC in September of 1952. She received a bachelor's degree from the University of Wisconsin and entered the Foreign Service in 1974. Her career included positions in Brussels, Port-au-Prince, Paris, Addis Abba, New Delhi, Casablanca, and Washington, DC. Ms. Cary was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy on November 30, 1995.

CARY: After that to Casablanca.

Q: You were in Casablanca from when to when?

CARY: From August, 1992 to July, 1995.

Q: What were you doing there?

CARY: I was the consul general.

Q: And your husband?

CARY: He was the political officer.

Q: Now, is this a problem or not?

CARY: The Director General had to approve an exception. They worked it out by having John report to the political counselor in Rabat, which was 70 miles away. The first year there was somebody else in the job and John was taking Arabic, so there was no problem. He put together his own Moroccan Arabic program. FSI was flexible on this. Normally he would have had to go to Tunis for their language program. But he was able to convince them that because our housing was already provided that it would be cheaper for him to stay in Morocco and learn Moroccan Arabic rather than Tunisian Arabic. He already had some North African Arabic from his Peace Corps days.

Q: I recall you getting ready to go there. For the record you were great with child at the time. Where did you have your baby?

CARY: Here at George Washington Hospital. Again the State Department was pretty good about it. Sometime in February or March I got a call from my predecessor, Tim Foster who asked, "Could you be here for July 4th?" I said, "No, I can't because I am going to have a baby at the end of May, but will be there as soon as I can after the DCM course." FSI and Personnel tried to be accommodating about timing. Because the DCM course is only offered 3 times a year I knew I was going to be nursing during the time of the DCM course. Special arrangements were needed because some of it took place off site. Most people were in one part of the off-site place and I had a little cottage with two rooms and brought our nanny. She would come and knock on the classroom door when it was time to feed the baby and everybody got used to it. James was six week old and was the youngest participant ever in the DCM course. For the courses at FSI, the director made her office available from the beginning so James could be with me. There really was no alternative for a six week old. And then I took three weeks of French and again...the ability of the system to respond officially is "No we can't do anything for you, I am sorry there isn't any space," but individually the instructors were willing to find space using various offices or classrooms not in use.

Q: You are talking about nursing?

CARY: Yes. The system does have to realize that more and more women are choosing to continue working and have their children. I had three children while working in the Foreign Service. I took six weeks off with James, which was my longest post-partum break. Its not an easily addressed problem. It is inconvenient to have to come up with a substitute for a period while somebody is having a child. And now that the Department is insisting that women return to the United States to give birth, it means mandating a gap of really at least three months because most airlines won't let you fly when you are more than eight months pregnant and most doctors

don't want you to fly either. When State was giving medical clearance for women to have babies overseas you had more flexibility. When our daughter was born we were living in Ethiopia. I flew to Nairobi two weeks before she was due and we returned when she was four days old. They haven't quite worked it out, how to handle trips and all that when you are nursing. I got an e-mail in 1994 from a female FSO who asked, "Please share your experiences of how you managed to have your kids and keep working."

Q: Well, you went out to Casablanca. What was the situation there at that time? Did you go out with any kind of agenda?

CARY: Yes. It was downsizing. Budget restraints meant we had to cut and you always cut at a consulate before you cut an embassy. The question was what to cut? The consulate was very large, about 100 employees including US and FSN personnel. We had a lot of regional offices in Casablanca. There was the regional marine headquarters which had moved out of Beirut. Casa had a marine security guard detachment. There were a couple of different agencies including the intelligence group and Department of Commerce. We had the engineering security services. All was based in Casablanca because it had good international connections to the region. So, I went out knowing that I was supposed to lose about half my American staff.

Freck Vreeland was ambassador, he had just been named. He was really up front. He had been the deputy assistant secretary for NEA when John, my husband, was the Libya desk officer. When we went down the bid list and saw 2 jobs in Casablanca, we thought we really ought to look at it. John had visited it with Freck and said it was a nice place. So, we told Freck that we were bidding on the job. He was very up-front and said, "I have to tell you that I have already promised to support somebody else for the consul general position." It was somebody he had worked with in France some time before. That was fine with us. The bid went up to the final DCM committee and Freck continued to support the other candidate. I got the job and Freck called me. I always admired his no-messing-around way of doing things. He was very above board about the whole thing. And it turns out that the person he wanted ended up political counselor in Rabat.

So, through a whole chain of events due to opening new embassies in Eastern Europe, there were a lot of shifts going on at that point. But the decision was that Casablanca had to be downsized and I was going out to do that and to work out the different ways of going from over a 100 employee mission which was the size of a medium size embassy.

Q: And only 70 miles away from Rabat.

CARY: Right.

Q: I would think this would...

CARY: Yes, so the question is why do you have Casablanca when you have the embassy so close. It is because Casablanca is the financial, business, and except for the Palace, the political center. It was like a New York and a Washington analogy. Historically US interests in Morocco have centered on the Straits of Gibraltar. I would argue that that has changed since the days of

airplanes. Now the Middle East peace process ...and economic potential... are of key interest. King Hassan has a minor role to play in the peace process. Moroccan Jews are the single largest ethnic group in Israel and what remains of the Moroccan Jewish community is based in Casablanca. The majority of the business community is in Casablanca. And, if the stability of the country is going to blow, it is most likely going to blow from Casablanca.

So, when I arrived it had more or less been decided to pull out the intelligence components. And then the marine security detachment was supposed to leave. We were losing the marine security guards because there are only so many worldwide and they had to go to the new embassies. So, that changed our communications because you can only receive up to a certain level without marines. We had our own communications system but some of the other stuff had to be cut. I learned more about what is required for this, that and other level of security. So, the marines left and the marine battalion command left, that was 9 plus the 6 security guards, and some other intelligence agencies. The engineering security service was supposed to leave but it turned out it was cheaper for them to stay than to move them some place else, so they stayed. We had to reconfigure the consulate. We also moved all consular operations to Casablanca. The embassy only issued diplomatic visas and Casablanca did all the rest.

By getting rid of so many American employees, we had to decrease the local staff through RIFs.

Q: A RIF being a reduction in force, basically firing people.

CARY: Right, firing people, including a 30 year veteran who was just the best GSO you would ever have, but I had to make the decision. We had two GSOs but could justify only one. The senior one was within a year of retirement and the other one had 15 years experience. If we RIFed the junior one then the next year we would be without anybody with institutional memory. And, the senior was eligible for an immediate annuity.

A lot of these hard decisions had to be made just on the basis of what was best for the US government, which wasn't necessarily best for the individuals. There was a lot of arguing about this ...we cut down communicators...what kind of support the embassy would come up with. The same with secretaries because PIT positions were frozen and we couldn't add certain kinds of people. So, how do you get the job done with much reduced resources and a very, very nervous staff because everybody was afraid they were going to lose their job. Rumors about closing the consulate were constant. Regularly, some of the US multinationals would call up and ask, "Are you closing the consulate?"

Q: What was the political situation like? We are talking now about Algeria which was undergoing a fundamentalist resurgence and certainly everybody was and continues to be very nervous about that.

CARY: Yes. In fact, the day we arrived in Morocco, was the day that they blew up the Air Swiss counter in Algiers and our ambassador decided to send out all dependents. Moroccans are just as quick to explain that Algeria and Morocco are absolutely nothing alike. There is no commonality whatsoever. According to Moroccans, Algerians are by tradition a violent people and current events are a result of very poor choices and limits that were put in post French period. They

reflect that there were no choices for political parties. So the only route was fundamentalist. That could never happen in Morocco because there are opposition parties. There are multiple choices. The king is the commander of the faithful which precludes anybody else claiming to know anything about religion because he is a direct descendant of the Prophet. You heard this every place and they believe it. I will say that I finally came down to the point that they believe it. Fundamentalism, both in terms of the religious sense because Morocco is a very liberal Muslim society. Muslims can buy liquor, nobody really cares about it except during Ramadan when only non-Muslim can buy liquor. On the streets women are not at all veiled. You can see mini skirts and bikinis, etc. A lot of the Gulf Muslims come to Morocco to party because it is a much less repressive society. There is a lot of resentment about that among the Moroccans, particularly with the Kuwaitis and Saudis. Half the Saudi royal family have huge houses in Casablanca.

It is a place where things were going on. The king believes, in my opinion, that if you have economic growth you can be pretty oppressive politically and nobody is going to care and he is probably right. There were a couple different types of elections while we were there and we went as observers. It was quite interesting, the Moroccans really haven't got any idea what democracy really is about. Most Moroccans, intellectuals as well as the man in the street, don't want American democracy because they see it as a negative thing. They see it as a challenge to family. Try to explain to them a system that allows a Marion Barry to be re-elected mayor.

Q: Marion Barry being a mayor of Washington who was re-elected after a drug conviction and serving time in jail.

CARY: They simply did not believe that if you know somebody is a bad choice, that you should allow the people to vote him back in. The king would not let a bad guy be a candidate. For the legislative elections there was a list of people who were suspected of drug dealing. Roughly a third of the marijuana that is sold in Europe comes from Morocco, from the northern areas. The government decided to publish a list of people who couldn't run because they were believed to have drug ties. There was no proof offered, but in a kingdom you can do things like that.

Q: In a way you are talking about a working kingdom. I have heard that King Hassan sort of eats ambassadors for breakfast if they sort of disagree with him but he particularly likes political appointees, some of them are renown for saying, "Our king," when they mean the Moroccans' king. Did you see any of this?

CARY: Yes. He likes political ambassadors because he doesn't believe in having less than great access to the President. The king wants to get directly to the President and he has learned you don't do that with a career Foreign Service officer who can't pick up the phone and place a call to the President. With change of administration from Bush to Clinton it became quite an issue because there was a long delay in naming a new ambassador.

Q: We are talking about changing from the Bush administration to the Clinton administration which has been very slow in making appointments.

CARY: Freck Vreeland, who had been ambassador for less than a year really hoped that he was going to be able to stay on. He wasn't and he left abruptly. The vacancy dragged on and on and

on. Nobody was named and there were all sorts of rumors about who it was going to be. The Moroccan newspapers kept saying that there must be some serious problem with our relationship and that is why we are not naming an ambassador. We kept saying no, that the processes for checking out people was extremely long. They finally named Mark Childs Ginsberg, who was the first Jew to be ambassador to Morocco. He had been a trade lawyer before and had many interests. He had worked at State for a while back in the Carter administration. He had been on the Hill and worked mostly with the Gore campaign, but with Clinton as well. His wife was a former Miss Arkansas, a stunning woman. They have two kids.

So, he finally arrived, almost a year after the last ambassador had left. He is a young guy, two older than I. He had to go through the whole process of learning the Moroccan way of doing things. The king makes all of the decisions, all of the decisions. People won't necessarily tell the king he has to make a decision if they don't think he wants to be told. Particularly on the military side we had some difficult times... on the aid side as well. We give aid to Morocco and they were contrary or untimely in their responses and compliance. Lack of response escalated the issue and it all had to be done at the highest level. You have to go in and say, "We need an answer to this." It can be a very, very frustrating issue.

Of chief concern to the Moroccans is the Western Sahara which they occupy and believe should be part of Morocco. There is a UN mandate to hold a referendum. We have US troops there along with other nationalities. This periodically has been a real thorn in US-Moroccan relations. For Moroccans, any time almost anything happens the focus is always, "Well, how does this affect the Western Sahara?" It is a very esoteric issue and one which we have spent more time on than you would think was worth it. Well, that became one of the ambassador's key issues... What should be US policy in western Sahara? And you had USUN involved of course. And the Polisario, who have done a very good job working with the Hill.

Q: Yes. It is an interesting thing. Here you have this desert movement sponsored by the Algerians really a socialist government against a very friendly kingdom to us, yet they have a lot of support in congress. It is field fighters versus an authoritarian king or something.

CARY: And that is exactly how it got put and the issues are not at all that clear. But we would have congressional staffers come out and they would all want to visit the Western Sahara. You have to fly down with the UN and it is always very touchy. We would not allow anybody above a certain level to go. The military attachés couldn't go. The economic officers from Casablanca would go down.

There was supposed to be a referendum in 1992, before we got there, but there still hasn't been one. It keeps getting put off and it will get put off...

Q: There is nothing to referend with.

CARY: Until the parties find a political solution there won't be a referendum. And there are ways to reach one particularly now with Algeria so concerned with other issues. It just can't depend on the reluctance of Polisario. I think it's important to move before Polisario splits, leaving little splinter groups that are going to cause trouble no matter what. Most of Moroccans believe that

the Western Sahara is theirs and it should be theirs. There is no real economic benefit to having it become a minuscule independent mini-state.

Q: How about your contacts as consul general with the elements of government? Did you have any problems with being an American and/or a woman?

CARY: I was the first female consul general in Morocco so everybody was curious. Here I arrived with a 3 month old baby and two other kids. The Moroccans reacted very, very well, very positively. I had a sense that they could relate to me as a daughter, a sister, or something, I had kids. I felt no sense that people thought I should be home taking care of our kids. Amongst the upper class nobody takes care of their own kids so it seemed perfectly reasonable to be out working. A number of women have taken over family businesses or are involved in the family business. So there is an acceptance, particularly for women my age.

There was a protocol issue. I arrived just as we were coming up to the 50th anniversary of Operation Torch, the allied landing in North Africa in 1942. We had a ship visit and then a major conference. Somebody in protocol in Rabat in the Moroccan government decided that a consul general should get agreement. We only seek agreements for ambassadors. So while the embassy wrestled with a stubborn Ministry of Foreign Affairs, I couldn't be received by the wali, the chief governor of the district. This meant I couldn't call on any of the officials that I needed to for the ceremonies. Well, we worked out something where the wali would receive me so we could go on with the ceremonial aspects but the picture in the paper and officially I wasn't received on protocol terms until Rabat decided. The governors are basically all run out of the Ministry of Interior, they are not elected officials. The Ministry of Interior and Ministry of Foreign Affairs didn't necessarily talk to each other, so you had to send everything to both. It was a real zoo.

But, there was a lot of ceremony. Moroccans are very big on ceremony. During initial calls I would be greeted by troops dressed in ceremonial dress with swords. No one told me what to do on these calls. I was unprepared for how often I would be asked to speak. I had no idea about photo opportunities, drinking tea and eating cookies and just the chit chat. The Consul General was expected to show up for certain things and not for other things. Everybody would know who you were. You would go some place and be greeted with, "We are so pleased to see you," and there I am in my blue jeans. I quickly learned you don't wear blue jeans unless you are really doing something outside.

And the business community...everybody wanted to meet the consul general. Everybody has a very, very positive attitude towards America. We are not France, and France is the dominant European power in Morocco. The common attitude was, "We don't know much about the United States, but we like it. We don't have any problems with you."

Q: Which really goes back to 1781 or something like that when the emperor of Morocco recognized the United States without knowing anything about it and it has kept up ever since.

CARY: Mohammed III was the first foreign leader to recognize the United States as a nation. Actually there was a good reason for it. Most of the barbary pirates operated out of Morocco. They had an agreement with the British that they wouldn't raid British ships, but as soon the US

became independent, well, the pirates could raid American ships. So, by working out this agreement, this letter to George Washington we were protecting our ships and ability to carry out trade. Why was our first consulate in Tangier? Because the Straits of Gibraltar were exceedingly important at that point and if US shipping couldn't get by the Straits, the US wasn't going to survive as a country.

Q: Now, you mentioned Tangier, I assume Tangier was in your consular district?

CARY: No.

Q: Well, did you have problems with dissolute Americans? One always thinks of Morocco as a place where dissolute Americans are given money by their family to stay the hell away and they can lounge around and chase little boys and little girls or both.

CARY: Most of them were pretty rich though. In Marrakech there were an awful lot of "artsy" American expatriates, including a sizeable homosexual community. They would come up to Casablanca for normal citizen services, to get their passport renewed or because they had problems getting something out of the country.

Q: So, you weren't up against a drug culture of people causing problems?

CARY: No, most drug problems were mentally unbalanced people. We had some of that sort of thing. The Moroccans did not want to have Americans in their prisons and on more than one occasion looked the other way. It was astounding to me. You have the opposing interests. Here we are supposedly serious about our commitment against drugs and all that, but we don't want any Americans in Moroccan prisons.

Q: This has been a dichotomy that has always been going on.

CARY: Our biggest problem was American women who came and married Moroccans after knowing them for three days, when it was clear that what the Moroccan was looking for was a green card. The consul -- and we had three during my tenure -- would always try to convince the women that they should think about this for a long time. We gave them letters from women who wrote, "I was so wrong. He came and was met by his brother at the airport and I have never seen him since and now I am pregnant." You would explain that in Morocco men don't marry women considerably older than themselves. They were really very sad cases. Technically under Moroccan law, a woman couldn't leave without written permission of her husband. Now, this has more or less changed, but not really. We had a number of American women married to Moroccan men and who were seeking to get out of the country and take kids. Usually the woman could get out, but to take kids was not allowed, that was more difficult.

So, those were some of the sad consular cases we dealt with.

Q: Well, you left there in 1995 and what?

CARY: Retired.

JOHN HURD WILLETT
Political Counselor
Rabat (1992-1995)

John H. Willett was born in Massachusetts in 1941 and received his BA from Kenyon College in 1941. His career has included assignments in Gaborone, Tunis, Bordeaux, Paris, Rome, Strasbourg and Rabat. Richard Jackson interviewed Mr. Willett on December 21, 1998.

Q: Well, John, we left you before in your jeep heading towards Morocco with an agreement to be political counselor for starters and move up to DCM, so you got there. How did it play out?

WILLETT: I got there with dengue fever, so it played out slowly at first. I moved into the political counselor's big house down the street from the Embassy□

Q: In which I lived.

WILLETT: An art deco house.

Q: A lovely house.

WILLETT: Yes, a lovely house. And I moved into the political counselor office. POL [Political] consisted of four American officers and a couple of secretaries. Joan Plaisted was DCM, and there were some tensions between us. I knew Joan from Paris in the '70's. Understandably, she may have seen me as something of a threat, since Freck Vreeland and I were close.

Then, something unexpected happened. George Bush lost the election, and instead of allowing Vreeland to stay on until the new administration came up with a substitute, President-elect Clinton made clear his intention to let go all political appointees. Republican nominees were told to leave by the date Clinton would take the oath of office.

It was a real shock to Freck when he received a telegram telling him to start packing his bags. Suddenly he left, and the embassy sat vacant for a long time. Joan Plaisted became chargé, and I became acting DCM, moving up to the front office. This period lasted more than a year; so I had, in essence, eight or nine months with Freck Vreeland, something more than a year as acting DCM, then eleven months with Ambassador Ginsberg.

The Embassy's main issue was, as always, the intractable Western Sahara question -- which was still in the UN -- and Polisario, the political and military movement in the Western Sahara. The Polisario has very able diplomats. They're in the UN and in Washington, on the Hill. In addition Polisario has help from the Algerians, who are terrific diplomats. Polisario doubtless learned its diplomatic techniques from the Algerians.

The Department was, and is, also interested in the Islamist question in Morocco, and in Moroccan-Algerian relations. It was interested in the pipeline from Algeria through Morocco up into Spain, and in Morocco's growing ties with the EC. All this made for a steady stream of reporting out of the Embassy; and even as acting DCM, I still had to do a lot of hands on political reporting, because there weren't enough people to do it all.

There was a brilliant young FSO4 in the Political Section named Tom Daughton. I got him the Director General's Award for reporting. It's not just another meritorious honor award, but goes once a year to one person. A lot of money, and a prestigious item to have in ones personnel file.

Really I had the two extremes in that Embassy: Daughton and another officer, who was hopeless and on whom I had to write a deleterious efficiency report, the first really bad efficiency report I'd written in my Foreign Service career. In general the Embassy ran smoothly. The Moroccan staff was competent, but morale was mixed. American men got along okay, but the women, in that Arab society, always felt they weren't taken seriously.

Q: The women officers.

WILLETT: No, the wives. I think most Moroccans preferred dealing with a man. That's just the way their society in general is set up. Be that as it may, they had Joan as Chargé for over a year.

There were periodic terrorist threats, of course, and the Embassy would have to go on alert. I never felt threatened; I just lived my life. The Ambassador's Residence remained vacant during that long period. I stayed in my house and Joan stayed in the DCM's house. It worked out fine.

Q: Well, as you first got there, Freck Vreeland must have had an agenda. What did that look like? Of course, as you said, he expected to be there for a full tour. The election was a surprise. I think he was remodeling his residence and didn't even live in it for much of the time. But what were some of his goals, and how might they have played out?

WILLETT: Inevitably any U.S. ambassador in Morocco is sucked into the Western Sahara problem. I can't say the Moroccans took us for a ride on this, though it was as important for them as, for example, Alaskan statehood would be for the United States. They could no more imagine losing the Western Sahara than we could imagine losing Alaska, and Alaska isn't even tied to us geographically. The Moroccan government has infinite patience. After all, the monarchy in Morocco, the Alawite dynasty -- I'm not telling you anything -- is the oldest, I believe, standing (or sitting) monarchy in the world, 340 years old. The King has great patience. As General Walters said to me, "People have been predicting this country will go to hell since I came here in 1943. They've been wrong for 50 years." The Moroccans are very different from their Algerian neighbors in character.

Q: Let's come back to Morocco towards the end of our time with the general observations. But working through, then, Freck Vreeland probably didn't have the time to make a mark as far as his agenda, what he hoped to accomplish there. He barely cantered around the course, met people, was -- as all new American ambassadors are -- couscoused to death.

WILLETT: Yes, well, there was one slight cloud. In the early seventies he happened to have been serving in Morocco in another capacity when one of the assassination attempts on the King took place. People said that when Bush named him ambassador, there was some concern in the palace. A previous ambassador had, in effect, been snubbed by the King. He, this former ambassador, had been preparing to participate in a meeting in Washington, when the King was on a state visit there. As I heard it, Hassan II in essence requested the Americans to have the Ambassador excluded from the meeting.

Q: Dick Parker, who had been virtually expelled.

WILLETT: Yes.

Q: That was quite a while ago.

WILLETT: Quite a while ago.

Q: Yes, different circumstances.

WILLETT: Different circumstances. Anyway Freck Vreeland wasn't able to pursue his agenda because he left so quickly. He was understandably bitter about the way the Clinton Administration handled his departure, especially so when he saw that the job sat empty for a year, with him living right down there in his place in Marrakech. Nor did the Moroccans like the situation.

Q: The fact that there was such a long gap, they felt, as many countries in that situation did, that they weren't being given their due, that Washington treated them as a second- class country, that we weren't interested in them.

WILLETT: Well, yes and no, because they knew that the USG considers Morocco in a special light. After all, there was a military tie with Morocco. We had listening stations there. The Moroccans had allowed us to implant ourselves and expected in return special treatment from Washington. They couldn't understand why we were not 100 per cent on their side in the Western Sahara problem. And even though we quietly assured them we had no objections to their annexing, in essence, the Western Sahara, so long as it was performed with some sort of plebiscite, that wasn't enough for them. They wanted really blind allegiance to their point of view. We had to walk a line between Morocco and Algeria, and between Morocco and the Polisario.

Q: So you had this long transition. You were in the experience of management, as the acting DCM; you were trying to keep the peace between the military assistance mission, the defense attaché office, and a declining aid apparatus. Aid levels were dropping. You had to butt some heads. How was that experience? How was it working with the chargé? How did the place run for that year?

WILLETT: I think it's always a bit difficult for host country locals to accept secondary figures running an embassy. Everywhere in the world, I believe, they prefer, for their own prestige, to be

working for an ambassador. This said, the Embassy was run capably, though no major innovations were undertaken. It's hard to innovate when you're a chargé or an acting DCM. You've got to be careful there. Even changes enacted by an Ambassador's predecessor sometimes cause trouble. When Ginsberg came in and saw the Residence, he was outraged that U.S. money had been spent to decorate it in a manner he considered inappropriate.

Q: That was by the preceding ambassador.

WILLETT: By Freck. Ginsberg had it all gutted, so to speak, and done up to his taste. Between you and me, I preferred Vreeland's style? I don't recall, Dick, any major innovations while the Embassy was run by a chargé.

Q: You were caretakers.

WILLETT: Sort of. I will say the place became more physically attractive. I mean it's a ramshackle, ugly building, but Joan fixed it up a bit, put up Moroccan decorations and what not. She was good at opening up her residence to locals and Americans, letting them use her swimming pool, holding informal dinners for staff, etc. But for my entire stay in Morocco, morale in the Embassy was terrible, just terrible.

Q: You felt neglected by Washington and out at the end of the tree, the branch?

WILLETT: No, it was more in the families. People didn't like Morocco, didn't like the Moroccans, didn't particularly like the food. They were not happy campers, and they wanted out. People would come then curtail, or wives would go into depressions. One of the Ambassador's big jobs, and I know Vreeland worked a lot on this, was helping the CLO try to improve morale. But you can't, really. A taste for the exotic is either in you or it's not. You either love living abroad in foreign cultures, or you don't. And if you don't, there's no amount of parties at the Ambassador's residence that's going to make you feel better. As for me, I had a wonderful time there. I had my horse and could go riding with friends on weekends. I had a job I enjoyed. And my wife and our kids got down every two or three months, or I would zoom up to Paris for a few days.

Q: And despite any earlier misunderstandings you mentioned with the chargé, you worked well as a team at the level of a country team? It was collegial?

WILLETT: It was collegial, though I can't say there was real warmth between the chargé and me. I didn't feel she respected me for what I was best at, and I'm sure she sensed that I didn't always respect her approach. There was occasional tension between us. At this point, I knew Morocco was it, the end for me. I was pretty forthright in stating my views on things, even after Ginsberg arrived.

Q: Before his arrival, you were really coordinating a good many matters of policy with Washington, presumably with the then country director Steve Buck. He was a person of particularly strong views. How was that coordination process?

WILLETT: Difficult. Buck had strong views on the Western Sahara.

Q: He had served in Algeria, I believe.

WILLETT: Yes, and in Nouakchott. Indeed, I remember meeting Steve Buck -- but I only realized it later -- before I entered in the Foreign Service, on a trip in my Land Rover. I stayed a couple of nights in the Ambassador's residence in Nouakchott and met him at a party. This was after I'd been accepted, but a few months before taking the official oath.

Q: You were coordinating with him by secure phone on a weekly basis.

WILLETT: Yes, by secure phone, by telegrams. We all found him a somewhat argumentative guy, and for his part he thought we'd gone local, that we were too much in the Moroccans' camp. He felt he was bringing us back to a position that took American interests more into account. Well, I didn't see it that way at all. I felt then, as in every post where I'd served, that I always kept American interests meticulously in the forefront (especially in a country like France, or in the francophone countries like Tunisia or Morocco, where I could be suspected, with all that francophony behind me, of somehow having a penchant for the French point of view). I thought those of us making policy in Rabat pretty hard-nosed, but I guess Steve Buck didn't agree.

Q: As DCM you were trying to conduct the orchestra, get a flow of reporting from the consulate in Casablanca, develop a different perspective from there? How was that?

WILLETT: Well, reporting from consulates is always a touchy affair. When Ginsberg got there, he more or less insisted that every cable Casablanca sent out, even one saying that it's five o'clock in Casablanca and raining, had to be cleared in Rabat.

Q: At the time you were the acting DCM, you were encouraging, suggesting topics, and trying to promote the independence of reporting from there?

WILLETT: Yes, I liked Anne Carey, who was consul general. I thought she was doing a good job and was an attractive person intellectually. And I liked her husband, John McNamara. They were good for us down there, activist, self-starting. I did encourage independent reporting, except on policy cables. But as I say, this was pretty much nipped in the bud.

Q: So the new Ambassador came out. He was a pretty hard-charging, business-oriented type. How did that transition evolve?

WILLETT: With difficulty. I worked okay with him, but sometimes with real effort on my part. He did acknowledge the fact that I'd dealt with the Western Sahara in New York, in Washington, and on the spot, and that I knew what I was talking about. When I wrote an analytic message on where we might go with the problem, he couldn't just toss it in the basket. On the other hand, his viewpoint on the Western Sahara sometimes took insufficient account of the Moroccans' capacity to be obdurate, to dig in their heels. He felt that somehow or other during his tenure he was going to resolve the question, while I and others tried to make clear that it would be around for a long time to come. But he did have innovative ideas, brought people in and got them

dashing about (sometimes in uncertain directions). There were tensions between him and Joan.

Q: You were still there as a DCM aspirant. Freck had brought you there with this, and he was then through. How was that?

WILLETT: When Freck left, I realized there had been a serious change in the direction my boat was headed. So I said to myself, Okay, this is it; you've stretched this out as long as you can, now you've got to start thinking about when it's going to end, how it's going to end. I was correct to do so, and to accept the permanence of the political counselor posting. Things ended earlier than I expected, because a cable arrived in January of '95 offering a cash incentive to retire, one of those \$25,000 cash incentives. It said, "You have to be out of the Department by April 3rd of this year."

Q: So you took the money and laughed all the way to the bank.

WILLETT: Well, it's hardly what you'd call a "golden parachute," but I did go to Ginsberg and say, "You know, it's time for me to go home." I think he was genuinely sorry to see me leave, because he did count on me for a lot of work and a lot of reporting. I'd been careful, when he arrived, as I'd been in Paris (where I was acting political counselor for months before the new political counselor, Kim Pendleton, came in), to step back where I'd been. This is important in the Foreign Service. Just because you've sat up there doesn't mean that when the person slated to fill the slot arrives and obliges you to move down again, you have the right to keep acting as if you were still DCM, chargé, whatever. So I went back to being a political counselor, which was hard for me.

Q: Well, he had strengths, outside ties, and a business focus, but he was pretty new to diplomacy, Marc Ginsberg. You must have, as the political counselor, helped him a good deal in his initial contacts. He was still trying to master French, so you certainly must have gone with him or pointed him toward the Palace and the other power centers in Morocco.

WILLETT: Yes, I did.

Q: You mentioned his settling in with the DCM was not an easy proposition.

WILLETT: Well, Joan had gotten comfortable in the ambassador's office, like me in the DCM's.

Q: So it was hard to go back to being a DCM.

WILLETT: Yes, probably as hard for her to go back to being a DCM as for me to go back to being political counselor.

Q: Perhaps harder.

WILLETT: Yes, perhaps harder, that's right. But I sensed real antipathy sometimes between Joan and Ginsberg, which I don't believe was the case with me. Now and then Ginsberg and I had run-ins with one another, but they were essentially on policy questions. I sensed that the

confrontations with Joan were more character clashes. Maybe she wasn't so pliant as I, and I don't mean this as criticism of her.

Q: *I always felt with Marc Ginsberg that he respected the person who would come back and argue the case, and I'm sure you would have done that on the Sahara. I had the impression that he, maybe because of his business focus, had some difficulties with the then economic counselor, Jack Aubert, who I think curtailed, in fact, resigned or retired from that post.*

WILLETT: A lot of people quit.

Q: *Presumably because of the bad morale you mentioned.*

WILLETT: Yes, but Ginsberg added to the bad morale. People couldn't take it. They left. Then there were scandals over in AID. Some of the AID advisers were apparently doing things not quite legal, making money on the side.

Q: *Had there not been equal scandals and perhaps funds missing in USIS as well?*

WILLETT: You know something I don't.

Q: *Earlier, I believe, there were some.*

WILLETT: Oh yes, there was a controversy, before my time there, and in fact, a woman in USIS grieved.

Q: *And some of the locals were, I believe, dismissed for misuse of funds.*

WILLETT: This didn't happen on my beat. But I see we're getting to the end.

Q: *This is the end, John. Why don't you step out of Morocco a little bit and think about where it's going? You mentioned Vernon Walters's confidence in its longevity and the stability of the monarchy, but what do you yourself think after your experience there? It seems to me the case that the traditional support for the monarchy in the Imperial cities and hostility to the monarchy in the countryside, the Bled, has entirely reversed in the last couple of decades in Morocco. The strong support's today in the Bled, and the cities, particularly the biggest ones, Casablanca, are less certain. Do you agree with that? What do you think it means for the future? What do you think that country will look like into the millennium?*

WILLETT: The *Bled*, of course, includes the *Rif*, in the north, where opposition to the King is still strong. But that's another problem. You're right to say that opposition to the King has grown in the cities. That said, I think it's directed more towards a man who's been around so long than to the concept of monarchy.

People like to pooh-pooh Sidi Mohamed, the heir apparent. I met him on a couple of occasions. They talk of him as a bit fey, not a serious guy, a man who won't be able to manage the reins of power. On the other hand, he seems more liberal than his dad. Now, would the country fall apart

under liberalism as practiced by Sidi Mohamed? Or would Rachid, his younger brother - who's a hard-nosed guy and more like his father - be the better one to take over? There have been periodic rumors that the King came close to disinherit, so to speak, Sidi Mohamed, with a plan to name Rachid, his second son, as heir apparent. This hasn't happened. Meanwhile Sidi Mohamed took a legitimate graduate degree at the University of Nice. He defended his thesis the way any French student would have to.

Q: *A degree by correspondence, no?*

WILLETT: Yes, but then he went and defended his thesis in person.

Q: *It was an unpublished thesis on the Western Sahara.*

WILLETT: No wonder he could defend it so well. But I still tend to agree with Dick Walters on this. Morocco is not Algeria, and I think *intégrisme* in Morocco is less likely to get out of hand for two reasons. In the first place the King, and presumably Sidi Mohamed who would succeed him, has always set himself spiritually, and physically, below the mullahs. In their public meetings he allows himself to be photographed sitting at a lower level than the imams, and the average Moroccan is sensitive to this. Now, how much it impresses the increasingly cynical modern city Moroccan remains to be seen. But I felt, while I was there, that the public at large still held the monarchy in esteem.

Q: *This is during the Ramadan "causeries"?*

WILLETT: Yes, exactly, when he dons the same hooded cowl as the mullahs. He has been - it must be said, like him or not - very adroit at balancing two ends against the middle. Secondly, religion and politics are closely intertwined in North Africa. Hassan II has the entire country behind him on the Western Sahara question. Only a small number of people I met while there oppose to the King on this, or feel the matter should be handled in a different way.

Q: *So you leave Morocco guardedly optimistic about its ability. What about the U.S. and Morocco? The Moroccans have seen us a perhaps an antidote to overdependence on France. But over the years that's been with a very hefty level of economic and military aid that no longer exists with the strengthening of Europe and the EU. How do you see this bicentennial relationship, and where is it going? Moroccans also feel we've shifted focus with the collapse of the Soviet Union and end of the Cold War and that we no longer regard them as strategically as we did.*

WILLETT: Moroccan ties with France in particular, and with the EC in general, will remain close, so the Moroccans will roll with the punch. There's a special economic relationship, after all, between Morocco and the EC, one that may develop further. In addition, I think Rabat will accept that Washington hold Morocco with less ardor than we did in the past. I don't know. Perhaps I'm overly optimistic on this. I mean, I'm even optimistic about Algeria. I even believe Algeria is going to straighten its problems out, and that the future of North Africa, the future of the Maghreb, looks good, if Mother Nature doesn't sock it with too many droughts.

Q: The fact that there was such a long gap, they felt, as many countries in that situation did, that they weren't being given their due, that Washington treated them as a second- class country, that we weren't interested in them.

PAUL GOOD
Executive Officer, USIS
Rabat (1992-1996)

Paul Good was born in Kentucky in 1939. After receiving his bachelor's degree at Cascade College he received his master's degree from Ball State. His career in USIA included positions in Thailand, Chile, Colombia, Dominican Republic, Nigeria, Australia, Yugoslavia, South Africa, Morocco, and Senegal. Mr. Good was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy in August 2000.

Q: You left South Africa when, in '92 was it?

GOOD: In '92, August of '92.

Q: And you were brought up, too, because of the problem up in Morocco?

GOOD: Yes, and unfortunately I should have known better, but we were still suffering communications problems with any other country outside South Africa. So you really had difficulty, if you could get through, in talking with anyone in Morocco. So I didn't know that they had been moved to an R and R status.

As you may remember, at the time of the Gulf War in '91, January of '91, they evacuated lots of people, in the Middle East, of course. Morocco was the only place that didn't have R and R. Well, in effect, this was an R & R. They were getting my evacuation. After the fact, they decided just to continue with that and lump it in as an R & R. I didn't know that. I had been planning to do an R & R in Colombia that summer, prepared to go back home. We could have done it; we had the tickets ready to go and everything. Then because I was shifting and wouldn't have my R and R, I thought, we just transferred directly, through Paris, had a good time with friends in Paris, then came on down to Morocco. We had sent our employee, our Colombian employee that we had with us, ahead. By the time we got to Morocco, they'd already subverted him, not with his conscious knowledge. The gardeners and the lower member staff at USIS had decided to have some fun with him and fed him hashish. He was, obviously, vulnerable. He was Colombian, and the Moroccan government was looking for proof that they could wave as, "we're serious about cutting the drug traffic." Of course, they didn't want to bother any of their own people, so they were looking around for others. So we got him out of there immediately, sent him back to Colombia, and did without help.

Q: Sent him back to Colombia then?

GOOD: Excuse me, I sent him back to Colombia. He and his brother had been with us for years.

They had worked for the family in Bogota for years before that.

So we arrived in Morocco in August to find the PAO, of course, gone, and the exec had just left. It was a mess. The acting PAO was the CAO, and they forced him out by mid-September.

Q: Who forced him out?

GOOD: Washington, because they said he had to retire. He was TICed Time in class. He should have been kept until the PAO came down. It turned out the PAO never came because he was unable to get medical clearance. He was Christian Science and had a problem, and he wouldn't take the medical. He still now looks like death warmed over. I don't see how he manages to subsist; he's skin and bones. He was still working when I retired. Lovely fellow, I'd met him when he was PAO in Jordan, had just gotten his Ph.D., lovely wife, lots of kids. USIS had to go find a new PAO. So we went from the active PAO, who ended up was TICed, to the IO (Information Officer) acting, who then left on home leave. That defaulted to the new CAO, who knew nothing about administration. So no decisions could be made to clean up what was a mess that we had been sent there to clean up. It wasn't until the PAO finally arrived in December, having been axed out of a deputy job in London when they canceled the position, that we were really able to get moving. Morale was the worst I'd ever seen. When I got there, the infrastructure, the plant was bad, morale was bad, some of the problem people had been fired already. I had to get involved in firing a few more, firing by not renewing a contract.

In one case, we had to fire the fellow because we caught him stealing. In fact, we caught him stealing twice. He'd stolen once before I got there. He got his wife to sign for a paycheck for a girl who was on a training mission, on exchange training in Washington. When she came back, she went, "Where's my paycheck?" Well, he'd already cashed it; we got proof of that from Patis. He was the dispatcher for the motor pool. He'd stolen some POL, which we had proof of. When we fired him, he never did understand what he'd done. He said, "All she had to do was ask me for the money back," in the case of the stolen paycheck. "It wasn't much money anyway; why would she do that to me?"

He was nothing but trouble from there on, because his wife still worked for us. She wanted to divorce, and with the changing laws, it was possible, theoretically, for a wife to sue for a divorce. She never made it while I was there. Last I heard she still hadn't made it. She left the country. She's working here with the Saudi embassy in Washington, had to leave her daughter, and can't go back to Morocco. For all the time I was there, she was under court order to give up the kids, but the order was held, because he hadn't yet paid what he owed in child support. So it was a standoff, but she was unable to push through the old boy network that he had in the police force to get this worked through the judge at court. He'd sometimes harass her when she left the grounds at night. Unfortunately, of course, there were people in the office, male employees, who certainly agreed with him. So you had most of the women agreeing with her, and most of the men agreeing with him. I had a real education on the Moroccan gender standards.

Q: Your job was what?

GOOD: I was exec again. We only had one branch post there in Casablanca, but that was our

larger operation from a programming point of view.

But again, Morocco was wonderful. Unfortunately I didn't have French, because having been shifted up there, it didn't give me any time to get any French. I didn't have French until after I left Morocco before Senegal. But because my wife had Afrikaans in South Africa, we were fine. She had marvelous French for Morocco. She's got the languages, and so she immediately stepped into the higher society in Morocco. We immediately had contacts at the ministry level, which had nothing to do with my job, but it meant that I would show up at places where only the ambassador was representing the American embassy. He'd look at me with, "What are you doing here?"

Q: Who was the ambassador?

GOOD: Marc Ginsburg, political. Actually, when I first got there Frederick Vreeland was Ambassador. He was the son of the editor of Vogue, had been a CIA officer for most of his career, and went to work for State as a deputy assistant secretary.

GOOD: He was good.

Q: Yes.

GOOD: He'd had to marry his mistress before he got sworn in here. She was interesting, an artistic type. The residence was interestingly decorated (laughing). But he was very good.

Q: Was Dick Jackson there at the time or not?

GOOD: No, he'd left. He had been there forever.

Q: Yes, yes.

GOOD: He had been very good, but, no, he had left. He was still echoing around the halls, but he had gone. So Joan Plaisted came in. She was the DCM, and she was the charge for a while until they could get Ginsburg out there. Ginsburg, of course, was hot to trot and without any clue as to how to trot as an ambassador, almost instantly alienated the foreign minister to the point where we had to back door our contacts. I remember my wife was working for the minister of finance when they had a World Bank visit, and the minister of finance, gritting his teeth as he told my wife and said, "All right, you know, I've got to have the ambassador over when we have lunch with the World Bank people." He said, "I really don't want to." He did, but that was the only time. Marc had a way with the locals, which got him termed "the Israeli ambassador to Morocco." However he meant that to be, he got that taint, and it didn't help at all. He had thought that he was going to be able to resolve the Western Sahara problem because of course he could do that; he was very good. He wasn't very good, and he couldn't resolve it, and he pushed too hard, and that's what really set him off with the foreign minister and with the minister of interior, who is the real power in the country.

My son went back in '97 to the graduation. He had been in the American school in Lugano,

Switzerland. He helped me pack out of Dakar and then on his way back to meet me in Brussels, he'd stopped in Rabat and went to the American school graduation ceremony, at which Ginsburg, of course, was involved. He said that the harangue that Ginsburg made, the Minister of Interior, was sort of a patron for the school, was on the platform and was so anti-Moroccan that a lot of the audience just got up and walked out, including graduating seniors.

Q: Oh!

GOOD: When I complained about it to some people here in Washington, they said, "Hang on there, he's out in a couple of weeks anyway, so don't worry about it." I guess that's one reason that I wouldn't vote for Gore because that's what Marc's connection was. His connection was to...

Q: Yes, still is, I think.

GOOD: I think still is, yes. He's involved with the campaign...

Q: I've seen him on a talk show.

GOOD: Yes, and his Miss Arkansas wife. He's in, of course, with the president for whom he provided safe housing after Clinton was defeated after his first term of governor in Arkansas. But he rubbed the international community the wrong way, particularly the wives. They didn't like his presumptuousness with they felt that he was sort of like the supreme court, chief justice, or the chief ambassador in that city, and that's not the way it goes.

Q: Now you were in Morocco from '92 to when?

GOOD: '96.

Q: Ooh! That's a long time!

GOOD: Yes. By the end of the second year, we had the office back in shape. The fun of the job, the creativeness was pretty well finished because our budgets weren't going well. We had to begin cutting, and that's always an unpleasant prospect to go through.

Q: Right.

GOOD: Then came the December 1995 hiatus, if you remember. We had a stoppage.

Q: Yes, the Congress, basically, would not vote, finally the government had to shut down for a week, and so on.

GOOD: Yes, they shut us down. We were not one of the embassies that decided that we were worth anything, so we shut down. It was all right for me, personally. I got out on the golf course every morning with my boots on. It was, of course, December, and there was dew on the grass, and they would bring the hose, one guy on each side of the fairway, and they'd walk down to

knock the water off the grass. But even with the water knocked off, it was still wet. But it was warm enough so that you'd start a sweater; you'd take it off by the third hole. Unfortunately, back in Washington, the area director felt he was essential and came to the office and thought deep thoughts and made arbitrary decisions without consultation. One of those decisions was that he wanted me to do his Middle East job that he had been unable to fill for a year or so. Since I'd done such a good job in the past, and since he didn't think that Morocco needed an exec, he didn't consult with the PAO who was there, he didn't consult with the PAO who was coming, both of whom knew more about Morocco than he did, although he had served there back in the '60s. He arbitrarily said he was taking the position away, and that I would take the job in the Middle East, didn't consult with personnel either. Of course, that wasn't something that he had control over. It didn't work for him. The PMAO job was in the management branch, not the area branch. But he did have the right to take the position away. Well they fought it, it didn't work, so at the end of February I climbed on the plane and came back for language training. He thought I was going to come back and take the job. But I made my contacts, pulled my strings, and said no, and personnel said, "We need you more for this other job." The IG (Inspector General's Office) had done an inspection of Senegal, our post there, and found it wanting. It had a series of three PAOs who couldn't manage themselves out of a paper bag. So they said, "You've got to get an exec down there who's experienced to clean it up. It won't be a full tour, but we need him down there. So they put me into language training for three months, and that allowed my wife and son to stay in Morocco long enough to finish the school year. I, of course, had made it impossible for them to get rid of the house earlier than that time either. I read the lease (chuckle), and they really weren't pushing for that anyway. They came and met me in June, and we did our home leave and went to Senegal.

Q: You're in Senegal and Dakar from when to when?

GOOD: Just from August to May '96, '97, and then came back to Washington. I turned out to get a good PAO, who came down about the same time I did in '96, who had administrative sense, and that's really all it needed. There was some cleanup to do, some lines to redraw, but we had a good staff, particularly our administrative side. What had not been allowed to happen, we allowed to happen, and that was to let her do her job. With her doing her job, things went beautifully.

Q: Yes.

GOOD: We had, unfortunately, a difficult administrative officer, who was eased out at the same time I left. I was eased out to. I'll get to that later. But he had some kind of a medical problem that caused him problems, caused us problems. He ended in Paris at RAMSI. I figure that was probably just desserts, if you know RAMSI.

Q: No, I don't.

GOOD: RAMSI is the regional finance operation for Africa, Europe, and the Middle East. The employees are very tough French employees. They don't take direction gladly. I'm sure that they have given him no end of a rough time, because they were home, and he was a visitor, and they knew he'd be leaving. And you know how FSN employees can help lash the bastard.

Q: Oh, yes.

GOOD: I really could have left after six months without any difficulty. I told the area director that I thought that my job should be abolished and go back to the way it had been before with the regional visitor on occasion as PMO. He agreed. It turned out that I left a few weeks early because the ambassador got himself into a sexual harassment situation, which if you interested in, I'll tell you, but which ended up with the administrative officer having to leave and his wife, who was causing the problem, having to leave.

Q: How did this come about? I think this is an era of "all sudden sexual harassment came up," and historically, it'd be interesting to see what was considered that sort of thing at that time.

GOOD: Well, my problem, my mistake was in not filing a suit within a 45-day period. I was rusty; I was in transit; I was overseas; and as you know, some ambassadors still act like proconsul. Dane was an experienced officer; he'd been ambassador in Conakry before he came to Dakar. He'd started out as Peace Corps in Eritrea. He and wife had been in Peace Corps. Bright guy, his wife, who was bright and wrote well, was still in the 1960s mode as an ambassador's wife.

I had heard before I got the post that he had had problems with the handling of his female staff in Conakry. I found out, to my dismay, that he had not learned anything since. We got along fine. He made me chairman of the housing board, which is probably not a winning position, but at least it was nice that he allowed me to have that. We had a good crew on board.

The administrative counselor, of course, was not happy about having a board that wasn't under his thumb. We, all the board, agreed that we worked for the ambassador; we didn't work for the admin officer. Of course, we would make our recommendations, and if the ambassador didn't like them, well, he could change them, of course. That was his prerogative. But the admin officer, took off after USIS as well, and made some accusations, which weren't true, and I called him on it. I said, "This is not accurate." It had to do with personnel; it was my job; and he was unhappy that I was bucking him. A lot of us from the embassy went off for a weekend in the bird reserve up at the Mauritanian border. The ambassador came up. I was touring with the deputy admin officer; we were buddies. My wife had had to be evacuated within the first month of our tour in Senegal with the precancerous skin condition.

Q: Oh, yes?

GOOD: They wouldn't let her come back.

Q: Because it's right on the Equator.

GOOD: Well, it is, and it started in Morocco, after I left for French language training. We thought that we had reversed it in the States, and it had calmed down, but when she got down there, it flared up again, and the regional medical officer said, "Get out."

Of course, that was one of the reasons also I had told the area officer that I wanted out as well. My job was done; the PAO was handling it well; the staff was good; and so let me go. I would have rather have stayed through the ICASS installation later in that fiscal year. I would rather have left in October after the new fiscal year started, but never mind. When I came back from this weekend, I saw that the administration officer had not corrected his actions on USIS. I saw that he had left on a medical. Now he had, just before this, spent a half hour of an all staff country team meeting, going through major minutia, or minor minutia, however you want to look at this. Everyone was looking at him, "What's going on with this guy?" The ambassador didn't say anything, just let it run out. As I was leaving the room that day one of the officers turned to me and said, "The guy's sick; something's wrong with him."

When we got back from the weekend we found he'd been medically evacuated. I wrote him a personal note, put it in an envelope, addressed to him saying that I hoped that he'd come back improved because this is, how did I phrase it? I alluded to the fact that "I hope that your breakdown is cured by the time you go back, because your wife deserves better than this," something to that effect. She was having a hard time; it was obvious. I was unwise to have put that line in of course. His secretary didn't like him either. She opened the envelope hoping that there would be something there that she could get involved with, and showed it to his wife. She took it to the ambassador, saying that I was harassing her.

Well, the ambassador of course, should have done what any reasonable manager would have done, saying, "Excuse me, that's not harassment. Get out of my face. Stop that." She was working in the consulate, so he had control over her as an employee. But he didn't, because he did not know how to handle women. We had had this problem with him twice with the housing board. He'd overruled the board's decision because of State women who didn't like the decision. He wouldn't do it for the men, but he would do it regularly for the women. He had problems in this with his wife as well. We found the presidential visit, excuse me, the Hillary visit advance team was shocked to see how she was demanding things of the visit, and the ambassador wasn't stepping in, although the advance team didn't want these things to go on.

So what it amounted to was that he allowed the administrator officer's wife to continue to harass him. Now my feeling is in retrospect, that her husband was aiding and abetting, using her as the front for his efforts to get back at me personally and USIS in general. What I didn't know was that the question of medical records had arisen and that the ambassador told the security officer to check in Washington, and to check with the post to see whether I had gotten into the office to see what was going on. When I found from the ambassador that he was concerned that I had seen the medical records, I said, "Mr. Ambassador, aren't you aware that the fact of his departure was registered on the circulated travel list on Tuesday of that week? We all knew why he had gone, those of us at least in the administration or heads of sections knew everybody who had traveled and why they traveled." I said, "It was no secret."

The ultimate result was that when, we agreed, he and I, that it was finished, that I had done what he wanted, although I hadn't done it quite the way he wanted. He had told me that he wanted me to apologize to her. I said, "For what?" "Well," he said, "I don't know, but apologize to her so she's off my back." So I said, "Okay." But because I'd gotten burned with a written communication internal at the post, I wrote a postcard note and sent it. I had mailed it at the post,

and it had gone to the States and come back. I'd sent it APO. He thought that I had done this purposely to annoy him. He said he had expected an instant apology although he had told me, "Now don't talk to her. I don't want you talking to her." So I couldn't apologize in whatever fashion to her directly. I had to do it in writing, so I did it in mail, rather than internally. I got a call from the DCM back in the States, I was home on spring vacation. He said, "What's going on?" I told him what had happened. "Well," he said, "you're in trouble with the ambassador." "Well," I said, "I'm sorry, but I did what I did." When I came back and talked to the ambassador about it, he still didn't like it, I'm not even sure he believed me. But I said, "Look at the postmark on the letter. The postmark was dated shortly after we talked. Just because it took a long time to get to her is not the issue."

So we agreed to drop it. He said, "Well, you've done what you can do, I hope over with." But the next day I got called in by the RSO (Regional Security Officer) and briefed or interviewed on the medical problem. I considered that to be a violation of the agreement that the ambassador had made that this was finished. So I wrote him a note and said that I didn't thing think this was kosher, and that I thought that, as a Christian, he should apologize for breaking the agreement. His conclusion from that was that I had shown disrespect for the ambassador's position. He told the PAO, not me, to get me out of town before he returned in a month.

There was no recourse at that point. I talked to the DCM about it, and he said, "You know, what can I do? I agree with you. The ambassador however can't handle this. His wife feels that he has got to show some power. He's got to get himself back in charge and this is what she's demanding of him." This is my reading of what I was told. He said, "If we at our age, Paul, can't stand on principle, when are we going to be able to stand on it?" But he rode through it. He's now ambassador in Gabon. I came back to the States, which really was better for me, because I was.

Q: Yes, your wife was here.

GOOD: My wife, I'd been gone from her for eight months at that point. While it probably would have been better for my son to finish high school off in Lugano, we couldn't afford it. It turned out we might as well have done that, because we sent him to Georgetown Prep, and that was just as expensive. But at least he was here. We could see him regularly, even though he was in boarding school for the first seven months of that year. It helped him with networking of course. It's a group of people there.

LOUISE TAYLOR
Cultural Affairs Officer, USIS
Rabat (1992-1995)

Ms. Taylor was born and raised in Illinois and educated at Wellesley College, George Washington University and Boston University. After joining the Foreign Service of USIA, Ms. Taylor served in Washington and abroad in the field of Cultural and Information. Her foreign posts include Moscow, Kabul, Tel Aviv and

Rabat. She also served in Washington as USIA Desk Officer for Afghanistan/Pakistan and for South Asia and as Policy Officer for Eastern Europe and Newly Independent States. Ms. Taylor was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy in 2001.

Q: You were in Morocco from '92 to when?

TAYLOR: '95.

Q: Who was your ambassador?

TAYLOR: When I arrived, it was the tail end of the Bush administration. With one exception, the ambassadors to Morocco have always been political appointees. The first ambassador was Ambassador Vreeland, commonly known as "Freckie." Freckie was an extremely interesting character. He had had a CIA career. He had been posted to Morocco as a young CIA officer. But really he was a political appointee. His mother was the famous Diana Vreeland, who was at the time of her death the curator of the costumes division of the Metropolitan Museum of Art. More famously than that, she was the 30 year editor of "Vogue" magazine and the inventor of Diana Vreeland red and the lady who made the famous comment that pink is the navy blue of India. Freckie was a very colorful character. He was our ambassador. He loved Morocco. He and his very brilliant wife, who was a British artist, a mosaic specialist who made beautiful mosaics, which of course were an art of the country, had a rather glamorous villa in Marrakech and were very famous and well known by Hermes and Yves St. Laurent and everybody who had villas in Marrakech. So, we had an ambassador who was really plugged into Moroccan high society as well as the European high society who came to winter in Marrakech. It was all very social and all very interesting. Freckie and Vanessa were devastated when the election came around in 1992 just shortly after I got there and Bush was defeated and Clinton was elected and that meant that Freckie would no longer be the ambassador. He did try on a trip back to the United States to make the case that he was not a political appointee, that he was rather a career person because, after all, he had this background. But that didn't fly with the Clinton administration. Eventually, a guy named Marc Ginsburg, whose name you may hear, was sent to Morocco some months after Freckie left. Freckie tried to string it out as long as he could. Marc was interesting because he was the first Jewish ambassador in Morocco.

Q: What was Ginsburg's background and how did he approach things?

TAYLOR: His background was that in the Clinton campaign of '92 he was public affairs director for international affairs or something like that. He had a very prominent position in the campaign. He was a lawyer from the Washington area. He was married to a woman from Arkansas, a very pretty blond woman. I think in his law field he dealt mostly in international communications and international commerce. So, from that respect, he was not completely unqualified for the job. He had also spent a good deal of time as a boy in Israel. I think he lived on a kibbutz for a while and speaks fluent Hebrew and did some schooling there, but not university.

Q: Going back to Ambassador Vreeland, from what you were saying, it's great to know high

society, but generally within the Foreign Service context, this isn't worth a warm bucket of spit. It's great socially and you have people coming out – Malcolm Forbes and others – but the society element really isn't important at all.

TAYLOR: Well, it is in Morocco. The King, now deceased, Hassan II, really had a major input over the years into the selection or at least the approval of the U.S. ambassadors. He felt that the most important thing was that his American ambassador would be able to pick up the phone and call the White House. This was true of Freckie. This was also true of Ginsburg. In Morocco of the time there one important person and that was the King. High society in Morocco was made up of the same people who ran the country. So, when I say that it was all very social, it was the social elements who controlled everything else. It's a very small society. Freckie, to give him due credit, got around a lot. He would do anything you asked him to. If you asked him to show up at something that you thought was important that the U.S. be represented at the ambassadorial level, he was pretty willing to do that. He was pretty willing to work with the press. He and his wife both loved the world of culture, so they were active along those lines. As far as visibility and reaching out and extending a hand of friendship to the Moroccans, he did that very well. Ginsburg less so because he was a little bit more hostile toward the Moroccans and he had a much more abrupt dealing with them. He could aggravate people, particularly the Moroccans. He had no use whatsoever for USIA or any of our programs. I'm not saying anything out of school here because he said it himself. He participated very minimally in the kinds of things we were trying to do. He felt that the only thing that he was supposed to do while he was in Morocco was to encourage privatization and develop some kind of a higher level of trade relationships between Morocco and the U.S. on the one hand and Morocco and Europe on the other. That was certainly a worthy goal. Morocco was sort of in the 17th century in some respects in terms of its trade relationships. Ginsburg made it his goal to try to position Morocco better for the next century of international trade. In doing that, he broke a lot of china in the china shop. I can't say that even the royal palace was very happy with him all the time. Certainly for us and USIA, it was difficult. The Vreelands would come up with some wild, off the wall ideas that they wanted USIA to spend its resources on. I won't really go into what those were, but they were pretty wild. Ginsburg on the other hand really didn't have anything that he wanted us to do.

Gradually over the three years that I was there as the CAO, we were beginning to educate him that we were not just a fluffy, frilly organization. I put together an International Visitor Program of parliamentarians to look at how the U.S. Congress deals with such things as setting up the committee approach to deal with an issue, so they divide up responsibility. The Moroccan parliament was almost inept. How you set up a congressional research service. We did different kinds of things to attempt to modernize the Moroccan parliament, which was largely an old boys school of very wealthy, highly placed Moroccans. I think Ginsburg at this point saw some value in doing things like that. So, at the time I left, he was coming around a little bit more to being supportive. He was doing a little bit more with the press, although he was fairly combative. One thing he loved was, he was truly a gourmet. I don't know how he did it exactly or how it happened, but all of a sudden there was this international food festival in Morocco and Ginsburg saw this as a way to get Morocco, which does have a wonderful cuisine, more involved in the whole international trend toward eating interesting foods. If you've noticed, half the waiters in Washington are Moroccan. All of a sudden, there were all these major foodies in Casablanca for five days. Then they went all around Morocco to different cities having food seminars and

cooking sessions. He helped pull that off. He did do some interesting things.

Q: I've never served in Morocco, but one of the charges I've heard about our ambassadors to Morocco is that very shortly they start referring in cables to the King of Morocco as "our King." In other words, they begin to identify with Morocco rather than American interests.

TAYLOR: That's right.

Q: Did you see this?

TAYLOR: Oh, yes. Absolutely. On the other hand, Morocco is one of the few countries which has consistently supported the United States position on Israel. The Moroccans have a history of having protected their own Jews during the Vichy occupation of Morocco during World War II. The then King Hassan II's father, Mohammad V, I don't think he wore a yellow star on his shoulder, but he went close to doing things like that. The Moroccan Jewish population was protected. They were not deported. Had the King not taken that position, they might have been. Andre Azoulay, who is one of the most elegant, intelligent, articulate men I have ever met in my life, is one of the leaders of the Moroccan Jewish community. He was and still is senior advisor to the King on community affairs and even much closer to that. We appreciated that of the Moroccans. Also, I think they sent a contingent of forces to the Persian Gulf War. There is a system whereby if any of the launches in Cape Canaveral, Cape Kennedy, go wrong, there is an alternate landing base in the desert in Morocco. All these films that are made there...

"Blackhawk Down..." So, there is a tremendous amount of cooperation. Moroccans love to say that they are the country that first recognized the United States. The French would argue with that, but if they weren't the first, they were the second. There is a long historical closeness. Ambassadors do come under this spell. The Moroccans entertain lavishly, more lavishly than any other country I've been in. My very first job when I got off the plane was probably one of the most interesting things I've ever done, which was to be put in charge of the 50th anniversary of the Casablanca Conference. This was part of the whole 50th anniversary celebration of D-Day and the end of World War II. I literally stepped off the plane and was handed this. For four months up until January of '93 when it took place, I did nothing but that. It involved all manner of Churchills and Roosevelts and Alistair MacLaine was there, as were Doris Kurtz Godwin, Arthur Schlesinger, a bunch of Eisenhowers, Pamela Harriman from France (She was not yet ambassador but she was living in France). There were 85-100 luminaries sponsored by the Roosevelt library and Hyde Park – and the King. Then the U.S. embassy was supposed to deal with all these egos and get everybody organized. Of course, the Moroccans never ever do anything – and they say this about themselves – until the very last minute. So, we had 95 very important people coming. I didn't know up until probably two or three days before they came exactly what the itinerary would be. The palace always knew. Even Andre Azila could not get the thing shaken out until the very last minute. Finally, the King laid a plane on for all of us and we flew all over the country. We had a meeting with him, a reception with him, at his palace in Fez, which I think very few Americans had ever been in. It was just totally lavish. The King paid for most of this. So, that was a real experience for me, particularly being newly arrived in Morocco. But it leads me to understand how the palace's charms can be pretty captivating for an ambassador who is subject to them all the time. I don't think Marc Ginsburg spent as much time in the company of the palace as his predecessors. He did have this culture clash with them, not

because of his Jewish heritage but because of his personality.

Q: Did you find as cultural affairs officer that you were nose to nose with the French there?

TAYLOR: All the time. But the Moroccans have this real... I mentioned the love-hate relationship between the U.S. and India. The Moroccans have a real love-hate relationship with the French. Increasingly, they are looking towards the West in general and the U.S. in particular to draw away from the rather hide-bound culture and educational structure and commercial structure that the French have left them with. Even moving away from the three hour lunch period every day is something that most modern Moroccans in the cities at least would like to do. Moroccan women in particular who are very professional and yet they have to go home and cook lunch for everybody for three hours every day. Then everybody goes back to the office at 3:00 or 4:00 and they stay there until 8:00 or 9:00 and they're all exhausted all the time. Particularly since the traffic was getting to be such a problem... In Casablanca it's unbelievable, or even in Rabat, this sleepy little village, people would find themselves driving 45 minutes to pick up their children, come home, make lunch, make lunch for the husband. So, everything that the French left behind is now coming under scrutiny in Morocco. The Alliance Française and the other French cultural centers had just money to burn. They had beautiful centers. They had first class exhibits. Of course, the distance from France to Morocco was so close that they could bring people in on a very cheap air ticket all the time. So, their schedule of activities at their cultural centers – and they had four or five major ones and eight or 10 minor ones throughout the entire country – was just spectacular. There was something like 45,000, maybe even more, French teachers in the Moroccan school system. 45,000 in a country that small is just amazing. So, there was no way we could compete on that level. But there was this real friction between the Moroccans and the French, much more so than between the Moroccans and the Americans. It's one of the places where we don't have this long history. The only thing we do wrong is our support of Israel. But even then the Moroccans are fairly supportive of us on that. So, yes, the French... I just realized we couldn't compete. Our cultural center was overflowing. Everybody wants to learn English. Everybody wants to go study in the United States. All of the professors and graduate students that I knew who had gone to study in Paris or in France understood the difference in going to a U.S. university, where the professor has to talk to the student because the professor respects the student, whereas in France the professors couldn't care less about- (end of tape)

The French certainly had far greater inroads and far more resources to spend in Morocco. Vast numbers of Moroccan university students and graduate students were going to France than to the United States either through French scholarships or even on their own dime because it's so much cheaper. But they also understood that they were getting, compared to what they would have gotten in the U.S., a pretty third rate education. Number one, the French university system is so hierarchical to begin with even French students don't get full attention from their professors. Then you have the societal racial attitude between the French and the Moroccans. Moroccans are very proud of the fact that, unlike Tunisia and Algeria, they never became a real colony. You can argue as to whether they were or were not a colony given the fact that the French presence was pretty much saturating the country. Nevertheless, Morocco remained independent through all those years while the French were there. But they're there. All educated people speak French.

Q: How did you find American education took? Did the Moroccans who went to the United States become absorbed in the United States?

TAYLOR: Oh, they loved it. The Moroccans just took to, gravitated to, the whole idea of American education. In my day, the rate of return was pretty good for Moroccans. There were some problems but it wasn't as bad as some other countries. They embraced the whole educational structure. They came from this very rigid French structure superimposed on an even more rigid Arab society. You almost had total paralysis in the universities as well as at the upper levels, where professors were appointed and faculty chairmanships and deanships were decided. All of that was based on who knew whom and it was all very incestuous. Everybody knew that and everybody knew there was no way out of this vicious circle. So, Moroccan students at any level whether they went as graduate students or post-docs or as senior lecturers and professors, they would find themselves blossoming in the U.S. educational structure. We also had a summer program for Moroccan professors. It's worldwide. We have a summer program called the Summer Institute where foreign professors or teachers, even high school teachers, of American history, American literature, American politics, economics, American studies, come to the United States for a six weeks intensive seminar. It can be on American literature. It could have a focus on Faulkner, for example. They'll go to the University of Iowa and it's summertime, so it's relaxed, it's a seminar environment. They're thrown in with professors from our program from other countries. Let's say there are 25-30 of them studying in a place like Ames, Iowa, or in a place like New Mexico or wherever. They have a wonderful time. First of all, the libraries are open to them. It's an open stacks library in our university systems. No European even has access to books in libraries. Particularly in Morocco, since first of all, there aren't any books in the libraries. Secondly, if there were, nobody would be able to take one out. So, in the U.S. they're just overwhelmed by the library systems. They're overwhelmed by their access to professors, by the openness of ideas, and by the fact that they're encouraged and practically pushed into talking, whereas in Moroccan universities, the professor talks and you don't question what the professor has to say. That's very much a legacy of the French. So, the Moroccan experience in the American educational environment is nothing but positive, just extraordinary.

Q: Were there any other elements that you were dealing with in Morocco?

TAYLOR: Well, there was a huge artistic community. They were very hungry for contact with the outside. They hadn't developed a degree of sophistication, largely due to resources. The Ministry of Culture is totally disorganized and under-funded. But there is a huge interest in the arts. Moroccan design and the use of color and the use of architecture is very important. So, there was a burgeoning movement within the artistic side of the country. Many people are interested in the arts, but not much was going on. There was one theater in Rabat. In the three years that I was there, other than things that we or the French brought, there were maybe three or four different programs that were Moroccan produced. Those would last two or three days. It was really a sad scene. So, we tried to help there.

The environment is a major issue of concern to Moroccans as well as to us. I wouldn't say they're primitive, but they have a long way to go in terms of cleaning up their waterfront, cleaning up their beaches. Pollution is just unbelievable. It's fortunate there aren't more cars in the country. It would be even worse. So, we did a number of programs to address those issues.

The idea of universal education, literacy, were issues that we tried to work with. There is a system of American language centers which are now privatized but which USIA started in the '50s. There are 10 of them now throughout the country. While they're not nearly as elaborate as the French language teaching centers, they're extremely effective and each one has an American director. There must be 50,000 students studying English in these American language centers. I sat on the board of the ALCs. We didn't give them any money, but we could provide facilitative assistance. We did teacher training together. We were able to give them some things. A fellow running the whole system, the director, who was based in Rabat, has been there for almost 20 years doing this. He is an American. That was a very effective counterpart to what we were doing. It was a spin-off of what USIA used to do when they used to teach English directly.

Q: Was it becoming a given that for international language, English outclassed the French?

TAYLOR: It was becoming a given that if you were under 35 years old and you had gotten your Ph.D. speaking nothing but Arabic and French, you really needed to start learning English. I had one very good friend at the University of Marrakech, a professor of comparative religion, and I sent him on an International Visitor Program. He went to the United States speaking very rudimentary English. He was wonderfully educated, a very intelligent man. He came back after 30 days speaking pretty good English. As I left, he was enrolled in English classes at the ALC in Marrakech. That was happening anyway. Then the whole Internet issue came up. The Moroccans, like several other Arabic countries – Saudi Arabia was among them at the time – this was 1995 – had not yet decided that Internet was the wave of the future. In fact, they were quite concerned about the evils that it might bring. There was a conservative element there that was arguing against opening up the portals to receiving Internet. In the meantime, the universities, students, businessmen, and everybody else were just anxious for this. My assistant cultural affairs officer, Laura Berg, who has subsequently spent the last five years and still is in Saudi Arabia, had this brilliant idea of setting up an Internet conference. Although there was no Internet in Morocco at the time, she did it. I never thought it would succeed. She somehow managed to get with very little cost to us over 20 or 30 top speakers on the Internet. Bill Gates was not there, but just about everybody else was. Plus, the university in Rabat lent us its space. The Ministry of Communications did the same thing. All the while, the PTT had made Internet connections impossible because of the cost. So, while Internet had problems coming to Morocco, they did allow and encourage us to sponsor this huge Internet conference. This conference was famous. It was all Laura's doing. The French were just beside themselves. I heard they tried to intervene at the last minute and tell the Ministry of Communications, "We don't want the Americans to be doing this. This is going to bring too much American commerce to Morocco. The Americans are going to dominate your whole Internet future." Laura really pulled off a major coup there. So, those two things, the Internet and the fact that so much of it is in English, plus a growing realization that France is a wonderful place but it's not the wave of the future means that most educated Moroccans understand they have to learn English.

Q: Things have developed so rapidly in the Internet that '95 was antediluvian Internet. But the great inhibition was that the telephone system just wasn't up to it or they weren't thinking ahead and they were charging by the minute. That pretty soon went by the boards. So, this was a tremendous inhibitor, the cost.

TAYLOR: It wasn't just the cost. It was also a way of keeping out this dangerous thing. The Moroccan ministerial advisors to the King were not yet quite sure they wanted to bring into their country. One of the American presenters put a map of the world up on the screen. It showed in different colors which countries were Internet active and which ones weren't. At that time, '95, the only ones that were not – there was this big suave of Internet active colors (let's call it blue), and then there were these countries in red that were not. Red countries included all of Africa with the exception of Egypt and maybe Tunisia, Morocco, plus Saudi Arabia and a few of the poorest places of the former Soviet Union. I forget what the situation was in China. But that just opened everybody's eyes up. There was the Middle East, Internet active. It was a very effective map that this man just very casually put up there and said, "Look, you, too, can be part of the next world."

Q: I take it when you left there in '95, you left with pretty good feelings about Morocco.

TAYLOR: I love the country. Of course, you always have wonderful friends. I found myself frustrated by the Moroccans. They couldn't decide whether they wanted to live in the 17th century or the 21st century. It seemed to be one or the other. They didn't seem to be finding their way. You would think that you'd be making tremendous progress on the one hand... For example, the King personally decided that he wanted to have an American style, an American modeled, university in Morocco. This university, to make a very long, complicated story short, was funded by Morocco from funds that it received from Saudi Arabia. It received those funds from Saudi Arabia because at one point somewhere in the late '80s an oil tanker had broken off the coast of Morocco in the Atlantic Ocean. There was the potential of an enormous oil spill onto the Moroccan coastline for which the Saudis gave the Moroccans \$50 million in the anticipation that they would have a big cleanup cost. Well, the oil never came. It went in another direction. So, the King has \$50 million. So, he says to King Fahd of Saudi Arabia, "I want to start a new American model university and will call it the Two Brothers University, meaning you and I." That seemed like a boondoggle to fall into our laps. We wouldn't have to pay a dime. There would be an American curriculum. It would be taught in English. All the professors would be American educated. It would be a private university. Students would have to pay money there. Therefore, they would have to graduate at some point instead of going on and on. This is a good and wonderful thing. But it is so fraught with Moroccan politics including the hiring and firing of people who are or are not in favor at the royal palace of the day. King Fahd finds out there are going to be women at this university. He hadn't been told there were going to be women. All power to the Moroccans for allowing that to happen. Of course, these women all show up in their black leather miniskirts and their Ferraris because this is a private university. The American faculty that's hired thing finds out there is no real freedom for the professors and the faculty. There is no way that this is run the way an American university is run. So, they do a good thing and then they ruin it somehow. It's just like they build a beautiful hotel and within a year it's all trashed. Then they let that go to seed instead of fixing it up and keeping it nice. Then they build another one. There is also a certain amount of duplicity in personal and professional relationships, though never among my staff. Moroccan staff are as dear to me as anybody. Several of them live here right now. But in some of the dealings I had with Moroccans in institutions throughout the country, I always felt that there was something else there. I never felt that way as much in any other country. Everybody always has a hidden agenda, of course. In international relations, we have to accept that. But in Morocco, I felt that it went beyond that. It went beyond what was necessary. So, I didn't leave there altogether positively. It's no secret that

American tourists who go to Morocco consistently say they would never go back again. Despite the fact there is this spectacularly beautiful country with spectacular scenery, wonderful food, interesting things to buy, interesting history, the way they are treated sometimes by tour guides or being ripped off here and there quite blatantly is something that American tourists, having now had experience in other countries, find is not very appealing to them. I have close friends who are very sophisticated travelers who say, "I had the most horrible experience of my life in Morocco." I don't feel that I had the most horrible experience of my life in Morocco, but I understand what the problem is. So, I wouldn't say that I left there altogether positive. I'm not even sure I'm altogether hopeful for Morocco. It is a place of tremendous tolerance and I respect that. I more than respect it. I just think it's wonderful. You see Berber people with more Negroid-type features fully integrated into the cities. There is a fair level of open tolerance. There is a lot of intermarriage. Other religious groups are allowed to exist and practice their religions. For an Islamic country, it's a very secularized society. There are increasing problems of radical Islam spilling over from the Algerian situation. Something like, depending on whose statistics you believe, 50-80% of the young men under the age of 30 are unemployed. 50-80% of young women are illiterate. These are problems that the government is just not facing even with the new king. There is some hope that with him they will, but it's almost the way I feel about Sri Lanka. Here are people who really have a chance. They're not at the bottom of the heap. They do have an infrastructure. They do have a chance to make it. They're not taking advantage of every opportunity. Some opportunities are turning to dust.

ROBERT B. PETERSEN
Public Affairs Officer, USIS
Rabat (1992-1996)

Mr. Petersen was born and raised in Ohio and educated at Oberlin College. He entered the USIA Foreign Service in 1965 and served as Public and Cultural Affairs Office in Embassies or Consulates in Vietnam, Malaysia, Japan, Mauritius, Israel, Morocco and Cote d'Ivoire. He also served in several senior USIA positions in Washington, DC. Mr. Peterson was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy in 2001.

Q: And you left Morocco when?

PETERSEN: In September of '96.

Q: Who was the ambassador when you got there?

PETERSEN: Vreeland. He left around the third week in January, right at the end of the Bush administration. Then Joan Plaisted was our chargé for a year. Then Mark Charles Ginsburg became ambassador.

Q: What was the state of American-Moroccan relations?

PETERSEN: Excellent. When I'm talking about Moroccans, to answer that type of question, I'm talking about the three-to-five percent that form the elite, the political/social/economic elite that we would deal with. That's not to say that most of their opinions weren't reflected by others. But the Moroccans would remind us of how good the relationship was. There was this little minuet we would all dance that Morocco had been the first country to recognize the United States.

Q: Anyone who has served in Morocco has always mentioned that.

PETERSEN: Indeed there is the letter. Excellent relations. An historically good relationship. Morocco is such a beautiful place in which to live and to work. It helps color your view of everything. I do recall that much of what we tried to do, got involved in there, was welcome and was generally supported.

Q: You were public affairs officer, but where did you find you were putting most of your effort?

PETERSEN: Well, at least initially, the bulk of every single day was spent on the usual things that a PAO would be involved in. We had 60-some people at USIS. I was managing the staff of that. That includes the Americans and the FSNs. We had two cultural centers, libraries, one in Rabat and one in Casablanca. We had a very good press section involved in providing a great deal of material for the press. There were cultural programs that we presented, the cultural exchange programs, the IV program, all of that. Management of the post was the bulk of every day.

But at least that first year, I spent a lot of time involved in the preparation of the new VOA relay station up in Tangier. We'd had a station up there from the end of World War II right on the outskirts of Tangier. We were preparing a move later in '93 into a new 1,100-1,200 acre antenna farm about 30 kilometers south of Tangier on a coastal floodplain. Much of the construction was nearing completion. My first trip when I got there was down to Casablanca because we had a program going on with the Roosevelt Library where the Roosevelt Library and the Moroccan government had flown in a group of people to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the Anfa Conference. We had the descendants of Churchill and Eisenhower and de Gaulle. We had scholars. We had Schlesinger there. Pamela Harriman came. They were feted and flown around Morocco for much of the week to Fez and Marrakesh, would have a scholarship discussion in the morning and tourism every afternoon. Then my next trip was up to Tangier from Rabat, up to the relay station. There were some public affairs issues about the move. Some significant time was spent that first year preparing for the move and the opening of the relay station and working with community leaders in the area to assure them that the relay station was going to be a good neighbor and wouldn't bring harmful effects to the environment or to the economy. For example, that grazing would still be permitted for flocks in the antenna field. I know that maybe some people in Washington felt that I was a little overreaching my responsibilities, but I got involved in communicating directly with Washington with the VOA about the need to have better barriers around the antennas and so forth to prevent people or animals from harm by electricity and so forth. We were dealing with public affairs issues having to do with the effects of the possible medical problems that could be caused for people living near high-powered antennas and those kinds of issues. It involved sending our IO (Information Officer) to talk to people, meet with the press. I spent a lot of time on the road back and forth between Tangier and Rabat.

Q: Was there any discussion at that time about antenna fields being outmoded and satellites taking over?

PETERSEN: Yes, oh, yes, a great deal. I don't think anybody would argue that at some point in the future, all of us are probably going to get our radio or broadcast signals direct to something we wear on our wrist from the satellite in outer space. The only question is when? In our generation or the next or the one after that? If an antenna field like that is going to have a 30 or 40 year lifespan, should you build it? Will it be overtaken by technology before its useful lifespan is used up? Those kinds of discussions were taking place. When I was in Israel, there had been a proposal to build a big antenna field out there and our PAO, Howie Lane, spent most of his time working on that. But now and then, I got involved in that issue as well when I was in Israel. There, the thing ended up not being built because of concerns about flyways for migrating birds. There was concern the proposed site would inhibit annual migrations of birds. But in Morocco, yes, at the time that plans were laid to build the new relay station, there was that discussion and arguments. And there were concerns that the antenna farm was too big, 1100-1200 acres, and the argument was that we lost our relay station in Liberia and when we did it forced us to go off the air for a huge swath of area and there were people who argued it's much better to have a lot of smaller relay stations instead of investing so much in a major single station. I've heard that the one in Morocco is probably about the last of the big ones that was to be built, that in the future, they'll be smaller and scattered more widely as we continue to use shortwave relay stations.

Q: Back to Morocco, who was the king at that point?

PETERSEN: The king did not die until 2000, four years after I had been there. But there were periods when I was there when there were concerns expressed about his health. Every year, annually, we would gather and review our paper to Washington that was on file as to our predictions as to what would happen with the demise of the king.

Q: One of our goals has been to promote democracy. How did that play in the country?

PETERSEN: Democracy under a monarchy seems to not go together. Those of us working in the embassy all did acknowledge that Moroccans – and I'm not talking about the elite, I'm talking about the entire country really – by and large regardless of the criticisms of the excesses of the monarchy or its shortcomings or its blind eye to certain things, took pride in the monarchy and they supported the institution of the monarchy. So, that's the starting point. If you're talking about democratization, it was not some effort to pave the way for something other than the monarchy and a strong monarchy in Morocco. But we worked with the parliament. We had a variety of programs. One in particular exemplifies this. USIS was working on a project to help develop a research capability for the parliament, I won't say something modeled on the Congressional Research Service, but something inspired by that, so that Moroccan parliamentarians if they wanted to do some research on possible legislation had the means at hand, had a structure, a methodology, for having some research done for them to develop a bill. This involved such mundane things as getting them some computing technology, but also providing information about how such a research service could be thought out, what kind of

personnel you would have in such an office. That's an example of contributing to the democratization process. Another example of this effort at empowering people to take more control over their lives. Joan Plaisted was still there. We had a meeting and instead of in an office she convened it at her house over lunch. There might have been Joan and one or two others from the embassy and myself and then six Moroccans representing different parts of Morocco including Fatima Mernissi, a sociologist of some international renown who writes on women's affairs. We had representatives of different groups. The point of the meeting was to talk about how to help Moroccan women. One of the conclusions was, well, maybe set up a hotline, something not modeled on but inspired from the things we do in the U.S., where we have hotlines for battered women. A hotline where Moroccan women could get some information, guidance, and support. That's one example. The parliamentary research service idea is another. There were a lot of these types of things underway, all of which would contribute to Moroccans taking more control over their own lives, recognizing their rights and being able to do more. I came up with the idea of handling our annual Human Rights Report differently. In the past when the Human Rights Report was submitted to Congress in January every year, I think every country was provided a copy the day before. In some countries if they're on their toes and working well with us, they probably know very well what's in it long before anybody in the foreign ministry gets a courtesy copy. I said, "Let's do it differently here in Morocco. Instead of just acknowledging that it's been submitted to Congress and we're required to submit it every year, let's talk about it at the cultural center. Let's have some representatives from the political section responsible for doing the document stand up with the document in the week after it's been submitted and respond to questions and talk about what goes into it and how it's put together and who we talk to." We did that for several years when I was in Morocco. I think the first year, there was a lot of misgivings on the country team about having such an approach. Credit to Ambassador Ginsburg for authorizing us to try this and do it this way. But at each of our cultural centers, we had programs on the document. We'd have a panel of people and say, "We write it. This is how we see it. This is why we see it the way we wrote about it." I don't know that that's been done in many, if any, countries. That type of thing doesn't result in a program or a new project like the parliamentary research or women's hotline, but it contributes to the idea of democratization. I'll give you one final example. There were dozens and dozens of these. In Morocco, there is the issue of Berbers and the Arab culture and who is a Berber and who is Arab. It's difficult for Moroccans to deal with this directly sometimes.

Q: Algerians are having tremendous problems with this.

PETERSEN: But it's something that needs to be addressed in the process of democratization. Our approach was, "All right, we'll talk about the American issue." We searched and found a French speaking American Indian who was a lawyer who could come to Morocco to talk about tribal legal rights in our democracy and how it worked and he could do it in French. It would have been even better if he had spoken Arabic, but that was too much to hope for. We brought this person over as part of our cultural program. This person went around and talked about this issue in the United States, how tribes were recognized, fought for, protected their rights, asserted their rights, what they were. People could make the connection. We didn't have to talk about Berber-Arab relationships. We just simply talked about this in the United States. People could then draw their conclusions and apply it to their own democratization. We also had more straightforward programs with the University of Chicago School of Law. We brought scholars

over over a period of a couple of years and had exchanges with people from the ministry of justice and the judicial system in Morocco, direct exchanges examining issues of how the court systems were working and so forth. Dozens of types of programs like this all looking at issues that were related, some very obviously, some less obviously, to the democratization of a society.

Q: Did you feel you were being monitored by the government on this? Did you feel inhibited?

PETERSEN: Monitored closely and not inhibited. You meant the embassy or USIS or staff?

Q: Yes.

PETERSEN: Monitored closely because we'd go out of our way to keep people informed and let people know. Not inhibited, no. It's interesting. So often, I've seen people dance around something instead of just dealing with it directly.

In Mauritius, there was a Libyan information and cultural center with the "Green Book" of Qadhafi and all the material. They had a resident Libyan in charge. They were trying to propagandize in Mauritius about the great way of Libya. A couple of visitors from Washington told me, "Gee, this is fascinating. I wonder what they're up to and how they're doing it." I thought, "Well, this is silly, so I walked over and walked in and introduced myself, told the director who I was. He was flabbergasted, but within seconds we started talking and I said, 'I want to look around and see what you're doing.'" I walked around and looked and then took some visitors from Washington. I've always felt that sometimes a direct approach can pay great dividends.

Back to Morocco, we were monitored, observed, and didn't feel inhibited. We were very careful never to confront the monarchy in any of this. We had no reason to. The monarchy was a great contributor to the stability of that country. The monarchy as an institution has great shortcomings.

Some of the things, the excesses of the monarchy, are wrong and are unfortunate and are not in the best interests of the country from my vantage point. But we had no reason to confront the monarchy.

Q: Did Israel come up while you were there?

PETERSEN: Oh, yes. The Moroccans had an Israeli government office in Morocco. I don't know how many Israeli diplomats were there. One of the king's titles was "Protector of the Faithful," but he looks after his Jewish subjects. The Israeli office was there and accepted by the Moroccan government because there is -- it's no longer a large Jewish community -- but there still exists a small Jewish community in Morocco. And the Moroccans tried to engage in the Middle East peace process. The Moroccans have a role to play. The Moroccan monarchy has some standing on this issue and the future of Jerusalem and so forth and makes useful interjections from time to time.

As PAO, I did not have a great deal of contact with the Jewish community in Morocco. I did go

over to a synagogue at the time of Rabin's assassination. From time to time, I would visit the Israeli office to talk about some of the developments in the peace plan and about some of our programs in Morocco. There was Israeli involvement in some of the investment and development in the Moroccan economy, too.

The ACAO (Assistant Cultural Affairs Officer), Laura Berg, came up with a concept for what came to be known as BELL, Board of English Language Libraries. We took our two libraries and interconnected them. This was in the 1990s, the dawning age of computing and cyber resources. We interconnected 40-50 English language libraries in Morocco. Some of them were real libraries – the British consul and others – and some were significant English language collections for research in different institutions, thousands and thousands of volumes in some of these collections in different scholarly organizations. And some were smaller. But throughout the country, we linked together this organization and coordinated some of the activities of these collections and the interlibrary lending and the use made of these English language library resources. It was a good idea and the credit goes to the ACAO, Laura. She was the spark. She was well supported by others. Our senior FSN librarian, Malika Baiz, the CAO and others all supported, contributed, helped. But one of the things I looked back on when I left Morocco was that BELL was a wonderful organization. I don't know its status today, but I do know that before I left Morocco, my last year there, posts and area offices in Washington were asking us to send them information because they'd like to start up their own similar organizations in their areas using the BELL in Morocco as the model.

GARY S. USREY
Deputy Chief of Mission
Rabat (1994-1998)

Gary S. Usrey was born in North Carolina in 1948. He graduated from the University of Maryland in 1970. His postings abroad during his Foreign Service Career included Baghdad, Buenos Aires, Alexandria, Bilbao, Panama City and Rabat. Mr. Usrey was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy on March 21, 2002.

Q: Gary, we're off to Rabat. What is your job there?

USREY: I was a DCM in Rabat.

Q: Now, who is the ambassador?

USREY: The ambassador was a guy called Marc Ginsberg, a political appointee, former Washington attorney, who had strong ties to the Clinton-Gore team. He had been there about six months. He went out in the December/January time frame. So, the existing DCM there, Joan Plaisted, was leaving that summer. I got there about six months into...

Q: Joan Plaisted?

USREY: Yes.

Q: I interviewed her.

USREY: Oh. I worked with Joan this past fall when we were both senior advisors in New York at the U.S. Mission to the U.N. After retiring, we went out together, worked together.

Q: Well, now, what was the situation in Morocco when you arrived in 1994?

USREY: I got there at the very end of August. I got permission to arrive very late, because my oldest daughter was starting college. I arrived as late in the summer as one can do, 29th of August or something. The most salient thing was the upcoming Casablanca conference. You'll recall, this is one of those annual meetings that got spun out of the Oslo process. The hopes were historically high for Middle East peace. Although, Morocco was nominally the organizer of this, we were deeply involved with the planning cell in the Foreign Ministry, and in the palace there that was being put together, because we had Secretary Christopher coming. Of course, there was going to be the Israelis. That was somewhat historic. I got to meet Foreign Minister Shimon Perez in Casablanca. Arafat and all the Gulf Arabs meeting in a conference with an Israeli delegation was still a new and remarkable thing. I guess it would be remarkable again today, under the circumstances. To have all these guys sit around the table in a non-confrontational way to plot regional economic integration and future Middle East peace. It was very, very exciting. We were very busy in the embassy up until... I guess that was October. I have to tell you, I can't recall. Maybe it was early November, late October when the Casablanca conference happened. So, it seems like I got caught up with preparations for the conference at the same time I was doing my courtesy calls, and getting to know the staff and getting the staff to know me, and who I was. I had to learn French before I went out there. I never dreamed I would go to the French speaking world. I thought I would dodge that bullet. Here, I ended up in Rabat, and having to take French. Moroccans really don't like to speak Arabic much. They prefer to use French, at least the elite.

Anyway, the first few months were totally consumed with that. I remember "wheels up" with Christopher, after the conference was over. We drove down to Casablanca Airport and put him on his plane. I think everyone thought it really went well. It was a pretty successful conference.

Q: Here you are an Arabist. Did you get any feel for our team morale, Christopher, dealing with the problem at that time, the Arab-Israeli situation? It has been criticized, at least at a later time, as the Arabists were essentially excluded. Did you get any feel for that?

USREY: If you are referring to the SMEC/NEA rivalry or divide, I always viewed that as more an organizational problem, as much as it was philosophical. I mean that you shouldn't have... Bob Pelletreau, who is about as classic an Arabist guy as you can have. It was still Ed Djerejian when I was in Washington, but shortly thereafter, it was Bob. Both of those guys would have been classic career Arabists of the first order. You couldn't lay blame at the NEA Bureau for lack of any focus on the Arab-Israeli issue. I always thought that the SMEC issue, having Dennis Ross and Aaron Miller do that, working on the same issues out of the Secretary's office, sometimes without good coordination and in relative isolation..

Q: You're talking about SMEC?

USREY: It was an acronym - Special Middle East Coordinator. So, it was SMEC Ross and DSMEC Miller. It's stupid. "Man from SMEC" sounds like it's from Get Smart or something. But I guess from my perspective in Rabat, I didn't have the sensation anymore Middle East policy had suddenly been hijacked by non-career types. Middle East policy was often formulated at the White House, anyway.

Q: That was the adversary you were getting from...

USREY: That is not the best perch from which to make an assessment of the Middle East. Rabat is on the rim of the Arab world. It's the closest Arab country to the U.S., and all that. Certainly, we felt we were involved at post. So, I think hopes were very, very high for peace at that time. Then, of course, we had the subsequent Amman conference the next year. Then, I guess it was Qatar, the year after that. Then, I think after that, they stopped occurring. But, I had to sort of decide what my role was going to be. That was obviously decided first by the ambassador. There are some DCMs where the ambassadors are less interested in foreign affairs, if they're political, and the strategic stuff. So those ambassadors pretty much handle the in-house ambassador functions, leaving it up to the DCM to do a large piece of the policy, the "outside" work. Others are all outside, and the DCM is the "inside," management guy. That latter thing is what I was asked to do. But, I did on our little floor there. Marc and I worked very collegially, especially at first. But, I understood what he wanted me to do was to concentrate more on issues like the MPP and mission morale.

Q: The MPP?

USREY: The Mission Program Planning function, which was an annual thing. You didn't have to live with that, I don't think, but it's a management by objectives exercise that is a nightmare. It makes the EER evaluation process look tame. Anyway, I tried to focus on morale, and of course, keeping tabs on all the Embassy sections. I was heavily involved in political and economic issues. I edited their cables, not overbearingly, I hope. I wasn't hands-off. But, the palace and high-level diplomacy was pretty much Marc's domain. Some DCMs try to become super political counselors, but I tried not to do that. I let the political section do its work. I would take care of managing that. Once we got the Casablanca conference out of way, we had this ongoing, ever present issue of the Western Sahara, which is the last colonial territory dispute left in Africa. The last piece of African territory that is not decided, in terms of sovereignty.

Q: Political sovereignty?

USREY: Right. Franco died in 1975. Then, Spain departed from what was then called Spanish Sahara, leaving a vacuum. It was later turned over to a UN peacekeeping mandate, called MINURSO, a French acronym. MINURSO was a UN peacekeeping mandate. The Moroccans ended up fighting a proxy war against the Polisario. Polisario was the Algerian-backed force, with some Soviet support. It was all a Cold War thing. The U.S. had an interest in solving the dispute, not only because U.S. troops were in the peacekeeping force there, but also because, as a

permanent member of the UN Security Council, we wanted to see UN resolutions on the Western Sahara carried out.

Q: Were there American troops there?

USREY: We did. We had American troops there. In fact, at one point, an American was the head of the military force. The overall coordinator was some other nationality, but the head of the military unit, was an American colonel. The U.S. had to walk a fine line. We did not endorse or recognize either country's claim on the territory. If you look at a map in the Foreign Ministry in Rabat, you would see references to "Greater Morocco." Morocco would be shown as extending all the way to Mauritania. We didn't recognize that, because as a UN Council member, we considered it a disputed territory. It was an issue of some conflict with the Moroccans. We had high-level meetings. I was involved in several meetings, with the Ambassador and the King, where I was the note-taker. I think we were making progress on, if not resolving, at least understanding better Morocco's compulsions. What I was going to say was I got pretty much fogged in. That was the main issue we worked on, a bi-lateral issue with the Moroccans, if you can call it that. The other thing was, our ambassador was determined to right-size the Mission. We had a Mission that was, like Tunis and some others, following the Cold War, much bigger than it needed to be. It had this artificial size that reflected our interest in trying to get aid to moderate regimes, to counteract the Soviet influence. Now, all that disappeared, and we didn't need to be in there, in such numbers. Certainly, not in Morocco. This wasn't Egypt or Israel in a front-line situation.

We had a funny situation. About 10 U.S. agencies were represented at the post. Some of the agencies were making decisions on right sizing, downsizing in Washington, for example, USIA. USIA wouldn't necessarily consult with us. We had something like nine, full-time, direct hire Americans in USIA. Within a year and a half, that fell to four. AID had a huge mission there, 20 plus direct hire AID people. That fell even more steeply, by the time I left, it was six. They were debating the future of the AID mission, whether they were ready to "graduate" Morocco, because of its per capita GNP numbers, and all that. With that said, other elements in the mission had less direction from Washington. We had a military defense attache, and we had a military liaison office. You know, the assistance guys. We had very few FSNs. They were delivering surplus U.S. military equipment under the so-called Southern Region Amendment to Moroccans. What else? We didn't really control Peace Corps. They were large, 140 volunteers all over the country, doing really good work. Our job was to try to right size the administrative section, and the ambassador had a bugaboo about merging the economic and political sections. He had seen that done at other posts, or had heard about it. He was fascinated with the concept. While I agreed that we needed to have some symmetry in the right sizing, the downsizing. In other words, we couldn't reduce AID and USIA, and leave the military grossly swollen. I wanted to have a "no regrets" policy, not cut four or five people, and then have a new ambassador come in two years and say, "I don't like it that way." We wanted to have something that would be defensible and sustainable. I remained, until the time I left, opposed to physically merging the political and economic sections. I thought the single, one thing we should be doing more of with Morocco was trade and bilateral economics, since we were graduating them from AID over time. We should be boosting trade and we needed a full, stand alone, robust economic section.

Q: Had you any experience or had you heard about this merging? It all sounds like a good idea, merging political and economic, but I can see where one or the other can end up dominate. I would suspect that political would end up more dominate than the economic, which has its own trap. I don't know. Were you getting any feedback at this time about this?

USREY: Well, obviously, the first post, which had done it, was the example the ambassador had in mind. It was done in Cairo, of all places. I think the feeling there was decisions in economic policy were fundamentally political too, and vice versa. Everything had economic consequences, politically. I think more often than not, it was done at posts that had moved from the very large size, say as Cairo, to something like Amman or Yemen, where you probably couldn't justify it, so they couldn't staff it. Sometimes you had counselor jobs where it got harder and harder to attract FSOs to be a section chief. People wanted to be a DCM. It used to be that you had very senior people, in the old days, assigned in embassies as political and economic counselors. But once our personnel policy shifted to the up-or-out approach, people wanted to be DCMs fast. They didn't want to go overseas and be seen sitting for three years in a counselor slot. So consolidation of sections might have been a response to the fact that economic chief or political chief slots were hard to fill. It would be easier to attract good bidders for a "super counselor" job.

I think he wanted to be seen as taking active measures to right size. Gore had been talking about that in the federal government, so he wanted to do that at his level. That's fine. There were cases in which I agreed that we were way too big. It had implications down at our consulate in Casablanca. We no longer had a consulate in Tangier. Our administrative section was also too big. We actually had full-time FSN employees with specialized titles like "iron worker." I used to have long conversations with the admin. consular who was very good. We agreed we could contract that stuff out. We didn't need a full time iron worker or a cabinet maker, who was paid by the U.S. government. There were some catching-up things we had to do. But you had to be careful, because you could trigger negative moral implications. We could end up losing our good and necessary FSNs if our downsizing wasn't clearly explained and transparent. My goal was going at a pace that was justified and explainable to everybody. So, all through the three and a half year term of Ambassador Ginsberg there, we were working on right sizing the mission. I think we mostly got it right. He let me have a very large say in that. I think the decisions we took were largely correct. I don't think we made any serious mistakes. But, it takes time. If you want to downsize your attaches, for example, you have to deal with the parent agencies, like DIA, who want to protect their equities.

What we finally decided to do was to have our two military offices be physically separate, as they were, but report to a single colonel who had responsibility for both. That would unify and make their jobs more coherent. That is how we did that. Admin. dropped a lot. As I say, the military went down. We did this in a tandem with the other agencies, like AID and USIA. I think when I left, it was about the right size.

Q: Going back to the- (end of tape)

Going back to the Spanish Sahara, the whole Sahara thing. What were the Moroccans after and what was the other side after? What was our role?

USREY: A good question. The terms of the UN resolutions on this call for a referendum that was to be organized so that the true residents of the Western Sahara could vote on their future, whether they wanted to be affiliated with Morocco, or independent. So, there were UN resolutions on this. The trick, however, was always in the details. You had to determine, for example, who true “Sahrawis” were. There was a series of criteria that had been established by the UN, for example, having been born there, having been the son or daughter of a Sahrawi who was born there. I don’t remember them all, frankly. I think there were five criteria where one could qualify to be eligible to vote in a referendum. Morocco controlled virtually all of the territory. After the various wars and skirmishes, they had built a long berm, and with their superior force had control of most of the territory. This did not have a lot of resources, except it did have phosphates, which is a key ingredient in fertilizer. You can see the huge shoreline there, which is rich in anchovies and tuna, which the Japanese, the Spaniards, and others wanted to exploit. So there were some economic resources involved. But, the Moroccan government had taken the position of no compromise. The King was responsible for this. Hassan had led the so-called Green March to the region to whip up national support for his view that Moroccan sovereignty was historic. There was a great folklore surrounding the Moroccan sovereignty over it, some of which was legitimate, but some of it was rather tenuous. Our concern was that the UN resolutions be adhered to.

The question, of course, in everybody’s mind, was if a real referendum were held, and Morocco lost, what would they do. Very few observers believed that Morocco, in that case, would say, “Okay, we lost, here is the territory.” There were two ways in which the Moroccan government could seek to forestall or avoid such a cataclysmic outcome. One would be to stall, because you can’t have a referendum if both sides don’t participate, or two, you could stack the polls. You could register many more people who might not have been real Sahrawis who would be induced to vote in favor of Morocco. When we were there, the UN had an identification commission, headed by a guy called Eric Jensen, who was headquartered at Laayoune, in the Western Sahara. They were trying to use the local tribes and the nomads, trying to agree on, by looking at documentation, who would qualify to vote in this referendum, the date of which had never been set. It still hasn’t been set. There were charges of malfeasance by each side. I won’t say who was right. The Algerians were charging that the Moroccans were stuffing the rolls of computer disks with thousands of names on it, many of whom had tenuous ties to the Western Sahara, who were pro-Moroccan, who would vote for affiliation with Morocco.

There would be, occasionally, a military conflict, where there was a hit and run thing over the Berm, and skirmishes. Toward the end of my tour, these had almost gone away, so there was no real threat of an open war. But, there is always the fear that a force from Algeria, or the Polisario could punch through the line, and start a real problem, a real shooting war down there. That is what we all wanted to avoid. To this day, they have enlisted former Secretary of State James Baker as the Special Advisor to the UN Secretary General on the Western Sahara. He is trying to organize this thing. We were trying to keep the Moroccans on the reservation, compliant with the resolutions, while ensuring our credibility in New York and the UN. It’s a tricky thing.

Q: Were the Algerians thinking they would get a window on the Atlantic, or something?

USREY: You can see that if they did control it, they would have an Atlantic coast, as Morocco

does. I think, more fundamentally, with Algeria, they are classic rivals in the Maghreb. They really don't like each other much. The border had been closed after a shooting in Marakesh occurred, just as I was getting there, and some Moroccans were killed. They closed the border up on the northern coast where there was a big tourism hotel and a whole service industry that had built up on the Moroccan side. That all went by the wayside. To one degree or another, we always felt we couldn't prove who was at fault in the conflict. It was sort of like Kashmir. You can't really prove the Pakistanis are backing the militants, but it's hard to imagine militants could operate freely in Pakistan without some support. It was probably material support Algeria was providing the Polisario, although less and less, after the Cold War ended.

Q: Well, at one point, the Polisario had the ear of the United States, and England, I guess in Europe. The Mark Band people, and the starlets...

USREY: Sort of like Tibet and the Buddhists.

Q: Tibet and Buddhists, and I think, Biafra, and all that. Had this died out as a cause?

USREY: No, not entirely. But, it was maybe less a Hollywood type cause than it was one for the international NGOs. When the UN Commission on Human Rights would meet in Geneva, for example, in the spring, the Polisario always managed a very crafty public relations campaign that could point to generally acknowledged transgressions by the Moroccans. That they had not adhered to the resolutions. That they were still trying to win a resolution, a referendum by force, instead of complying by international law, and all that. Frankly, in my opinion, the Moroccans, had a rather clumsy, and turgid diplomatic, public diplomacy policy on that. "It's ours dammit, and if you don't believe it, look at the history." They weren't very adroit. It was such a taboo issue that in Morocco, it's an absolute monarchy, effectively.

Of course, there is a parliament, and there were some aspects of a democratic regime, but it's closer to an absolute monarchy than anything else. At least when King Hassan was there, although I can't speak for the current king, Mohammad. There were three or four things that could not be discussed. You had freedom of speech in the press. The Herald Tribune was freely available. The press was pretty open. You had cable TV and all that, or satellite TV. But, you couldn't talk about the monarchy, the current monarchy, or the status of the monarchy in the future. That was understood to be taboo. The military was another thing you couldn't talk about. Islam, in general, because Hassan was not only a direct descendant of the prophet, and a sovereign to his people, he was also commander of the faithful, through his hereditary connections, he claimed. The fourth thing you couldn't speak about was the Western Sahara. You just didn't discuss it, unless it was to reaffirm the Moroccan view in the press. There was no public debate. It was rather clumsy, so they didn't come across, internationally, very smoothly.

Q: Had there been any soundings of the Sahara tribes and all? Did anybody have a feel of what might happen?

USREY: You mean ad hoc polls?

Q: Yes.

USREY: The only way to do it was to have a referendum. You go to a place like Laayoune, which has been swollen by Moroccan investment, and Moroccan workers brought in, and housing built. There have been a lot of resources from a country that doesn't have a lot of extra money, thrown in there, to sort of change the mood and make the Moroccan regime look more favorable to the Sahrawis. It's a very tough place to run an honest Gallup poll. I note the fact that the Moroccans were going to all these lengths, because it suggested that they knew that it was very, very close. So, it was a problem. The Moroccans got themselves into this referendum game by agreeing to comply with the terms of the UNSCRs, but they didn't like the risks. The risks were dangerous. It might be dangerous to the regime.

Q: Well, what was down there?

USREY: How did we get there? I guess I went to Agadir on a Royal Morocco flight, and then got into an UN aircraft there. You flew in on a UN plane, and it was a UN-administered city, but heavy presence of Moroccan officials there. You could see the old Spanish paradors from colonial days. For a couple years, DCMs of most western embassies did not go down there. We were careful to only send working level, i.e., political officer and sometimes political counselor level people, to avoid appearing to rubberstamp the Moroccan claim. That was relaxed later largely because of the large number of international travelers down there, and the fact that other embassies almost all dropped it. We were one of the last ones. I went toward the end of my tour. Our ambassador never went, and still hasn't gone, to my knowledge. I don't know if she is interested in going down there.

But, you land there, and it's a funny place. There is this nice airport, all jazzed up, with this monumental sculpture. You get on a little roundabout, and go through some desert. Then, you pass some obviously recently built housing, in little neighborhoods, with street lights and schools and stuff. There is money being spent. There are phosphates mines around. It's some of the best phosphate in the world. Phosphates come from areas that were once under sea. This area was all under water. So, the phosphates were of the highest quality. You would reach down in, and this stuff was gold. It produced high quality fertilizer. It was probably their big export item. There were one or two good restaurants. There were a lot of international peacekeepers and support staff. You saw these Koreans, Sri Lankans, Nepalis, and Nigerians, or whatever. People walking around in their UN berets, and patrolling in jeeps. They had routine overflights of the area, at great UN expense, in order to monitor whether there had been any violations of the cease-fire line. We kept up pressure in New York to bring Morocco finally to the table, and conduct this referendum, because of the expense. We had to be sensitive to that. We pay 25% or more of these things anyway. It was expensive. These things are very expensive. You have soldiers down there. They draw heavy danger pay, extra pay. So, the UN Security Council kept passing resolutions, giving an increasingly shorter extension of the deadline before the referendum had to happen. This was almost monthly, at one point, as a pressure tactic. We are still not there.

Baker is working hand-in-hand with the Secretary General on his own approach, which I'm not very familiar with, and can't comment on. If I had to bet the mortgage, I would find it hard to imagine... I think the two sides have to want to end this, before there can be a referendum.

Q: Do we have any contact with the Polisario at all?

USREY: Well, our political officer, when I was there, would go down to Tindouf, across the Berm, inside Algeria. There is a refugee camp there. At Tindouf, he would meet with the Polisario leaders. There were several of them. They were sort of a diffuse group, but they had a leader, and an international command council. Some of these guys had been in the desert for 20 years over there. It was surreal. In fact, we were involved in helping to facilitate a repatriation of about 200 Moroccan POWs, who had been there for up to 20 years in that camp.

Q: Oh, God.

USREY: They were returned to Marakesh. I was down there on the runway. I was there in Marakesh with the Moroccan UN Perm Rep. in New York. A C130 came out of the sky and landed. Some of our people were on board with the POWs. Some of these guys had trouble walking. It was a tragedy. There is no reason for this. But, until Morocco and Algeria said, "Look, enough already..." And I can't speak to King Mohammad's ability to address that. The trouble is that it had become hyped up as such a national identification issue that it would be difficult for any compromise to be... Because there hasn't been a debate on it. It's a pandora's box issue. So, they are running scared.

Q: Every time I talk to people, they talk about the berm. What was that?

USREY: It's a wall of sand about eight feet high. The berm is like a cur, but a big one. It is the Sahara Desert. It is the beginning of the Sahara, with wind storms and intense heat in the summer, and flat, unfeatureless terrain. It is very, very hard to defend against, so the Moroccans built a berm almost 1,000 miles long. It is an unbelievable construction feat. It took earth movers, and hand tools. It took years to build, after the Green March, I think. It doesn't run along the border exactly, but it parallels it somewhat. It is a long barrier, 1,000 kilometers.

Q: I would think that having lived for two and a half years in Dhaharan and watching what sand does, we have walls around the compound which immediately got buried.

USREY: So, there had to be a lot of maintenance, and the fear was that a group of Polisario would come over the Berm near Laayoune and start something. Then, there would be a real situation. So, the good news is that the U.S. was no longer involved in a Cold War sort of relationship with Morocco. The Soviet Union ceased to exist, and Algeria was no longer a client state of the Soviet Union, but they still hated each other. I wish I had followed it more closely. My guess is relations are a good deal better between the two countries. It seemed like a big deal to us. In the grander scheme of things, I don't think the seventh floor of the State Department thought much about the Western Sahara. But, when you have Security Council resolutions and American peacekeepers involved, the stakes are reasonably high.

Q: Well, how did we see King Hassan? This is close to the end of his time.

USREY: Yes, he died a year after I left.

Q: Was he in ill health when you were there?

USREY: Yes, he was. There were always rumors about Hassan's health, and his fairly regular trips to the U.S. I guess sometimes he went without seeing the president, but normally it was on the margins of a working visit. He would go to New York. There were physicians in the U.S. who went. They were heart physicians. He was a heavy smoker. He was a small man in stature. Hassan was tiny, and was very slight. He was about 5'4" or 5'5". He couldn't weigh 100 pounds. He had almost a female stature of bone thinness, but a commanding, magnetic presence.

Remember when his father, Mohammad V, who was a national war hero, against French colonialism. When he died and Hassan became king, he was seen as a scotch drinking, golf playing playboy. But, as Hassan matured, well before the Middle East peace process, there were meetings in Morocco that the king arranged between Israel and Arabs that probably sowed the seeds for Madrid and Oslo. So, he had real stature. He was a moderate Muslim. He was clear about violence. He was clearer than most leaders in that region. He didn't put up with any nonsense with extremist Islamists, and so on. He had great personal stature. He was a favorite to the French presidents. He even kept Queen Elizabeth waiting once, which is a never to be forgotten incident, between the British and the Moroccans. He kept her waiting an hour or something, which was unbelievable. He had known every president since Eisenhower, if not before, fairly well. So, when he made his state visit to the U.S. when I was there, which was a major, major thing, done up all the way, he cultivated international favor. He was pro-western, pro-business. We liked him. He was a fascinating man.

Q: Was there concern when you went out there, by people who dealt with Morocco, from Washington? We had ambassadors and whole embassies who had been almost captured by the Moroccans. There is talk about one of our ambassadors who, when he would refer to "we," he meant the Moroccans. "Our King," that sort of thing. Was Ginsberg aware of this, and careful about this?

USREY: Yes, he was aware of it, and he took, maybe excessive pains, to go the other way. Marc was determined to have a correct relationship with Moroccans in that respect. He was a Jewish ambassador. He was one of the first Jewish ambassadors in an Arab country. It was quite a novelty, although Morocco has and always had a significant Jewish population. Andre Azoulay, one of the King's top advisors, was a Jewish Moroccan, so it wasn't a totally strange thing, but it was a bit unusual. He was also young. He was a year or two younger than I was. I was 45 when I got there, so he was a young ambassador in a highly visible part of the Middle East. He was determined to make sure he represented the U.S. interest and not the other way around. He had been aware of all the stories. Sometimes he was hard on the Moroccans, in my opinion, in that way, possibly to guard against that.

Q: Were we pushing at all for democratization?

USREY: We were. We had limited tools, of course, because we didn't have military aid at the time. We weren't going to tie up our AID program to a relatively minor place. This was not an Egypt, or a Turkey, after all. Morocco's protection of human rights was spotty, but it was not terrible. We took enormous pains to get the human rights report right. The process is one with

which you're familiar, I'm sure. You send back a report that you have edited several times and it gets attacked by a group of contractors, and DRL, and gets torn apart. It is a real difficult process, always done at the eleventh hour. The report came out in September, and the day after, we started on next year's report. Our political section did a very good job, and the front office reviewed it carefully, but we pulled no punches in the report. We also had some projects with NED. They did a few things with the parliament. The parliament, believe it or not, did not have a directory of his members. There wasn't a congressional directory. It didn't exist. We helped finance such a directory in Arabic, so people in Morocco could see who his or her representative was, what the District was; his phone number, her phone number. It was an unremarkable thing, but it had not been done. With small projects we used our international visitor program, the IV program, to bring... Democracy was always a fundamental focus on that, to bring people back, to look at Americans, a civil society, and how NGOs played a role. Morocco had lots of NGOs. It wasn't that they didn't exist, but they were very loosely coordinated. With the stand alone issues, they didn't seem to have a good, connective tissue.

To the extent there were problems, they tended to be in the following areas: Let's see if I can remember. One was in press freedoms, foolish. I think Le Monde, the French paper, once printed an unflattering article on King Hassan. It did not like King Hassan. It took a harsh perspective on him, and his government. The government then seized all issues of Le Monde for four or five days. You can read this stuff on the Internet or hear it on TV. That was silly. It was that kind of occasional censorship, the incommunicado detention - the fact that they didn't always follow due process. People weren't hung necessarily from their thumbs. The Moroccans were sloppy about habeas corpus, and all that sort of stuff. Those are the two areas that come to mind. It was sort of a lack of due process. It wasn't bad. It was a country that had signed a partnership agreement with the EU. Ten years after the agreement entered into force, they would effectively have a free trade agreement with all of the EU. It makes it almost a EU country. Israel and Tunisia have similar agreements. Maybe Turkey is trying to get one now. It was a fairly advanced place. There was no particular need for their small blemishes.

Q: What was the role of the French there?

USREY: The French saw this as their "chasse privé," their private patch. They had the largest French school there outside metropolitan France. It was in Morocco. They had a tricky relationship. The Moroccans were never a colony, they were a protectorate for 16 years. They were never like Algeria. Algeria was metropolitan France. It was French territory. That's part of the friction between the two countries, the superiority feeling that Morocco exhibited. With that said, most of the elite spoke and learned their French, studied in France, had French wives. The French put a lot of resources into it. So did the Spanish, by the way. If you think about it, it really is one of the more important relationships over time, I think. But, the French had a huge mission there. We had a cordial, but competitive relationship with the French embassy. They had a nice DCM, and I got along well with the ambassador. We were competing for the same economic opportunities, such as whether Morocco was going to buy Aerobus, or a Boeing. Of course, RAM was all Boeing. One of the assassination attempts against Hassan was when he was aboard one of those 707s. They took some rounds through an engine and the plane kept flying. He said, "Well, I'll always buy Boeing," because the plane got him down. But, there was some competition there, we knew whatever we did would be carefully scrutinized by the French, and

viewed as aimed against them, which of course it wasn't. We always felt that with Morocco, the future, with the Internet in English... In fact, the younger Moroccans were going to Penn State, Texas, Florida to study. So, the old French ties were weakening.

Q: Well, was there concern on our part about the economic side, about the French paying off, particularly into Mitterrand and all that. There were French ambassadors or people from Paris coming around with satchels full of money to get things.

USREY: Yes, there was a concern. We were keenly aware that many of our big competitors do not have a foreign corrupt practice act like we do. Without naming names, a lot of the big infrastructure stuff, like a new port in Tangier and radar system for the Straits of Gibraltar, they were going to effectively put a big traffic control system for the heavy ship traffic getting in and out of there. These were big contracts. We knew we were up against some competitors that didn't have the same ethical regulations we had. It was a constant concern, and we had to fight for every penny. I'll give Ambassador Ginsberg credit on one thing. He set up a joint commission with Morocco on trade with subcommittees in areas where we either had disputes or had difficulties. They had a great commerce minister, a guy called Dris Jetu, who is now I think the Interior minister. We had regular meetings at ambassadorial and ministerial level with committees and reports. It was a novel idea that got us around some tricky things, like 200% duty on alkaline battery imports. There was not a national product that was competing with it, but yet they had these absurd duties. We got some of that stuff solved.

The ambassador also dreamed up something called "Bridges to Progress." I think the name was a little goofy, but it was effectively a reverse trade mission. This was led by him to survey the Moroccan market to see what was hot, food processing, telecom, graphic arts, whatever it is. Then, we could figure out where in the U.S. these industries were located, and then he would take a team of 10 or 12 of the top Moroccan industrialists in that field. He would take them to St. Louis, Atlanta, or Chicago, and literally match them up with American businessmen. It was quite remarkable. We did a couple of those. So, I learned a lot, on the trade promotion side. It was almost a zero sum game, given the small, not terribly fast growing size to the Moroccan economy, that if we were going to win a deal, it would have to come from somewhere else. Of course, the Spanish were there too, and the Italians. It was a crowded field to compete in.

Q: Was Morocco attracted to the EU?

USREY: Morocco was attracted for status reasons and also I think the King knew, and even his son even better, that Morocco's economic future was linked to Europe. He did his master's thesis on Morocco's relations with the European Union, or something like that. They knew that Morocco's future lay with some sort of partnership where by attaching itself to European globalization and economic policies, Morocco would be dragged kicking and screaming into the late 20th century, where it needed to be. Left to its own devices, Morocco would take much longer to get there. With that said, I'm not sure the Moroccans understood the full impact of that approach. They kept calling for a "free trade agreement" with the U.S. What that effectively means is that U.S. goods would come in unimpeded by duty. We would swamp them. They always said they wanted a free trade agreement. It was a two-way street. Their carpets, and their textiles, and handicrafts would not have any duty assessed in the U.S., but our stuff would come

in the other way, cars, computers. I don't think they ever fully gripped the implications of it. I think the pain is still down the line with EU when this partnership kicks in. I talked with a Moroccan businessman once, and asked him how he saw this shaking out. He said, "You look at all the companies now operating in Morocco and in 10 years, one-third will be gone, one-third will be fundamentally restructured, and one-third will be fine. That was very impressionistic, but right. In other words, it would be a transformation of this protected economy, to something competitive. But, it would be rough. There would be displacement.

Q: What about Islam? How did it play there during your time?

USREY: It played prominently, surprisingly, because given Morocco's moderate politics and nearness to Europe and the U.S., you wouldn't expect it. You would think that Morocco would be far from the more strident religious fervor of the Levant. I always looked at Ramadan. You almost didn't notice in Iraq when Ramadan was happening. It was a secular country, and it was observed, sort of like a cultural custom, but it wasn't exploited by the government then. Egypt a bit more. By the time I got to Egypt, Sadat, and the others were more visible, in endorsing Islam. Moroccans put up a big show of complying with the fast. They had these huge "ftours." That's how you say "iftar" in Morocco. At night, we got invited. They were very generous like that. We would go and have huge meals all night long. You know how that goes. The King would lead a series of evening prayers. Because at Hassan's role, Islam and its symbols were always present as part of the government's image.

As head of state, he had more than just governmental duties, he had religious duties. Hassan would invite notable Muslims to Morocco during Ramadan. Mohammad Ali came to lead one of these prayer sessions. They had scholars from Al-Azhar and other Islamic scholars from around the world, giving sermons, speeches and addresses. Almost everyone fasted. It was really visible. I don't know how much of that was just a wave of conformity or just a Moroccan fad, or whether it was always different that way. I think the king took seriously his Commander of the Faithful title. I think it was different in Morocco. It was very overtly religious, although quite moderate politically.

Q: But, there was no reflection of the violence that was happening in Algeria?

USREY: No, nothing like the horrific beheadings and that savagery. They were very careful about incipient movements. There was one Islamist, Sheikh Yaseen, who had been under house arrest for several years. He's since been freed, I'm told. But, he was under house arrest, ostensibly for his "own protection," in Sale, which is the sister city right across the river. He was a bit of a rebel rouser. I think the police and the interior ministry types kept very close tabs on them. Yes, there were some Islamist groups, but they were on a really short leash. You could have a demonstration about virtually anything in Morocco, but with lots of police. Nothing ever got out of control. It was carefully calibrated. But, one didn't get the feeling that they were repressing a ground swell of radical Islamism like you saw in Algeria, with all the attendant violence. But, there was none of that in Morocco.

Q: Well, is there anything else we should touch before we leave Morocco?

USREY: No.

Q: Well, then in 1998, you left Morocco, and wither?

USREY: I came back to the State Department to become country director for India, Nepal and Sri Lanka. I had met Rick Inderfurth in Morocco, who later became Assistant Secretary for South Asia. He was at the time the ambassador for special political affairs at the UN who helped arrange the prisoner release I referred to.

EDWARD GABRIEL
Ambassador
Morocco (1997-2001)

Ambassador Gabriel was born and raised in New York and was educated at Gannon College. Before becoming Ambassador he was active within the US Government dealing primarily with energy, environmental and American Indian affairs. After serving in the Department of Energy and as Executive Director of the Council of Energy Resource Tribes (CERT) and participating in the successful Bill Clinton Presidential Campaign, he established the Concord Company which deals largely with production and control of uranium. In 1997 he was appointed US Ambassador to the Kingdom of Morocco where he served until 2001. Ambassador Gabriel was interviewed by Charles Stuart Kennedy in 2005.

GABRIEL: In March '96, we took a weekend trip to Morocco, stopping in Casablanca and Marrakech, as part of a weekend retreat for my wife's company. The beauty of Morocco moved me, but also the hustle-bustle of a very different culture was intriguing. I also saw a struggling third world country and the challenges it faced, especially the poverty. I wrote my experiences in my diary. On March 26, 1996, I described what I had seen and felt and concluded that I needed to do something more meaningful with my life professionally. I thought maybe a job in the administration was right for me now, or the non-profit world, or some other opportunity that gave me more satisfaction and put me closer to making a societal contribution.

Q: How would you describe the relationship between Morocco and the United States at that particular time?

GABRIEL: It was very difficult. There's one major issue that determines Morocco's relationship with every other country in the world, and that's the Western Sahara. Do you know this issue?

Q: Yes. Polisario..

GABRIEL: Yes. When I became Ambassador, America was pressuring King Hassan into a very difficult position on the Sahara, suggesting that he was not cooperating on a referendum to determine the status of the territory. King Hassan had given his support years earlier to a referendum to determine the status of the territory. However, King Hassan saw the referendum as

a “confirmatory” referendum, one that would occur following a negotiation concerning the governing status of the territory within Moroccan sovereignty, but not including a vote on independence. Also, during the process to qualify voters for the referendum, Morocco expected more inclusive criteria to qualify voters, while the Polisario – and Algeria – wanted a more restricted definition.

Q: The Green March and all that.

GABRIEL: Yes. America was allowing the UN mandate, MINURSO, to be renewed at one-two month intervals only, thus creating frequent press opportunities for the U.S. to criticize Morocco for what it viewed as its lack of cooperation in the process. Every month or two the UN Security Council (UNSC) would rollover the MINURSO mandate, and each time the U.S. would issue statements against Morocco following the rollover. The U.S. was the leader of a so-called “Friends of the Sahara” group in the UN, and would draft the monthly resolutions and subject them to review and comment by the Friends group before submitting them for debate and consideration at the UNSC. It was a virtual pressure point on King Hassan and he didn’t appreciate it. As a result the U.S.- Morocco bilateral relationship suffered.

As you know, Morocco was the first country to recognize the U.S. and has the oldest and longest continuous treaty with the U.S. King Hassan had been our friend during the Cold War and his father and forefathers had protected the Jewish citizens of Morocco during WWII. In my first bilateral meeting with King Hassan, he regretted the position of the U.S. towards Morocco and said that my job was going to be very difficult, as the Moroccan people didn’t appreciate the U.S. position on the Sahara. After asking him if I could speak candidly, I suggested that I, as a representative of the US in Morocco, would not say anything disparaging about Morocco in public if he gave me time in private to discuss matters candidly. He agreed. Thus began a very good relationship between us, one in which I would meet with him 20 times during the next 18 months, until his death. In this job I learned one most important lesson, one I’ve repeated several times in this interview: if one cannot develop the trust and confidence of one’s interlocutor, one will never be able to find resolution to the most difficult issues between you. This lesson guided my mission in Rabat.

Q: Sometimes these movements such as the Biafra one and Sandinistas and others gain their adherence within Congress and sometimes in the press of the, what you call the “glitterati,” the Hollywood types and rock stars. The Polisario had some of this, didn’t they? Wasn’t this a popular cause?

GABRIEL: Yes, depending on your view of the Polisario, that’s right. The Polisario were the darlings of the left wing, viewed almost as Che Guevara types. Later, we would discover that they had infiltrated the Christian right wing evangelical churches as well, and were viewed as a downtrodden people who had been driven from their homeland. Several members of the Congressional Black Caucus view their plight as a colonialist problem, one of the last on the African continent. The Polisario was formed by Che Guevara, Fidel Castro, Algeria, Libya and the Soviet Union.

Q: How did you deal with this?

GABRIEL: Well, I started dealing with this issue as Ambassador and it continues to this day... Our team at the Embassy was a remarkable team. I cannot say enough about them.

Q: Who was that?

GABRIEL: Maureen Quinn, who became Ambassador to Qatar following her tour with me in Morocco, was our Deputy Chief of Mission (DCM). She managed our operations and provided key political and strategic advice. Our political counselor Bob Holley was likewise phenomenal. Bob was a 20-year plus veteran of the State Department and a helicopter pilot in Vietnam who did two tours and received the Silver Star. Bob is the best political strategist that I've worked with. He could think three steps ahead of any proposed action and predict its outcome. Our economic counselor, Richard Johnson, was not only a highly qualified economist but also a remarkable man. Our Defense attaché, AID director, public affairs director, Agriculture attaché and most all the Foreign Service nationals were among the best I've worked with. Most of our mission team – 90% of my senior team – changed the summer after I arrived. That meant I had six months with the old team to get up to speed, get my own sense of direction and be prepared when the new team arrived. I was lucky enough during the four months prior to my departure from Washington to be involved in the selection process of most of my senior team since I had a chance to be at the State Department about four months before departing to Post. Political ambassadors who are selected from outside of the Washington area do not usually get the chance I did to spend time at the State Department in the months leading up to one's departure.

Getting back to the Sahara, during my first six months, as I was getting my feet on the ground in Morocco and before my senior team arrived, I came to realize that the Embassy had no strategy, no cohesion, and no central mission. The various disciplines or agencies were acting in a function management mode, each with its separate mission and work plan. There was no common purpose at the Embassy with regard to the bilateral relationship with Morocco.

Q: OK. We'll pick this up the next time the new strategy, also your impression of the king.

GABRIEL: Both kings. Remember King Hassan died and King Mohammed VI came into power while I served in Morocco.

Q: Both kings. Both kings and the transition there, and the Moroccan government and the coterie around the king.

GABRIEL: Exactly. And also, Stu, I'd like to talk to you about my feelings about management and leadership in the State Department.

Q: Another thing would be the prisoners out in the middle of the desert.

GABRIEL: That's part of the story.

Q: That one. Did Israel come in there?

GABRIEL: Big time. And the peace process.

Q: And the peace process. Another question I'd like to ask you is that Morocco has a reputation of foreign service of recruiting particularly political ambassadors and gobbling them up and become...

GABRIEL: Clientitis.

Q: Clientitis. The political appointees, I think of Dick Parker, have been kicked out because they know too much, something like that.

GABRIEL: Let's talk about that.

Q: It is an issue to talk about because...

GABRIEL: We had career ambassadors that I think blew it. We had ambassadors that were political that went beyond clientitis. They forgot who they were working for.

Q: I've heard of one US ambassador who...

GABRIEL: The same one.

Q: ...our king.

GABRIEL: I'll tell you two stories about that ambassador.

Q: OK. Great.

Q: Today is the 20th of September 2006. Where do you think we should start? Would you like to talk about the kings or the new policy? We've really just gotten you to the post.

GABRIEL: I can't remember if we talked about it at all, about the beginning of my mission there or not.

Q: Let's talk about that. When you went out there... First place, you were there from when to when?

GABRIEL: I believe I was sworn in as Ambassador on November 21, 1997. I went to post January 25th of '98, and I left post March 1st of 2001.

Q: Where did Morocco fit in our overall policy? What were American interests in Morocco?

GABRIEL: I would say that at the State Department Morocco was considered a second-tier country in terms of strategic interest to the U.S. Although there were strong relationships in all fields, they were of bilateral concern to Morocco only, not regional or world-wide, except for the peace process.

Q: When you say the peace process, could you explain what that meant?

GABRIEL: The Middle East peace process, the elusive peace process between Israel and Palestine, Syria and Lebanon. As President Clinton prioritized an effort to finalize peace among the remaining states and Israel, certain Arab leaders became very important to us. King Hassan was especially important for several reasons. One, he was a moderate Arab leader who could understand the issues and the needs of the Western world and could represent them well to the Arab world. Secondly, he was the Chairman of the Jerusalem Committee or the Al Quds Committee of the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC). As chairman of the Al Quds Committee, he represented the Muslim world on its interests regarding Jerusalem. During the Clinton administration, King Hassan was one of the five most important leaders in the region concerning this issue, along with Jordan, Egypt, Syria and Saudi Arabia. The third reason for the importance of King Hassan in the peace process was due to the very large population of Sephardic Jews who were Moroccan and living in Israel. As I indicated earlier, Moroccans are the second largest ethnic population in Israel after Russians.

At one time, there were 400,000-600,000 Jews living in Morocco. The historic reason for that, of course, was that during the Inquisitions of the 1490s, the remaining Muslims and Jews in Spain left for Morocco, the land of the Moors. The sultans of Morocco have protected Jews ever since and counted Jews among their cabinet members and Palace counselors. The kings of Morocco considered them their subjects along with the Arabs and Berbers who lived in Morocco. There is a long history of close relations between Jews and Moroccans. After the creation of the State of Israel, many Moroccan Jews moved to Israel. Today there are more than 600,000 Jews of Moroccan descent in Israel.

Q: Can the Moroccan Jews having voluntarily left Morocco, go back and forth.

GABRIEL: Yes. Many still have family connections in Morocco. There are about 4,000-5,000 Jews in Morocco today. They go back and forth, and often those living in Israel go to Morocco for vacation. The Kings of Morocco have traditionally invited Israeli and Jewish leaders regularly to Morocco to discuss regional matters. There's no issue there between the two countries in terms of a normal dialogue.

Q: What sort of role did America particularly play in Morocco during the peace process?

GABRIEL: Whenever we made a move in the peace process, King Hassan was asked to provide his guidance and help. We had developed a close working relationship and I believe the record will show that King Hassan was responsive to our requests during this time. I have fond memories of many stories regarding various issues with the King.

Q: Sure. Let's hear them.

GABRIEL: I'll give you one in particular. Before the Wye Accords in November of 1998, an earlier attempt was made in May of '98 to move the parties forward. I was asked to demarche the King.

Q: 2000?

GABRIEL: It was May of 1998. Secretary Albright had met with Yasser Arafat in London and believed she had a breakthrough with him. And although Israel had not signed on to this precursor arrangement to Wye (and would not until the “Wye Accords” months later) I was asked to get an immediate endorsement of their agreement from King Hassan and ask him if he would be willing to come to a signing ceremony the following week in Washington.

The King and I met alone, which we often did – and I generally preferred it that way, as I felt it created an atmosphere of candor and trust. I presented two requests: one, to support the Arafat agreement with the Secretary, and two, that he come the following week to a ceremony at the White House, assuming the Israelis signed on to the deal. King Hassan didn’t hesitate in agreeing to make a public statement in support of the agreement, but resisted the invitation to come to Washington. I tried again and said, “Your Majesty, please allow me to make myself clear. There will not be a signing ceremony unless Israel agrees with it, so all we’re asking of Your Majesty is that, if Israel agrees, and there is a signing, and since Arafat has agreed, will you make yourself available?” He replied, “Mr. Ambassador, I will make a public statement tomorrow, but I won’t be able to come next week.” I went at him a third time, “Your Majesty, allow me to suggest something. If your schedule will not permit you to travel to Washington, can you send the Crown Prince or the foreign minister to represent you?” Again he replied, “No. Mr. Ambassador, I will make a public statement of endorsement, but I will not be present in Washington.” I started to make one last pass, “Your Majesty...” He interrupted, “Mr. Ambassador...”

Q: You were putting your hand to say, “Stop.”

GABRIEL: “Mr. Ambassador, you always make yourself very clear. You’re about to ask me a fourth time, but the answer is no. I’m sorry, Mr. Ambassador.” I discovered something about the King in that meeting. I think intuitively he knew that things would unravel the following week and he didn’t want to make a commitment to something he might regret. As it turned out, a deal was not forthcoming for several more months and the event in Washington didn’t happen. I believe King Hassan foresaw the consequences and didn’t want to be a part of it, other than to support the decision of Yasser Arafat. He seemed to have great vision. The next day by 2 P.M., King Hassan issued a public statement of endorsement of the Arafat-Albright agreement. King Hassan was on the throne for 38 years and it showed in his great vision about issues and their consequences. At the time of his death, he was the second longest living ruler in the world.

Q: Of Jordan.

GABRIEL: Yes. Fidel Castro and King Hussein were the longest living leaders in the world until King Hussein’s death, at which time King Hassan became the second longest living leader.

Getting back to the meeting with King Hassan. As you know, at State we have a fantastic reporting system which was one of the keys to our success in diplomacy. Whenever I met with King Hassan alone, I would come back to the Embassy and be surrounded by my senior team

who were interested in what transpired and more worried that I took good notes. We cabled back immediately to Washington the results of the meeting with the King that day.

Later that day I became somewhat nervous. I had been alone with the King in that meeting and became concerned with all the issues facing the King he may not remember to get to my request in a timely fashion. We needed it the next day, but who would remind him of that? I thought perhaps I should place a call to one of the Royal and provide a written note to the King reminding him of our conversation. Although I initially thought that to be a good idea, I realized that the King would wonder why I was putting our conversation in writing and sending it through a counselor who had not been invited to the meeting. He may not appreciate it.

I remembered that Ahmed Snoussi, the Moroccan ambassador to the UN at the time, was in town, and decided to seek his advice. He indicated that he would be with the King the next day and would find a way to bring the subject of our meeting up with him. I decided this was the best way to reach the King, since such a dossier would have been a common topic of discussion between Ambassador Snoussi and me.

The next day at 12:15, I got a phone call from Ambassador Snoussi. He addressed me, "Mr. Ambassador". He was accustomed to calling me Ed, but this time he called me Mr. Ambassador in a certain tone of voice, which immediately made realize he was with the King. He said the King has a question for me. "His Majesty wants to know what time is it in Washington, DC right now?" I responded, "Well, let's see, it's 8:15 in the morning." He said, "His Majesty has another question for you. "What time do the officials of the State Department come to work?" I replied, "9 A.M", to which he informed me that the King wanted me to know there will be a public statement issued from Morocco by the time the State Department opens for business. [laughter] This is an example of the ease with which our relationship evolved. Since I arrived I was always given a fair hearing on any subject requested, and never felt unwelcome in my requests, nor matter how difficult the topic, even when I repeated myself four times.

Since we are on the peace process, I'd like to discuss another story that is Morocco- related. As you know, President Clinton made a heroic attempt to find peace. In his final year in office, more specifically August 2000, he convened the Camp David summit, which about two weeks. It was publicized that Prime Minister Barak and President Arafat spent less than 10 minutes directly talking to each other during that time. Arafat was blamed for the failure of Camp David by President Clinton and others, although there are conflicting reports on exactly who was to blame. Shortly thereafter, the second *intifada* began in September 2000, when Ariel Sharon walked onto the Al Haram el Sharif.

It's not widely publicized that on December 12(?), 2000, Yasser Arafat was secretly invited to Rabat to meet with Dennis Ross, our chief ME peace negotiator. I attended that meeting. Dennis briefed King Mohammed before his meeting with Arafat. I had been in meetings with Arafat before, and I knew some of his team. Dennis laid out a proposition to Arafat, which you can now read about in Dennis's book, The Missing Peace. He explained to Arafat that we had one final chance in the next six weeks to make peace, and the President would put his entire weight behind one last proposal unless President Arafat was not prepared to make an ultimate compromise. Dennis explained that the question of process was no longer a question of land for peace, but

rather trading the “right of return” for most of East Jerusalem. Dennis explained the President’s parameters regarding Jerusalem: anything that was Arab in Jerusalem would be under Palestinian control, including the Arab and Catholic quarters. Regarding Al Haram el Sharif, the Temple Mount, an agreement would be sought whereby Palestine would retain sovereignty over the top and Israel would retain sovereignty underneath, including the Western Wall (or Wailing Wall which is part of the Western Wall). However, no excavation could be conducted underneath without the agreement of both parties. West Jerusalem, and everything Israeli, including the Wailing Wall (and its natural extensions) would remain under Israeli sovereignty.

Arafat was clearly pleased by Dennis’s proposal. As he saw increasing support and interest, Dennis reminded Arafat that the deal doesn’t come without a cost. Arafat must prepare his people for no right of return. Dennis went on to say that language would be carefully drafted to offer five ways to deal with the issue of the right of return, but the bottom line was that the vast majority of the Palestinian people will not be allowed back to Israel. Only in certain humanitarian cases, decided by Israel, would a small number of Palestinians be allowed back into Israel (1-2%). Dennis explained that Arafat could get back about 94-96% of the West Bank. The remaining 4-6% would be comprised of other lands swapped and adjacent to Gaza, with a permanent access road between Gaza and the West Bank. By 3:00 A.M. in the morning Arafat signaled his interest to pursue the parameters described. Dennis was very positive after the meeting, and expressed optimism about Arafat’s commitment. He asked me what I thought. Although I was not in the private operative meeting - but was in the other sessions throughout the evening - I saw a real desire on Arafat’s face. He expressed satisfaction with the offer, but I also knew he was known to back down under pressure, and if the other Arab leaders did not back him up he may not come through. I was cautious in my response. We then provided King Mohammed with a complete debrief on Thursday morning, December 14th.

On Saturday, December 23rd the President met with the Palestinian-Israeli negotiators at the White House. He laid out his principles for peace. The plan was five pages long. He read it as a verbal proposal that was a “take it or leave it” deal. He wanted a yes or no by the following Wednesday, December 27th. Those five pages are an addendum in Dennis Ross’s book. I was directed on Sunday afternoon, December 24th, to brief King Mohammed and ask him to become actively involved in convincing Arafat to support the proposal. The instructions came via Night Action (NIACT) cable. My wife Buffy and I were in Marrakech for Christmas holiday. The five page parameters paper was delivered to me to read to His Majesty.

Q: NIACT is a night action, immediate telegram.

GABRIEL: Right. On Sunday, I requested an urgent meeting with His Majesty, which was granted immediately for the next day, Christmas 2000. I met the King at his Palace in Casablanca. The Foreign Minister was present. The meeting lasted for more than three hours. The King was positive and encouraged by the report and pledged to do all he could to persuade the “parties” to accept this deal. He offered to go beyond a call to Arafat, and said he would request a meeting with Israeli officials to provide them with similar encouragement. Egypt, Jordan and Saudi were also being démarched with the same cable.

I got a call from both the Palace and from the Foreign Minister on Wednesday the 27th, the day

that Israel and the Palestinians were to provide their answers. I was informed that Arafat would not be able to accept the proposal by the given deadline as he needed to consult with his lawyers and the Palestinian parliament. I understood that the King had pressed the matter but was unable to get a commitment from Arafat. Arafat said he needed until the following Monday. I made it clear that today (Wednesday) was the deadline, and there were no revisions to the agreement that would be accepted. It was explained that the King had pressed the issue very effectively but did not get Arafat's commitment.

Meanwhile, Israel agreed to the principles, along with a list of questions/conditions. I called the White House to inform them of the news, not knowing I was the person who would be breaking the news. I reached Rob Malley. He was more than disappointed by the news and was the first to break the news to his superiors.

The following Friday, December 29, Shimon Peres on behalf of Israel visited King Mohammed at his request. He suggested to the King that the deal fell apart because of Jerusalem and not because of the right of return. He proposed to King Mohammed that Morocco suggest taking Jerusalem off the table and later they would negotiate a special jurisdiction for Jerusalem that would be managed by a multi-person, multi-religious commission, of which King Mohammed could be the chair.

I was called back to Rabat from Ouarzazate, where my wife Buffy and I now were, to get a debrief of this meeting from the Foreign Minister, Mohamed Benaissa. A plane was sent for me. Upon hearing the results of the Peres meeting and being asked if such a compromise was actually realistic, I couldn't believe my ears! I told the Foreign Minister that this couldn't be true, that the Jerusalem issue would have presented a problem for Israel, not the Palestinians. Further, I was under the impression that there were not going to be any revisions to the plan. It was a take-it-or-leave-it proposition and that any changes like this, presented by Morocco, would put them on the wrong side of U.S. and the Palestinians. I told him I would report back to my government and seek clarification. I cabled back to Washington that night, before flying back to Ouarzazate. It turned out I was right. King Mohammed appreciated our advice and clarification and the idea went no further.

Martin Indyk, then the ambassador to Israel, also wrote a cable back to Washington after getting a debriefing from Peres upon his return to Israel. Our two cables were diametrically opposed. Peres denied making such an offer, but the facts do not back Peres' version of the meeting. In his debrief with Martin, Peres *inaccurately* states that it was King Mohammed's idea and not his.

This led to the final meeting between the President and Arafat on about January 2, 2001, and the results are now a part of the history in this never ending story of trying to find peace in the Middle East.

This example emphasizes the important role Morocco has played in the peace process, and I believe will continue to in the future. Few among the Arab leaders could have picked up the phone and called for a meeting with their Israeli counterpart in such a circumstance. King Mohammed's role as Chairman of the Jerusalem Committee of the OIC, gives him additional legitimacy that others in the Arab world do not possess. The large ethnic Moroccan population in

Israel allows King Mohammed to have a unique relationship with the Israeli people. These will be important considerations when the next serious peace effort is pursued.

Morocco also serves as a bridge to the Jewish and Christian communities as well. In the future, it will continue to play a role of bringing together conflicting parties and different cultures and religions.

Q: Going back to your time there, you say you were going to try a different approach to things that concerned Morocco. What sort of things? How stood the Polisario movement at this time?

GABRIEL: You want me to talk about management leadership doing business differently, or do you want me to talk about the Sahara next?

Q: Let's talk about management leadership and then we'll come to the Sahara.

GABRIEL: OK. I come from a business background, and I have strong ideas on leadership and management. I have never worked for a big bureaucracy, except my two stints with the federal government and am therefore not a proponent of what is called "functional management," the common way the federal government is structured. I am also trained in strategic planning. Developing strategic plans for our company or for clients when undertaking an assignment is a part of the way we work. That is something that really is not embedded in the thinking of the State Department. At the end of the first summer on the job, right after our senior staff arrived, I had an off-site retreat to develop a one-year strategic plan. We developed the plan through a process called "mind mapping," which is a process that records fast thinking ideas from all staff and is transcribed on a board in spokes and circles, rather than just working off a flip chart. We actually wallpapered one side of a conference room with flip chart paper. The center of the paper was a circle with the overall goal written in it. From the center circle came spokes to other circles, which were objectives. Around each objective circle were spokes of activities. In a few short hours this process allows you to map out a whole strategy using the thinking of the entire senior personnel. Our center circle (the Mission's goal) became building a stable, prosperous, and democratic Morocco. We believed that a stable, prosperous, democratic Morocco was in the best interest of both the United States and Morocco. It also became our mantra, and signs with this goal were hung around the embassy.

The strategic plan was implemented by three working groups, made up of embassy personnel, foreign service officers and foreign service nationals. Rather than implementing our plan functionally – i.e. state department personnel do certain things, AID does certain things, DOD does certain things – we were now organized in a project matrix. The Prosperity working group had Economic, AID, DOD and the Commercial attaché as members to "deliver" results applying to this working group's activities. The Democracy working group was chaired by our political counselor, and had members including AID, Agriculture, Public Affairs, etc. It was the team now delivering an Embassy's mission and strategic plan, rather than carrying out functional assignments by agency. In other words, embassy employees were asked to take off their "agency" hat and put on a "Mission-wide, Embassy Rabat" hat. We were very proud when we won the best Embassy strategic plan worldwide for two of the three years I was in office.

Our strategic planning process had to be rectified, however, with the short term needs and requests of Washington. We tried to set up a system that combined not only the short term, immediate requests of headquarters, but also allocated more time for the longer term, bilateral objectives and activities we had defined. Without a long-term goal and view, we would only be waiting on Washington to issue short term work and fire fighting assignments. We would be in a reactive mode rather than a proactive one. We corrected this problem by simply building time into our work week for State Department demarches but, made sure we had a significant amount of time to spend on the long-term strategy and delivery. This process was neatly rolled into and made a living part of the Mission Performance Plan (MPP) process at State.

Q: Would you explain what that is?

GABRIEL: The MPP is the process by which each embassy is asked to provide its strategic plan for the year. Most embassies simply saw this as another bureaucratic exercise with its results put on the shelf and never referred to over the course of the year. Our MPP led us to a longer-term implementation of programs and plans, and a longer term vision bilaterally in our relations with Morocco. We flattened the management of the embassy so that we had teams of people working together to solve problems, rather than layers of hierarchy competing with one another, or worse, no one supporting one another. We imposed deliverables and timetables. This allowed us at the end of the year to actually weigh our results against expectations. Examples of our success abound in programs relating to democracy issues, economic and commercial reforms and new military cooperation on security and stability issues.

During this time, Morocco became more of a strategic partner to the U.S. It has a coveted free trade agreement (FTA) with the U.S., and with our support, Morocco has positioned itself as a hub or platform for manufacturing and trade among the U.S., Europe, Africa and the Middle East. The Defense Consultative Committee between our militaries has put Morocco into a privileged strategic alliance with the U.S on regional security and military matters. On the democracy front, Morocco has become the leading country for political and economic reform in the Middle East. Even King Mohammed has recognized that our programs in the fields of democracy have enabled him to expedite his agenda in this regard.

Getting back to the management model, I want to say something about career versus political ambassadors. I happen to believe that there are good and bad eggs in both groupings. I think some of our best ambassadors have been career ambassadors, and I could give you names of people, especially in the Middle East region, like Dan Kurtzer, Ned Walker, David Welch and others that have come through the system. I really admire Frank Wisner, Bob Pelletreau and Tom Pickering, for example. Also, I think, political ambassadors bring new thinking to the department that is badly needed. They not only bring a business sense but also new techniques in management, new leadership thinking, and a results-oriented way of conducting business. I really believe that the American system of mixing the two backgrounds enriches our diplomacy. I believe many of the career employees I've worked with agree. These people would tell you that they had good experiences with political ambassadors. They learned something different. I think the State Department builds some of the best analytical capability, has an unbelievable reporting system and a system for education and training next to none. The Foreign Service officers whom I worked with were an incredible group of people, some of the most competent I've ever worked

with. I think we fall short, however, on management and leadership training and we could use some improvements in these areas.

Q: There are efforts made much more now. Colin Powell, I think, really pushed his military experience. Was there any spill-over into the training back in Washington? Was anybody saying, "These people won the Best Management Award? Let's take a look at what was done."

GABRIEL: No. I can tell you that being a political ambassador, I had about four or five constituencies that I had to prove my competence to and therefore I had to first get over those hurdles, which took a lot of time. The Office of Policy and Planning did take note however and cited us for our ingenuity in management. The audiences I had to be concerned with included the State Department hierarchy in Washington; congressional committees and members; the King and his cabinet; the Moroccan elite; and the general Moroccan public and media; and, of course, my own employees, both foreign nationals and foreign service.

Q: How did you find your team there? How did they respond to these?

GABRIEL: First of all, I was really lucky. The whole team turned over six months after I was there. I came in January. An entire new senior team arrived the following summer. Most importantly, I picked my DCM. I also had a say in picking my political consular and a few others, including our Counsel General of Casablanca. Before I left for Morocco we were able to meet together as a team and discuss our thoughts and goals.

Having said that, I think there's some skepticism towards political ambassadors. You've got to work with both the State and Foreign Service employee constituencies. They are key to your success. Being an Arab-American and a political appointee, I felt I had to prove myself more than usual. I think some judged me as "guilty until proven innocent."

Q: Let me tell you, from my experience it's always a concern when you have an ethnic person in the country. Italy, Greece, I can think of. Other places where somebody is a political appointee gets there and wants essentially to show off. "Look where I am! My parents were dirt poor, I got out of there, and here I am." There's that which means that if they spend a lot of time on that running around doing representation, they're not taken seriously. In fact, fueled with suspicion, and in many cases rightly so because they're not getting a very good report. That's the experience of the State Department with this.

GABRIEL: That's the challenge I had. Luckily, I'm schooled in public policy. I can't imagine if I were a businessman from Oshkosh, Wisconsin, and all of sudden became an ambassador. I have lived in Washington most of my professional life; I have worked in public policy; I know the Middle East. It turned out that the assignment actually fit me like a glove. I felt strongly that, in spite of possible criticism, I was going to stick to my gut instincts. First and foremost was a strong belief that you must develop trust and confidence with your interlocutor in order to advance your agenda. In spite of the possibility that I may be viewed as being too cozy in my relationship with the Moroccans, I was determined to prove that such bonds gave me the ability to give the tough message later when I needed to, or to extract the help when we needed it. It proved to be true. When the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) wanted Moroccan cooperation

to arrest the eventual key witness in the first World Trade Tower bombing, my relationship proved instrumental in overcoming questions of Moroccan due process. Over time, I think we overcame the initial bias one finds as an ethnic or a political ambassador.

There were also plenty of times my staff and the Moroccans witnessed the tough messenger in me. I had several public meetings with ministers where I stood up and threatened to walk out of the room. When we were advocating the free trade agreement with Morocco, I was lectured on how it was only good for the U.S. and would hurt Morocco. I remember in one meeting making myself very clear. I explained that trade with Morocco in one year equals our trade with Canada in one day. I said, "If you think America really cares about your trade, then I've over-emphasized the importance here." I started to stand up. "No, no, no, Mr. Ambassador," came the response of a minister. I had two such events. My staff realized that when you build trust with your friends, you have the luxury to be tough with them when you need to. Sometimes you can be a best friend to the Moroccans by telling them the truth. But to do that they had to trust your intentions.

Q: This is probably a good time to bring in what you were hearing about our previous relationships. There were different ones. Some of the political are, and maybe not necessarily political but career.

[crosstalk]

GABRIEL: I'll give you three examples. Before leaving for Post I met with every living former ambassador to Morocco. I also met with former Secretary of State Jim Baker, who at the time was Personal Envoy for the UN Secretary General on the Western Sahara. The first story involves Dick Parker, the last career ambassador to Morocco, who served during the Carter administration.

Dick frightened me as he pointed out certain pitfalls to avoid. I was so taken with his account of his experience that he gave me a copy of the Morocco chapter of his yet to be published memoirs. His account was somewhat shocking. It started with losing his dog in the residence pool the first week after arriving to Rabat. On top of that, he was the person who had to break the news to King Hassan II that the Shah of Iran, who was a guest of the King's while waiting for permanent clearance to be exiled in the U.S., was no longer welcome to come to the U.S. The news was not well taken by the King. To add insult to injury, President Carter initially cut off badly needed arms to Morocco during its full-fledged war with the Polisario, almost crippling the country to the point where the Polisario was gaining military ground. Having just served in Algeria, Dick was probably under suspicion to begin with, and his style was perceived as too aggressive and somewhat arrogant for the Moroccan diplomatic scene.

Q: Oh, yes. Dick was a pretty gruff character.

GABRIEL: For me, this was a lesson in what not to do when going to Post. As a result of the experience, King Hassan requested that Dick be recalled, and from then on Morocco would request a political appointee as Ambassador, preferring someone with more of a presidential view of things, as well as someone more nuanced in conducting diplomacy.

Q: Another example?

GABRIEL: Another ambassador who served in Morocco had just the opposite problem. In this case he was a political appointee. I won't mention his name here, but he gave me great advice. I went to visit with him and he had a list of ten things he recommended I do upon arriving to Post. By and large, they were public relations tactics on how to introduce myself to certain constituencies I would be interacting with, such as employees, Moroccan officials, and the diplomatic corps. This ambassador was very big on public relations that created a positive image for the United States. I took to heart many of his suggestions. We never discussed issues or policy process. Dick Parker, on the other hand, was all about issues. This Ambassador was dearly loved in Morocco and achieved a positive relationship with Moroccan constituencies to the benefit of the U.S.

Unfortunately, this ambassador was misunderstood at the State Department and consequently lost his influence on policy mainly because of a mistake involving a significant policy issue, Libya.

Q: I've heard about this. The Arab states have gone through this UAR. They've done this a couple of times.

GABRIEL: The ambassador was given an intelligence report, suggesting that Morocco was soon to make a peace deal with Libya, a country we were in conflict with at the time. The ambassador was asked to verify the report with the King. Unfortunately, he was given inexact information which he passed as fact back to Washington, and which denied the Libyan report.

The evidence, however, kept mounting and some time later Washington provided the ambassador with a report that in fact the King and Qadhafi were to meet soon to conclude a deal between them, perhaps on the Algerian-Moroccan border. Again the Ambassador relied on flawed information, which was reported back to Washington. The original intelligence information proved to be true. Hassan II and Qadhafi signed a deal at a time when the Cold War appeared to be moving towards the interests of the U.S., and we did not appreciate any of our allies going around our back to Soviet backed countries.

This taught me a great lesson on the exactness and importance of our reporting and knowing how to critically evaluate information before taking it at face value. The real lesson I learned from studying this ambassador was that you can get too close to a country and lose your perspective, to the point where your reporting is clouded and wrong. This is the opposite of Dick Parker, who assumed the Moroccans were guilty until proven innocent. I learned from these two experiences that I should find a healthy balance between the two styles.

A third example involves a political ambassador who met with King Hassan and suggested a proposal to fix the Sahara problem, on the condition that, if he were to undertake the task, certain royal advisers would have to be excluded from the dossier. Not only were these advisers informed of the comment, but this was the last time this ambassador had an audience with the King. My lesson here was simple. No matter how close your relationship, or how much trust and

confidence develops between the two sides, never forget who you are the President's U.S. representative. As an Ambassador to a foreign country, one must always refrain from personally criticizing foreign officials, and in my case, never become more Moroccan than the Moroccans.

Overall, the lesson one can draw from these examples is that there are good and bad political ambassadors and there are good and bad career ambassadors. Extraordinary results in this job will come from the building of a relationship based on trust and confidence with foreign country officials, and their constituencies, as well as with key American audiences and U.S. policy makers who also judge your performance.

Q: I wonder if you could give me your impression and compare and contrast or however you want it of Hassan and Mohammed.

GABRIEL: On an appearance level, their styles were very different. I had a close professional relationship with both Kings. King Hassan was very formal. He would wait until a person was completely finished before talking. He spoke in a single speed and tone, never raising his voice. He always offered me a drink when we sat down. I was so predictable that after a while he would simply tell the server to bring the Ambassador a glass of (the Palace's famous) ginger drink. He had a friendly smile and I learned that he did like an occasional funny story. When I offered one at the beginning of a meeting with him, it would almost always have a positive effect on the tenor of the meeting, and of course made it more relaxing for me.

King Mohammed is more modern and relaxed. He didn't think twice to spar with me over ideas, as he expected a more natural give and take in our conversation. He often laughed and was very polite, but was relatively informal compared to his father. Even if he didn't offer something to drink, as he may have thought the meeting was going to be short, he created an atmosphere where I felt comfortable enough that I would not be inhibited to simply ask for a ginger drink. I would never have thought to do that with his father. Both men were very intelligent and wise. I believe King Mohammed is the most visionary leader in the Arab world.

A somewhat humorous example of their different styles revolves around the King's chair. In each Palace there were chairs reserved, of course, for the King. They were simple and somewhat modern. When we were not seated at a meeting table this chair was more noticeable. In formal meetings with visiting delegations, Hassan II only moved his head and hands when sitting in that chair. The rest of his frame was relatively immobile. I'll always remember the first time King Mohammed VI met with Secretary Albright, which was the first time I saw him in the chair formerly used by this father.

The meeting was remarkable for many reasons, but I do remember that after Secretary Albright made an in-depth presentation on the issues of the world facing the U.S., the King turned to her to engage her on issues of Europe, the Middle East, Asia and Africa. I said to myself, "Oh my God, that chair is a swivel chair." In the 20 meetings with King Hassan, I had not known that many of his chairs were swivel. When King Mohammed swiveled his chair towards her I knew we were in for a different personal style if nothing more. We were soon to realize we were in for a lot more all the way around.

Q: How did his courtiers treat him?

GABRIEL: There is still a lot of traditional pomp and circumstance surrounding the King. At all public meetings, there is still the traditional bowing and kissing of his hand by Moroccans. The servants announce loudly when the King is in their sight, so you always know when he's a hallway or meeting room away. You feel the extreme formality when you enter the Palace.

The ceremony to present my credentials was quite impressive. My handler, in full Moroccan dress, came to the Embassy to escort me to the Palace. As my car pulled up to the Palace and I got out, I was met with a full honor guard with arms and music. When I entered the main room of the Palace, I stopped at the entrance until King Hassan acknowledged my presence. I dipped my head slightly and walked forward, halfway across the room I stopped again, until he recognized me a second time, then I walked up to him to present my papers.

Q: It was a nod.

GABRIEL: Yes, a respectful dip of the head. I have been taught to respect the culture and dignity of others. I saw this as such, and especially since he was a King. If I were ambassador to the Vatican, I wouldn't think twice about bowing to the Pope or even kissing his ring, since I'm a Catholic. It's the same thing for the King of Morocco. I will offer the utmost respect to others and show that I do so in a proper manner, no matter who they are.

Before I went to the Palace, I was coached by my DCM at the time and my staff: "Don't touch the King. Present your credentials with both hands and give a slight bow of your head. Don't speak to him unless he speaks to you and then only respond in kind." The ceremony was on the Moroccan television so they could see me as I presented my credentials.

Well, I was a little more than nervous. I walked up to the King as instructed with no glitches. But when I presented my credentials I handed it to him with one hand and touched him on the arm at the same time and bent over and whispered to him to say I had a message from President Bill Clinton, who I had seen before leaving to Post, and was given a personal message to give the King. I'm told my staff were unhappy. "He's done. He touched the King. He laughed with the King. He'll never be welcome there. What was he thinking?!"

Of course, I was thinking of how to break the ice with the King, and again I was pretty damn nervous, I'm sure. When I spoke to the King, he grinned and asked, "Yes, please tell me." I gave him the personal message. The King now smiled huge for the cameras and my staff to see. I felt we connected.

Q: How concentrated on the conversations was King Hassan when you talked to him?

GABRIEL: In our meetings, King Hassan was totally concentrated on the conversation. I believe he decided that if an ambassador asked him for a meeting, he must have thought through every word he was going to say. He listened as though I had thought through every word and every word had a meaning to him, so I knew I had to be exact. Also, while he spoke English, he was not as fluent as he was in French and Arabic, and that probably added to his concentration level.

King Hassan took a country in disarray and stabilized and unified it. In the process, he developed strong macroeconomic policies, and began the process of democratization. King Mohammed VI built on his father's legacy, keeping strong macroeconomic policies in place, speeding up economic and political reforms and tackling what his father had not focused on, namely, microeconomic or socio-economic issues of the Moroccan people.

Regarding the socio-economic conditions when King Mohammed took over, health statistics, education policy, housing were all below standards, and there was little or no infrastructure, clean water access or electricity. Early on, King Mohammed became known as the King of the poor. His early focus was on economic empowerment, social and community empowerment. He understands and has empathy for the poor of the country and his policies have evolved into new rights for women and a comprehensive program to eradicate poverty, improving the human rights in his country and reconciling the wrongs of the past.

Q: Part of the ambassador's role is to figure out where power is in different power centers. Were there economic or religious interests that were around the kings that were influential? The usual thing if you're trying to be nice to the poor people, you may be breaking the landlord's rice bowl or something. What was some of the...

GABRIEL: This is a tough one. OK. There's what is called in Morocco the Makhzen. Literally, it means the magazine/warehouse where in English times the civil servants would go to get their wages, in military language where the arms are stored.

Q: Yes. The magazine in the military sense.

GABRIEL: I think so. The Makhzen was an elite group of people that grew up around the monarch, and other influential figures such as military, police, business, religious. It was a system of rewards to the few so that there was a mutual reason to protect each other's interests, but it is also viewed as a factor of stability in Morocco, because its roots are deeply connected to Moroccan society. The Makhzen's allegiance is to the king and no one else. They remain loyal because the monarch has the material means and political power to make or break anyone.

Under King Hassan, there was a strong Makhzen. This system was detailed in a book, Commander of the Faithful, by John Waterbury. The system has resulted in a very influential and rich elite class in Morocco. Although a middle class is beginning to emerge, Morocco is made up of a concentration of wealth in the top one or two percent of the population, with most of the rest of the country being poor. The per capita income is about \$1500.

The system continues today under King Mohammed, although he appears to be breaking the concept of the Makhzen down as he gains more and more control of the country and slowly replaces traditional advisors and influencers with instruments of democracy.

As the King consolidates his power, he is empowering civil society, reining in the powers of the police, enforcing human rights, strengthening the judicial system, empowering women, addressing the social needs of the poor, and reasserting himself as Commander of the Faithful,

the only person in the state that can issue religious decrees and opinions. In the process, he's weakening the Makhzen, although old habits are hard to break in Morocco. We have seen examples of police brutality, corruption and the heavy hand of the authorities in political matters. I hope I'm answering your question?

Q: You know, you are. Sometimes there's problem when you have the coterie, a powerful coterie around, chief of state or a ruler, was our embassy able to... Did they find themselves almost captured by this group, or were they able to get out to other areas, people outside this group?

GABRIEL: As democratic reform and change came to Morocco, and more people were empowered, the importance of reaching out to the larger society became more important in order to get a more complete understanding of the country and its newly emerging character. In 1998, the most important changes occurred within the political sphere. There was, of course, important economic and commercial interaction with the business community at this time as well. But until this time there was a belief in Morocco that the King, his entourage and some key ministers made the decisions and influenced society. There was therefore no need to have an embassy strategy that addressed civil society, the media, political parties and other vested interests of the political sphere.

In 1998, the opposition government was elected and came into power with King Hassan's blessing. A new era was about to begin and with it a newly defined Morocco. In the Cold War era, our interests with Morocco were measured based upon our military, security and intelligence cooperation and alliances. Beginning in 1998, a new relationship with the U.S. would begin, one marked by supporting the Moroccan democracy model, and its economic and political liberalization.

It also became apparent the Embassy needed to change and to develop a new strategy that identified all key interests – our audiences – in the country and that reached out to them. Through a single mission strategy we addressed all constituencies that affected the prosperity, democracy and stability of Morocco. They included the media, political parties, civil society, think tanks, academia, ethnic groups and elected local politicians. We continued and deepened the excellent work begun by my predecessor with the business community, which eventually led to a number of liberalizations in the business community, including the free trade agreement with the U.S. in 2004. The strategy worked well and we established an effective bilateral strategy together to build a democratic, prosperous and stable Morocco.

Also, in the religious field, King Mohammed is making change. Let me give you an example. With the Casablanca terrorist bombing on May 16th, 2003, it was discovered that there's an Islamic extremist movement rooted in Wahhabism inside the country within the mosques. The King introduced two sets of reforms. The first came immediately after the attack and focused on restructuring the entire Ministry reorganisation of the Ministry of Islamic Affairs in 2004 and the revision of the legislation governing mosques. The second set was much more comprehensive, affecting imams, mosques, and even Moroccans who live abroad. With these reforms, King Mohammed sent a clear message that he is the Commander of the Faithful and the sole authority when it comes to religious decisions. With these sweeping reforms, he seeks to ensure the

promotion of a moderate brand of Islam and to nip radical Islamism in the bud.

Q: When you were there, was anybody at our embassy taking a look at what was going on in the Islamic schools? The Saudis were subsidizing all over the area...

GABRIEL: In Morocco...?

Q: ... in Morocco. I don't know if you called Madrassa or not, but, Islamic schools that were teaching a rather viral form of Wahabi.

GABRIEL: Until 2003, I don't think anybody realized that some extremist Islamic schools of thought had become entrenched in Morocco. To begin with, I should explain that there are two broad Islamic followings in Morocco. The first is the Party of Justice and Development, sanctioned as an official political party in Morocco, and it goes by the same name as the officially sanctioned party of Turkey. They are a moderate Islamic party, although if you listen closely to them and not to their usual publicity statements, one quickly sees that they do not believe in a secular state. But relatively speaking, they are moderate and have moderated their views and aspirations for the betterment of the country as a whole. There is a more radical group, the Justice and Charity Group, whose spiritual leader is Sheik Yassine. His spokesperson is his daughter Nadia. They are non-violent but radical in their thinking, and preach an Iranian-type state. Although they are outlawed as an official party in Morocco, they are very vocal and move freely about the country. They are working through peaceful means, mainly propaganda and charity work, to win converts. Under King Hassan II, Sheik Yassine was under house arrest. Under King Mohammed VI, Yassine was free to move about, but given his advanced years, he hasn't been very active in recent times, leaving most of the public interaction to his daughter. In regards to these two movements, our Embassy followed their actions and was in regular contact with both groups, and often reported on their popularity to Washington.

During my time, we didn't appreciate the growing influence of the Saudi-funded Wahabi schools and most of these would later be closed down by Moroccan authorities. Lately, however, it has been discovered that Saudis have funded very modern schools, with full amenities, that are much better equipped than the normal schools of the Moroccan Ministry of Education. Such efforts to create private schools were not unusual, as many wealthy Moroccans also took on that challenge. But when it was discovered that the Saudi-funded schools were preaching a foreign form of Islam, contrary to the common practice of the Moroccans, they were quickly and harshly dealt with. Moderate Islam has been prevalent in Morocco for centuries and is widely accepted by the population at large. This form of Islam is the official version, and the King, as Commander of the Faithful, has endeavored to protect it from corruption by more radical voices.

At the same time, and after my tenure, it was discovered there was an Al Qaeda or violent Islamic presence being exported from Morocco and plotting within Morocco itself. After the May 2003 bombings in Casablanca, Morocco went after these violent radical groups with determination and force, weeding them out one by one. This Al Qaeda influence is a very different element from the political parties described above, and Morocco's continued vigilance has been very successful to date.

The King also instituted programs to take back religion from any fringe groups. As I indicated above, he went as far as to announce his control of the sermons given in the mosques at Friday prayer. He's instituted a nightly religion program on TV to preach the official, moderate form of Islam, he's ordained women prayer leaders (women versions of an Imam), and he has been more present in all religious ceremonies.

Q: During the time you were there, was there a dissident leakage into particularly France at the time?

GABRIEL: What do you mean...?

Q: These were people who today we're really worried about as being jihadists...terrorists.

GABRIEL: You mean were there people that we knew of going from Morocco into Europe for terrorist activities?

Q: Yes. Was France a place where people, maybe they weren't terrorists but potential... In other words...

GABRIEL: No.

Q: This wasn't an issue.

GABRIEL: No. The terrorist bombings in Kenya and Tanzania occurred during the summer of my first year, 1998. Al Qaeda was new to us then and we got up to speed very quickly. In those early years, years while I was ambassador, there did not appear to be any Al Qaeda operatives in Morocco. Only later did we discover home-grown Moroccans joining in branches of Al Qaeda. Another important point to note was that even when Moroccans were beginning to be identified among the terrorists, in 2001 and beyond, they were not Moroccans, but Europeans of Moroccan ancestry. They were born in Europe. For instance, the 20th September 11th bomber, I think his name was Moussaoui, was said to be Moroccan. He was not. I do not even know if he had ever been to Morocco. He was born in France to Moroccan immigrants.

Q: Was the Moroccan experience, particularly in France, of concern? I watch French TV now, and it's of concern. We're not talking necessarily about terrorism. We're talking about underemployment, being integrated into the community, and all that.

GABRIEL: These were mainly concerns for Europe during my tenure and we did not have a principal involvement in issues such as illegal migration and the hashish trade to Europe. However, as the U.S. deals with counterterrorism in the Sahel region, we find ourselves much more concerned with these issues. We have recently seen a growing number of terrorist cells in the Sahel, with some elements of Al Qaeda regrouping there. This has now become an American issue. Terrorism is being exported to Europe and beyond. Terrorists are using drug money to support their activities. Economic growth in North Africa is among the worst in the world. And there is no economic or political integration among the countries of the Maghreb. This is now

cause for concern for the United States and requires new policy thinking on our part.

Back to your point about integration into Europe and the issue of racism – Moroccans often remark about the racism that is prevalent in Europe and admire America for its lack of racism as seen in Europe. Racism in the U.S. is more on a personal level, not on a professional level. Moroccans see this difference and admire us for it, just as they despise Europe for the feeling of being second class in places like France. King Hassan II actually made a remark to this effect once, when he alluded to the differences between Europe and the United States. He felt that Moroccans felt at ease and as immigrants to America, felt like they were part of our country, unlike in France, where they are treated as foreigners who are not welcome.

Q: Looking at it from their perspective, I think they're quite right. I'm just looking at the time here.

GABRIEL: We'll need another session?

Q: We'll do another one, if you don't mind.

GABRIEL: No problem.

Q: OK. The subjects we want to talk about...

GABRIEL: The Sahara.

Q: Next time we want to talk about the Sahara.

GABRIEL: Did we cover the political ambassador versus the career?

Q: Yes. I think we have talked about that. Also, the use of the consulates.

GABRIEL: That's an interesting one.

Q: And the business atmosphere. As trade goes, whether Morocco and its relationship particularly to Algeria, and maybe the rest of the Arab world, and the United Nations, too. Maybe there's something else to talk about. Then we'll talk about what you did afterwards, too. Can you think of any other issues you'd like to talk about?

GABRIEL: I think you've hit the right subjects.

Q: OK, we'll do that then. Great.

Q: OK. Today is October 25, 2006. Ed, let's talk about the Sahara.

GABRIEL: OK.

Q: What was the issue, and what were we doing? You were there at what time now?

GABRIEL: During the time I served as U.S. Ambassador, a significant change occurred in the U.S. policy with regard to the Sahara. Should I give a little bit of a background?

Q: Please do.

GABRIEL: The Western Sahara, as it has become known, is the westernmost edge of the Sahara desert and forms the southern portion of Morocco, about a third of the country. At various stages in its history from 1600 forward, Morocco controlled the Sahara, having taken it from the Portuguese. The Spanish took control of the Sahara in 1884. From the 1600s until the Spanish occupation, Morocco had exerted its sovereignty over the Sahara. Following Spain's occupation of the land in 1884, around 1912, France and Spain further divided the country into territories. As I recall, the northernmost territory, down to the northern region above Fez, was taken by Spain. The middle part of the country was taken over by France, whose reach extended to the Sahara, where again the Spanish exerted control. The middle section of the country included the cities in the front range of the Atlas Mountains, such as Fez, Rabat, Casablanca and Marrakech. Tangier was designated as an "international" city. Morocco remained a "soft" protectorate of Spain and France until 1956, when both countries turned over the northern Spanish and middle French portions of Morocco to the Moroccans. But the Sahara remained in the hands of the Spanish until 1975.

Q: The area used to be called Spanish Sahara.

GABRIEL: Yes, the Spanish Sahara. At the end of Franco's rule in Spain, as he was literally on his death bed, Morocco was struggling to wrestle the land away from Spain and from this newly formed rebel group. At the urging of the UN, Morocco agreed to an International Court of Justice opinion on the rightful ownership of the Sahara. When the opinion came back inconclusively – stating that neither the Polisario nor the Moroccans had real claim to sovereignty, with the court only conceding allegiance to Morocco by some tribes of the Sahara, short of sovereignty – King Hassan II organized a peaceful march to reclaim the Sahara, known as the Green March, in which more than 350,000 people marched to the Sahara and claimed it as Moroccan. Spain quickly signed a peace treaty with Morocco and Mauritania – and eventually Morocco signed an agreement with Mauritania – turning the land over to Morocco as the "administrator" of the territory. The UN never recognized this action.

During this time, an insurgent group was formed, backed by the Soviet Union and its proxies Algeria, Cuba and Libya, called the Polisario, to pressure Morocco to give up its claim of sovereignty and call for the independence of the Sahara. A war ensued. In the very early years of this conflict, Morocco suffered significant casualties. By about 1980, however, Morocco built a rock and sand berm, north to south, separating the Sahara from the rebels on the other side. This action stabilized the area militarily, until a cease fire was signed in 1991 with the Polisario. There has been no fighting since that time, although the Polisario refused at the time to also live up to the Geneva Convention accords to release the prisoners of war (POWs) that had been held for more than twenty years, some approaching thirty years.

Q: What was in it? Keeping prisoners is a nuisance.

GABRIEL: Until a real grassroots effort was started in the United States in 2004, which eventually got Senator McCain's interest, there was not any pressure put on Algeria to force the Polisario to release the POWs. It was the worst form of cruelty. The Polisario decided that they were not going to release the POWs without a deal to have the Sahara turned over to them. It turned out to be a bad decision. In essence, the POWs were being held hostage in exchange for the Polisario getting land, even though at the same time they were agreeing to a referendum to decide the fate of the territory.

Until 2000, both sides to the dispute worked with the UN to organize a referendum to determine the fate of the territory, on whether it should be dependent or remain under the sovereignty of Morocco. An effort was undertaken in the latter 90s to register qualified voters through a process of verifying whether each Saharawi citizen could prove his or her direct lineage to one of the Saharawi tribes. There was tremendous disagreement between the parties over the criteria, but by about 1998, 80,000 people had been registered. There were another 200,000 or more remaining on appeal. The Polisario were against the appeals and Morocco wanted them to go forward. All the while, the U.S. was somewhat suspect of the process, as we did not see how a winner-take-all process would settle the animosity in the territories. If the Moroccans were to lose the referendum they would never give up the Sahara anyway, and the UNSC would not force them to. Secretary Jim Baker, the personal envoy of the UN Secretary General, did not see a way out and instead preferred a negotiated settlement, but both parties had refused to abandon the referendum.

Then in early 1999, the U.S. formulated a new policy that suggested to Morocco they grant significant autonomy over the Sahara to the people living there, but under Moroccan sovereignty. This position was signed off by Madeline Albright and brought to the region by Martin Indyk, the Assistant Secretary, in March of 1999. We promised to not support any outcome in the negotiations that did not respect Morocco's sovereignty in the Sahara. We also told them that we could not guarantee such an outcome, but that we would work to ensure that any outcome respected Morocco's sovereignty. King Hassan II was initially cool to it and found it hard to abandon a 20-year position to support a referendum on the fate of the Sahara. Martin explained that there was no guarantee that Morocco could win a referendum, and given the present make up of those qualifying to vote, a positive outcome for Morocco was uncertain. Martin went on to explain that the further the King went down this road the more difficult it would become for us to support such a position. Martin said, "Your Majesty, we are going down a dark tunnel together on this issue and at some point a wedge will be driven between us." He told the King that a winner-take-all referendum was not in either of our interests. Regardless, the King did not show an immediate interest in this new approach.

I met with King Hassan on July 20 of 1999, three days before he died, the last business meeting he had in his life, for an hour and twenty-five minutes. That's when he informed me that he was now prepared to change course. I think you will find a little anecdote here interesting.

Q: Go ahead.

GABRIEL: King Hassan started the meeting by saying that he now felt the Western Sahara had to be solved with “an African solution, not a Texas solution.” I took that to mean that since Bouteflika had just been elected President of Algeria, he would work directly with him to find a way forward, and that the UN effort, through Secretary Baker, would take a back seat.

He also said something very telling. He went on to relay a story about King Leopold II of Belgium, during WWII. He said that at the time, King Leopold had been a Nazi sympathizer and that the Belgians wanted his head at the end of the war. Leopold said he wasn’t afraid of his people and would subject their views to a popular referendum to decide. His prime minister at the time, Spaak, advised him that there could never be a referendum on the Throne. King Hassan went on to tell me that he had finally come to conclude that in Morocco as well, a referendum was probably not the way to solve the Sahara problem. He died three days later, so we will never exactly know what he had in mind. We can only speculate. However, we did find out what the new king thought on this issue some two months later.

Q: With Algeria.

GABRIEL: No, more regarding the Sahara issue. Following the last and very moving meeting with King Hassan, I was able to brief the new king, Mohammed VI, on the evolving Sahara policy and the new U.S. position. A series of meetings were quickly set up with the new king, the first being with Secretary Madeleine Albright on September 1, 1999, his first official meeting as King, only forty days after his father’s death. By the end of September, the U.S. reached an understanding with the King for a negotiated settlement that would provide autonomy under Moroccan sovereignty.

The next step was to convey the U.S. position to Secretary Baker and seek his agreement. He had always been for such a negotiated settlement but had been rebuffed in the past by both parties. Baker wanted to hear it for himself from the Moroccans, but otherwise was excited to move in this new direction, which he had agreed with all along. He finally met with King Mohammed in February or March of 2000 and reported back that in fact he was convinced the King was ready for a sovereignty/autonomy solution under “internationally accepted standards.” Baker swiftly moved in this direction. It took Baker until April 2001 before he finally announced what is commonly called Baker I, or the framework agreement, outlining his proposal for an internationally accepted form of Saharan autonomy under Moroccan sovereignty. Morocco quickly accepted the offer to negotiate within this “framework” agreement. The Polisario and Algeria rejected it.

By now, early 2001, the Clinton administration had stepped down and President Bush had taken over, but there was continuity in Baker. Given his Republican credentials, his closeness to the Bush family, and the soon to be appointment of his close protégé, Margaret Tutwiler, as U.S. ambassador to Morocco, Baker was now even more in control of the process. The plan under Clinton was to pocket the Moroccan acceptance and then begin a process of encouraging Algeria to come to the table to negotiate within the framework agreement.

Baker met with Bouteflika in November 2001. I thought this was to put pressure on him to accept the framework agreement, but something very different happened. In February of the next

year, 2002, Baker went to Rabat to follow up on his Algerian meeting. The King was informed that Bouteflika did not accept the framework agreement and instead Baker was now suggesting a partition of the territory between the parties. I'm sure it was difficult for King Mohammed VI to believe that in less than a year Baker had reversed course. The King had overturned twenty years of his father's policies, at a very vulnerable time in his new reign, and had taken a chance with the U.S. on a new way forward. Within a year of the deal the rug was being pulled out from under him, or at least that is the way it looked. The King came to a terrible realization. Whereas under Clinton the King of Morocco had enjoyed a strong bilateral relationship on the Sahara, as well as a distinct but coordinated multilateral dialogue, most recently through Jim Baker he was being now relegated to a multilateral relationship only. The new U.S. ambassador, Margaret Tutwiler, came in with a mandate to not deal with the Sahara on a bilateral basis, but instead work through Jim Baker (i.e. the UN only). It was said that even in his briefings on the Sahara as the new Secretary of State, Colin Powell said, "I don't have to worry about this issue. Baker is handling it."

King Mohammed quickly went to Washington for his first official visit with President Bush in April of 2002. Later that spring, Baker proposed four possible solutions to the Sahara: 1) no action, the UN would cease to be involved; 2) the framework negotiations, which Morocco supported and the Polisario and Algerians refused; 3) a partition of the territory, which no one publicly was admitting to support or endorse; and, 4) a referendum for independence.

These options languished for nearly a year, until Secretary Baker decided to table an ultimatum. He had laid down yet another proposal in April of 2003 known as Baker II, in which the Polisario would be allowed to administer the Sahara and run the territory for five years under an autonomy regime, after which time a referendum choosing autonomy or independence would then be held among all citizens of the region. In August of 2003, due to a fairly negative UN resolution against Morocco, and in a direct discussion with Baker, Morocco was threatened by Baker to accept the new proposal offered or face UN chapter VII sanctions. The King, again, was taken aback by such heavy handed tactics. It was obvious that a bilateral discussion between the US and Morocco on the Sahara was nonexistent and the original agreement with the United States on this issue was deteriorating. Coincidentally and not due to anything in this regard, Ambassador Tutwiler also resigned and returned to Washington that same month.

In September 2003, a definitive and policy-changing meeting occurred between King Mohammed and President Bush during the United Nations General Assembly meetings. This would finally put on track a serious bilateral discussion between both countries regarding the Sahara and lead to the policy that was publicly announced in April 2008. Between December of 2003 and the following April, Morocco responded to Baker directly on the Baker II proposal but was unable to find a compromise. Baker resigned in April of 2004.

The current policy of the U.S., which is actually the understanding originally stated in 1999, reaffirms that Morocco's April 2007 proposal, granting autonomy to the people of the Sahara, is credible and serious and should form the basis for negotiations between the two parties. It also states that the only solution to the Sahara can be an autonomy/sovereignty proposal and that independence for the Sahara is not a realistic solution. The UN has tacitly endorsed the Moroccan proposal and four rounds of negotiations have gone on without any progress, as the

Polisario refuses to use the autonomy framework for a basis of discussion and instead clings to independence as an option.

The main contention revolves around the concept of self-determination and what constitutes the right of self-determination, which the International Court of Justice insisted on in its 1975 opinion. The Polisario say that self-determination can only be fulfilled with a vote on independence. However, the UN and international legal experts recognize other forms of expressing self-determination, such as elected leaders of a group leading a negotiating team, for example the Polisario. Or, a negotiated settlement that can then be subjected to an up or down, yes or no vote of the Saharawi people. There are many ways to address the issue of the Polisario wanting to find a solution that fulfills the concept of self-determination. One has to wonder, however, whether they are more concerned about a struggle for power.

Q: Sahrawis being...

GABRIEL: The indigenous people of the Sahara. In the Hassani dialect of Arabic, Sahrawi means Saharan or from the Sahara. The Sahrawi people – Saharan people – should be consulted in order to fulfill the obligation of self-determination. In preparation for the Moroccan autonomy proposal, the King set up an extensive consultative committee among the 12 major Sahrawi tribes and dozens of sub tribes to get their views of an autonomy proposal before endorsing and proposing such a solution. Ideally, once an autonomy agreement is worked out, the proposal negotiated by the parties could be subjected to a vote, up or down, of the Sahrawi people living in the region.

Q: It's interesting that we're playing a role. How would you put it? You've got the French and the Spanish have been involved. Were everybody else tainted more or less so we're the SOB's from outside the country. We're more likely to come up with something without... We don't have a particular stake in it, so we're seen as a more neutral observer?

GABRIEL: I think you really brought up a very important point. There are two tiers of players. In the first tier are the U.S., France and Spain. Those three countries are very important. The next tier is the rest of the Security Council, which includes Great Britain, Russia and China.

Q: Those are the major players.

GABRIEL: Yes, and the Security Council is most important in this regard. France has traditionally agreed with Morocco's position on the Sahara and has been its most ardent supporter. Although Spain has privately agreed that a sovereignty/autonomy solution is the most favorable way to deal with this situation, they have enormous ties to the region and carry guilt of abandonment as well. Spain will have to play a quiet but deft role, but their acquiescence of late gives Morocco hope. The U.S. is obviously a key player on the Security Council and can greatly affect any given outcomes. Russia and China seem to play a quieter role, never tipping their hand on this matter nor wanting to take too aggressive of a role for the UNSC.

My tenure coincided with the first free elections in which the opposition government won and took office. This offered us a great opportunity to shape a new vision with Morocco that was

based on building a “democratic, prosperous and stable” Morocco, which was in the interest of both countries. Building on this vision, we were able to redefine the Sahara policy, our economic relations, political and aid reform packages and our military relationship.

It was the beginning of a new “post-Cold War” relationship that began to cast Morocco as a strategic ally of the United States. Egypt would later remark that Morocco was taking on a new strategic anchor in North Africa. The die would be cast for the new, strategic Defense Consultative Committee, a free trade agreement sealed by Ambassador Tutwiler, the Millennium Challenge program, non-NATO ally status and a host of other new strategic policies between the two countries.

I still remember when my political counselor, Bob Holley, and I came back to Washington in January of 1999, to argue for a new Sahara policy. Twenty State Department officials were seated around the table, with Martin Indyk chairing. Two hours later, this group of State Department policy makers had set in motion a policy change that would create a new 21st century relationship with one of our oldest allies, Morocco.

Q: One of the themes that often runs through our diplomacy, rightly or wrongly, is that there’s a tendency of Americans—American diplomacy—to say, “We’ve got the solution,” and almost an arrogance of power to come in and come up with a solution which usually, if they may be logical to us, but it’s not necessarily logical on the ground. Did you feel that there was a bit of this?

GABRIEL: Somewhat. I was surprised by the amount of demarches that would come in from Washington that I had to deliver, and it was usually a matter of life or death that Morocco support us. It was expected of me to demarche the Moroccan government and get their agreement with us on a whole host of regional and multilateral issues. I remember thinking that I would no sooner write and be ready to send out a report stating that I got the King’s attention on an issue before another demarche arrived on my desk demanding more from the King. It got somewhat embarrassing at times. It seemed like everything was do or die. We didn’t consult; we demanded. These were generally associated with the multilateral issues of the U.S. such as the Israeli/Arab peace process or UN resolutions.

On a bilateral front, it was very different and very much a consultative process. Early on in my tenure, we established a three-year strategy to build a democratic, prosperous and stable Morocco. After organizing our Mission around one central vision, we then took it to Moroccan government ministries and asked how we could partner with them in the conduct of this vision. We wanted to know what we could do together that would move us closer to realizing this mutual goal. So it was very much a consultative process, and this process was very much supported by the State Department. In other words, there was a big difference in the way the U.S. conducted its diplomacy between bilateral and multilateral/regional issues.

Q: Did you get much of a feeling for the Algerian position from our ambassador, our mission to Algeria? Was localitis a problem of their taking one side and you finding yourself being forced into the Morocco side? How did it work?

GABRIEL: I had a very good relationship with our ambassadors in Algeria and Tunisia and we

actually met at least once a year to compare notes and discuss common issues – Cameron Hume in Algeria and Robin Raphel in Tunisia. Morocco was changing more quickly than the other two countries when I arrived and it was almost too difficult to understand the changes going on in Morocco. Maghreb experts who had been around for decades relied on their past experience and history to assess the Moroccan situation. Yet for the first time in Moroccan history, a free election put the opposition government in power. North African policy experts didn't see at first what was happening in Morocco. There was great skepticism about whether King Hassan was serious about the democratic experiment. We also missed the fact that King Hassan II was probably aware of his deteriorating health and wanting to make changes before he died.

Most importantly, no one knew really had any understanding of what kind of leader King Mohammed would become. I remember giving a talk about King Mohammed to a packed audience of the Council on Foreign Relations in September 1999 in Washington. Our positive predictions about the King then turned out to be true. He was a man that was going to bring great change and reform to his country. No one however predicted the visionary he is. The Washington policy audience was anxious to know more. I remember that during this time a group of CIA analysts interviewed me for two hours about the new King. The most memorable question asked was, "How long a honeymoon does the King have?" I answered five years or a little more. They thought this was too kind and wondered whether he was up for the job. The King has now been on the throne nearly nine years and the honeymoon isn't over yet. This is due to his keen intellect, vision, and charisma, not to mention the economic, social and political results he has produced.

So Stu, you could say I had clientitis, but if the analysis is right, is it clientitis? I'm sure the State Department was somewhat suspect of me, given that I was a political appointee and an Arab American. I felt I was able to call the tough shots against Morocco when it was necessary, and get the regional and multilateral support from them that my superiors expected, but I wasn't going to be contrarian just to prove my steel to them.

I also learned a lot during that time about how the State Department works. When our policy changed in January of 1999 – the new Sahara policy – I learned that no matter who was against the position prior, or no matter who trusted our particular views or not, state department employees are superbly trained to fall in line and carry out the mission, at least on the face of it. A new decision was made on the Sahara and signed by the Secretary. Clientitis didn't matter anymore. We were one team with one mission. One of the most interesting personalities I worked with at the time was Deputy Assistant Secretary Ron Newman, who was not supportive of our change in policy and was probably fairly suspect of me at the same time, but changed immediately when the policy decision was made. He actually became the implementer of the new policy. Ron taught me how to be a great "soldier" in the diplomatic corps as well as the importance of making sure a policy is carried out once decided upon. Until then, I had wrongly assumed that once a secretary approved a policy it was simply carried out. What Ron taught me was that the implementation itself could be much more divisive and that a policy could fail without the right kind of leadership and management. He provided that leadership and management, as well as being a role model for me on how to be a good diplomat.

Ron spent enormous time with his European counterparts building partnerships on our new

policy. He was also developing tactics that would involve Moroccan confidence-building measures with the Algerians in order to make them more agreeable to and facilitate their acceptance of our policy changes. One time, Martin Indyk and Ron spent seven hours with President Bouteflika on the issues of Morocco and Algeria. During this time, Morocco was asked to work closely with Algeria on counterterrorism and tightening security along their joint border to prevent the infiltration of criminal elements between the two countries. Needless to say, nothing seemed to work, and the ultimate question, “what does Algeria want in order to fix the Sahara?” went unanswered. The most Martin got out of his seven hours with Bouteflika was that he was “*parti-prenant*” (an “interested party”) to the Sahara. Great, but what did he want?

The ultimate question on the Sahara will remain whether we have enough leverage with Algeria to ever get them to move in a more constructive manner that would benefit the region and their own people.

Q: Was there any concern while you were in Morocco that with the generals running things, they had their own terrorist movement?

GABRIEL: The Algerians?

Q: I mean Algerians.

GABRIEL: The Algerian generals.

Q: ...that they might try to attack Morocco?

GABRIEL: No. All the intelligence reports at the time seemed to indicate that Algeria was content with using a proxy – the Polisario – to agitate the Moroccans. The Algerians themselves kept their hands somewhat clean. The Polisario live in Algeria. Algeria also provides them with arms and money and controls their movement. Algeria, however, has not shown an otherwise aggressive military stance against Morocco, but recently there is a great deal of worry about military escalation in the region. Algeria just purchased more than \$7 billion worth of arms from Russia in what was Russia’s largest post Cold War sale. Morocco is reacting in kind and purchasing a whole new line of F-16 jet fighters from the U.S. The Algerians also kept Moroccan POWs inside Algeria against international law for a number of years.

Q: Were you able to make any progress on the prisoners of war while you were there?

GABRIEL: Yes. During my time in Morocco, we were able to free approximately a quarter of the more than 2,000 prisoners of war. Until this time, only hardship cases were freed, such as the sick and dying. King Hassan had a very difficult time dealing with this problem since the POWs were used as a way of somewhat forcing the King into concessions on the Sahara. Every time he suggested they be released, the Algerians would use it as an opportunity to highlight the defeat of Morocco’s air force and as leverage on the political situation concerning the Sahara. So every time the humanitarian issue came up, the Polisario and Algeria turned it into a political issue. King Hassan didn’t like the Polisario making news out of the release, as they would offer to release a hundred of the POWs from time to time. This was usually due to a payoff by an NGO

or an attempt to embarrass King Hassan. We believed the King didn't need to play into these tactics of the Polisario. At our request, the US Embassy in Algiers demarched the Algerians every chance they got and highlighted the plight of the POWs often. Bigger tranches of POWs were offered every time a U.S. visitor went to Algeria. In the end, nearly 600 POWs got out during my tenure.

But the most fulfilling and emotional result was the release of all remaining POWs in 2004, when an effort we led with the great support of Senator McCain resulted in the Algerians releasing the POWs to Senator Lugar, who led a mission to Algeria to bring them home to Morocco on a U.S. transport plane. The effort to force Algeria, by highlighting the plight of the POWs and otherwise embarrassing them was led by Senator McCain, who obviously had personal interest in this issue. The photos of the return of these men, after twenty five years and more in captivity, still make me cry. My colleague, Bob Holley, at during the time I was Ambassador was the Embassy Political Counselor, and has continued on with me in private practice regarding this issue, is the principal advocate for the release of the POWs and the reason why they came home. Not many people can end their careers knowing they saved the lives of 404 forgotten POWs, who had been imprisoned for more than 25 years. Bob has made a great contribution to our country and to the lives of these prisoners.

Q: Turning to another facet: What commercial relations with Morocco?

GABRIEL: During the time I was Ambassador we more than tripled trade, from \$250 million to about a billion dollars. Our single biggest success was the sale of an all Boeing flight to Royal Air Maroc (RAM), worth nearly \$1.5 billion. Our success over Airbus was unprecedented. We received a letter from the CEO of Boeing congratulating the Embassy for fighting as hard as Boeing to win the contract.

Q: Airbus is a French-British consortium.

GABRIEL: Consortium, yes. We were successful in counseling Boeing and working inside with the Moroccan government to have a transparent bidding process, which allowed Boeing to propose a lease-back option with the jumbo jets, which reduced the cost to RAM, and thus gave them the advantage in the sale.

We also opened up new markets for Moroccan agricultural products, principally exports of tomatoes, for the first time to the U.S. We inaugurated the largest power plant in 1997, just before I came to Post, during the tenure of my predecessor. It was a consortium between a Swiss company, ABB, and CMS Energy, an American company, a \$1.5 billion deal.

During my tenure we also negotiated an open skies agreement with Morocco, Morocco's first. We also began the framework process for a free trade agreement.

Q: How about business people... Was there a problem/role for the small or medium size American firm trying to do business in Morocco? So many countries have obstacles: licensing, bribing, the whole thing. How did they find it?

GABRIEL: That's a great question. I think the bureaucratic hassle in Morocco is tremendous. What it takes to get a business set up and get a business going in Morocco is a very cumbersome, difficult and archaic process. Let me give you a few statistics and then tell you what they've been doing to improve. When I arrived there, it took seven days for an item to clear customs. It took 24 months on average to set up a business. They had the second highest number of taxes in the world. Not the highest taxes, but the greatest number of them: thirty-seven taxes on a business. We redirected USAID money to assist Morocco in this regard, at their request. The Moroccans brought down customs clearance to three hours; from seven-day clearance to three-hour clearance. It takes a couple of weeks now to set up a business in Morocco, not a couple of years, and the number of taxes have also come down. Morocco, with USAID counseling, has established regional "fast track shops" where a business can get the approvals it needs in quick order.

But petty corruption is still prevalent. You will find things like the police taking money to let you out of a ticket. Of course, you are happy to offer it so you can simply move on. If you want to get your paperwork off the stack of papers in any number of local government offices, a small amount of money guarantees it. We haven't seen much change in that area, unfortunately.

On big projects, where competition is involved, there appears to be a completely transparent process. The most famous of these and the earliest was the bidding for the second cell phone license. As a result of a competitive process, Morocco received the second highest per capita fee in the world, next to Austria, over \$700 million more than they expected. King Hassan put this money into an investment fund that is still incubating large projects throughout Morocco, the Hassan II Fund.

Another privatization was the Regie des Tabacs, Morocco's state-run tobacco monopoly until June 2003. It was expected to go for \$1 billion. Instead, it went for \$1.7 billion. The companies delivered their bids at 10 A.M. on a Monday morning. When they walked into the room they were asked to stay. The Minister of Finance walked in and opened the envelopes in front of them and announced the winner. You can't get more transparent than that.

There are continuing complaints, however, on deals that do not have to be competitively bid upon. It seems that those with the best connections continue to get the opportunities to partner on tourism projects and other deals requiring land from the government.

The King is progressive; civil society is flourishing; business is growing as well as the middle class, but the government and the political parties are still weak. The King forms alliances with civil society and business to get things done because they can get things done quicker. But until government and the political parties are strengthened, there will be a continuing problem. The judicial system also needs to be strengthened.

Q: Did they have the equivalent of French AID or German AID or other groups coming there?

GABRIEL: Oh, yes. The number one donor in Morocco is the EU. France and Spain, Germany and other Europeans are also big donors. America is the sixth largest donor, although that is changing as the Millennium Challenge Account program comes to Morocco. U.S. aid began to

increase again while I was in Morocco, in correlation with the country's post 1998 political and economic reforms. We were able to use high-level visits to bring in aid in the form of wheat subsidy programs, which added nearly \$50 million in new programming, up from just \$5 million before I came to Morocco.

Q: The wheat program was PL-480.

GABRIEL: Yes, PL-480 funds. This program offers free tons of cereals to a country. In turn they can sell it and use the local currency for projects specifically agreed on between the US and the grantee country. We were able offer \$50 million a year in PL-480 funds. Also, we reinstituted military aid while I was in Morocco. It started with just \$2 million, and it is nearly \$20 million now. The new Millennium Challenge Account money will add a huge \$700 million to Morocco starting next year (2009). Within the next year, America could become the second or third biggest donor to Morocco.

Q: What was your impression of the EU efforts?

GABRIEL: EU efforts were good. Morocco had a very good EU representative there during my time, Lucio Guerrato. The U.S. tended to focus more on business issues and political reforms, while the EU focused more on social issues and government restructuring issues. The real problem is that we don't really work together to come up with country-wide plans. There is a growing movement to coordinate aid money in countries like Morocco, but so far we haven't found the vehicle to do so.

Long-term, there is a real opportunity for Morocco to become an important link among the EU and U.S. through a new Atlantic alliance that positions Morocco as a key open market for adding value to goods and services to and from the U.S., EU, Africa and the Middle East.

Q: How did you find as the ambassador using your... How many consular posts did you have?

GABRIEL: One. We have one Consul General (CG) in Casablanca.

Q: Rabat and Tangiers had gone by the wayside.

GABRIEL: That's right.

Q: How did you find the one in Casablanca?

GABRIEL: I think I said earlier I was really lucky with the great staff we had. Six months after I arrived, my entire senior team changed. Nabeel Khoury took over as CG. He had served in Morocco before and was politically astute on Morocco. He knew the political weavings of the whole country. As I mentioned earlier, we operated as one mission, not independently as separate functional areas. Everyone at the Embassy had a role to play in Embassy strategy, in addition to their principal job and regardless of their principal role, including Nabeel and his staff of 50 people. Altogether, there were 450 people employed by the Embassy, 100 of which were Americans. With this kind of setup, Nabeel had more than just a regional or functional job. So

the Consulate during my time did not act like a regional office. Instead, it was part of an overall mission, although out of convenience some of Nabeel's staff focused on Casablanca-based activities and organizations. I never saw a difference between our employees at the Consulate or Embassy. I saw one, integrated Mission with a common strategy to carry out. I don't know if that answers your question.

Q: It does. What about our military, the attaches, military aid. How did that... What were we...

GABRIEL: I really enjoyed the military and spent a lot of time with them. They too were fully integrated into the Mission strategy. I wanted our military personnel to be a part of our overall mission, and part of our team. They jumped right in. As a matter of fact, one of our military personnel chaired one of the three mission working groups, the stability working group. We also had intelligence issues, but even those who were in responsible positions participated in the larger mission's activities.

I had some problems at first organizing like this. Government employees are much more accustomed to functional management, not flat, matrix and project management organizations. For instance, at first Nabeel saw the consulate as a mini embassy, with its own regional competence. But when Nabeel saw he could play in a much larger field he cooperated. The same was true for other areas, including the CIA. In this case, it boiled down to building trust and sharing information with each other, helping each other do a better job.

Q: I want to be a little careful when we're talking about the CIA. We've gotten a little flack just recently. The CIA, for one thing, they want to.... They're going to think, "We don't want people talking about that the CIA is actually located abroad."

GABRIEL: I don't quite understand this point but will adhere to whatever you think is best.

Q: This doesn't pass the ho ho test.

[crosstalk]

GABRIEL: There are people that are covert in the world and of course I'm not going to talk about that. But there are people that are declared, and our CIA head was declared. I had a meeting with the head of the Near East Bureau at Langley before I left and discussed how we were going to operate together. I got to meet and go out to dinner with the new chief before she came to Post, so we had some initial rapport. She was very good at her job and I respected her. We discovered that if you developed trust and confidence between the two of you, there would be cooperation. By and large, 80% of the time, we got along. I decided to weigh in on their reporting concerning Morocco, as I felt from time to time their reporting about Morocco was not correct, although once I was dead wrong and they were right. But I never changed one of their reports. Instead, I offered my own additional comments in the reports. I finally set up a team of people I trusted with the chief to meet every week to review CIA reporting. I wanted us to get a better understanding of what we were trying to achieve and how this would, in the end, help our mission. There were times that we bumped heads, and I'm sure I often didn't know what was going on.

The CIA aside, I feel strongly that the mission of the ambassador and the way embassies conduct bilateral affairs needs a total revamping so that long-term strategies can be developed and accomplished. We have to devise a way to give priority to the Mission and the mission of America in any given country, rather than yield to the parochial interests of a particular agency. I think that's going to be a future question for our government. We have a great opportunity at the embassy level to mold the various missions together in a common long-term strategy in a given country. The embassy is a natural funnel through which a multi-disciplined mission can be carried out.

Q: How did you find the expatriate community there? Morocco has the reputation going way back of remittance men and remittance women from a Western Europe going there to play around with boys and girls in different ways or smoke things.

[crosstalk]

GABRIEL: ...elicit drugs and sex?

Q: Elicit and elicit sex of all persuasions.

GABRIEL: I think just before I arrived to Post, an American was arrested on drug charges. King Hassan released him through the diplomatic efforts of the Embassy. That was before I was there. During my tenure there, I cannot remember any Americans getting into that kind of trouble. I'll tell you about one issue, however, that was somewhat strange.

A Brit came in on his own yacht with 10,000 Bibles, as he was going to distribute them around the country in defiance of Moroccan law. This should not have been any of our business, since it involved a Brit, except that Senator Brownback decided it was our business.

Q: From Kansas, I think?

[crosstalk]

GABRIEL: He decided it was our business and demanded that we press this case with the King to have him released from prison. I went to the British ambassador, Anthony Layden, to see what he was going to do about the situation. Anthony said, "The guy broke the law! We're not going to do anything! He broke the law. He came in here with 10,000 Bibles. He's proselytizing. We're not going to do anything." I explained I was under pressure to do something. Eventually the British citizen was released. Then the next problem was his yacht. I was asked to get his yacht released from custody. I think we finally got the yacht released. Can you believe we are forced into situations like this? And there are costs for these things. You can only "go to the well" so often with your bilateral partners.

Q: This is interesting because I've run across this myself. The British attitude is that if somebody is unjustly arrested, they'll go all out, but if somebody breaks the law, well, OK, that's their problem. But we get these congressional pressures. There's nobody back in Washington who's

going to tell a senator it's just not worth it.

GABRIEL: Exactly. But overall, I do not remember many, if any, problems involving American citizens and drugs.

Q: You're fortunate. Part of the thing was the wonder year of college kids was over. This was during the '50s, 60's.

[crosstalk]

Q: This is where you went and got high.

GABRIEL: I grew up in the 60s, so I know what you are referring to. The issue of hashish in Morocco, which is about a three billion dollar business, is a problem for Europe, not the U.S. Some of the drugs may end up in Canada, but little, if any, ends up in the United States. The issue was therefore not a priority when I was there, although I believe it's changing now, as terrorism is linked to drug trafficking. We were worried more about the trans-shipment of hard drugs like cocaine, but during my time in Morocco this was not a serious situation either.

Q: Was there any—I don't want to use the term—almost human trafficking through Spain? We're talking about people especially from black Africa

GABRIEL: This is a phenomenon which has grown in recent years and is a very serious one. Trafficking of all sorts from Africa, through the Sahel, puts tremendous pressure on Morocco because everybody in Africa looks at a map and says, "Oh, my God, there's only an eight-mile stretch of water between Africa/Morocco and Europe/Spain. I'm going up to Morocco." Migration into and through Morocco is therefore a huge problem.

Q: It wasn't a particular concern to you at the time.

GABRIEL: No, but they are now, thanks to King Mohammed. He's brought this issue and other similar issues into the open and is dealing with them forcefully.

Q: Maybe we've covered pretty much it. If you run a cross anything that we haven't mentioned, you can put it in when you get the transcript. I assume that when Bush II came in that you left. Is that right?

GABRIEL: Yes. Typically you hand in your resignation when the president is elected. There is then a blanket acceptance of the political resignations. For this administration we were asked to depart March 1, 2001, my birthday.

Q: You must have felt pretty good about your time there from what you told me. And from your reputation.

GABRIEL: You know what it's like as you have had the chance yourself. You get a chance to serve your country. There's nothing like it, is there?

Q: To stand up at a ceremony and there you stand up and they play your Star Spangled Banner or what have you or lay a wreath or just be there.

GABRIEL: That's right. Pretty marvelous. I got goose bumps every time they played the Star Spangled Banner when I served my country.

Q: What have you been doing since?

GABRIEL: When I got out, my wife, Buffy, was still stationed in Lausanne, Switzerland. We had not been together full time in seven years. For three and half I had been in Rabat and for three and half years I had been commuting between Washington and Lausanne, where my wife was Senior Vice President for Corporate Affairs for Philip Morris International. So I moved back into our home in Washington in March of 2001 and she joined me there in October of the same year.

In the process, by that summer, I was pretty much engaged in a new business representing U. S. companies on new business strategies in the Middle East from Morocco to the Gulf. I picked up clients in high tech, defense, energy, consumer products, and represented companies on various investments opportunities.

Q: Do you still do that?

GABRIEL: That's what I do today. In addition, about a year or so ago, the government of Morocco asked me to advise them on U.S. political, cultural and investment matters, and I now represent them as well.

Q: Looking at it today, how do you project Morocco? How is it doing?

GABRIEL: I think the glass is half full. You hear a lot of comments that the glass is half empty. When you look on all fronts, King Mohammed is moving in the right direction. Women have more rights today, the press is more open and free, labor laws have been enacted. It's a much more conducive environment for private sector investment and building a middle class. Unemployment rates are coming down. Literacy is improving. The infrastructure's developing. Tourism is booming. GDP is growing. It seems like a lot of things are coming together. The question is whether it is happening fast enough. I don't think there's a better visionary than King Mohammed VI in the Middle East. There are a number of countries with more resources, but for a man with a poor country having to take on enormous problems with little resources, and bring his country into the developed world, and make it more democratic along the way, he is doing a remarkable job. In one of his most recent speeches he underscored the importance of democracy, saying, "There's no turning back for us. We've made our decision to become more democratic." At the same time, he has to balance such reform with the threat that radicalism in his country will take advantage of such new freedoms and reforms. Instability and the potential for violence are a very real threat in Morocco.

I think that macroeconomic policy is strong. I think political reforms are remarkable. I think the

King is going in the right direction on micro and social reforms, but here is where he has his biggest challenge: legal reforms and a stronger judiciary. Morocco has built a strong civil society, a very engaged business elite, and an open, free and competitive society. The government, however, is weak, as are the political parties, the judiciary and the parliament. These are the challenges for the King in the future. Of all the countries in the Middle East, most people believe Morocco is the model of the future.

Q: ??? of the Arab world, the Islamic world. It stands up.

GABRIEL: It really does. If it had more resources, it would be unstoppable. On democratic reform, it's the best. In terms of economic changes, it's among the best. In terms of social problems, they're huge, but the King is thinking correctly on how to solve them.

Q: They don't seem to have the problems of population.

[crosstalk]

Q: Actually, Saudi Arabia. There are no resources in Saudi Arabia other than oil, and their population is growing so fast the per capita income has been dropping.

GABRIEL: I think the Moroccan population growth rate is just about 2% or less.

Q: It's all right.

GABRIEL: It's all right.

Q: Compared to some of these other places. Okay Ed, I think this is a good place to stop.

End of Reader