

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

AMBASSADOR MOSINA H. JORDAN

Interviewed by: Charles Stuart Kennedy

Initial interview date: July 8, 2010

Copyright 2015 ADST

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Background

Born in Brooklyn, New York
New York University
Howard University
UCLA
American University

Community Services Administration 1973

Senate Appropriations Committee 1981
Sub-Committee on Labor

USAID

Office of Equal Opportunity Programs 1982

Africa Bureau – Office of Central African Affairs 1983

Cameroon 1985

Belize 1988

Barbados 1991

Guyana

State Department

Central African Republic 1995

USUN 1997

USAID

Jamaica 1998

Latin America and the Caribbean Bureau 2003

Counselor for the Agency 2005

Acting Assistant Administrator for Management 2005

INTERVIEW

Q: Today is the eighth of July, 2010. And this is an interview with Ambassador Mosina H. Jordan. This is being done on the behalf of The Association for Diplomatic Studies and Training and I'm Charles Stuart Kennedy.

Q: Let's start at the beginning. Where and when were you born?

JORDAN: I was born in Brooklyn, New York on December 14, 1943.

Q: Well, let's talk a bit about the family. On your father's side, what do you know about that?

JORDAN: Well, I have very limited information about my father. My mother wasn't very forthcoming with information about him. My mother and father separated when I was three, and he moved out of the area. I had almost no contact with him except for a couple of telephone calls, until he died in 1966. My father, Frank Monterio was from Cape Verde and was a stevedore on cargo ships between Europe and the U.S. In 1935, during a routine trip to New York, while on shore leave, he decided to stay in New York. He found his way to Brighton Beach. He believed he could make a successful living in a Jewish community. He rented an apartment and started a painting contractor business that in relatively no time became very successful. He met my mother while painting a house where she worked as a housekeeper. They were married in 1938. They bought a rooming house and renovated it so that they could live on the ground and first floors. This too was a very successful enterprise. I have fond memories of the house, dancing with my father, you know, putting my feet on his feet and dancing around the room.

Q: Oh yeah.

JORDAN: -- One day when he fell asleep, I was sitting in his lap and remember taking a jar of Vaseline and putting it all over his head.

Q: Oh yeah? (laughs)

JORDAN: He wasn't too happy when he woke up.

Q: No.

JORDAN: I'm told that he's from Cape Verde, but we have had no contact with my father's family.

Q: From your perspective there's no father's parents.

JORDAN: No, I have no information about my father's parents or any of his relatives or even where in Cape Verde he is from.

Q: OK. Well, let's move to your mother's side. I hope you've got more information.

JORDAN: My mother is from Selma, Alabama. She can trace her family history back to slavery. Actually, at her 100th birthday party celebration we talked about family history and how it evolved into the current family.

Q: OK. What were you getting from back in those days?

JORDAN: Well, my great-grandfather was the son of the plantation owner. His name was George Bonner, named after the plantation owner. He was very fair. Actually, he was so white he looked like his father. Even though George was the plantation owner's son, he was still a slave and worked as a servant in his father's mansion at a very young age. George fell in love with another slave that worked as a servant in the mansion. Belle was more African American in terms of her appearance. When George and Belle reached young adulthood, the plantation owner requested that they marry. Before the plantation owner died, he deeded 80 acres of his land to George and Belle. They had 18 children, 9 boys and 9 girls. The 80 acres are still inhabited by their offspring.

Q: Good heavens!

JORDAN: My grandmother, Ellen Bonner was one of the daughters of George and Belle. She worked as a domestic in the white homes in Selma. She married Joseph Larry Jones who worked as a carpenter. My mother, Alice Jones was born December 17, 1907. She attended Clark Elementary School and had a wonderful childhood. She frequently recounted memories of her trips with her grandmother, Belle on the train visiting the 18 families across the U.S.

Q: Do you know anything about your mother's schooling?

JORDAN: My mother wasn't well educated. I believe she finished elementary school, but I know she definitely didn't go to high school. When she finished elementary school, my mother was fortunate to land a good job in the local hospital as an elevator operator. She frequently talked about how much she liked the job. At the time, it was considered a very good job. She spent a lot of time in the hospital kitchen during her breaks helping the workers there prepare the food trays that went up to the wards. She talked a lot about that experience, especially in her twilight years. She was very reminiscent of her youth and her past.

She was a Baptist and went to church regularly on Sundays and to Bible Studies during the week. She also attended all sorts of social functions at the church and volunteered to help in many events at church. She spent her time at work and at church. She married Johnny Hitt and had three sons, George, Johnny and Robert. When Johnny Hitt died she migrated to New York to find work and a change from the Jim Crow south.

Q: Well, did you learn much about Selma, I mean, the family there?

JORDAN: Despite segregation, discrimination and Klu Klux Klan intimidation, the Bonners were a well-respected family in their working class neighborhood that also included a smattering of white families. The Bonner children that remained in Selma all had good jobs and lived in relatively nice homes. They understood the dynamics of their environment and were able to have a reasonable standard of living.

Q: When did your mother move to New York?

JORDAN: My mother moved to New York in 1937. I don't know how she settled in New York all by herself. I don't know whether she came up and met friends or other relatives, but she somehow relocated to Brooklyn and met my father. She subsequently sent for her mother and three sons. When I was nine I visited relatives in Selma with my grandmother. It was very hot, like today. The neighborhood wasn't very well developed. It was a rural community. My aunt and cousins lived in a very nice house with a big yard full of chickens. I didn't like drinking from a colored only water fountain in town or sitting in the hot balcony in the movie theater or feeling the racial tension as we walked through the streets. I didn't like Selma and I never went back.

Q: Well, how long did you stay in Brooklyn?

JORDAN: Well, I lived there with my mom and my extended family, my half brother and his family until I graduated high school, until about age 16.

Q: OK, so let's talk about growing up. What section of Brooklyn did you grow up in?

JORDAN: I grew up in Brighton Beach. .

Q: It's now a Russian area, isn't it?

JORDAN: Yes. It is now.

Q: Were you growing up in an African American community?

JORDAN: No, it was a predominantly Jewish community with a few Irish, Italian and African American residents.

Q: OK, just talk about your childhood, what was it like there?

JORDAN: I had a very enjoyable childhood. I went to elementary school, P.S. 100. I was maybe one of five African American students in the school. Because there were so few African Americans students in the school, we were treated just like the white students. I participated in many school events, served on the student body and participated in the different school clubs. Mr. Liptman, my English teacher kind of adopted me and was my mentor. I worked with him in reorganizing the school library. He introduced me to books that I probably wouldn't have read if he hadn't taken an interest in me. I enjoyed learning

and had a curious nature. Elementary school was a wonderful experience for me. I lived about four blocks from the school, so I walked back and forth to the school with classmates. After school we played in the streets, kick-the-can, stickball, handball, dodge ball and many other games. The kids in the neighborhood were diverse and we had a good time playing together after school.

Q: I mean one of the things that comes across clearly was that you were not relegated to a slow class. It was a tendency, particularly back in those days, in some school systems, to put African American students on a slow track.

JORDAN: Mr. Liptman saw in me potential and tried to cultivate it. But not only that, I think because there were really so few African American kids in the school, and they happen to be intelligent, they weren't assigned to a remedial program

Q: Well, but you know, I don't know the area, but I get the general feeling from my reading that if you are growing up, particularly in New York or in Brooklyn or something, in a predominantly Jewish neighborhood the intellectual caliber is pretty high there.

JORDAN: That may have been the case. There wasn't a color issue at that time that I was aware of in my little community. I'm not saying it didn't exist in the broader community, but not in our community.

Q: What about reading? Were you much of a reader?

JORDAN: My older brother, George with whom I lived, was an avid reader. He enjoyed reading about history, especially wars – War of 1812, Civil War, WWI and II and battle strategies. He frequently shared with me information he found fascinating about the wars. He encouraged me to read books since I enjoyed reading. Mr. Liptman provided the arsenal of books in the library that gave me an unlimited supply of reading material. He also encouraged me to read books and suggested that I read Cry, the Beloved Country by Alan Paton, my introduction to the inhumanity of apartheid in South Africa. Since I had access to so many books in the library, my reading list was prolific and eclectic – stories about magical prowess such as Half Magic by Edward Eager, to my favorite, Charlotte's Web, by EB White and Tom Sawyer and Huckleberry Finn by Mark Twain.

My brother also taught me to appreciate jazz and classical music. I was a jazz enthusiast at the age of 10 because he played jazz records all the time. He also played the trumpet and the piano. So, I learned to appreciate good music and loved classical music. Unfortunately, I never learned to play the piano, even after several attempts. I regret to this day my failure in this area. It was a very wholesome environment. My family had very strong middle-class values. They put a high premium on getting an education since no one in the family graduated from high school.

Q: Early on were there any particular subjects enjoyed and some that you really didn't like?

JORDAN: I was eight or nine, maybe 10 when I decided I wanted to be a doctor. In high school, I focused on the academic program. I was good in math and didn't do so well in French. I was a cheerleader, the vice president of the student body and participated in many school clubs.

Q: What high school did you go to?

JORDAN: Abraham Lincoln High School.

Q: Did you have any foreign interests?

JORDAN: I was in a group of students assigned to represent the school in a mini UN (United Nations) at the United Nations. We debated other high school representatives on various issues. It was an extraordinary experience not only to participate in this unique opportunity, but also meeting representatives from so many countries around the world. I also devoted most of my spare time supporting the civil rights movement and the March on Washington. I took the subway from Brighton Beach to Harlem weekly with a group of students from Abraham Lincoln to work with A. Philip Randolph, a labor leader and social activist who organized the March on Washington. We printed and mailed fliers and licked hundreds, if not thousands of envelopes.

Q: Well, let's talk about in high school. Did you go into Manhattan to see the delights there, the museums, the theaters?

JORDAN: No. I commuted to high school from Queens with my sister-in-law who worked in Brooklyn in a neighboring community to the school. After classes and extra-curricular activities and homework, she would pick me up for the ride home. I didn't have time to go to Manhattan to visit the museums and the theater. The weekends were consumed with homework and chores around the house. During the summers, I was a volunteer at the Beth Israel Hospital in Manhattan working a variety of jobs in the pharmacy and pathology lab.

Q: This is all part of your interest in being a doctor?

JORDAN: Yes. When I graduated high school, I attended New York University, the downtown campus. I now had an opportunity to visit the museums and the theater and I visited them as often as I could. There was a sculptor garden in one of the museums, I can't remember which, that was so beautiful and tranquil I would sit there for hours soaking in the sculpture. My favorite museums were the Guggenheim and the Metropolitan Modern of Art. I was also a foreign film enthusiast and saw every Ingmar Bergman film when it came to the theater. Although his films were dark and dealt with death, betrayal and bleakness, I loved the cinematography and characters especially in the Seventh Seal and Through a Glass Darkly. Max Von Sydow is one of my favorite actors.

Q: You graduated from high school when?

JORDAN: In 1960.

Q: So there would have been the early efforts, desegregation schools in the South and all. Did that have any repercussions where you were far as your awareness or --

JORDAN: Yes. I was aware of Martin Luther King and the civil rights movement he led. As I mentioned earlier, I went to Harlem with a group of students from Abraham Lincoln High School to work with A. Phillip Randolph in supporting the civil rights movement, and his work with the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters Union – the first African American labor union. We printed fliers, stuffed envelopes, established mailing lists and mailed fliers. I volunteered when I could, primarily on the weekends.

Q: Did your mother encourage you to get involved in causes or issues?

JORDAN: No, she didn't. I was kind of inner-driven. I was the first person in the family to graduate from high school, and obtain a college and a professional degree. My family supported me because they valued education and I was achieving my goals. Their main concern was that several African American girls got pregnant and dropped out of high school and they didn't want that fate for me. So the concern was, don't get pregnant. Get an education! That was real important to them and to me. And so my focus was on getting an education.

Q: I gather that in a way you sort of literally missed the -- the pressures. I mean a young African-American girl in a predominantly African-American high school in that period -- I mean, the guys were out, you know.

JORDAN: Abraham Lincoln High School was a predominantly white high school.

Q: That's what I'm saying. I mean, you didn't have -- you were in a school that did not have that pressure.

JORDAN: We had a very small number of African Americans students at Abraham Lincoln. In addition to the five from elementary school, there may have been a few others. Today, the enrollment is 75% African American and Hispanics and 25% white.

Q: Teenage pregnancy is plaguing the Hispanic community.

JORDAN: It's plaguing the African American community still. It's plaguing the economically deprived communities whether white, African American, Latino, or Asian. It's not frowned upon now to get pregnant and not have a husband and even get pregnant several times without a husband and with several different men. It's not looked upon as a social stigma. At that time, it was not acceptable, even in the community that we lived in, to get pregnant and not be married and not finish high school. Finishing high school was important and not getting pregnant was important.

Q: Do you have any idea why you wanted to go to college?

JORDAN: Yes. I wanted to be a doctor and I knew you had to go to college and medical school to be a doctor.

Q: What year did you graduate?

JORDAN: 1960.

Q: Did you get at all involved or engaged in the election of 1960. That was Kennedy versus Nixon.

JORDAN: No, I didn't get involved in the elections of the 1960s. I watched the debates on the TV. We were fortunate to have a TV.

Q: How did you pick NYU?

JORDAN: To qualify for free or low tuition at the New York City public colleges (Brooklyn College, City College of New York and others) an applicant needed a grade point average of 3.5, in numerical terms an 85 average. I missed qualifying for Brooklyn College and all of the New York City public colleges because I had an 84 average. So I had to apply to the private universities. I applied to four or five universities and was accepted at NYU. I was ecstatic to be accepted in an Ivy League school. My grade point average was reasonably decent and Abraham Lincoln High School at that time had a reputation for academic excellence.

Q: So you went to NYU from when to when?

JORDAN: From 1960 to 1964.

Q: My grandson is going to start his freshman year at NYU.

JORDAN: It's a great school. Is he attending the downtown campus at Washington Square?

Q: Yeah. He's doing sort of the dramatic arts side of things. Well, lets' talk about NYU. What was it like in those days?

JORDAN: As I mentioned earlier, we moved from Brooklyn to Queens just before I started my senior year in high school. I commuted from Queens to Brooklyn and to Abraham Lincoln by car with my sister-in-law to finish up my last year. I also had to commute to NYU from Queens to downtown Manhattan by subway. The trip took an hour each way, every day and affected how much time I could spend at school.

The first semester was a big adjustment for me - organizing my time to attend classes and study before returning home at 11:00 pm each night on the subway. The allure of the

museums and the theater also distracted me. After the first semester, I settled down and was able to manage my time better. I really enjoyed the school.

What I liked most about NYU was that it was very diverse - students and faculty from all over the world. My friends were from South America, Africa, Europe and Central America. I experienced their cultures vicariously and enjoyed their wonderful foods. NYU's library was also state of the art and fabulous - new, modern and high tech. I studied in the library every night before trekking home on the subway.

Q: Were you taking pre-med?

JORDAN: Yes, I was in a pre-med program. My first year, I did so well in math that my math instructor encouraged me to major in math as well. So, I had a double major, pre-med and math. We were also required to participate in a physical education program. And at that time there was bowling and fencing. So, I chose fencing. I really liked it and I was invited to be on the women's varsity fencing team. The second year on the team I became captain of the team. I was the first African American to be a captain of a varsity team at NYU.

Q: Oh. Well, what were you, foil, saber, or epee?

JORDAN: Foil. The women's teams fenced foil only.

Q: I got my letter in the foil.

JORDAN: Oh really? Fencing helped me to become more disciplined and to develop organizational and leadership skills.

Q: Well, how did you find social life on campus?

JORDAN: It was great. As I said, it was so diverse. I had friends from Cuba, Honduras, Ethiopia, Nigeria, Trinidad and Germany. I just enjoyed the diversity of it all – it gave me an appreciation of other cultures and of exotic foods and a different perspective of viewing the world and contemporary issues.

Q: Did you find yourself -- I mean, not obviously on purpose, but just by this new world, sort of moving away from your family and your half brothers and all? I mean, you know, you were off in a different world?

JORDAN: My half brothers were a lot older than me. The youngest, Robert was 16 years older, the middle brother, Johnny was 18 years older, and the oldest, George was 20 years older. So they were old enough to be my father.

My mother and I lived with my oldest half brother, George Hitt and his wife and son. Though Robert and Johnny visited us daily, they lived in different residences with their families or girlfriends. As I said earlier, George loved to read about history and especially

the wars. We had lots of discussions about current events. I could always come home and have a conversation with him about whatever I was learning at school or to talk about current events that were impacting the family, the community or the country. There was intellectual stimulation at home through him.

Q: I would think that at NYU at that time, probably even now, that there would have been a lot of interest in other parts of the world, particularly in well, Israel being one, but also the Soviet Union, things happening there and all. I mean -- or as pre-med, did that sort of move you away from that thing?

JORDAN: Well, I was really, extremely busy with my studies, pre-med and math. I was busy with fencing. We were going to competitions, weekly, and we also had to practice daily. During the summers, I was working in Beth-Israel Hospital again. So, my focus was consumed with dealing with all the challenges I had on a daily and weekly basis. The assassination of President Kennedy had a profound effect on me. Not only was the world stunned that the President of the United States could be assassinated in a well-established democracy like ours, I felt that we all were now more vulnerable.

And, that was compounded by the assassination of Robert Kennedy and Martin Luther King and the resulting riots and continued discrimination and brutal treatment of African Americans in the south. The country psychologically wasn't in a good place and neither was I. My youngest brother, Robert died that same year. He had rheumatic fever when he was young and had a bad heart valve. He had numerous surgeries to repair the valve. He died after the last surgery. So, 1963 was a traumatic year for me with the loss of my brother who was very dear to me and the assassination of President Kennedy.

Q: Well, how did pre-med go for you?

JORDAN: I successfully completed the pre-med program but changed my mind about becoming a doctor the summer before my senior year. I had the opportunity at Beth-Israel Hospital to observe an autopsy and it turned me off to pursuing a career as a doctor. So, I decided I wasn't going to pursue medical school and I would look for work as a mathematician. I applied to dozens of firms but wasn't successful.

I needed a job to begin making payments on my student loan. New York City's Department of Social Services was looking for recent college graduates they could train as caseworkers. I applied and was accepted into the program. I knew at the time that this wasn't a career I planned to pursue for the long term. I needed income and time to assess other options.

Q: How did you find the New York social system, which is quite an apparatus?

JORDAN: I was responsible for working with families that were in crisis - where the children were in jeopardy as a result of abuse, abandonment or neglect. The children had to be removed immediately from that environment and placed in temporary shelters and then placed in long term care. There were protocols that had to be followed to remove the

children. Finding a temporary shelter could take hours and in the meantime, I was responsible for the children. If the children needed to be fed, I had to buy food and feed them and protect them from the unstable environment. In many instances the New York Police Department had to be called because of the severity of the abuse or neglect or the parent was mentally unstable. Once a shelter was found, I packed the children's belongings and took them in a taxi to the temporary shelter. These challenges usually happened at night and in dangerous and economically deprived neighborhoods. For the most part, the social services systems worked in removing the children from a crisis environment. Although it took hours to find temporary shelters, finding long-term solutions were elusive. I worked there for eight months and was overwhelmed and stressed out the entire time.

During the training conducted by social services, I met my husband, George Jordan who had just returned from Vietnam. He was a chemist by training and was having difficulty finding a job. We dated for nine months and then got married. We relocated from New York to Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. He was hired by Exxon as their Regional Director to manage their service stations in the tri-state area. I taught math at one of the high schools in Pittsburgh. We were there a year when my husband applied to Howard University Law School and was accepted. We relocated to Washington D.C. and I was hired by John Hopkins Applied Physics Laboratory in Maryland as a mathematician. Finally, I found work as a mathematician and it was short-lived. My husband convinced me to attend law school with him. I applied and was accepted, so we went to law school together.

Q: Which law school?

JORDAN: Howard University Law School. At the beginning of the second semester my husband became very ill. He was hospitalized for a month -- he had an allergic reaction to aspirin or something and almost died. He was too sick to read while he was in the hospital. Since we were in the same classes, I covered for him -- wrote his papers and briefed him daily on what transpired in all the classes. When he was released from the hospital he was still weak and unable to catch-up and keep up with the heavy reading schedule. His grade point average dropped below the level to matriculate and was informed by the school that he wouldn't be accepted back the following year. We decided to move to Los Angeles, California and that destination may have been influenced by a commercial we saw by the singing group, 5th Dimensions called "Up, Up and Away" on your yellow balloon. They were promoting the airline, TWA -- Up, up and away on TWA.

We were fortunate to find an apartment in a great neighborhood. My husband was hired by Hunt-Wesson as a chemist and I went to UCLA Law School on full scholarship as a result of excellent grades at Howard. And then I got pregnant and I had to drop out the second semester because I had serious medical problems during the pregnancy. I gave birth to a 10 lbs boy, George Michael after a difficult labor.

After a year in Los Angeles, with the tremors and fear of earthquakes, I didn't want to live there any longer, especially with a new baby. We moved to a progressive community

in Raleigh, North Carolina, my husband's home state. My husband worked for the Mayor of Raleigh as a special assistant while I stayed home with my son and nine months later, my daughter, Mosina Michele. We petitioned Howard University Law School to reinstate my husband. They accepted him and we moved back to Washington D.C. We now had a family and expenses and my husband decided he would work while I finished law school and then he would attend law school and I would work. I applied to American University and was accepted with a full scholarship. I attended classes in the morning and in the evening. I would take the children to daycare for a couple of hours in the morning, attend class and then return home in time to give them lunch and care for them in the afternoon and prepare dinner. My husband, when he came home in the evening would care for the children, give them dinner and put them to bed in the evening. We followed this routine until I graduated in 1973 with a Juris Doctorate.

Q: How'd you find American U?

JORDAN: The classes were small, the professors were interesting and accessible, and the course schedule was ideal for me. My labor law professor encouraged me to specialize in labor law, which I did. I reshuffled my course schedule to include more labor law courses and thoroughly enjoyed them. I didn't have much time to socialize because of my tight schedule but established a newsletter, entitled "Ipso Facto," which I wrote at home. The newsletter was a mélange of student issues, particularly African American. There were 5 African American students in my graduating class, not much improvement from elementary school. The newsletter also addressed a variety of legal issues and analysis. I enjoyed my time at AU Law School, though brief and episodic.

Q: OK. Realizing all your other calls of your time, including maternal and everything else, were you at all involved in politics?

JORDAN: No.

Q: How about church? Was church important to you or not?

JORDAN: When we returned to the Washington, D.C. area we lived in Southwest, D.C. in the Carrollsburg Square apartment complex and condominiums. There was a Lutheran church right next-door, St. Paul Lutheran Church. Although my husband was Pentecostal and I was Ecumenical, we went there every Sunday and participated in church events. Our third child, Frank Anderson was baptized there. We believed in God and Judo-Christian principles of love, mercy and ethical values. When we moved to northwest D.C., we attended a Pentecostal church.

Q: Well OK, so you get your law degree, specialized in labor law. What'd you do?

JORDAN: I got a job with the Office of Economic Opportunity, in the Executive Office of the President. The Office of Economic Opportunity was the agency responsible for administering most of the "War on Poverty" programs created during the Johnson Administration in 1964 –Vista, Job Corps, Head Start, Legal Services and Community

Action Programs. The Economic Opportunity Act established Community Action Programs to provide services and assistance to eliminate poverty or the causes of poverty. President Nixon in 1969 began the dismantling many of the OEO programs and transferred them to other government agencies. In 1974, under President Ford, new legislation was passed and the name was changed to the Community Services Administration.

I worked as an attorney advisor for the Legal Services program. I provided oversight of the advocacy centers throughout the country that ensured that the disadvantaged and the poor had information and access to legal services. I worked there for a year, then, I moved to the General Counsel's Office to work in the Labor Relations Division. I was responsible for providing legal advice to the community action agencies throughout the country on labor and employment issues.

Q: And in a way, although you were the government, your opponent in many things was the big bureaucracy.

JORDAN: It was mostly state and local bureaucracies that were impediments to ensuring fairness and equity to the unemployed, elderly, the poor and disadvantaged.

Q: Well, what was sort of the spirit of the organization and were there successes?

JORDAN: It was a bureaucracy like any other bureaucracy. Although we were a small agency trying to make a little difference in the lives of people who were struggling in the country, there were many significant successes that generated high levels of energy, enthusiasm and empowerment.

The Legal Services lawyers initiated class action suits to compel equitable treatment of the poor by public and private institutions. They challenged public housing, urban renewal agencies, welfare departments, the police and slumlords. They won a case in the U.S. Circuit Court to allow tenants to withhold rent from landlords who refused to correct dangerous or unsanitary conditions, and persuaded the Supreme Court to throw out the men-in-house rule that deprived families of welfare benefits, just to name a few. One of their most significant successes was forcing the State of California to restore medical benefits to 1.5 million poor and elderly residents of the state.

Q: Well, when did your husband get his degree?

JORDAN: He received his degree in 1976. We were separated at that time. The stresses and strains of law school and my hectic schedule - working, caring for the children and the household and supporting my husband in his studies created an unhealthy and stressful environment that led to the separation and ultimately to a divorce.

Q: So, then obviously life continued. What did you do?

JORDAN: I was still working with the Community Services Administration in the General Counsel's Office as the head of the Labor Relations Division. Six months later, I

was assigned to the Office of Civil Rights as the director. In my 35 years of working with the federal government, this was my most challenging assignment, and one that honed my management skills.

Q: Well, let's talk about the civil rights side of things. How did you find that?

JORDAN: Well, it was an interesting time. It was a time when affirmative action was the vehicle for addressing historical discrimination.

Q: It was the Carter period, by the way.

JORDAN: Yes. We were busy preparing affirmative action plans for the agency. We were also promulgating regulations and rules for the handicapped to ensure they had adequate accessibility accommodations.

The problem that I faced and I think is a current problem throughout the federal sector, and probably at state and local government levels as well, is that many people who tend to gravitate to work in these civil rights offices, who are supposedly there to protect the rights of the employees in their organization, are people who are disgruntled themselves, former EEO complainants, and employees with psychological problems. I inherited a very dysfunctional office with alcoholics, psychotics and agitators. There were 25 employees in the office and only three had the capacity to perform their duties. All the rest were incompetent. It was truly unbelievable. All of the employees were African American except one and she was white. I fired five employees, the five most egregious non-performers – all African Americans, and the Merit Protection Board sustained the terminations. All five filed grievances against me and all the grievances were dismissed. Even though they were all African Americans they also filed discrimination complaints against me and they all lost those complaints.

Q: What you're pointing to -- for somebody listening to or reading this at later times -- a major problem in the American Government, and that is that particularly in the civil services almost impossible to get somebody fired. And if you do it you're laying yourself open for charge after charge. And most of the time what you do is you give somebody who is really disgruntled, you give them a glowing report and get them the hell out of your office, if you can.

JORDAN: Well, that's been the practice to avoid the problem. It's difficult to terminate an employee for poor performance if they have been historically receiving glowing performance evaluations. Even when everyone knows that the evaluation is inaccurate, the employee has documented evidence of superior performance and will use it to challenge the termination or reprimand. The employee will say, why all of a sudden, I've been performing well, and now you're saying I can't do the work when I have all these glowing evaluations. It's a disservice to the employee and to the organization when managers fail to accurately evaluate their employees because it makes it difficult to fire their employees when it's warranted.

You can fire employees in the federal government, but it's not easy. Invariably, the employee will file complaints against you, which you have to respond to in detail, which takes a lot of time and effort. I had five EO (equal opportunity) complaints, five grievances, and one complaint to the Special Counsel's office filed against me. All of this in addition to documenting their non-performance and counseling them because you have to demonstrate that you tried to rehabilitate them but they couldn't be rehabilitated. And while you're documenting their performance and counseling them, they're going to be very nasty to you. And they were to me. One employee put a dead rat in my desk drawer. One employee brought a gun to the office to intimidate me. Another brought a rifle and threatened me in the parking garage. So that's why supervisors/managers don't want to fire anyone, it's easier to write a glowing evaluation than to put up with all the hostility and threatening and dangerous behavior, because it's too much.

Q: Where did you go after you finished firing everybody?

I applied for a Congressional fellowship and was accepted. The fellowship was for one year. I was assigned to the Senate Appropriations Committee, Sub-committee on Labor, Human and Health services, Education and Related Agencies. It was a very unique experience because the subcommittee was responsible for the oversight of the Community Services Administration and the United States Agency for International Development. I found it very strange there was really no orientation as to my duties and responsibilities. I was thrown into an environment where you had to figure out what to do and how to do it and support the overall subcommittee's work, as well as the Appropriation Committee.

Q: Who was the head of Appropriations?

JORDAN: Senator Mark Hatfield from Oregon. Senator Harrison Schmitt from New Mexico, the former astronaut was the chair of the subcommittee on Labor, Human and Health Services, Education and Related Agencies. Basically I was responsible for doing research on a variety of issues affecting the agencies under the sub-committee's jurisdiction and writing questions for the hearings for the Community Services Administration, which unfortunately was being closed by President Reagan. The sub-committee staffers worked at a very hectic pace. It was a chaotic time. I was struck that most of the work of the committee and the sub-committees was done by the young staffers – twenty-somethings. They basically controlled an agency. An administrative assistant to the senator was responsible for the day-to-day operations of the sub-committee and was a senior and experienced manager. Basically the young staffers ran these agencies and were very demanding in terms of information they needed to recommend to the senator a course of action and budgets. There appeared to be no substantive oversight - you're going too far, you're asking the wrong questions. I guess because of the administrative assistant's extensive experience and confidence in the staffers, the supervision wasn't as apparent to me. They were in control of the process and they ran the process. And I found that very interesting coming from a bureaucracy with hierarchal decision-making and here the channels of communication and decision-making were very fluid.

Q: OK. 1982, were the staffs pretty well integrated?

JORDAN: Not really. There were many white women staffers on the Appropriation Committee and the sub-committees, and very few African Americans. I was the only African American on the subcommittee. I believe there may have been one or two on the full committee working for Senator Hatfield.

Q: Where did you go after the Hill?

JORDAN: The head of the transition team for the Republicans for the U.S. Agency of International Development had been the director for management in the Community Services Administration. He knew me because of my work at Community Services Administration and offered me a job at USAID as director of their civil rights office. Apparently the office was moribund and there were a number of employees with sub-standard performance.

I was in the Senior Executive Service and that facilitated the appointment at USAID. As I didn't want a career in equal employment opportunity administration or civil rights, I asked to move to the Foreign Service to focus on economic development after cleaning up the civil rights office.

Q: Did you find the same thing that you mentioned earlier that the civil rights side of things tended to get an awful lot of disgruntled people?

JORDAN: Yes. The office had a handful of employees who were disgruntled because they didn't get promoted when they thought they should have or who had serious interpersonal problems or psychological problems. The civil rights office is a place where an organization puts problem employees to get them out of the mainstream operations of the organization. Assigned there to deal with other people's problems, mess up other people's lives, which is what they usually do. So basically in a year, I cleaned up the backlog of discrimination cases and restructured and reorganized the office. We had a number of employee groups in the agency - Hispanic, African American, Women and Asian. They had long standing issues that hadn't been addressed, so I organized better communications with them and began resolving many of their issues. The deputy in the office, who was in the Senior Executive Service, was removed from the service and transferred to a GS-15 position in her former unit and two employees were terminated for poor performance.

Q: Did you get any feel, above and beyond your staffing problem, about AID (Agency for International Development)? Did it have a proper attitude towards women, towards blacks, towards Hispanics?

JORDAN: Like most organizations, there is always an "old boy" network. There was one in USAID at that time and probably there's one today. Those who were part of that network advanced and those who weren't did not advance as rapidly as those in the

group. The mandate of the EEO office was to ensure that objective criteria was used for promotions and training and were applied equitably. We worked with the personnel office to put systems in place to ensure fair and equitable review of everybody.

Q: Did you find the systems responsive to the situation?

JORDAN: Sometimes. Part of the problem then and continues to be the problem now is that we had poor managers. There is a culture of conflict aversion in both USAID and State Department. Managers didn't want to confront an employee if their performance was substandard because they didn't want to deal with the hostile environment it created. Managers tended to do "work-arounds" for employees who didn't perform. If you were an African American, Hispanic or Asian employee your performance was suspect in any case and if they were poor performers, "work-arounds" were instituted. It made it difficult for an organization to successfully adjudicate EEO complaints filed by these employees because their managers hadn't effectively supervised them. It just complicated the issue. A major goal of the agency was to manage better. We needed to train our supervisors in how to manage poor performing employees of all groups. We instituted a very aggressive training program to help managers do a better job of managing all of their employees. We expected with accurate performance evaluations, it would reduce the number of EEO complaints and grievances. Conflict avoidance is still a cultural phenomenon in the government in general, but especially in the Foreign Service agencies.

Q: Well then, you transferred over in AID to a different section.

JORDAN: I was assigned the position of deputy for the Central African Affairs Division in the Africa Bureau. The assignment enabled me to get a better understanding of how Washington supported our field missions. Our division was responsible for Zaire, Cameroon, Equatorial Guinea, Burundi, Rwanda and Sao Tome Principe. I visited the countries in the region to get a sense of what we were doing there and provided support to the missions.

Q: Those countries you named, like Zaire is probably maybe one of the potentially wealthiest pieces of real estate in the world. I guess Mobutu was still passing money around in support of good old tribal balance.

JORDAN: Right. Mobutu was in charge.

Q: But also the other countries you managed, I mean, these aren't countries that stand up to being well governed. Were you all asking, are we getting anywhere?

JORDAN: The U. S. Cold War policy was to prevent Soviet expansion into Africa. With national movements in many countries in Africa, we championed freedom, democracy and self-determination. We supported many of these movements and the support to Zaire enabled Mobutu to rise to power. I think part of the approach was to try to build and maintain some level of capacity in some of these countries to prevent them from going over to the Communist. But we didn't succeed in creating capacity. We didn't succeed in

creating infrastructure to support the health and education systems. Everything was very tenuous. It was held together as long as the donors were there to provide for it.

And when the donors left everything fell apart. When the Belgians left Zaire, there wasn't a single Zairean in the country trained to manage anything. There wasn't real commitment on the part of the governments to move their country in the right direction. It was basically a challenge and the donors kept working at it, but we really, even to this day, I don't think we were having the kind of impact we should have had. With limited resources, we tried to tackle the critical impediments to economic growth and development in the countries: democracy and governance, where you need institutions that work and government operations that work; a private sector that contributes to the growth of the economy; a civil society that's involved in the operations of the country; good education and health systems; and social order. In all the countries in Central Africa, they were all weak in all those areas. Our contribution in addition to our European partners was not adequate and sufficient to change the dynamic of how the countries operated.

When I went to Zaire, I was struck by the level of poverty and the level of investment provided by the Europeans, particularly the Germans, in Zaire's road infrastructure. It all had deteriorated due to lack of maintenance.

Q: Now the Belgians actually had a very good road system. But when they left in 1960, whew, that was the end of it.

JORDAN: After the Belgians left, the Germans assisted in repaving the roads and constructing new ones. If you don't have adequate government infrastructure – a government division responsible for maintaining the roads with trained staff, equipment and resources to maintain the roads, then they deteriorate. Unless a donor does it for them, they don't do it. The West created a dependency in one of the richest country in Africa and with a president that probably was one of the wealthiest individuals in the world -- it was just ridiculous.

Q: Was this sort of the feeling, paying off Zaire because of the communist threat.

JORDAN: That was never articulated in Washington or in the field. There were successes that I guess justified the development paradigm. It wasn't like totally throwing the money out the window. There were successes and we used those successes to reinvigorate and incentivized the development effort. We had development problems and those problems continued to today. If you look at some of the countries that became independent in the '60s and received development assistance from the West and are still receiving development assistance today, they haven't improved very much in terms of their ability to manage their economies or improve the cost of living and the quality of life of their people. In fact, the cost of living and the quality of life have deteriorated in many of these countries. It's a challenge. We are dealing with national leaders whose primary goal was to enrich themselves during the time they were in office. They didn't have a national agenda or a national interest.

If you develop capacity in some of the countries, that capacity leaves. If you train people in whatever sectors and once you get competent technicians, they leave to go to Europe, the U.S. or Canada where they can have a better standard of living. We also have a collective of donors all with their own separate agendas. We have our agenda of what we want to accomplish and sometimes it's in conflict with what the other donors want to do. The donor coordination, from my experience, is not effective in most countries. The host governments prefer an unstructured approach to donor coordination so that they can work one donor against the other in terms of getting the resources they need to do whatever they want. Sometimes they get double resources to implement the same project and they don't want to see a very unified approach. They want to see a little bit of chaos so they can take advantage of the process and get as much money as they can from the donors. There are these obstacles to really achieving our goals, but there are significant accomplishments despite these challenges. Whether development assistance is adequate and sufficient for sustainable results and impact. I don't know. We are looking at that as an element of our development paradigm. We now have more sophisticated tools to track progress and make appropriate development decisions.

Q: Well, how did you find the Scandinavians?

JORDAN: Well, the Scandinavians have a different approach to development than we have. They want to put development resources in a basket and let the government use those resources to do whatever they feel is appropriate in terms of their development goals. That was an approach I believe we utilized back in the '60s, early '70s. And we learned from that experience that when you give money to corrupt governments they spend the money in corrupt ways. We work with the host governments in identifying the projects that they want to undertake. We use local and American contractors to perform the work. USAID monitors the work with host government officials to develop their capacity. The Scandinavian approach to development was often counterproductive to what the government should be doing.

Q: How about the French, Germans?

JORDAN: The French and most of the donors, except for the U.S., require a quid pro quo for development resources. They request something in exchange for the help that's given, whether it's access to resources, such as timber, diamonds, gold, oil or whatever the natural resources are in the country. The Japanese required the host governments buy Japanese cars. There was always this contractual agreement, quid pro quo relationship. With the U.S. government, we preferred to help develop viable economies that would provide opportunities for trade and other international relationships with the U.S. and other countries.

Q: Who were these Africanists at USAID?

JORDAN: Well, they were people who had worked with USAID during the Vietnam Era. They were people with very strong technical expertise. We had agronomists, engineers,

educators and health specialists with masters and PhDs. People with extensive development experience and understood it was a slow process. Development takes time, a factor that usually isn't taken into consideration in assessing whether we have achieved our goals. Development sometimes takes generations. Our congressional funding and oversight require results in very short, unrealistic time periods - five-year periods. We design projects to accomplish that goal, but these efforts aren't sustainable because the capacity isn't there on the part of the government, private sector or civil society to sustain it. USAID staff is very dedicated and committed to development and understand that achieving sustainable results is a long haul. We had projects that were very successful. We funded the establishment of a land-grant type college in Cameroon working with some of the land-grant universities in the States. From designing and constructing the buildings, to staffing it, training staff, purchasing and installing equipment, you could see results and it was gratifying and it was an incentive to continue to push forward. In health we were working on ways to deal with all of the indigenous diseases and HIV/AIDS. AIDS had not come on the radar screen in 1985. I think we were just becoming aware of this problem in the States, and then it became much more of a challenge overseas. Our focus was on maternal and child health, mothers dying giving birth, children dying at birth and from a whole array of childhood diseases. There was a significant infant mortality issue in the country and we were trying to institute immunization programs throughout Cameroon. We were seeing results in many of these efforts. Was it adequate and sufficient to enable the country to manage the campaign. No, but we were moving in the right direction and achieving results.

Q: Well, did you find any of these African visits tap your African American roots at all? Was there any effect there?

JORDAN: I was viewed primarily as an American. I think I related to the Africans not only because of my color, but more importantly, because of my personality. I listened and respected their point of view and treated them with dignity and respect. We had a number of officers, then and now, that felt that they knew what was best for the Africans and were dismissive and disrespectful. I'm concerned that we have a lot of Africanists who are white who hate black people and you wonder why they are in Africa with that attitude. Maybe it's because, they feel superior to the Africans and they can exercise their superiority in a way they couldn't in the States.

Q: Well, how long did you do this?

JORDAN: I worked for a year in Washington as the deputy in the Central African Affairs Division in the Africa Bureau. I was assigned to Cameroon as the deputy mission director and spent six months in French language training at the Foreign Service Institute prior to my departure in August 1985.

Q: Let's talk about the Cameroon. What was the situation in the Cameroons?

JORDAN: The Republic of Cameroon is located in Central Africa. It is bordered by Nigeria to the west; Chad to the northeast; the Central African Republic to the east; and

Equatorial Guinea, Gabon and the Republic of the Congo to the south. Cameroon had a population of over 10 million people and over 200 different dialects. French and English were the official languages. Cameroon had previously been a German colony and, after World War I, a French mandate and the western section, a British mandate.

In 1960, the French-administered part of Cameroon became independent as the Republic of Cameroon under President Ahmadou Ahidjo. The southern part of British Cameroon merged with it in 1961 to form the Federal Republic of Cameroon. The country was renamed the United Republic of Cameroon in 1972 and the Republic of Cameroon in 1984.

Cameroon enjoyed relative political and social stability. This permitted the development of agriculture, roads, railways, and large oil and timber industries. Nevertheless, large numbers of Cameroonians lived in poverty as subsistence farmers. Paul Biya was elected president in 1982 and was viewed as a progressive leader with a national vision. A failed military coup in 1984 reinforced his authoritarian leadership proclivities. President Biya pursued growth in all sectors, improved trade relationships and explored ways to improve crops, conducted significant research in the health sector and established a land-grant university for agriculture. He was moving forward in terms of a vision for the country but it didn't last long. As a result of deteriorating international economic conditions, a severe drought, falling oil prices, years of corruption, mismanagement and cronyism, President Biya cut government spending, privatized many industries in Cameroon and relied more on donor assistance to address his development agenda.

Q: Well, who was the American ambassador with you?

JORDAN: We had two ambassadors while I was there, Myles Frechette and Mark Edelman, former USAID Administrator.

Q: What were your responsibilities in the USAID mission?

JORDAN: This was the first time that both the mission director and the deputy mission director were African Americans. Jay Johnson, the mission director and I worked very well together. He was an experienced mission director having served in Mali and Tanzania, and a mentor. I learned how to relate to the president of the country, government officials, the media and the people of the Cameroon. He was the external person – meeting with the president, ministers, government officials, heads of other donor agencies - paving the way for our projects and efforts and getting a better appreciation for the obstacles that prevented achieving our goals. The first six months, I attended every meeting with him to observe his impressive diplomatic skills. My job basically was to manage the USAID mission. I managed a staff of 88 employees and made sure that they had the tools they needed to perform their jobs. We had significant projects in the education, health, and agriculture sectors.

Q: Was it sort of a plutocracy or was it getting out -- I mean was there a pretty good distribution system of the natural wealth of the country?

JORDAN: Although Cameroon had a vibrant private sector, the majority of the Cameroonians lived in poverty. This is attributed to tribalism and historical government mismanagement, corruption and cronyism.

Q: Was there sort of a north Muslim, south Christian or animist split?

JORDAN: The English-speaking territories of Cameroon had grown increasingly alienated from the government, and politicians from those regions called for greater decentralization and even secession. The former British region was organized and more efficient than the rest of the country.

Q: Was there civil order in the area?

JORDAN: Yes. Except for the attempted coup in 1984, civil order was pretty good. It was a period where President Biya promoted a vision of nationalism, progress and prosperity. He also had significant military support from the French.

Q: Well, then did our AID efforts mesh or collide with the French?

JORDAN: In terms of our trade relations, U.S. private sector access to and opportunities in Cameroon, I can't say to what extent they were thwarted, but I could say with certainty that we were not given the access that we should have been given. The French were given priority in most trade efforts, as well as in terms of contracts to do work for the government. For instance, a very prestigious law firm in Washington submitted a proposal to President Biya to serve as Cameroon's lobbyists in Washington. Ron Brown, an African American lawyer of the firm, who later became the chairman of the Democratic National Committee that helped elect Bill Clinton president in 1992, visited Cameroon to meet with Biya and discuss the proposal that had been languishing for many months in Biya's executive office. Unfortunately, President Biya's team selected a French firm to lobby for them. We missed this opportunity because of the influence of the French and Biya's allegiance to France. I'm sure in terms of other business ventures and trade opportunities we were not given due consideration.

Q: Were there any incidents or occasions or anything that sort of stick out in your mind when you were there? Well, you know, your adventures or funny things or anything like that or was it sort of a modest experience, would you say?

JORDAN: My assignment to Cameroon was an excellent experience for me. This was my first exposure to living overseas. I'm a city girl. I grew up in Brooklyn and my only exposure to the outdoors was when I went to camp at age 10. I'm really a city person, so the whole country was basically a big outdoor adventure for me. The field trips were by road mostly and took days to get to the project sites. In route to the project sites, I hated to use the bathroom behind some bush or tree for fear of snakes and bugs. That was an enormous challenge. Many of the communities we traveled through were very primitive and accommodations were very basic, getting used to that was another challenge.

Q: How did the Cameroonians treat you as a woman, were they dismissive or what??

JORDAN: They were very respectful and treated me as an American. In the Cameroonian culture women weren't considered equal to the men even though there were women in high level positions in government, politics and the private sector. So it was a challenge to work in an environment where you had to be respectful of the culture, and learn how to maneuver in an environment that didn't accept women in certain functions. For instance, at social events, the men would be on one side and the women would be on the other side of the room. While I had little in common with the women, usually wives and girlfriends, and should have been with the men, I stayed with the women because that was the culture. I wanted to demonstrate that I understood and respected the culture. I didn't try to make a point that, I'm one of the guys and I should be there with the guys. I had to feel my way. I assessed many events and circumstances and maneuvered within those environments to get the work done and be respected, trusted and accepted.

Q: Where did you go afterwards?

JORDAN: I went to Belize. It gave me an opportunity to see that development approaches are different in different regions. Even though it's on the Central American isthmus, it's a Caribbean country in a Central American environment.

Belize is located on the east coast of Central America and is the only country in Central America whose official language is English though Belizean Creole and Spanish are also commonly spoken. Belize is bordered on the north by Mexico the south and west by Guatemala on the east by the Caribbean Sea. Belize has a diverse society, composed of many cultures and languages that reflect its rich history. The Belizeans are very friendly people, warm and generous. The population of Belize was about 190,000. Creoles, descendants of African slaves, represented 40%, the Mestizos, mixed Hispanic and Amerindian represented 33%, the Mayas represented 15%, Garifuna, descendants of African slaves and Amerindians represented 7%, a variety of ethnic groups including Mennonites made up the remainder of the population.

Belize is the home to the second largest barrier reef and an interlocking network of rivers, creeks and lagoons and the majestic Maya mountains, all representing significant and important ecosystems.

As a former British colony there was good infrastructure in place in terms of governance and also in terms of roads and bridges. They had challenges like all developing countries. Their social indicators were pretty good - maternal and child health, literacy and HIV prevalence. Their major challenge was that the drug cartel had basically taken over the country. Belize was a big drug transshipment point. There was a lot of poverty in the country, particularly in the capital, Belize City and the circulation of drugs had a significant impact on the youth – drug addiction and higher levels of youth crime. We had a significant training program there where we took high school graduates and provided them scholarships to attend colleges and universities in the U.S.

Q: What kind of things were you training them for?

JORDAN: Everything, all sectors.

Q: I would have thought that the British would have had a big training program.

JORDAN: The British had a relatively large training program at one time, but the program was substantially reduced. USAID's training program was a Central America initiative to build capacity as a result of the civil wars in Central America. Since Belize was part of Central America, they were a part of the Central America training effort. Participants obtained bachelor and master degrees in all disciplines with an emphasis on health and agriculture to build capacity for sustained economic growth.

Q: Were we concerned that Belize was sort of the odd man out?

JORDAN: Belize is an anomaly. A former British colony, it shares a common colonial history with the Caribbean countries. Belize is considered a Central American and Caribbean nation with strong ties to both the Latin American and Caribbean regions. It is a member of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM), the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC), and the Central American Integration System (SICA), the only country to hold full membership in all three regional organizations. From 1862 to 1973 Belize was named British Honduras and was officially renamed Belize in 1973. Progress toward independence, however, was hampered by a Guatemalan claim to sovereignty over the territory of Belize. Belize finally attained independence in 1981, however the British maintained about 1,500 British troops in Belize, to provide protection from a Guatemalan threat.

Q: Well, have any of sort of the civil wars that have gone on in Central America, essentially between you might say the left and the right, has that spilled over in Belize?

JORDAN: No. Belize is a parliamentary constitutional monarchy. The structure of government is based on the British parliamentary system, and the legal system is modeled on the common law of England. Belize has a functioning two-party political system, the People's United Party and the United Democratic Party. In contrast to the Central American countries, elections in Belize are held regularly, democratic principles are adhered to and there's an absence of violence. In addition, every four years the Belizeans voted in a new government because they weren't satisfied with the way the old government was addressing their concerns. This provides a constitutional vehicle to deal with pinned up frustration that could lead to violence.

Q: Well, what were you doing?

JORDAN: I was the AID Representative for the development program there.

Q: And was this mostly, I guess come into the general exchange idea of getting people to the States, or were we doing things on the ground?

JORDAN: We were doing things on the ground. In addition to the participant training program, we had a leadership exchange program where we would take government officials to the States to meet with members of Congress and local and state government officials to expose them to the U.S. form of governance.

We had a large private sector initiative to strengthen the private sector, -- basically looking at crops that had strong potential for markets in the States, Europe or elsewhere. We were also promoting the development of private sector companies to market and support the new crops. We were trying to strengthen their export capacity as well as strengthen the management capabilities of the private sector. We were also assisting the Belizeans in doing research in agriculture to improve their current crops and explore “boutique crops” for export. We were focused on developing capacity. What was unique was that you could succeed there. They had strong growth and the potential to grow even more. Once the crops were identified and the private sector entities were established to manage these crops for export, they were successful.

Q: What sort of crops were they --

JORDAN: Papayas, peppers and pineapples. The papayas had strong markets in the U.S. and Japan.

Q: How did the drug trade interfere? I mean was it penetrating into the country or were these just some people sort of at the top using it as a shipment point?

JORDAN: Crime associated with international drug trafficking posed a major challenge to Belize. The government devoted considerable resources to combat trade in narcotics. Belizeans and others participated in the drug trade because of the opportunity for quick profits and because it was relatively easy to move drugs through remote areas that were difficult to patrol. Belize was a producer of marijuana and a transshipment point for cocaine. USAID built roads to transport produce in support of the private sector initiative and the agriculture export programs. The drug cartel was using these roads in remote areas to land planes to drop off cocaine. They used trucks provided by our garbage disposal project to transport the drugs in country. We constantly protested these nefarious operations to the government and the inappropriate use of our equipment.

Boats would bring in the drugs, in addition to the small planes. Drugs were being used to pay off the little guys on the ground that were involved in moving the drugs within Belize, and a culture of drug use and abuse by these young people developed. We developed youth programs and vocational training programs to help the youth who were caught up in the drug culture to get out of it.

Q: Who was the ambassador?

JORDAN: Robert G. Rich and Eugene Scassa.

Q: How did you find relations with the ambassador and with the embassy?

I had an excellent relationship with the ambassador and the country team. The ambassador and I worked together in dealing with government corruption, misuse and abuse of USAID resources and in resolving project implementation issues. The ambassador was supportive of my demands to the prime minister to fire the minister responsible for the misuse and abuse of USG resources. For the first time in Belize's history, the prime minister fired a minister in his cabinet. The ambassador was very happy.

Q: And in many ways this had to be a more positive experience than the Cameroon. From what I gather, the whole mission wasn't that effective.

JORDAN: No, if I created that impression, I was wrong. We were effective. As I said, we were in an era, the golden era of Cameroon when there was progress being made on all fronts to accomplish a real national agenda set by the president. In education, health and in strengthening trade, particularly in agriculture and in improving the agriculture sector, we were getting support and cooperation from the government, private sector and Cameroonians in general. That weren't problems. We were making progress and we had significant successes. While we weren't getting the kinds of trade relationships that I thought we should have, USAID's program was on target and we were having impact. The government and the people were very supportive of our programs. The difference between Belize and Cameroon was that Belize was from a development perspective, 25 years ahead of Cameroon. They had capacity, relatively good governance. USAID's support to their private sector enabled them to provide better products and delivery of services to the Belizeans. Belize was on a trajectory too of moving forward. Then there was a change in government and the drug cartel began to make greater inroads into the country.

Q: Were the Cubans messing around there at all?

JORDAN: The Cubans provided medical support to Belize. They had a major doctor exchange program. There were Cuban doctors in the hospitals and in the clinics in Belize. Cuba also had a significant participant training program as well, training Belizean doctors and others in a variety of technical areas. At one point we had the largest training program and I think five years later, Cuba had the largest training program in Belize.

Q: When did you leave?

JORDAN: I left Belize in 1991. I was assigned to Barbados to be the director of the Regional Caribbean Program. The Regional Program supported the countries in the Eastern Caribbean, Grenada, St. Vincent and Grenadines, St. Lucia, Dominica, Antigua, Saint Kitts and Nevis.

Q: Well, before I forget, when you were in Belize it seemed like the place is particularly susceptible to hurricanes or tropical storms.

JORDAN: A tropical storm came through in 1989. USAID's offices were in a prefab building located near the sea wall. Belize City was at sea level. The Peace Corp building was next door and the Embassy was located next to the Peace Corp offices. The Embassy was in a 100- year old mansion made of wood and reconfigured for offices. None of the USG buildings could withstand a full force hurricane or a major tropical storm. The Embassy's Hurricane Plan required the American staff to convoy inland to Belmopan. Instead of going to Belmopan, the Ambassador decided to stay in Belize City and weather the storm, which from all reports wasn't headed in our direction. We were fortunate that the storm's outer bands weren't very strong and that all we had to endure was heavy rain. Except for that one tropical storm, I don't think we had any other hurricane or tropical storm threat during my tenure there.

Q: Were there any problems, as far as you were concerned, with Mexico or Guatemala?

JORDAN: As I indicated earlier, Guatemala disputed Belize's sovereignty claiming that Belize was a part of Guatemala and these unsuccessful claims, challenges and threats continued throughout my tour in Belize.

Q: OK, let's go to Barbados.

JORDAN: Barbados was a very small island, 21 miles in length and 14 miles wide with a population of 250,000. Like Belize, it's a parliamentary constitutional monarchy. The structure of government is based on the British parliamentary system, and the legal system is modeled on the common law of England. Barbados had a functioning two-party political system, the Democratic Labor Party and the Barbados Labor Party with elections held regularly and democratic principles adhered to.

Q: Who was the prime minister?

JORDAN: Erskine Sandiford of the Democratic Labor Party was the Prime Minister. The streets in Barbados were immaculately clean and safe. It was a model for the region in terms of governance with a progressive agenda and an engaged private sector and civil society. They definitely epitomized their nickname, "Little Britain." USAID and most of the other donors didn't provide development assistance to Barbados because their GDP and social indicators were good – per capita income, literacy, maternal and child mortality and morbidity. The donors were all located in Barbados because it was a hub for travel to the Eastern Caribbean and an ideal place to live.

Q: What about tourism?

JORDAN: We weren't focused on tourism at that time. We were focused more on agriculture. We were really trying to look at ways in which we could strengthen the region's exports.

Q: Was there much room for agriculture on those islands?

JORDAN: The agriculture sector was seeking to diversify, but the prospect for improving competitiveness was very limited, due to low yields from small farms on sloping lands with very limited potential for irrigation. Bananas were the major export. Even with the restructuring of the banana industry, there would be a two-thirds decline in employment in the banana industry. Which meant 12% of the labor force would lose income along with those who benefit indirectly from the banana industry. In the absence of alternative livelihoods and social safety nets, this would lead to increased poverty. A major conundrum for the Eastern Caribbean countries was that the European subsidies were eroding, and they needed alternative competitive crops but their focus was on convincing the EEU not to remove the subsidies rather than aggressively explore alternative crops for fear of this massive level of unemployment. USAID's job was to work with the governments to develop and implement a transition plan.

Q: Did Martinique play a role there?

JORDAN: No, Martinique is actually an overseas department and region of France. It was a tourism destination for international tourist and the French. Although it was located in the Eastern Caribbean, it really wasn't a part of the Caribbean.

Q: How about Trinidad and Tobago?

JORDAN: USAID funded an HIV/AIDS outreach program in the University of the West Indies located in Trinidad to strengthen the ministries of health in all of the Caribbean with a special focus on the Eastern Caribbean countries. It was the CDC (Center for Disease Control) for the Caribbean. Our support strengthened the University of the West Indies that happened to have a campus and the Caribbean Epidemiological Center in Trinidad. We didn't provide development assistance to Trinidad. Trinidad was very developed with strong growth from oil revenue and so they didn't need our direct support.

Q: Did Venezuela play any role there?

JORDAN: No, not at that time

Q: What was the program for the Eastern Caribbean?

JORDAN. The Eastern Caribbean countries faced special development challenges. The islands were small and vulnerable to natural disasters and other external shocks such as international economic crises. With populations varying from 45,000 in St Kitts and Nevis to over 150,000 in St. Lucia, institutional capacity is limited and cost of basic social services were very high. Hurricane and floods regularly reverse economic gains by destroying infrastructure and disrupting key economic activities in agriculture and tourism. The private sectors were relatively small and had limited human and financial capacity. The economies were dependent on preferential trade arrangement for bananas. These development challenges contributed to the rise in poverty levels. About a third of

the Eastern Caribbean households lived in poverty. Income inequality was also relatively high in the region.

The objective of USAID's program was to strengthen the Eastern Caribbean countries so that they could remain viable economies as they transition out of bananas. Although, the region had relatively high literacy rates we were providing support in the education area, we were assisting the islands in developing curricular for their secondary and tertiary education programs. In health, HIV/AIDS was now prevalent in the region and we assisted the islands in establishing HIV/AIDS program, working with the Caribbean Epidemiological Center at the University of the West Indies in Trinidad. In the area of health, we were also supporting maternal and child health programs. We also had a robust participant training program where we provided scholarships to the young people in the Eastern Caribbean to attend universities and colleges in the U.S., and at the University of the West Indies. We were also trying to strengthen the private sector, providing them with research tools and linking them to the U.S. Executive Corps, a group of retired U.S. executives that provide technical assistance to companies to improve capacity and profitability. The goal was to enable the private sector to play a greater role in the growth of the economies in the region. We also supported a significant Caribbean justice reform program working through the University of the West Indies campus in Barbados and Florida State University to computerize the case law in the Caribbean, provide training for the clerks and justices, and standardize the commerce laws for the Caribbean, so that they were all working within a common system.

Q: Were we involved in tourism?

JORDAN: USAID didn't get involved in tourism at that time. We were focusing on education, health, alternatives to bananas, and strengthening the private sector. When I returned to the region in 2000, we developed a very dynamic tourism program for the region.

Q: How did you find sponsoring people to go to the States for training? Did they come back?

JORDAN: Yes. This was a challenge and it still is a challenge. We had a contract with the participants that required that they return and work for the government for 2 years. They would return and stay for a short period of time and then leave. We were training these participants in all of the Eastern Caribbean countries to get jobs in Europe, Canada and the U.S. They left because the economies were weak, job prospects were limited and wages were low, barely above poverty levels. Even though they signed commitments for two years, the governments had a hard time enforcing them. The challenge was to have more vibrant economies with more opportunities for employment, employment at a living wage so that their citizens would remain in their countries. In addition to the participant training brain drain, there was significant legal and illegal immigration especially to the U.S. The challenge was to develop strong viable economies so their citizens would want to stay in their countries. It's still a challenge.

Q: How did you operate? Did you have an office in Barbados?

JORDAN: Yes, we had an office in Barbados staffed with technical experts in health, education and agriculture. We had agronomists, educational specialists and health specialists with masters and PhDs in public health. The staff was involved in the design and monitoring implementation of our projects in all of the Eastern Caribbean

Q: The Cubans have always put a great emphasis on doctors. Were they involved in the Eastern Caribbean and did we cooperate with them?

JORDAN: All the islands had significant support from Cuba in terms of doctors. They were in the hospitals and clinics throughout the Eastern Caribbean. Cuba provided a significant training program for doctors and a significant participant training program in a variety of technical areas. USAID's contacts were with high level government officials in the health sector, the minister of health, the vice minister of health and the Permanent Secretary for health. We were not in contact with the Caribbean doctors or the Cuban doctors. We were assisting the governments in developing health strategies and systems, and cost recovery methods, issues addressed with high-level government officials. Not the doctors that worked in the hospital and clinic systems. We knew that there were Cuban doctors in the region, but we didn't have anything to do with them.

Q: Were you there two years?

JORDAN: I was there for three years.

Q: How did things go?

JORDAN: We had successes and we had challenges. We had successes with the education and health programs. We also set up a system of buying pharmaceuticals for all the Eastern Caribbean countries from one source so they could save money and have a central location for distributing the pharmaceuticals to the Eastern Caribbean islands. We supported the Secretariat of the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS), an inter-governmental organization dedicated to the economic harmonization and integration of the Eastern Caribbean countries. They were responsible for the protection of human and legal rights in the region and promoting good governance. Strengthening the Secretariat enabled them to perform their role more efficiently and effectively. We have had phenomenal success with the Justice Reform project - case law was codified, commerce laws harmonized, justices and clerks trained. The private sectors in the region were more engaged with the governments in addressing options to sustain their economies when the banana subsidies were eliminated. We were not entirely successful in developing a robust program in alternative crops to bananas for the region.

Q: In the long term, do you feel there is much of a chance of the Eastern Caribbean islands forming together into a single unit?

JORDAN: No. They are sovereign states and they want to maintain their sovereignty. Established in 1973, the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) is an organization of 15 Caribbean nations and dependencies. CARICOM's main purposes are to promote economic integration and cooperation among its members, to ensure that the benefits of integration are equitably shared, and to coordinate foreign policy. Its major activities involve coordinating economic policies and development planning; devising and instituting special projects for the less-developed countries within its jurisdiction; operating as a regional single market for many of its members (Caricom Single Market); and handling regional trade disputes. They have been discussing since its inception uniform approaches to how all the islands can work together with similar systems to reduce cost and redundancy, and even that is a challenge. There have also been discussions on a single Caribbean state and there are reams of white papers on the subject, but those discussions haven't lead to any decisions.

Q: When did you leave Barbados?

JORDAN: I left Barbados in 1995 to go to Guyana.

Q: How long were you there?

JORDAN: I was there for six months. I returned to Washington to be sworn-in as ambassador. Then I went to the Central African Republic.

Q: OK, well let's talk about the program in Guyana. I mean what was the situation? What was the government and what was going on there in '95?

JORDAN: Guyana is located on the coast of South America, with Surinam to the east, Brazil to the south and southwest and Venezuela to the west and the Atlantic Ocean to the north. Although Guyana is part of the Anglophone Caribbean, it's one of the few countries that's part of South America. The official language is English, although the majority of the population speaks Guyanese Creole. Guyana has a population of approximately 765,000 people, 51% Indo-Guyanese, 42% Afro-Guyanese, 4% Amerindians and the remainder, Europeans, Chinese and Portuguese. Guyana was originally colonized by the Netherlands, and later, it became a British colony.

The 20th century saw a rise in consciousness among the country's ethnic groups and a struggle for political power between the disenfranchised, non-white class and the old plantocracy. The British responded to demands for reforms by establishing suffrage in 1950 and allowing the formation of political parties. Rival parties emerged based along ethnic lines, the People's Progressive Party (PPP) led by Cheddi Jagan, a Marxist Indo-Guyanese, and the People's National Congress (PNC) led by Linden Forbes Burnham, a leftist Afro-Guyanese. Burnham was the first prime minister at independence in 1966, winning a contentious election in December 1964. I read that Cheddi Jagan, the prime minister at the time had to be forcibly removed from office, because he wouldn't accept the election results. Burnham's two decades of authoritarian rule, firmly established control over Guyana's political and economic life. Intimidation and threats accompanied

fraudulent elections. As opposition to the government increased, the government responded with retaliation and violence. Nationalized industries and financial institutions led to decline in productivity and economic stagnation and decline. Quality of life deteriorated - there were frequent blackouts, shortages in rice and sugar, basic staples and unprecedented emigration of skilled professionals. Three factors that kept the economic decline from becoming a disaster was the flourishing illegal economy, remittances that Guyanese citizens received from relatives abroad and Guyana's near self sufficiency in food production. In 1981, USAID under the Reagan Administration terminated its development assistance program in Guyana.

Burnham died in 1985 and Desmond Hoyte, vice president became the new executive president. In 1980, a new constitution shifted power from the prime minister to the executive president. In the 1985 elections, Hoyte won by 79% of the vote. Hoyte developed an economic recovery plan, negotiated with the IMF and World Bank new loans in exchange for free-market reforms and reversed Burnham's nationalization policies. Hoyte expecting to win the 1992 elections based on the improving economy and free market reforms, lost to Cheddi Jagan who after 40 years renounced his past Marxist policies and embraced elements of the free-market economy.

A new Guyana program was developed to support Guyana's free-market reforms. We started initially in Barbados looking at ways to re-engage in Guyana by exploring improvements in the justice system, in the management of their trade and export program, and in constructing a new drainage system in a section of Georgetown, and in constructing a new power supply grid. In January 1995, I relocated to Guyana, selected an office building, staffed the office, bought and installed equipment and furniture, and implemented the program. Three months after my arrival, I became very ill. The doctors at the Guyana Hospital misdiagnosed my medical problem and after a month of tests and re-tests, my condition became severe, and I was medevaced to a hospital in Miami with pneumonia. I remained in Miami for three weeks and returned to Guyana to pack out and depart for Washington, D. C.

Q: OK. Well, let's then move on to how'd the hearings go?

JORDAN: The hearing went very well. I gave an opening statement and answered an innocuous question about democratic gains in the CAR. Prior to the hearing, one of the staff of the committee met with me at the State Department for an informal chat. I remember he stated that the residence was very nice and probably one of the better ones in Central Africa and that I should be very happy there.

Q: Well, you were in the Central Africa Republic from when to when?

JORDAN: From 1995 to 1998.

Q: OK. What was the situation in the Central African Republic (CAR) when you got there?

JORDAN: I arrived in Bangui on November 19, 1995, the week before Thanksgiving. The president was Ange-Felix Patassé. The CAR is a landlocked country in Central Africa bordered by Chad to the north, Sudan northeast, Democratic Republic of the Congo and the Republic of the Congo to the south and Cameroon to the west. CAR's population was about 3 million. Despite significant resources such as uranium reserves, crude oil, gold, diamonds, lumber, hydropower and arable land, CAR is one of the poorest countries in the world. The majority of the people living outside the capital of Bangui are hunters and gatherers, living as they had been since the beginning of time. The per capita income was \$300.

Patassé was the first president in CAR's history to be selected in a free and fair democratic election. Historically, change in political leadership in CAR resulted from a coup d'état. Ambassadors Dan Simpson and Robert Gribbin, my predecessors were instrumental in creating the political environment for the democratic election. Ambassador Simpson laid the foundation for the democratic election, meeting with political and government officials convincing them that democracy was the future for modern Africa. Ambassador Gribbin also met with a wide array of political aspirants and government leadership and helped organize the actual election process. In 1993 free and fair elections were held and Patassé was elected president.

Patassé was a northerner and belonged to the Sara-Kaba ethnic group. He was an agricultural engineer and inspector in the Ministry of Agriculture under President David Dacko. In 1966, Jean-Bédél Bokassa took power in a coup d'état. Patassé, the cousin of Bokassa's wife, gained Bokassa's confidence and served in practically every ministry of government during Bokassa's 20-year reign. He was named prime minister after Bokassa appointed himself emperor. Patassé served as prime minister for a little over two years and left to live in exile in France. For ten years, he lived in exile in either France or Togo returning to CAR intermittently to strengthen his political base for the presidency.

The day before Thanksgiving, I presented my credentials to the president. I made a concerted effort to present my opening remarks in Sangho, the local language, and my closing remarks in Sangho. The president in return did the same. He made his opening remarks in English and made his closing remarks in English. The remainder of my presentation was in French, and the president made the rest of his presentation in French. Right away we hit it off really well. First, I was the first woman ambassador to Central African Republic and that created a special relationship between the president and government officials and me. Secondly, the president had a special fondness for America that provided me access to him and his cabinet whenever I needed. Patassé was a very nice middle-aged man in his mid-50s who wanted to move the country forward under his authoritative approach to governance, believing that he was now a democratic leader. He also thought that he was in a unique position to facilitate contact with Libya and wanted President Clinton to use him as his envoy to Libya for the U.S.

Patassé purged many Yakomas from the south, his archrivals and political opponents, from government and replaced them with the Sara-Kabas his tribe from the north. Patassé made a serious tactical error when he removed the Yakomas from leadership positions in

the military but didn't remove them from the rank and file. The rank and file was made up of about 80% Yakomas and 20% other tribes. This had a destabilizing effect and led to the series of attempted coup d'etats the country experienced.

Patassé also had very strained relations with France. The French had two military bases in Bangui, one right outside of Bangui and one to the north in Bouar. It was a military force of 2,000 soldiers. Their agreement with CAR to continue the use of these bases was up for renewal and Patassé was reluctant to give approval for that renewal, so the relationship was strained.

We had a very small USAID program in CAR focusing on HIV/AIDS, preserving the rainforest and setting up tourism programs in the rainforest, and an education program, providing audio/video materials and teacher training and curriculum development support through the Peace Corps. My entrée was very positive and very similar to the environment in Cameroon, the neighboring country. This was a unique period in the region, except for Gabon, practically all the countries in the region were in political crisis - Zaire to the south, Congo Brazzaville and Chad.

Q: About Bokassa ?

JORDAN: After losing the 1993 elections to Patassé, Kolingba declared a general amnesty for all the prisoners, as his final act as president and Bokassa was released from prison in August 1993. Bokassa remained in Bangui as a private citizen and didn't get involved in politics. In 1996, his health declined and he died of a heart attack on November 3, 1996. He was given a State Funeral with all of the pomp and ceremony by Patassé. Needless to say, I didn't attend.

In January, I took a trip with my econ officer and his family to the rainforest to see our program with the World Wildlife Fund. What I found astonishing was that the roads outside of Bangui were deplorable. It was a two-day drive to the rainforest on roads that you would consider nonexistent. Much of the time we were driving on two wheels in several feet of sand. Equally astonishing was that there was no place to stay outside of Bangui, no hotels. We were prepared with tents and food, but given the conditions in the savannah, it wasn't reassuring to this "city girl" to camp with the snakes, bugs and animals. Fortunately, my econ officer was astute enough to contact the sawmills on our route run by the Lebanese to arrange housing. They gave us the manager's house and prepared meals for us on two of our stops on the way, which made the trip more tolerable and pleasurable. While I had proper accommodations, it was at the expense of throwing people out of their beds and requiring them to bunk with someone else and I felt guilty about that. The Lebanese managers and workers at the sawmills were genuinely friendly and welcoming and were happy to host a U.S. ambassador. We were happy to tour their plant and visit the fields where they logged the timber to learn more about their operations. The contrast of CAR and its neighbor, Cameroon was striking. No matter how far you went outside of Yaounde, the capital, north, south, east or west, there were hotels. Many were small hotels, but pretty nice ones throughout the country. In CAR there was absolutely nothing.

It was a very unique experience driving to the rainforest. We're in the wilderness and then we come to a town made up of a series of Pygmy villages. When you leave the town what you see is just open savannah with nothing there. Then you come across a little village, and the villages are really that, thatched-roofed huts with families cooking, eating, and caring for their children in front of the hut.

Q: Well, had any effort been made to change the Pygmy way of life?

JORDAN: No. We didn't try to change the Pygmy's way of life. We capitalized on their way of life, by incorporating their hunting and gathering skills and knowledge of the rainforest into the tourism package. The Pygmies would accompany the tour guides who were French-speaking Central Africans, trained by the World Wildlife Fund into the rainforest to show the tourist the various bushes, herbs and wildlife that was in the forest, adding a unique dimension to the tourist's experience. The Pygmies were an integral part of the guide program.

Q: There was a movie about a Pygmy and a Coke bottle. Do you remember that?

JORDAN: Yes. That was in South Africa.

Q: That was in South Africa.

JORDAN: It was "The Gods Must Be Crazy".

Q: "The Gods Must Be Crazy".

JORDAN: When we arrived at the World Wildlife Fund manager's office/home, we learned that he was in Europe and that he invited us to stay in his home. We had a very comfortable place to stay and with the non-perishable food that we brought, we had enough food for the duration of our stay there. We tried to find fresh meat, like a chicken or goat. It was very difficult to find any food.

The World Wildlife Fund manager organized a trip for us to the rainforest to see an elephant salt lick. My econ officer, his wife and three children (ages - 5, 8 and 11) accompanied me on the trip. We drove about 45 minutes into the rainforest to a parking area and then from there we went on foot to the salt lick. Before making the trek to the salt lick the tour guide explained to us that we had to be very quiet because, this was the animal's habitat and we didn't want to disturb them. This was an important trip for me personally, so that's why I'm sharing it with you. The tour guide told us about the precautions we needed to take to protect ourselves in the event we were attacked by wildlife. We had to talk very softly and very quietly, and if we were attacked by a gorilla, we were supposed to get on our knees and hold our head down and be still. If we were attacked by an elephant, we needed to climb a tree. If we were attacked by a wild boar, we needed to climb a tree. Right away, my heart was thumping in my chest because I was scared. I didn't realize this trip was going to be so dangerous. Because I was with a

member of my staff, and his family and they were calm and collected, I felt I had to continue on this trip and kind of suck it in and go forth. Had I been alone, I would have canceled the tour. We walked through a river, knee deep, to get to the other side where the salt slick was. I was worried about snakes and was happy I didn't see any. We were in a formation the Pygmy guide was in front, then the World Wildlife guide, me, the econ officer, his wife and the children and another Pygmy guide in the rear. When we cleared the river, we walked about an hour from when we got out of our vehicle and we were still walking. About ten minutes away from the salt slick I heard this humongous roar that sounded like a lion. I was so scared that I literally jumped in the air like Michael Jordan and turned around and started running back toward the way we came in. I'm running and I turn around and to look back and nobody else was running, just me. So I went back and I said to the tour guide, "What was that? Why aren't we going back? Aren't we in trouble?" He said, "No. We're getting close to the elephants and that was an elephant bellowing, so we're getting close to the salt slick."

It really was a frightening experience and kind of embarrassing too. We walked to the salt slick. It was really massive and beautiful. The World Wildlife Fund built a two-story platform with stairs that we climbed to see the entire slick and all the elephants there and take pictures and not disturb them. For an hour we took pictures, talked, and admired the beauty of the rainforest. I started to get nervous again as we were getting ready to leave. I felt somewhat secure on the platform near the salt slick because we were up high and the wildlife wouldn't bother us up there. Back on the ground the walk back was uneventful and seemed shorter than the walk going. It was a real personal challenge to have walked through the rainforest to the salt slick, and I was really grateful to get back to the car. I asked the tour guide, whether he had a gun or a rifle?" When he said, "No", I asked whether he had a flare. He said, "No." Then I asked, if we got in trouble how would you notify anybody that we were in trouble?" He said that the Pygmies knew the rainforest well and knew how to maneuver within it to get us help if we were in trouble. That was amazing.

On that trip I contracted malaria, as did one of my econ officer's children. A few weeks after our return to Bangui I became so ill that I had to be medevaced to London. I was in London for three weeks. I left in March and returned the beginning of April. Before I left for London our military under the International Military Education and Training (IMET) program trained the CAR military in field maneuvers, weaponry, skill building and military relations. They spent a couple of weeks out in the bush learning how to use compasses how to track and weapon training and so forth. After the training, we had a big ceremony to celebrate the success of the exercise. I think we had about maybe 10 or 15 U.S. officers and CAR had a small platoon. We were fortunate that the U.S. officers that conducted the training were culturally sensitive, they brought presents for the military leadership and the lead colonel made a presentation at the end of the training, like a graduation ceremony, in Sangho, the language that the officers spoke. It was a really wonderful expression of camaraderie. Afterwards, we had refreshments and we sang and danced. I was the only woman there and I sang and danced with the CAR military rank and file. A positive U.S./CAR relationship was established.

When I returned from London, I had a visit from Captain Soulet in the CAR military who informed me that they hadn't been paid wages, that they were living in deplorable conditions, that they were very unhappy. The president and the current military leadership wasn't listening to them or paying any attention to their grievances. He asked me to speak to the president about their issues. Being the only woman in the diplomatic corps, the president always gave me priority in terms of access to him, he called me his sister, "ma soeur." I called him and I explained to him the problem and before anything could be done, the colonel, a group of officers and the rank and file military personnel mutinied. They were shooting up the city. I mean basically this rebel group was holding the city hostage by going around the city shooting in the air. The bullets came down and were hitting innocent Central Africans: children, women, and bystanders. People were getting hurt as a result of the mutiny. I called the president to encourage him to find the money to pay the military, particularly since the military was made up of 80% of his arch enemy tribe, the Yakomas. The president said he didn't have the money. I sent a communiqué to Washington about the problem and that we needed to contact Paris and get the French involved and the money to pay the military.

Q: At that time Mitterrand wasn't the president.

JORDAN: Chirac.

Q: I mean why weren't the French doing something?

JORDAN: The French had a really strained relationship with Patassé because he wouldn't agree to renew their military bases. The U.S. Embassy was instrumental in Patassé's successful presidential election and as a result Patassé was trying to cultivate stronger ties with the U. S. After the Kolingba regime sabotaged the first set of elections in 1992, which Patassé probably would have won, a second set of elections was held in September 1993, Patassé came in first defeating Kolingba, David Dacko and Abel Gouma and took office in October 1993. I don't believe he really liked the French, especially since they supported Kolingba in the presidential elections. The French controlled every change in government since they colonized CAR. If the USG and the UN hadn't been involved in ensuring a free and fair democratic election, Kolingba would have been the president. Washington was able to convince Elysee Palace to free up the money to pay the military salaries and to structure a plan to address the other military grievances. Patassé also wanted to punish the rebels for the mutiny. My job was to convince him that was not in his best interest. The German and French ambassadors and I, all lobbied Patassé to grant amnesty so we could have peace and move forward. We also supported the establishment of a commission to look into the other grievances such as living conditions for the military. Patassé agreed to the amnesty and established the commission.

A month passed, and Captain Soulet and the English-speaking interpreter for the military unit made an unexpected visit to the embassy. The military unit we trained and danced and sang with in joyous celebration was the group that was mutinying. The young officer came back and sat in my office and basically said that they received some back pay, but

all the other grievances were not being addressed even though the commission had been established. He said that Patassé was victimizing the soldiers who participated in the mutiny and they weren't doing anything to move forward on their other grievances. He was in my office on Friday morning. Before I could address his concerns, Saturday morning was the first real coup d'état.

I was in my residence when the mutiny started in April. It was a Saturday. I don't know why they picked Saturdays. My driver came and picked me up and took me to the embassy. I didn't have a bag packed to take with me because I just never thought that the political environment was so unstable. But from that point on we started preparing for the eventuality of several of these events, and we had several. The mutiny lasted four days because of the swift response of the U.S., key allies and especially the French.

After the mutiny, we provided emergency training to the embassy staff. We conducted weapons training so that everyone knew how to use the weapons if we needed them. We had tear gas throwing training. We made sure everybody had a bag packed with basic toiletries and change of clothing by the door in case we had to move quickly. We developed procedures for what to do if we were trapped in our homes and we made sure our radios were synchronized and prepared ourselves for continuing hostilities by stocking up on food and water. As I said, the rebel leader came to see me on Friday morning. Saturday morning was a real coup d'état. I was in the beauty parlor getting my hair done when my driver came in and told me we had to go immediately. I wrapped my wet hair in a towel and ran out. The American officers and some critical FSN staff were all hunkered down in the embassy. The American staff was anxious about leaving their families at home alone and unable to help them hunkered down in the embassy. This time, unlike last time when the soldiers were shooting in the air, the political opposition with the mutinied military soldiers was trying to oust Patassé. We were hunkered down for two weeks. The rebels were burning French homes. They burned down the French Cultural Center twice. They looted the stores in the city and burned some of the stores. They looted the hotel and the World Bank director's house. The government forces were shooting rockets at communities that they felt were opposition strongholds. The embassy was in the crossfire. We were three blocks south of the palace and three blocks west of the radio station. The rebel forces established themselves in a strategic position on the perimeter of the embassy to shield themselves from heavy government artillery. The embassy building was getting hit by machine gun fire and other automatic weapon fire. But the staff and I were safe inside. The embassy wasn't being attacked by rocket fire because the government forces knew that they could not take out the rebels who were literally hugging the embassy perimeter without killing the U.S. embassy staff inside.

We had very little water and no food. We were also taking in refugees. Anyone caught out in the city's hot zones came to our embassy for refuge. You couldn't go anywhere on foot or even in a vehicle because the rebels and the government forces were shooting 24 hours a day. We gave refuge to Cameroonians, Lebanese, Chinese, and Russians, and a host of other nations because they had no place to go and the city was dangerously unsafe. Pursuant to an agreement with the diplomatic community, the French were responsible for protecting the diplomatic community in Bangui because they had a

military presence in the country. But the French were so consumed with taking care of their own citizens, since their communities were under attack, that we didn't get very much support from the French.

We had two situations where Peace Corps volunteers were stuck in two different hot zones and the only way that they could be rescued was through the French military in an armored tank. We had 10 Peace Corps volunteers who had come in for the weekend and were stuck in their hostel. The rebel forces were in their area going house-by-house raiding the houses, pillaging the houses, and taking whatever they could find. When they were close to the hostel, the volunteers were on the radio with me and they were reporting how close the rebels were to the hostel. We checked-in with them every 20 minutes, and they reported where the rebels were. The volunteers were upstairs locked into a room and the rebels were coming close to the hostel. We also had four female Peace Corp volunteers stuck in another hot spot in the city. The young Peace Corps women were reporting to us regularly on the radio. They said that the rebels had come by a couple of times for money. They had given them money each time and they were now down to their last centime and they were worried that after they gave them the last centime they were going to come back and rape them. We needed to get the girls out of there. The French were not responding to my pleas to go pick up the ten Peace Corps volunteers in the hostel and the four women volunteers. We pleaded with our French contact to focus on rescuing the Peace Corp volunteers, and provided them with their locations. I called the French ambassador, but he was not helpful. I called Washington and pleaded with them to call the Elysee Palace in Paris and ask them to instruct the French ambassador to pick up the Peace Corp volunteers. It was a horrific experience. I felt impotent because I couldn't do anything. I couldn't go physically to get them and I couldn't get the French to go get them. It was really a horrendous time. I called the State Department and spoke to the Africa Bureau's principle deputy assistant secretary. I basically had to use some profanity to make it clear to them that if anything happened to these kids it was because they were not taking the action necessary to secure their rescue. The French were consumed with rescuing their citizens. The French and Patassé were the targets of the rebels. They were burning French homes and attacking the French stores, so the French were consumed with moving their citizens out of harm's way and to the airport. I guess, the French were overwhelmed and didn't want to use scarce personnel to deal with our problem. Paris ordered the French ambassador to rescue the Peace Corps volunteers. They were rescued and transported to the airport and then flown to Douala, Cameroon. The Peace Corps volunteers trapped in hot spots in the city was my worst nightmare during this first coup d'etat.

Apparently, the rebels had made some inroads toward capturing the radio station. In the middle of the night, I got an anonymous phone call and the male caller said you need to get out of the embassy because the government forces are now going to send rockets over in your direction to take out the rebels that are around your embassy. There were seven officers and several FSNs in the embassy with me. We couldn't leave the embassy because there was machine gun fire and RPG fire all around the embassy. The only way we could leave would be in a French military armored tank. I called the French ambassador and explained the threat and asked whether they could come and pick us up

in an armored tank. He said that they couldn't, they didn't have the resources. I suspect that he resented my reporting him to Paris and he wasn't going to help the Americans at the expense of French citizens. French citizens in Bangui were also complaining to Paris about the long delays in being rescued from hot spots around the city and the way the French military was handling the crisis. Even though, there was shooting and fighting throughout the city, there weren't any attacks on American homes, not one. Clearly the message was they hated the French, somehow the attacks were retaliation against the French, as well as Patassé. While the American officers in the embassy were in constant contact with their families by radio, they worried about their families' safety, it was clear from those radio checks that we weren't the targets of the conflict.

Q: You were receiving the warning about a rocket attack. What did you do?

JORDAN: I told the staff that, it was impossible for the president to send a rocket to take out the rebels on the embassy's perimeter, because he knew that it could hit us. It was crazy, he wouldn't do that. I called President Patassé and I said, "You know what? We just got this anonymous call, that you're going to send rockets over here to take out the rebels that are hugging the embassy perimeter and I know that's not true." And he says, "Yes, it's true and we have to do it because they're getting ready to take the radio station and if we don't do it we may lose this conflict."

I said, "But Mr. President, you guys don't have precision rockets. You can't take the rebels out from around the embassy. They're hugging the embassy! You're going to kill us in the process." I said, "If you're intent on doing that, then you're declaring war on the U.S. and I don't think you want to declare war on the U.S. I think you need to think about it because we can't get out of the embassy and if you take the rebels out, you take me and my staff out as well." And I said, "You better think about that and call me back."

In the meantime, as soon as I hung up from talking to the president, I sent a message to Washington of my conversation with Patassé. We were sending several SITREPs (situation reports) a day to Washington. Our command center was on the floor in the communications room of our safe haven. We were on our knees typing so that we wouldn't be in the line of fire or stray bullets through the window. One of the addressees on the SITREPs was the European Command. They were receiving copies of everything that we sent to Washington. I received a call from General Joulwan, Commander-in-Chief of the European Command, asking me what resources we needed. He said that he had been following the events in Bangui and saw that we needed support and offered to provide support. He asked what resources we needed and then rattled off a list of resources - C-130s, troops and Puma helicopters. I said, "General, I don't know what the hell I need. Send it all. I just need to know how fast it can get here." He said, "Well, we can have men on the ground in 18 hours." They were pulling them from a ship off the coast of Liberia. There was a conflict in Liberia at the time. We had troops on the ground literally in 18 hours. The French Military met them at the airport and transported them to the embassy in their armored tanks.

Patassé called me back and said they were not going to send rockets to take out the rebels by the embassy and that they were going to stop their approach to the radio station.” While we were awaiting the arrival of the Marines, there were several unsuccessful attempts to breach the embassy wall by the rebels. We set up tear gas canisters by all the windows in the event they would start breaching the wall, we could just launch the tear gas and maybe that would slow them down. We took our weapons out and were locked, loaded and ready until the Marines came. When the Marines arrived, I think there were 25 soldiers, I can’t remember, they set up their perimeter on the roof of the embassy and in our courtyard and managed our security from that point on. They brought us MREs and water.

Q: MREs means meals ready to eat?

JORDAN: Yes. We didn’t have any food and water and we were taking in people everyday who needed to get out of harms way. We took in a Chinese family who owned a restaurant across the street from the embassy’s back gate. Embassy staff and I and the diplomatic community ate at their restaurant frequently. When they came they brought some rice and some kind of meat, I don’t know what it was. For at least one day, we had some rice with a tasty sauce and this mystery meat. We all slept on the floor. When the Marines arrived they too bunked down on the floor. There was one bathroom in our safe haven area, a toilet and a sink. We hadn’t bathed in over a week.

Q: What about the families that are out in their homes?

JORDAN: The families were all secure. We were in constant contact with each family by radio. As I said, the rebels were not interested in the Americans. They basically insulated us from any attacks. Not one American lost a fingernail as a result of the coup. The coup d’etat was squashed by the French after two weeks of hostilities. The rebels had guns and money and supplies. They had everything they needed to successfully execute the coup. It was alleged that the French were covertly supporting the rebels, but the French suffered the most from the rebel attacks, they lost 50% of their homes and mostly all their stores and their cultural center. The rebels burnt down the cultural center twice, I’m not sure why twice. The U.S. and the other foreign embassies in Bangui and major international organizations supported Patassé, the first democratically elected president in the country, in the history of the country, and we didn’t understand the French’s inaction and lobbied the French government to put down the coup. In the beginning of the coup the French moved their military troops outside of Bangui into the city and positioned them on the streets. But they didn’t lift a finger to do anything. They didn’t even stop the rebels from burning down the French stores and homes and looting.

They had a policy of constructive engagement, which meant that unless the rebels were attacking a diplomat or a French citizen, something that they saw, they weren’t going to do anything. So they didn’t do anything. We had to convince the French that they needed to get engaged otherwise the whole city was going to go up in flames. Once engaged, the French attacked the rebel strongholds and ended the attempted coup. They proposed a program of reconciliation and brought in an African peace keeping mission made up of

former colonies, about six or seven countries. The countries sent about 70 military personnel to protect the city while they worked on reconciliation. When the coup ended there was a reconciliation ceremony. They appointed General Amadou Toure, the former president of Mali, to negotiate peace and reconciliation. During one of his visits, he brought with him several presidents in the Central Africa region to facilitate the peacekeeping process. They met with the rebels to get a clear sense of what they wanted and documented their issues. Then they met with the government to work out a resolution. When they reached an agreement, they had another reconciliation ceremony; everybody shook hands and hugged and kissed. As both sides moved forward, the peacekeeping force remained in place. We had a little respite after the reconciliation. We went home, got a set of fresh clothes, and water, and were prepared for the next coup attempt. The second coup took place about three weeks after reconciliation.

The rebels were looting again, burning homes and raping the women in government held areas. The government forces retaliated and intense fighting began. This time they were shooting much heavier artillery and rockets. The fighting continued for three weeks. The French, General Amadou Toure, and some of the presidents from the region, tried to broker peace again, and they were successful. In the meantime, several French advisors that were part of the African peacekeeping operations were killed. The French were incensed and they took out a rebel stronghold with a vengeance. French Puma helicopters shot up the entire neighborhood, killing innocent women and children and non-combatants. The French put down the rebellion again and we had another reconciliation ceremony, lots of hugs and kisses and champagne. The diplomatic corps was invited to all the reconciliation ceremonies. We had peace for maybe three or four weeks.

Q: Well, let me ask, why were you, the Americans, the Peace Corps, the whole thing, there? Why didn't you get the hell out?

JORDAN: After the first coup, we evacuated all the Americans from the country. We had 96 Peace Corps volunteers in CAR at the time scattered throughout the country. We were able to use the missionaries and their private planes to pick up the volunteers and transport them to staging points where they were picked up and transported to the airport. The French controlled the airport, so we could transport the Americans to the airport and get them out on our C-130s to Douala, Cameroon where transportation to the States was arranged on private carriers. We also evacuated all the families of the American staff. We went to their homes and packed up the families and then evacuated them as well. There were about 200 different religious groups in the country and we evacuated all of the religious groups. I think there was one missionary home that was slightly damaged because they were in an area where there was a lot of rocket fire. Basically, the Americans were protected, we weren't targeted, and we weren't touched by the hostilities. We evacuated everybody: non-essential embassy staff and their families, families of essential staff, private American businessmen and women, and missionary groups. We evacuated everybody except the essential staff in the embassy, basically seven officers, including myself.

Q: Well, why should you stay? I mean, why not just get out?

JORDAN: Washington didn't want to close the embassy. Once you close an embassy it's difficult to reopen it. In addition, Washington wanted to maintain a presence and be able to get some intelligence as to what was going.

Q: What were American interests there?

JORDAN: The U.S. made a substantial investment in the early 1990s to move the CAR toward democratic leadership and a democratic society. U.S. diplomacy in Bangui has focused on sustaining democracy through strengthening democratic institutions, encouraging improvements in CAR's human rights posture, promoting economic reforms, reinforcing international peacekeeping operations, insisting on an even playing field for U.S. commercial interests.

Q: What's the point of putting an ambassador and her staff in harm's way? I mean why not just get the hell out?

JORDAN: We weren't the targets. We were in the crossfire. The embassy building was riddled with bullets on all sides. After a mutiny and two unsuccessful coup d'états, the conflict escalated to rocket fire. During the mutiny, we consolidated to our command center in the embassy. During the first and second attempted coup d'états we also consolidated to the command center in the embassy. We were at risk because we were a special embassy with no Marine support. The third attempted coup d'état, we established a command center in the residence, which I thought would be out of harm's way. We were not in the crossfire between the palace and the radio station. My residence was close to the palace, but it wasn't in the crossfire, it was in the middle of a hill. At the top of the hill were the government forces and their barracks. At the bottom of the hill were the Ubangi River and the rebel forces. When the shooting started, the rebels now were shooting rockets to the top of the hill and the government forces were returning fire. The rockets were now falling into the yard of my residence. It was then that I informed Washington, that I couldn't protect the Americans under these conditions and we had to leave. Washington didn't want us to leave. We were on a secure conference call with the State Department, and other resources in Washington. We talked about the situation on the ground and whether or not it was to our advantage to leave. I told them that we were leaving whether they approved it or not, because I couldn't protect anybody. My staff and I had enough and it was no longer safe to remain in Bangui. I have a tape of the shooting and you can hear constant shooting and rockets going off around us 24 hours a day. We all left and I set up an embassy in exile in Yaounde, Cameroon.

Q: How did they allow you -- who allowed you to leave?

JORDAN: State Department.

Q: State Department. How'd you get out?

JORDAN: The French military escorted us in armored tanks to the airport. My staff and I flew into Douala and they flew to Washington on private carriers. I was met by Embassy Yaounde staff and driven to the embassy in Yaounde, Cameroon.

Q: Tell me about the embassy in exile in Yaounde.

JORDAN: I established an embassy in Yaounde, Cameroon. Ambassador Charles Twining was gracious and generous in sharing space in his suite with me. I was assigned a room and the support of Embassy Yaounde staff. The embassy in the CAR remained opened and I managed the few FSN staff there from Yaounde. Before the last of the American staff left Bangui, the facilities in the embassy except for the entrance and the lobby were secured to allow access to American citizens that were still in country and in need of counselor services. The FSN staff in the embassy provided counselor services to American citizens before the hostilities began and continued to do so in this new drawdown status. They also conducted intelligence and reported on fast-breaking political and security developments in Bangui and the country. I was in contact with them several times a day.

I flew back to Bangui when the hostilities died down to assess the political and security developments. I met with the head of the African Peacekeeping force, the prime minister, members of government, members of parliament and members of the diplomatic corps. They all assessed that the political and security posture of CAR was still very fragile. The goal was to protect Patassé, the democratically elected president. Pressure from the international community forced the French to squash the rebel forces and bring an end to the third attempted coup, and find a politically acceptable solution to the conflict. The French and the International Follow-up Committee assisted Patassé in setting up a coalition government, which was difficult to do because there was so much distrust. They brought in the CAR ambassador to Paris, to serve as the prime minister. In the beginning there was maybe a glimmer of hope that the coalition government would function and restore peace and begin rebuilding the damaged properties in Bangui and the damage to the CAR economy, but basically there was just a lot of distrust. Eventually Patassé began to distrust his own prime minister because the French selected him. He believed that the French was controlling him and had some kind of sinister agenda that put him at risk. Patassé left the country to meet with Chirac. While in Paris the tensions in Bangui began to mount again and were ready to explode. When Patassé returned, Prime Minister Jean-Paul Ngoupandé resigned because his relationship with Patassé had deteriorated to the point that he was ineffective. Patassé selected someone that he liked to serve as prime minister, and the fragile coalition government limped along.

I managed the embassy in Bangui from Yaounde for a few months and then went to Washington to brief them on the latest developments in CAR. I came down with pneumonia and was sick for several months. State/Med would not medically clear me to return to Yaounde. So, I managed the embassy in Bangui from Washington for a year. I was on the phone every day with FSNs and checking with contacts in Bangui to learn about recent developments. While I was in Washington, there was a resurgence of violence in the rebel strongholds in the south and southwestern sections of Bangui in June

1997 that stalled the peace negotiations. I was on the phone with key allies in Bangui who were lobbying for constraint and an end to the recent outburst of hostilities. I was so angry, I fired off a searing letter to the rebel leader Captain Soulet condemning the resumption of hostilities. I tried to send a clear message to him and the dissidents that their violation of the January 1997 Bangui Accords and recently brokered cease-fire agreement was reprehensible, irresponsible and dishonorable and had caused untold human suffering. I demanded that they cease fighting. The letter was picked up by the French wire service and “Jeune Afrique”, and applauded by the leadership in the region and our major allies.”

While in Washington managing the embassy in Bangui, I was also assigned to be the senior advisor for Africa to the U.S. Delegation to the United Nations for the United Nations’ General Assembly (UNGA). Bill Richardson was the ambassador. He was the first person I met as I entered the U.S. Mission. It was a U.S holiday and it was very early in the morning. I thought to myself, they work on holidays; this is going to be an intense assignment. Ambassador Richardson greeted me in the entryway as he was leaving. We chatted briefly. He had a great sense of humor and was wonderful to work with. During the 52nd UNGA, I established USUN outreach to the African Permanent Representatives, meeting with all 48-subsharan ambassadors on a wide range of issues, explaining U.S. policy not only on Africa but also on diverse topics as the scale of assessments, Iraq, Bosnia and Security Council reform. I attended many Security Council discussions on Sierra Leone, Somalia, the DROC, Congo-Brazzaville and the Central African Republic. My major challenge was convincing high-level State Department officials of the need to support the French government’s request in the UN Security Council for a follow-on UN peacekeeping operation to the African Peacekeeping Force, as the withdrawal of French troops from Bangui and Bouar would create a security vacuum and rekindle hostilities. This was a difficult sell because of cost implications for the USG through the UN peacekeeping budget and the CAR’s low priority profile. After much persuasion, my position prevailed in spite of significant pressure to do otherwise from a number of quarters at the time. It was an interesting and fully charge period and I enjoyed every minute of it.

Even though Patassé was elected president as a result of free and fair democratic elections, he was an authoritative leader. That’s all he knew from his 20 years working with Bokassa. I was constantly, meeting with Patassé to address all kinds of human rights violations. I recall, being invited to dinner at his home and discussing the arrest of a journalist that had been beaten in prison. I said to him, “You can’t arrest journalists because they’re saying things you don’t like. You’re a democratic president now. You can’t do it!” He said, “Well, they’re lying.” I said, “If Bill Clinton arrested everybody that lied about him in the U.S. we’d have half the country in prison! You can’t do that. You have to figure out ways in which you get your message to the people that counters what the journalist is saying. Go on television, talk to the people. Go on the radio, talk to the people. You don’t have to arrest journalists and beat them up.” The approach I was suggesting was incomprehensible to him. This is a global problem for emerging democracies.

Patassé wasn't interested in helping the people of CAR. Like his mentor Bokassa, he was only interested in helping himself, his family, his tribe and his friends. He thought that because the U.S. supported the democratic elections in CAR and he was the successful candidate, the U.S. could replace the French in prominence and support. That was never going to happen. Patassé wasn't the French's choice for president and his arrogance, stubbornness and pro-U.S. posture strained their relationship and they got rid of him.

Q: How'd they get rid of him?

JORDAN: A coup d'état. In May 2001, there was another unsuccessful coup attempt that was thwarted by Patassé using troops provided by the Congolese rebel leader Jean Pierre Bemba and Libyan soldiers. In the aftermath, of the failed coup, militias loyal to Patassé sought revenge against the rebels and murdered many political opponents. In March 2003, General François Bozizé, a former general in the army, launched a surprised attack, overthrowing Patassé while he was out of the country.

Q: So what happened to you?

JORDAN: I was planning to retire when the Assistant Administrator for Latin America and the Caribbean, USAID asked me to serve in Jamaica as the mission director. I spent five years in Jamaica. We were trying to implement a dynamic and significant development program there and to resurrect the Caribbean Regional Program, which closed in 1996. At that time, USAID had to make some difficult funding decisions to operate within a development assistance budget that was inadequate to cover development all around the world. Countries with USAID programs and relatively good social indicators were targeted for closure. The Caribbean had great social indicators: literacy rates were high; maternity and child mortality was very low; and immunization rates were high. The Caribbean program fit the criteria for closure. However, it was clear that these economies were still very fragile and they still depended primarily on the banana subsidies from Europe. Those subsidies were rapidly eroding and they didn't have alternative crops and tourism wasn't strong enough to carry their economies.

After the closure of the Caribbean program in 1996, bitterness and suspicion had increasingly characterized the Caribbean, especially the Eastern Caribbean attitudes toward the United States, especially in light of the dispute over bananas, economic uncertainty due to globalization, U.S. narcotic interdiction and U.S. deportation of Caribbean criminals back to the region. In 1997, CARICOM at the Caribbean/United States Summit made a compelling case for continued development assistance support for the Caribbean region. The U.S. agreed and a joint Summit Action plan was developed to help the region prepare itself for the inevitable globalization and liberalization of its economies. USAID worked closely with Caribbean stakeholders in the design of the Caribbean Regional Program. In 2000, the program was launched with the signing of the grant agreement by the Secretary of State and the Secretary General of CARICOM with wide national and regional media coverage, which enhanced the USG's stature in the region.

The USAID Caribbean Regional program covered the Caribbean region with special emphasis on the small islands that were affected by the loss or reduction of banana preferences: St. Lucia, St Vincent and the Grenadines, Grenada, Dominica and Belize, with limited resources for Guyana and Surinam for environmental activities. The program was complemented by the bi-lateral programs in Jamaica, Haiti, the Dominican Republic and Guyana that limited their scope to programs and projects that were value added to the regional program.

The development challenges faced by the Caribbean were many. Lagging economic growth, resulted from trade policies that emphasized domestic production over production for the world markets. Weak government institutions, from conditions marked by a shortage of qualified personnel with skills to conduct policy analysis, negotiations and even routine paperwork to make and implement informed decisions. This especially limited their ability to protect the natural environment, critical to the tourism industry in the region. Weak judicial institutions and the lack of harmonization of commercial laws undermined investment in the region. Globalization made the islands vulnerable to economic shocks such as loss of banana preferences, which they rightfully feared would cause high unemployment, social unrest, violence and an increase in poverty, if they didn't have alternative employment options.

The Caribbean Regional Program promoted trade and investment, environmental management, judicial reform, disaster mitigation and preparedness, technical and management support to tourism enterprises and enhanced management of HIV/AIDS. Hurricane reconstruction and recovery activities provided valuable infrastructure such as seawall defenses, roads and a hospital pediatric ward. We also provided training, hospital equipment and loans to the small and micro business sector. The Eastern Caribbean Telecommunications (ECTEL) regulatory authority was established and a sophisticated financial architecture and legal framework was designed with technical assistance from USAID. ECTEL instituted a new telecom act and provided licenses to many new service providers creating a competitive market. Environmental Tourism Resource Centers were established in all of the Caribbean islands. These walk-in Centers provided small hoteliers and other tourism industry participants with access to training and other informational material for the purpose of improving management, marketing and other business operations. A comprehensive case flow management system was completed in all of the Eastern Caribbean High Courts as well as in the Court of Appeals. Automation of the regional case reporting system allowed approximately 10,000 precedent setting cases dating back to 1950s to be automated and accessed by judges, lawyers and clients throughout the region. We also provided automated court reporting equipment to all the islands, trained the judges and clerks and harmonized the commercial laws. The Caribbean Epidemiological Center, through which we provide support for HIV/AIDS to the region, played an important role in assisting the governments in the region to formulate national strategic plans for HIV/AIDS. They also served as a reference lab, disseminated guidelines on home and clinical care for HIV/AIDS patients, conducted HIV/AIDS surveillance, and trained health professionals.

Q: What are the United States foreign policy interests in the Caribbean?

JORDAN: We are a Caribbean nation. Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands are truly a part of the Caribbean. In addition, the Caribbean constitutes the United States' "third border." Poverty, political instability and environmental degradation there can directly affect the U.S. as a whole. Immigration is a USG concern and drug interdiction is a major foreign policy objective.

Q: What about Jamaica?

JORDAN: Jamaica is an island situated in the Caribbean Sea south of Cuba and west of Haiti and the Dominican Republic. The population is 3 million. Jamaica is a parliamentary monarchy with legislative power vested in the bicameral Parliament consisting of an appointed Senate and an elected House of Representatives. Jamaica has historically had a two-party system with power alternating between the People's National Party (PNP) and the Jamaica Labor Party (JLP). P.J. Patterson was the Prime Minister and leader of the Peoples National Party. While Jamaica enjoyed significant development progress in its social, economic, and political history in the 1980s and early 1990s, in 1998 when I arrived, the country was challenged by persistent fiscal deficits and heavy indebtedness, high unemployment, deteriorating living conditions, high levels of poverty and high levels of crime and violence, especially in the inner city "garrison communities".

To address Jamaica's development challenges required a highly skilled and energized USDH and local workforce. Unfortunately, I inherited a Mission fraught with major irregularities in its financial, administrative and program management. Management assessments clearly indicated that FSN positions had for years been filled non-competitively within a virtual "closed shop." Opportunities for advancement were distributed preferentially throughout the Mission and the caliber of the local workforce had eroded. Morale was at an all time low and USDH curtailments were the norm rather than the exception and relations with the Embassy were strained by the inconsistent application of FSN personnel policies. To address these irregularities required a massive realignment and reorganization of the workforce and restructuring of the entire Mission by rewriting, classifying and openly competing virtually all of the Mission's 73 local positions. I sought and received support from the Ambassador, Minister of Labor, USAID/Washington and the State Department. I ensured that the process was transparent and fairly and consistently applied, and held weekly meetings with the staff to brief them on the progress of the reorganization and to answer questions. The turnover of all but two USDH positions required assembling a new energetic USDH management team. The realignment and reorganization was accomplished in ten months, reviewing over 200 applications for each of the 73 positions and preparing severance packages for the employees that were unsuccessful in competing for their jobs, identified employment opportunities for separated employees, wrote letters of recommendation for them and personally counseled each separated employee. It was remarkable that the reorganization was achieved without litigation or grievances. In the midst of this intense process, the remedial actions identified in the many management assessments had to be addressed, in themselves, a daunting challenge and the design of new strategies and programs for Jamaica and the Caribbean, all placed enormous demands on the staff and remarkably

morale was high. With the recruitment and empowerment of a highly energetic, enthusiastic, hardworking, dedicated and technically proficient local and USDH team, the Mission was poised to tackle the development challenges of Jamaica and the Caribbean region.

Q: What was the turnover of USDH and local staff?

JORDAN: I recruited for seven out of the nine USDH positions and replaced 70% of the local workforce. I invited the agency Ethics Officer to present a comprehensive training workshop on ethical decision-making and the mission's values of honesty, compassion, fairness and accountability. We were able to discuss in a non-threatening manner long-standing but serious irregularities, such as vendors selling their wares in the bathrooms and in the offices and what constituted "conflict of interest" and why they couldn't accept lunches, dinners and gratuities from our institutional contractors. I also developed an aggressive training program for the new staff - training in supervisory skills, first aid, audit management, performance management, performance monitoring, technical writing, acquisition and assistance and technical disciplines such as micro-finance, rural development, disaster management, economics and USAID's rules, regulations and policies and required frequent site visits to the projects so that they could see first hand the development challenges on the ground. Spanish language classes were also offered during lunch hour. Once trained and with full delegations of authority, the staff achieved incredible results. The new ambassador was impressed and proud of the superb briefings by the senior FSN staff during her initial in-country orientation on USAID's Jamaica and Caribbean Regional Program.

Q: What did the Jamaica program entail?

Under the Jamaica program, USAID supported micro-finance lending, youth-at-risk programs, natural resource management, judicial reform, improving the performance of primary schools, private sector-led economic growth and competitiveness, democracy and governance and improved management of HIV/AIDS. These programs were very successful and had significant impact.

The new micro-credit institution, Jamaica National Micro-Credit Company (JNMC) developed a well-focused marketing plan, increased loans to micro-entrepreneurs beyond Kingston and introduced financial products that were of immense interest and use to the micro sector. JNMC expanded geographically to four parishes and increased lending to 2,355 entrepreneurs while simultaneously reducing portfolio arrears and increasing profitability. The program had a significant impact on the economically disadvantaged in Jamaica, providing opportunity and hope, as well as a blueprint for other lending institutions to follow.

The Grants Pen and Standpipe communities where we were implementing the inner city program were rife with gang warfare, drugs, domestic violence and high unemployment. The democracy and governance project established a strong on-the-ground presence in both communities with a wide range of interested public, private, religious, and community groups brought together to address the problems of the communities. It included a partnership with the private sector whereby USAID provided the resources for conflict resolution and the private sector provided for a comprehensive model police station in the inner city neighborhoods. We launched the Peace Center in Grants Pen, the first of its kind in the Caribbean conducting conflict resolution training and training

for youth at risk. The Center also proposed practical solutions to reduce crime and violence and assisted in increasing employment and entrepreneurial opportunities through their training efforts. The Jamaican police force confirmed that there had been a marked reduction in serious crime due to USAID's conflict resolution training, the peace center and community policing in the two-targeted communities. Both residents and police were able to move freely with less fear and violence in their communities.

Jamaica's education system was characterized by poor attendance, perennial underachievement, low secondary school enrollment, and a high percentage of untrained teachers. This system failed thousands of young Jamaicans. The education program improved the quality of teaching by providing teacher training and access to innovative interactive classroom techniques, fostered community involvement, especially parents in their neighborhood schools and provided management training for the principals along with modern management tools to improve management of the schools. The impact was so powerful in improving test scores of third graders in reading and basic math in USAID's 72 targeted schools in low income areas that the Ministry of Education planned to expand the project to all primary schools in the country. Continued progress will increase the productivity and competitiveness of future workforces and will enhance the quality of life for an entire generation of Jamaicans.

Fifty-two percent of primary school graduates were functionally illiterate and innumerate. Approximately 10,000 10 -14 year olds were not enrolled in school and an additional 4,000 dropped out each year. Moreover, despite the decline in the fertility rate for all other groups, the rate among 14 – 24 year old young women had dramatically escalated and this same group had the highest rate of HIV/AIDS in the country. To address these profound challenges, USAID supported an integrated program to improve primary school education with a focus on schools in the low-income communities as I just mentioned and enhance the life skills of at-risk, out of school adolescents and expand access to youth friendly adolescent reproductive health services throughout the country. I don't know what the precise number youth that were trained by the time I left Jamaica, but I can say with some certainty that at least 15,000 at-risk youth who have dropped out of school received remedial training to improve reading and math proficiency, vocational training and training in life skills, hygiene, appropriate dress for job interviews and job interviewing skills. I visited several of these youth-at-risk training centers during my tenure in Jamaica and they were impressive.

The private sector strengthening initiative prepared Jamaica for the Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA) by sponsoring the private sector's attendance at the FTAA Business Forum so that the private sector could better understand the issues and the opportunities that were available; streamlined land titling and valuation and provided investor on-line access to company data for approximately 40,000 active companies that were currently operating in Jamaica; reduced the check clearance time for commercial banks from 14 days to 1; partnered with Microsoft to develop on-line payroll system, reducing operating overhead for small, medium and micro-enterprises; adopted international phytosanitary standards to permit export of Jamaican agricultural products; provided business development and management training to over 608 small, medium and micro-enterprises; provided technical assistance to the private sector as well as website development and access to economic studies and analyses, just to mention a few of the initiatives.

USAID Jamaica's response to the HIV/AIDS crisis was by working closely with the Ministry of Health to strengthen their capacity to implement effective response models and increase non-governmental organizations' capacity to deliver prevention programs. Jamaica's economic dependence on tourism, mining and traditional agriculture has generated widespread degradation of the country's natural resource base, threatening the very existence of these key industries. USAID's Ridge-to-Reef watershed initiative incorporates cutting edge environmental management – integrating the ecology of the coral reef systems with related economic viability of the fishing, mining and tourism industries all of which are threatened at all levels. USAID's efforts targeted increasing the capacity of the Government of Jamaica and local non-governmental organizations to manage and protect Jamaica's fragile eco-systems and included the development and implementation of a national environmental policy framework and the development of a watershed management system.

Q: Well, how was the government to work with?

JORDAN: The government was easy to work with. They were very cooperative, and supportive of our programs because they achieved results and had phenomenal impact. For example in the education sector, we helped reform their primary education system to the point where it became a USAID model worldwide and the basis for the “No Child Left Behind” program developed by the White House. Third grade reading and basic math scores increased 50%; parents were involved in their children's education; superintendents of the schools were trained and provided modern management tools; and teachers were trained and had access to a wide variety of audio-visual materials for improving classroom performance. Working with the Ministry of Education was very gratifying because they were excited, dedicated to the goals of the program and went the extra mile to achieve results. In the other sectors we had similar experiences, too many to recount here. However, there's a phenomenon in Jamaica that I don't understand. Jamaicans when they live outside of Jamaica, for example in the UK, U.S. and Canada are very successful. And in Jamaica they seem to be impeded from achieving success. I don't know whether there's something in the environment that prevents the Jamaicans from succeeding to their full potential. It could be the crab phenomenon, where they pull each other back in the barrel as they try to crawl out. There's some dynamic in the environment that's having an impact. However, I find the Jamaican people to be probably one of the smartest people in the world.

Q: I've noticed that in the Greek context. I mean I was the consul general in Athens for four years. Greek peasants going to the United States, having been scratching their little piece of land in Greece forever and all of a sudden next thing you know they're running a restaurant, their children are studying to be doctors, and they're moving up the economic ladder very quickly, which they can't do in Greece.

JORDAN: It's the same phenomena. There's something about the environment that's debilitating. I don't know what it is. We were trying to work around this mysterious phenomena by providing the necessary inputs and working in partnership to achieve success, whether in agriculture, education, tourism, music, art, the environment or HIV/AIDS. We would see significant progress, but the country never achieved the

economic success that it should have. Jamaica could be a model economy and society if they could overcome this phenomenon and get rid of the crime.

Q: What is the United States foreign policy interest in Jamaica?

JORDAN: The United States has a strong interest in Jamaica's economic and political well-being because of its geographic proximity, trade and investment relations, commitment to the interdiction of illegal drugs destined for the U.S. and shared concerns regarding regional security and environmental threats.

Q: Is there any getting rid of the crime? They just recently had practically a war just to extradite one guy.

JORDAN: With a population of 3 million people, it shouldn't be too difficult to know the criminals in the various communities. The U.S. and the UK both are providing assistance to Jamaica to address the crime situation there. They have made some inroads but there are many vested interests in maintaining Jamaica's outrageous level of crime.

Q: And you lived there for how long?

JORDAN: I was there for five years.

Q: I mean I know having started this back in the '70s, but in Italy to get a telephone installed, you had to know somebody or else it took months. And here it just takes a day to get a telephone. How about the telephone communication system? Was that a problem?

JORDAN: No, it wasn't a problem because the British company Cable and Wireless had a monopoly in the entire Caribbean. They invested in the infrastructure when the islands were colonies and the telephone services were accessible and efficient. The problem arose with cellular phones. There were no cellular phones except for Cable and Wireless. The Eastern Caribbean Telecommunications (ECTEL) regulatory authority was established with the assistance of the USAID Caribbean Regional Program and introduced competition. They provided licenses to four or five different cellular carriers creating a competitive market and reduced cost to the consumers in the region. If there's commitment by the governments and private sector, investments in the Caribbean if managed properly will be effective, successful, sustainable and impactful. The Eastern Caribbean Telecommunications regulatory authority is an excellent example. In contrast, many African countries are 25 years behind the Caribbean in terms of an educated workforce and infrastructure not only, roads and bridges but reliable electricity, technology and modern systems. USAID's programs in Jamaica and the Caribbean had significant impact on the countries in the region and made a difference in liberalizing their economies. It was my most gratifying assignment, despite long hours and traveling 70% of the time.

Q: When did you leave Jamaica?

I left Jamaica in 2003 to return to Washington D.C. to retire and was asked to serve as the senior deputy assistant administrator for Latin America and the Caribbean, which is similar to the principle deputy assistant secretary.

Q: How long did you do that?

JORDAN: I served as the senior DAA for an intense and fully charged year. I had oversight of the entire Bureau's portfolio and staff, with a special emphasis on trade and investment priorities, the complex budget process and the management of an overseas staffing exercise. I conducted multi-disciplinary Mission Management Assessments (MMAs) in 14 of the 16 missions in the Bureau. The MMAs allowed me to engage the private sector and government officials in the region and forged a hemispheric private sector strengthening program that consolidated and synchronized key trade initiatives under the FTAA. Due to severe budget cuts in program and operating expense funding, missions were required under the overseas staffing exercise to develop strategies to minimize the adverse impacts on both the program and the staff, and provide the Bureau with the ammunition to make a compelling case to Congress that reducing staff and program support in light of the perceived impact of the Millennium Challenge Corporation and the Central American Free Trade Agreement was counterproductive, and in fact USAID had more responsibility rather than less in support of these initiatives.

The Andean MMAs were conducted at a particularly crucial time as the Bureau was in the midst of determining the efficacy of consolidating regional support services for the South American sub-region into a single platform. The information garnered from the Andean MMAs provided an empirical base for selecting Peru as the sub-regional platform. The MMA teams played a critical role in providing on-the-spot practical solutions to the Bureau's field missions during the assessments, addressing a wide array of management and program issues to reinforce accountability, reduce vulnerabilities, enhance management operations and achieve efficiencies. The MMAs resulted in more focused strategies, streamlined organizational structures, reduced management units, improved morale and communications, reduced vulnerabilities, and ultimately more result oriented development programs in the hemisphere. We also removed several senior managers for poor performance during this exercise.

I engaged a wide array of Washington stakeholders, NSC, State, OMB and Congress on behalf of the Bureau and the Agency. The atmospherics of these inter-agency meetings always seemed to be contentious. During a meeting on the Presidential Initiative on Trafficking in People (TIP), I had to persuade my Washington counterparts to reconsider and accept USAID/Mexico's original TIP proposal that reflected the realities on the ground there, rather than the Washington TIP proposal, which was seriously flawed and lacked Country Team support. This was a no-brainer as far as I was concerned, but it was a hard sell. Finding consensus also wasn't easy. In a meeting with a group of eclectic Central American Mission Directors, all of whom had divergent opinions on the implementation of the new innovative and dynamic regional strategy which would change development assistance programming and delivery and achieve results with national level impact took days to arrive at consensus.

Throughout my career, I seemed to have had more than my share of assignments with dysfunctional offices or missions and expected to rectify the problems in these entities during my tenure. This was the case with the Civil Rights Office in the Community Service Administration. At USAID, it was the Office of Equal Opportunity Programs. In Belize, although I didn't mention it earlier, the staff was polarized and relations with the Embassy were strained due to my predecessor's removal for malfeasance. The entire mission in Jamaica had run amuck. And in the LAC Bureau, staff morale and productivity were low as they avoided the sniping and strained relationship of the political leadership in the front office. I held one-on-one weekly meetings with the senior managers and weekly meetings with them as a team to tackle cross-cutting management and program issues. As a result of focusing program strategies in a tight budget environment, the staff advanced the Bureau's and the Agency's development objectives. I was the initial point of contact for the staff to address a wide variety of issues. The MMA travels wreaked havoc on my ability to provide continuous oversight of the Washington-based operations.

I had no real appreciation for Latin America from a development perspective until I conducted the MMAs. I observed that there was no real political commitment to the poor in the South American economies. The political commitment was to the affluent, and not to the lowest social economic levels in their societies. I saw that clearly in Brazil. The affluent Brazilians couldn't care less about the people in the shanty communities. It was shocking and disturbing. While not acceptable, at least in CAR the income disparities were tribal.

Q: Well, I've heard this about people who served in Latin America in Venezuela against Chavez, because the upper class treated the rest like dirt. What did you do next?

JORDAN: I was appointed by the USAID Administrator, Counselor to the Agency, the highest position in the executive career corps in USAID. The Counselor provides advice and guidance to the Agency's Administrator and Deputy Administrator as well as to the Agency's senior management team.

Q: Well, counselor here in the State Department is a very mixed assignment. It can be anything. It can be often speech writing or the advisor or what have you. It depends on how the Secretary wants to utilize that position.

JORDAN: I served as Counselor to the Agency, and concurrently, the Acting Assistant Administrator for Management. As the Counselor, I spearheaded a number of new Agency initiatives in addition to the traditional role of the Counselor. I led the establishment of the Agency's Diversity Council, which is now making real progress in ensuring a diverse workplace, and in serving as a catalyst for initiating real change in the Agency's mindset towards diversity as an Agency core value. In establishing and chairing the Agency's memorial committee, a program and criteria for honoring USAID employees whose lives were lost in the line of duty were established. As a result, the 2006 Memorial Dedication reflected a complete list of all the employees who lost their

lives since the Agency's inception. In coordinating the Executive Information System (EIS), I worked with a great team people to ensure that the Agency improved the way it captured and reported information, that it had business systems that effectively supported the USAID missions and operations and allowed employees to implement their work more efficiently.

The Mission Management Assessments were an invaluable management tool for the LAC Bureau and as Agency Counselor, I proposed the exercise for the entire agency and the Administrator supported it. An MMA Steering Committee was established made up of bureau deputy assistant administrators and over a dozen Agency Mission Management Assessments (MMAs) worldwide were conducted. I worked with the regional bureaus on follow-up actions, and monitoring to ensure their ownership of the MMA process. I also commissioned the first headquarters assessment in early 2006, establishing the MMA process as a viable management tool and part of the organizational management culture for all bureaus throughout the entire Agency. As the Agency's Ombudsman, I spent a great deal of time providing guidance and assistance to the career staff (both Foreign and Civil Service) on a wide range of workplace problems and issues in a fair and impartial manner, and considered this one of my most critical role as Counselor.

Six months into my appointment as Counselor, I was asked to assume the role of Acting Assistant Administrator for Management, a position that had at the time been vacant for eighteen months. The Management (M) Bureau is the Agency's largest, with over 400 USDH headquarters positions, supported by over 300 contract staff located in the Ronald Reagan Building and in the tech hub in Virginia. As the home of the Agency's infrastructure functions, it is comprised of eight functional offices, including financial management, human resources, procurement, information resources management, overseas management support, and administrative services. The M Bureau is responsible for over \$3 billion in acquisition and assistance per year, over \$100 million in real property overseas, and is responsible for the Agency's financial transactions and yearly obligations totaling over \$7 billion.

Prior to my appointment as acting AA/M, the M Bureau had suffered from a lack of leadership and cohesion, which contributed to the widely held perception that it was stove-piped and not adequately represented in important internal and external forums where major issues relating to how USAID manages itself had been discussed and/or decided. This was a massive dysfunctional unit that required remedial action. I guided the M Bureau team in developing a prioritized set of corporate goals and objectives, and I communicated these goals to the Agency's senior managers, Assistant Administrators, equivalent to State Department's Assistant Secretaries, in a clear, candid, and realistic manner and tried to instill a corporate approach to addressing management issues. I established monthly meetings with the Assistant Administrators and their deputies to address and resolve critical management issues affecting their programs. As a result of these efforts, there was a new sense of corporate leadership not only within the M Bureau, but also throughout the Agency.

Recognizing the critical role of the Management Bureau in the Agency's management

agenda and its impact on the Agency's programs, I requested that a management assessment be conducted of the entire Bureau. This exercise examined the alignment of the Bureau's core functions, priority programs and staff against the Agency's development mandate. As a result of this effort, a new Senate confirmed Assistant Administrator for Management would be better able to lead a management reform agenda that streamlines the Agency's infrastructure, and ensures that its resources are focused and concentrated in support of the Secretary's vision for transformational diplomacy and overall U.S. foreign policy priorities and objectives. Unfortunately, there was no Assistant Administrator for Management candidate on the horizon and I had to lead the management reform agenda.

Recognizing that the Congressional mandate of overseas "rightsizing" and regionalization and its significant impact on Agency programs and business operations was an immediate and politically sensitive challenge, I initiated a major transformation of the State/USAID Joint Management Council (JMC) which had failed to develop a strategic vision for joint management partnership to guide the two agency's efforts as we restructured our overseas and domestic presence and operations. As a result, the Undersecretary for Management and the JMC were able to see the forest for the trees, and really collaborate on a strategically focused and results-oriented effort to collectively restructure our overseas presence in practical ways to eliminate duplication of functions, achieve synergies, economies of scale and ways to contain costs without sacrificing quality of services and USAID's business systems in the process.

In late 2005, the continuing constraints on the Agency's resources became even more problematic with the extremely large budgetary effect of Hurricane Katrina reconstruction. In the face of likely budget cuts government-wide, USAID was faced with a budget crisis that had serious implications for both the short and long term. In order to grapple with developing an overall agency approach to operating in a severely reduced resource environment, I chaired an agency-wide Operating Expense (OE) Working Group to develop and implement an austerity program to identify immediate areas for cost savings, and actions that would enable the Agency to continue to operate and work under severe budget constraints, both in the short and long term. Determined to ensure that the Agency did not suffer the same traumatic events from the budgetary crisis of the mid-1990s, which led to massive reduction in staff and reduced presence overseas. The working group developed a plan that enabled the Agency to live within the existing operating expense budget - a very painful process.

Q: Must have been a very painful process.

JORDAN: It was a very painful process. The comprehensive plan impacted virtually all segments of the Agency's infrastructure and functions, including human capital, management support services, regionalization, and overseas operations. In addition to a dramatic cut in Agency training, operating expense budgets for most operating units were cut by at least 10%. Unfunded requirements were carefully scrutinized, as were virtually all aspects of Agency operations. As a result of these efforts, the Agency was able to continue vital operations, and identify areas where real, immediate cost savings could be

found. The OE Working Group was a catalyzing force in ensuring that bureaus and independent offices carefully prioritized their activities and programs based on criteria that enhanced accountability, improved management and cost efficiency, as well as transparency.

The new Administrator, Randall Tobias imposed a new initiative that was a major sea change in how managers managed their operating expense budgets. As the Agency embarked on implementing the new Manage-to-Budget-To-Budget Initiative that began in FY '07, it required Agency's managers to strategically align OE resources to program resources. Moreover, the OE austerity plan developed by the OE Working Groups served as a prelude to ensure that Agency managers control costs, reduce overhead, and reduce the use of program funds for administrative expenses.

Under the new and improved Management Bureau the Agency made significant progress in implementing an ambitious, priority focused agenda to effect results-oriented change in business operations. These major initiatives included the development and implementation of globally deployed business systems and consolidation of services and integration of management structures with the Department of State. With the worldwide deployment of Phoenix, the Agency's new core accounting system, USAID made a quantum leap forward in achieving management efficiencies and accountability.

An area of contention with the Under-Secretary of State was the potential merger of the USAID/State IT infrastructure. State Department desperately wanted to merge USAID's IT network into their IT network. USAID's Chief Information Officer (CIO) quickly mobilized a complete and thorough cost analysis on the alternatives for State and USAID IT integration of their respective networks. As a result, USAID was able to effectively engage its State counterparts with concrete data and solid analysis to best determine joint recommendations for IT integration. The joint State/USAID team validated the cost figures and defined engineering impacts related to the integration of the two IT networks. This unprecedented effort provided top USAID and State management with the necessary information on the alternatives and the business case for IT integration. Despite USAID's compelling case to maintain two separate IT systems due to the high cost for USAID, USAID's high efficiency and high quality of service against the high organizational risk posture of the Department of State and the negative and costly impact on USAID's ability to conduct its core business overseas, State Department continued to insist on the merger. I understand that after I retired in 2008, State Department and USAID merged IT networks in a select number of countries.

Q: Well, Mosina, this was a pleasure. Absolutely Great!

JORDAN: Thank you for the opportunity to share my experiences with you.

End of interview