

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

LEONARD SANDMAN

*Interviewed by: Morris Weisz
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[Note: This interview was not edited by Mr. Sandman.]

Q: And this is Morris Weisz and the date is Friday, March 11, 1994. We are seated at a table at the beautiful new home of Leonard Sandman and his wife, Sonja. As usual we begin with a little bit about your family background, social history, education, etc.

SANDMAN: Well, I was born in Worcester, Mass. It was very much a Jewish ghetto. My grammar school was 90% Jews. We didn't really mix until we got into Junior High School which was a combination of Jews, Swedes and Irish, with Worcester being a very ethnic city....

I graduated from high school in 1944 on a Friday and I went into the Army the following Monday. I served t World War II, with the 42nd Rainbow Division in the heavy weapons company of machine guns and mortars.

My father was a merchant. He spoke Russian, Polish, Lithuanian and his English was also very good. He died when I was 17. My mother was born in New York City. Later her family moved to West Virginia.

After the Army, I went to West Virginia University. I guess that leads into how did I get interested in Labor and Foreign Affairs? Even though I used to lecture my daughter on needing to really plan your career and know where you are going, mine was totally unplanned. I remember at West Virginia University when I enrolled and moved into a fraternity house I really envied a guy who knew they wanted to be a doctor or lawyer. I had no idea what I wanted to be.

One of the fraternity brothers came into my room one night and he said that he was transferring to the Georgetown School of Foreign Service. And I said, "What's that?" And he said, "Well, it's a very good school in Washington, D.C.; part of Georgetown University. I wasn't feeling very challenged at West Virginia University and I liked this guy so I said, "I'll go with you." So I transferred with him to Georgetown University and then to the School of Foreign Service. That was where I first became aware of an institution called the Foreign Service of the United States and foreign policy and things of that sort.

Q: Before you continue on that what about your background in terms of politics, pro-Labor, anti-Labor? Did you have any?

SANDMAN: No. In my job it was absolutely innocent. My father was, to my knowledge, not active in the Labor-Zionist movement or the Socialist movement. And so unlike many of my colleagues, there was no family background in politics, in Labor, in Socialism or so forth. I did have an uncle in West Virginia who was president of the local musician's union but no family influence either in Foreign Affairs or in Labor.

But as I said, if Malcolm (my friend) had not transferred to Georgetown, I might have graduated from West Virginia University and gone back to Charleston and worked as an accountant for the rest of my life. And so careers are sometimes, you know, influenced by various innocuous events.

At that time, Georgetown School of Foreign Service was considered to be one of the best in the United States. I went in on the G.I. Bill of Rights. And that made it possible. Because I had no savings, my mother had no savings....

Q: Do you have any siblings?

SANDMAN: I have two older sisters and the middle aged one had passed away about eight or nine years ago. And I still have a sister who is about ten years older than I am and she lives in South Florida-not too far from where I am living now.

At Georgetown it so happened that there was a professor of government who was one of the few people at the school who took an interest in his students. And he selected about a half a dozen of his so-called "better students" and asked if we wanted to meet once a week in the evening and go a little bit further than he went in class. And he also invited some of his friends from government to come up and lecture. He had a lot of contacts. And he had contacts in the field of Labor.

Q: What was his name, do you remember?

SANDMAN: Professor Krause, he had served in the military government in Germany.... And so he encouraged us to accept internships. Now this was back in 1949 and while internships in Congressional offices, trade unions, and the State Department are very common now, in those days they were not. Professor Krause just had that interest in students and he had an opening at the AF of L, American Federation of Labor Research Department. He had known the research director, a woman by the name of Florence Thorn, and she created a sort-of assistant position.

The condition was that I would earn a secretaries salary...I reported to the research department which was on the Ninth floor. The president of the AF of L was William Greene. Secretary/Treasurer was George Meany. And I was taken into a rather small room

where there were two desks and I was introduced to my office mate-his name was Lane Kirkland.... I had helped him do a pension negotiation for sugar workers union and that was one of the early pension plans that was negotiated.

...He taught me how to use a slide rule and I just went down the lists of names and I had to compute the age and service and their social security and so forth. I just did the Labor work and the math. And later Lane got a secretary and I moved into the Executive Council room which was fascinating.

...It was interesting because when the Executive Council met we just sort of continued our business but listened to the proceedings. And many of the very famous Labor leaders were in it.

I then met a fellow-Phil Delaney-and he was the international representative of the AF of L attending-he was the worker delegate to the ILO [International Labor Organization].

...He also did other international work of the AF of L and once I started talking with him he told me about a Labor Attaché program of the Foreign Service. And that if I was interested to let him know and he would recommend my name.

At this point at AF of L I was doing various kinds of research. It was the centennial of [Samuel] Gompers birthday who was the founder and long-time president of the AF of L and so I had to read all of Gompers writings and be familiar with what he had to say on many issues and compile the research that was used in the speech making and so forth.

And I then did a study on, of all things, trade. And this is very interesting because there was a proposal called the Havana Charter for international trade. It was meant to establish a trade organization under the umbrella of the United Nations to work towards free trade and the elimination of barriers and so forth.

And I was assigned to do the research on what the AF of L position should be. And I read the usual books and most academics are in favor of free trade. So I was strongly influenced by what I read. My recommendations were that the AF of L should endorse. However, there were many interests in the AF of L that were hurt by free trade. At that time it was the bicycle workers and the pottery workers and the glass workers, who opposed free trade because they were very severely adversely affected. So the AF of L eventually took the position which of endorsing the world charter but with very, very grave reservations and protection for workers who did.

In the end the Havana Charter was voted down in the United States and other countries. Later it was proposed in a general agreement on trade and tariffs. GATT [General Agreement on Trade and Tariffs] has been the world institution for trade regulation up until today. But having followed recently the NAFTA [North Atlantic Free Trade Agreement] negotiations and the position of Labor, I said, "Hey, things haven't changed much."

At that time the CIO [Congress of Industrial Organizations] was a very strong advocate of free trade. The unions of the CIO were the auto workers, chemical workers and the steel workers which were all great exporters of their products. Later the CIO began to slowly change as steel and autos from Japan came in; they became just as much anti-free trade as the old craft unions. Although the interests of both members of the AF of L-the building trades and so on-would have been served by cheaper products. But Labor has a tendency to support those people who will be adversely affected even though they may be a minority. As I said, things have not changed all that much.

My work in the AF of L brought me into touch with the history of the workers movement-the history of organized Labor in the United States, the functions of trade unions, the function of collective bargaining. I was fascinated with it and really enjoyed what I was doing.

Q: What were your relations with people like Margaret Scattergood in the research department? Who were the people there who impressed you?

SANDMAN: Well, Lane [Kirkland] impressed me but he was never terribly friendly. The research director was a woman named Florence Thorn who very few people knew. Florence went to work for Samuel Gompers in 1911 and pretty much lived in the past. She later went into retirement when George Meany became president. Margaret Scattergood was Florence's housemate and was a member of the research department; she also ran an economic newsletter. There was Peak Henley who went on to the Labor Department and Burt Sideman who later became much more involved in international affairs. So the relations were one of a junior employee intern to more senior people.

Q: What about the relations with the international department?

SANDMAN: The international department was Phil Delaney. ...At that time there were no "staff" of the international department. The staff came later when the AF of L and the CIO merged and Jay Lovestone became the Director and Mike Waas was the Deputy Director of the CIO International Relations. With the merger there became a department of International Affairs. But by this time I had left I left around 1953, I think.

Q: Is that when you took the Foreign Service exam?

SANDMAN: No. I came in through what was then called the lateral entry program. At that time Labor Attachés were selected on the basis of recommendations from the AF of L and CIO, mainly people who worked for the trade unions. This was largely staff people, it was rarely the officers of trade unions.

Q: What about the Labor Attachés who came in from the Foreign Service?

SANDMAN: ...That came after 1955. After the merger, the AFL-CIO decided that they really didn't want to nominate the Labor Attachés. They decided it was basically a program of the State Department but they continued to take a very close interest in the program and were always supportive of it. So the entry in 1955-56 became more open. People from the Labor department and National Labor Relations Board were being included. I remember Rue Silverberg came from the NLRB.

And then, at a certain point, it changed to FSO's who opted at one point to go into the Labor field. But few of them looked at the Labor Attaché program as a career. It was sort of another assignment: political officer, economic officer. And they were trained up at Harvard Trade Union Program. But ...that came in the late 1950's, early 1960's.

I was nominated to the State Department ...by Phil Delaney and I was interviewed and approved. However, there were no openings at the time in the Labor Department.

Q: How were you interviewed?

SANDMAN: ...By a panel. And I regret that I forget who was on the panel.

Q: Somebody from the Labor Department maybe?

SANDMAN: There may have been. There were two Foreign Service one was Phil Sullivan. He was the East Asian Labor Advisor who later died in an airplane crash while he was on duty trying to cross the Pacific. For me, it was a very easy exam and no problem.

Q: I would like to interrupt now for a few minutes and tell you why it is very relevant to our project. And that is this Professor Kraus evidently met, from what you say, Joe Keenan in the American Occupation. Now we have had a very few interesting interviews of people in the Occupation period who were engaged in this internal fight between those people in the Occupation forces.

SANDMAN: In the military government? And yes, he had Joe Keenan as a friend and a contact....

Q: In the military government, excuse me, who took sides on one of the two major groups in disagreement. One, the trade unionists like Joe Keenan from Wisconsin, who felt that the situation was such that they should support efforts to dig a hole for Germany and defeat any objectives they might have to become was a world power again.

SANDMAN: The Communists and pro-Communists in the military government favored the Russian position of down-grading Germany. And they were allied with the Morgenthau Plan people. And then the other group in the Occupation was a group of wood, loom, trade unionists and academicians-people with Labor backgrounds who felt

that we shouldn't repeat the 1920's period when Hitlerism was really created, from their point of view, out of the misery of the Versailles Treaty.

Q: Did Krause ever discuss that with you? He must have been involved in that.

SANDMAN: No. I don't think Krause was involved in Labor...

...He focused a good deal on nationalism. And for his little seminar group I did a paper on Labor and Nationalism and Internationalism and how Nationalism did win out in the world Labor movement.

I continued contact with Krause and I was most grateful to him as patron pushing me in the direction of a career which I thoroughly enjoyed. I later lost contact with him. As often happens in the Foreign Service, you go abroad and lose touch with a lot of the people you knew in the Washington area.

Q: Well, you then get your first assignment.

SANDMAN: Well, actually, my first overseas assignment was with the, what is now called USAID.... And I went off to Bangkok as a training officer. But before I was assigned there was a freeze on the Labor Attaché Program and there were just no vacancies at that time. I sort of got frustrated so I took a leave of absence-a one year leave and went off to Europe.

My wife and I went with backpacks to Yugoslavia. I remember that very vividly. This was back in 1959-1960 and I guess we had no appreciation for the depth of hostilities between the Serbs and the Muslims and other groups within the Yugoslav Federation. But we ended up in Israel where we lived on a kibbutz [collective community in Israel, often based on agriculture]. I studied Hebrew and Sonja, my wife, had to work in the kitchen because she already knew Hebrew. She didn't like that but she enjoyed life on the kibbutz. And then we got a cable from USAID, that if I wanted to go to Bangkok, Thailand as a training officer I should advise them.

Q: So you took the oral exam with three friendly types, one of whom may have been Solomon, probably was and then you were on "hold"?

SANDMAN: Yes. The Labor Department asked me to come over and they said you have very good experience in the domestic field of Labor from the Federation point of view and we have an opening that would be very useful in arranging the programs of people sent to the United States under AID or ILO or Point 4, to study trade unions, Labor relations, manpower, productivity. And I agreed to that because it was true. What I did in the AF of L, I had a counterpart in the Chamber of Commerce doing the same thing because I did research for legislative work. Some research in answering requests for information from the public, students, and some of the Labor affiliates-the directly affiliated unions.

But I didn't really have intimate knowledge of the national unions, the local unions. So, I went over to the Labor Department, you know, pending an opening in the Foreign Service and that opening just didn't come. That freeze stayed on for about four or five years.

Q: Then you were then in the Bureau of Labor and Statistics?

SANDMAN: No. I was in the Office of International Labor Affairs. It later became a Bureau of International Labor Affairs. One of its activities was arranging the training programs. This experience for the next three to four years to me was more valuable than the Ph. D. in Labor. I traveled the whole country with these groups arranging their programs, escorting them and got to know the national leaders, the local leaders, steel mills, coal mines. Every place where we wanted to go. And then getting to spend time with the trade union people from Japan, from India, from Indonesia, from the Philippines, That to me was the most wonderful education and obtained in the most pleasant way. I remember that the per diem was \$12.00 per day, it doesn't sound like much but we made money on that as hotels were four or five dollars. As I said, that was the most wonderful experience. It made me very, very knowledgeable and very self-confident of my grasp of the American Labor Movement of the American society and so forth.

Q: It also gave you contacts in the Labor Movement.

SANDMAN: Oh, yes. Not that I could exploit. Phil Delaney was my "godfather". And I knew that Phil would always look after me. But my problem was really waiting for something to develop in the Labor Attaché Program. And then finally some jobs did open and I didn't get them. And I took the leave of absence and then the offer to go to Bangkok, Thailand and so I accepted that. After about a year and a half in Bangkok, the Labor Department asked if I was interested in going to India as Assistant Labor Attaché. That was the first opening that they thought I could fill. And so I agreed.

Q: You said the Labor Department? They were in a position to nominate you?

SANDMAN: At that time, I had already been nominated by the AF of L. So my name had already been approved by the State Department. ...One of the very historic figures in the Labor Attaché Program was a guy named Jim Taylor. Taylor was the one who contacted the prospective Labor Attachés and brought people on and was an important figure in transfers and assignments.

The Department of Labor had a statutory role on the Foreign Service Board. The Labor Department did want to have its own Labor Attaché Program and as I understand it, the State Department's response was that unlike agriculture and science and so forth, their interest in Labor was largely political. They agreed to a Labor Attaché Program but under the direction of the State Department, though the Labor Department had a role in designing and administering the program, and the selection and recruitment of Labor

Attachés. And in establishing the reporting requirements. So it was jointly administered program.

And so it was Jim Taylor who wrote to me and asked me if I would like to go to India as Assistant Labor Attaché. And so finally I went into the Foreign Service in the Labor program.

Q: You arrived there-I'm trying to get dates here.

SANDMAN: 1961. We went to Bangkok in 1959, our daughter, Julie, was born there. Trade unions were outlawed. And several trade union leaders were jailed and "Labor" was kind of a dirty word; even the word "manpower". My wife went to work for the University of Hawaii administering a contract on vocational training and they wanted to call it the SEATO. At that time SEATO was the South East Asian Treaty Organization composed of the five Asian states and the United States. And the Thai's objected to the word "manpower" because it was too close to Labor. But anyhow, it went as the Manpower Program.

Trade unions were associated largely with the Chinese and Communism. And as I said, they banned it. But we were there during a very high period of dictatorial military rule.

Then we went to India. I entered the Foreign Service and left AID.

Q: Do you remember what your entering grade was in the old system?

SANDMAN: FSO-5, I think.

... It was, you know, mid-level. And that was a lateral entry. So, I didn't come in the traditional way and I didn't have to serve in Consular work and work my way up through the ranks. Lateral entry was a nice program. And it was intended to bring into the Foreign Service specialties and skills that the Foreign Service were in short supply. That included Labor, Science, and Geography. We had a geographical attaché. And of course, the Defense Department had its own attaché program. Agriculture Department had its own agricultural attaché program.

So, I went to work for Dan Horowitz, who had recently arrived as Labor Attaché. And Dan was considered the first Labor Attaché ever to go into the Foreign Service and was hired, I think, in 1943 to go to Chile. So Dan was one of the much respected people in the Labor Attaché Program. He had served mainly in Europe. He was sent out to India because the State Department had a high interest in India.

The State Department was looking for very competent people. And there had been some very competent predecessors in the Labor Field, like Dave Burgess who came out of the CIO. But basically a missionary background-had worked for organizing agricultural workers and Dave was Labor Attaché. And there was Henri Sokolove who succeeded

Dave. So there was a good record of good Labor Attachés. And Dan was Labor Attaché, I sort of apprenticed under him. He was very intelligent very politically sophisticated, very forceful and sometimes a very difficult guy to get along with. But we survived and have become very, very, close friends up until our respective retirements and until today.

Now in India, the Labor Attaché function was a fairly, let me say, traditional one in that its focus was largely on the trade union movement, the collective bargaining scene, industrial relations. Some concern over what is happening in the field of employment, unemployment, manpower training, etc. In part, it was being responsive to the Labor Department's interest in data and responding to the State Department's interest in the political aspects of Labor.

India is a very big country. And India is like Europe- It has 16 different languages, different cultures, different foods. It is many, many countries that have been lumped into one. And the fact that it is even held together, largely by the English language and the British railroads... and that it has not split apart, is really a wonder. It is also a country with very, very marked ethnic divisions between Hindu and Muslim and so forth.

But being such a large country it did take a major effort to be familiar with the leadership, the organizational structure, the politics, etc. And unlike the Political Officer or the Economic Officer at the Embassy whose jurisdiction was the New Delhi consulate area, we also covered Labor for the Bombay consulate area, the Calcutta consulate area and the Madras consulate area, which had populations of 40-50 million-much larger than most countries in the world.

And so it was a full time job. The Labor Movement was highly political with its alignments to the Congress Party, really the Socialist Party and the Communist Party had their respected trade union wings. And later as other political parties came in they also looked at the trade union field for adherence. And the trade union leaders all came out of political parties. And so the Embassy was interested in what is happening, particularly what is happening in the Communist Labor field. Perhaps one of the most capable Labor leaders was a man by the name of Gange who was head of the Communist Labor Movement.

We did not have much contact. Our contacts were mainly with the Congress Party Labor leaders and with the Socialist Party Labor leaders.

Q: I'd like to know a couple of things about the functioning of the Labor Office in terms of how Dan divided the function between yourself and him. Did you just cut it in half and or did you have some functional breakdown? One covering the parties and one the trade unions. Or one, one trade union and one, another

SANDMAN: Well, the boss goes to the party and the Assistant does the work. Or Dan took the more important aspects or the ones that interested him the most. But it was nice relationship. But actually, it is funny. This question never came up how we divided work.

There was just sort of a flow of work and Dan said, "Here, you take this." And I would perhaps draft the annual Labor Report and Dan would polish it up. And all of my reporting of course, had to be approved by Dan.

We both worked on the AID Labor Program and the USIS [United States Information Service].

Q: What was the relationship to the other functions of the Embassy? Within the Embassy, you know, who attends a certain congress. Did you get to do some of that? Or because it involved travel and high-level consultation, did you not get that?

SANDMAN: What, attending conferences?

Q: Congresses, of trade unions or political parties.

SANDMAN: I don't know. I went to all of the conferences and some Dan went to and some he delegated to me.

Q: That is what I wanted to know because in some other posting there is a much stricter line of demarcation.

SANDMAN: At that time there were none...

Q: What was the influence of the Embassy Labor office on what the AID people did if at all? Approval of projects, individuals.

SANDMAN: Well, the Labor projects were very limited in scope. Trade union training. We had some assistance to vocational training, Labor statistics and so forth.

Q: ILO programs?

SANDMAN: At that time there were no big ILO projects in India. And the Labor projects were, I would say, innocuous.

They were not controversial. They were sort of the traditional things that we had always done. And my own interest at that point hadn't really developed. It came somewhat later on. The feeling that AID should spend much more money on human resource development and that was the best investment that you could make in a country. The AID philosophy in the early days was largely to build factories and to build infrastructure. And we discovered that human resource development is the best development. Japan has no resources. But it had a highly skilled and motivated work force.

Q: Were you successful in influencing the AID people either directly or through the AID Labor people towards this emphasis toward human resource development?

SANDMAN: I wouldn't say that we were successful. We were voices. And there were some people in the Labor office in Washington, Bud Nelson and others, who argued for the human resource aspect of development. But you know, you have different directors of AID and various economists from different schools of thought. And the prevailing one in those days was focus on infrastructure and build factories. And I guess it was based on the "Trickle-Down" Theory and as I said, their failure.

Now today, in the United States, we recognize that the best investment is in people and that without a skilled Labor force we cannot compete or grow. And job creation; President Clinton keeps talking about job creation. The handful of us who are interested in that aspect always talked about job creation. That this should be a goal of development, particularly when there were vast numbers of unemployed people. The word job creation, I think, was a word used by Labor Attachés and some of the AID manpower specialists but it was rarely used by AID itself.

But later on, in Indonesia this became a subject. Perhaps let me touch upon it when we get to Indonesia.

Q: Within the Embassy there was also the USIA program where there was no separate Labor office. But they conducted a number of other types of projects. What was the Labor office of the Embassy's attitude toward the information program?

SANDMAN: Well, the USIS office in New Delhi pretty much delegated to the Labor Attaché office. The Labor Attaché was the editor of the monthly Labor review. We selected the trade union candidates for the specialist program. We arranged the program for American Labor specialists. It was a very good relationship. Later on, after I left, I think USIS had experimented with a Labor officer in the form of a fellow, Joe Glasier, later appointed a Labor Officer. I don't know how that worked out.

But those were days when there was lots of money. Money was never a real obstacle. If you had a good idea and you sold it to the proper people, you marketed it, you know, you could do it. But when I look at the Labor Attaché Program or the whole program of Foreign Relations today, I am glad that I served in a time of affluence in our resources. Whether we used the wisely is another question.

Q: How did you go about selecting individuals for the IVP program (International Visitor Program)? Pretty much it was turned over to you as to recommending people who would go?

SANDMAN: Oh, yeah. They never questioned that role and never rejected a candidate that we proposed. We drafted the cables and as I said, it was a period of good cooperation, no problems. We saw that whatever Labor books we wanted in the USIS library were there.

Q: Good. Any comment about the position of the Labor Office within the Embassy? Dan was a member of the country team, was he?

SANDMAN: He was a member of the country team. He attended the country team meetings. Weekly meetings with the Ambassador.

He was in the political section.

Q: Relations with the economic?

SANDMAN: They were good. There were no problems. They would clear whatever reporting that we did, which was in the economic field.

Q: More importantly, within the economic field, did they clear their cables with you about general economic analysis for India to see if there was another facet to it?

SANDMAN: No. They didn't. We were, at that time, very well occupied with the trade union Labor relations field. We never sought perhaps to look at their reporting. And so these issues did not come up.

Also as I said, this was my first tour. I was the Assistant Labor Attaché. I was learning. This changed perhaps later on as I went into other posts as Labor Attaché with a lot more experience.

Q: Well, experience or not, the tentative conclusion that I have come to as a person who has observed so many and heard so many stories is that there was always a willingness on the part of the economic section if the Labor office was in the political section, to look over what was prepared to see what the economic analysis from the Labor point of view showed. But much less of an interest in telling the Labor people this is the way we read the economic news and if you people have anything to say about whether there is a negative aspects to our analysis, we are not to keen on it.

SANDMAN: Well, as I said, later on, as I had much more experience, I did argue certain positions in the Embassy, particularly on the national budget. It was always a major document. I used to kid the people in the political section that this is the major political document of the government. It tells how our assets are to be allocated, who will get rich and who will get poor.

It also shows how power follows political lines. Who has the influence to determine resource allocation. And I said the political section ought to report that in political terms because that is what Washington should be interested in. But even in this country the budget was always looked at as an economic document, not a political document. And yet it is the most political document.

...So, I always thought that the Embassy sometimes was not structured right. That in the days of Adam Smith there was a field called political economy. And then we divided that into political and economic. And really, it is a very false division. Because somebody once defined politics as "Who gets What" which is also key in the study of economics, and so the fact that maybe oil people have a lot of political power. We have big oil depletion allowances in our taxes which permit oil people to get wealthier.

And children have no political power in the United States or in most countries and therefore we do not devote as much resources to children as we do to senior citizens, who are well organized. And so you have to look at who gets what in accordance to power with who has the power.

And money flows, assets flow to that. And that is true in Third World countries. Very often what AID or the U.S. wanted to expand or improve the economics of the country they were developing new classes and they were shifting economic or political power. And sometimes when we wanted stability we had the dilemma between maintaining the status quo and altering economic distribution which would shift political power, whether it be to workers or peasants or what. And so we have conflict between our goal of political stability, particularly with friendly governments, and economic development.

Q: Well, you spent two years in India as an Assistant Labor Attaché. Was that your only assistant post?

SANDMAN: Yes. It was my only title as assistant. The next post, again, the reason for sending me there was a little bit unusual. I was sent to Malaysia. And we had two Labor positions. Labor Attaché in Singapore and the Labor Attaché in Kuala Lumpur.

Q: The countries had just separated?

SANDMAN: No. The countries had just come together. Malaysia came into existence with Singapore. But there was that period that we maintained the Embassy in Singapore and we had the Embassy in Kuala Lumpur. Abe Kramer was assigned to Singapore. And Abe was one of the very remarkable Labor Attachés. He had a great gift of influencing people and establishing very trusting relationships with the Labor union, trade union leadership.

Abe came down with Leukemia in Singapore and the State Department did not want to move him right out of Singapore. And so I was asked by State and Labor if I would go to in Kuala Lumpur as Labor Attaché and also go down to Singapore and work with Abe and just make sure that in Abe's sort of declining health, that everything was being done. So I had my independence as Labor Attaché in KL and traveled to Singapore. And then Abe was transferred to Guadalajara. It was known it would be his last post.

I then took over, I was Labor Attaché in both Singapore and in Kuala Lumpur. And so I started out in that role of really helping Abe and then taking over the both posts. It was an

entirely different country than India. A little bit more prosperous. Much prettier than India in many places, a country with lush jungles and greenery. I always remember how green it was where as India was kind of dusty and brown.

Q: Except for a couple of weeks after the monsoons.

SANDMAN: Yeah. So there was the question of how I operate, what I do. The trade union movement under the old federation of Malaya, on the mainland, was dominated by Indians. Malaysia had three ethnic groups: Malays, Chinese, and Indians. The Indians came to Malaysia from South India to be plantation workers, and to be the clerks on the plantations. And then many came to be government officials. They had a command of English and British training. They fit in nicely. There were a few professionals-Indian doctors and lawyers but they were very much a minority community.

But the trade union movement was dominated by Indians. The best known leader of the Malaysian trade union movement was P.P. Narayanan who had organized a very, very successful plantation workers union. He also became active in the international Labor movement and eventually ended up as the president of the Malaysian branch of ICFTU [International Confederation of Free Trade Unions]. So there was a lot of interest in who P.P. is and what was happening with the plantation workers and the general Labor movement, which was mainly railway workers. The miners in the British tin mines, although not the Chinese, and the public sector were highly organized.

I made the usual trade union contacts and the usual reporting about Labor relations and the public sector on the plantations which was the main source of foreign exchange.

Singapore had its own very unique Labor history. It was a history of political Labor leadership. Singapore is mainly Chinese, a minority Malay population, and some Indian. Again, the Indians were as active in the Labor movement there as they were on the mainland. Singapore had a very, very, strong history of militancy in their Labor movement. When the British were there, the militancy was aimed at getting the British out and by creating industrial chaos and industrial unrest and strikes that helped the British decide to leave Singapore and turn over self rule to Singaporeans.

Lee Kuan Yew, a very brilliant Chinese lawyer from Singapore who graduated with double honors from Oxford-I think one of the very few people who did that- came back to Singapore and used the Labor movement as his springboard into political life and the position of Prime Minister. Lee, who was a professed Socialist, became a very tough socialist, and told the unions it is our country now and we are going to have to tighten our belts and go to work. He also gave a beautiful headquarters to the trade union congress.

But he appointed a director of research to help them understand the realities of economic life and how much money they can ask for and can settle for. And the fellow who did that later went on to head the Ministry Intelligence department of the Singapore government

and then ended up as Ambassador. And the famous Labor leader was an Indian, Devan Nair who had been in the Communist movement later broke and supported Lee.

Towards the end, the government really took over the Labor movement. ...Singapore was expelled by Malaysia because of the fear of the Malays that Lee Kuan Yew's party, called the People's Action Party, would invade the mainland political stream.

Lee was trying to develop a politics of class- that the Chinese bus driver and the Malay bus driver had more in common than the Malay bus driver and the Malay owner of the bus company. And that struck fear into the Malays. So Singapore was expelled. Singapore, needing industrialization, felt it had to curb its militancy in the Labor movement so that the fear of strikes and militancy would not deter American investment.

As I began to look around as to what were the real dangers here in achieving our goals of political and social stability in Malaysia, it became apparent that it was ethnic relationships. The Chinese were about 40% of the population but controlled the economy. The Malays were 50% of the population-largely poor-but controlled the politics of the country. The Indians were about 10% and were really a minority people.

The competition and the conflict between the Malays and the Chinese was just growing. I began to focus much of my time on what is happening in the work place in terms of ethnic conflict. What was happening to the intelligent utilization of manpower where more and more jobs for Malays had to be reserved. Malays tended not to study science and math. They studied the Koran and found it difficult to move into the better paying jobs.

There was also the beginning of violence. We just kept our ears to the ground for any kind of violence. I did a lot of reporting on that and I thought it was important.

Q: Who were the U.S. Ambassadors to Singapore?

SANDMAN: When I was there it was Ambassador Bell. He was very, very pro-Labor... his wife's brother was a steel worker shop steward in Buffalo. If I had problems I would go see Ambassador Bell.

Q: Were you a member the country team?

SANDMAN: No, I was not a member. I don't think the country team approach was very strong in the Embassy in Kuala Lumpur

Q: Did you have some general overall impact at the Embassy? Or only when Labor things came to the floor?

SANDMAN: Well, I define Labor in as broad a way as I could. Everything impacts Labor.

Q: I am not talking about your definition. I am talking about the Embassy's definition.

SANDMAN: The Embassy did not have a dictionary that defined Labor. If somebody was there to make a contribution they respected their integrity, you were accepted if you made a contribution to what they were interested in.

Q: Did you have an opportunity to contribute though? Did you know what was going on?

SANDMAN: Yes. I read everything. It was a small Embassy. There were also informal communications and you learn more at lunch and parties and so forth.

Q: I think you realize there are some cases where that sort of openness does not exist.

SANDMAN: Well, look. Every embassy has traffic that is for the Ambassador only. And there is some traffic that the Ambassador complained that he did not see. And so everybody has a complaint that they are not being told everything. And this became most apparent in Korea when during the capture by the North Koreans of a Naval Electronics Intelligence Ship. The North Koreans took the crew in and held them in the North Korean prison. And we know that the North Koreans are generally pretty tough and these people would be subjected to torture and very inhumane conditions.

The Embassy, when we began to negotiate with the North Koreans, decided that the political section officers would be the duty officers. And so every third night we were on duty. And that meant you went into the Embassy and read everything. And then when you were off duty you read the regular traffic....

Q: Well, we have gone onto Korea, which was your next post. Anything else on Singapore and KL?

SANDMAN: No. They were very, very pleasant posts. This was where I began to sense my own way and how I would like to see the Labor Attaché position used. And that it was certainly broader than the trade union movement, particularly in Third World countries where the problems are poverty and jobs. And that is Labor to me- distribution.

Q: Did your connections with P.P. Narayanan help you later on in your career?

SANDMAN: P.P. and I were very friendly. We used to walk together every morning at six. He once told me that he used to walk. And I said, "Gee that must be nice". And he said, "Why don't you join me?" So I joined his little walking group. But you know, you don't use it to get information. But it had its payoffs and you'd simply become closer. But P.P. didn't need any advice. He was a very savvy guy.

Q: Did knowing him help you in your relations. For instance, if you go to a new post and the head of union is Mr. X and you say "I know P.P. or I have had things to do with him," would it help?

SANDMAN: The Koreans had very little knowledge of other places.

Q: I see.

SANDMAN: And P.P. was probably better known in Europe or the United States. Devon Nier was not known outside of his country...

I discovered also that when I went from India to Malaysia and in India, I thought the sun set around India and the whole world revolved around Nehru. Then I went to Malaysia and discovered that they had very little interest in the Indians...

Q: Anything else in Korea? Anything special?

SANDMAN: Well, Korea was an extremely fascinating post. We hadn't had a regular Labor attaché there for many years. I think I was, perhaps, the first. The Labor position had for many years been used as a cover for CIA. And the guy who did the Labor reporting was very good. I thought he did a good job- he was very intelligent and he spoke Korean. He spent half his time on Labor and half on doing other things. ...But very often their reporting tends to be based on intelligence reporting from their counterparts. And their counterparts report on the corruption in this and that in the trade union movement, so the picture that the U.S. government is getting is that the Korean trade union movement is government controlled and infiltrated and so forth. Some of that was true.

When I got to Korea I decided that I should get out of Seoul and see what was happening in the coal mines and on the ports and so on. Language was a problem. I had to use an interpreter quite a bit. I knew some elementary Korean, but not enough to get along with. Whereas in India and Malaysia, English was the wider spoken language so there was not a real serious problem.

But I discovered that as you get further away from Seoul there is a thrust for democracy -- to not be controlled by the government and so forth. There is a very authoritarian government, very repressive to trade unions and as I said, infiltrated through what is called "the rock", the Republic of Korea CIA. And very closely monitored. I felt that there was potential in the Labor movement that was in favor of democratic institutions.

Later the students in Korea were the most assertive. They caused the downfall of Syngman Rhee, the first leader... Korea was a very sad country in that they had been controlled by the Japanese. And then the glimmer of independence and democracy was quickly squelched by Rhee and invasion by North Korea.

I did appeal to the AF of L-CIO that they should be more supportive of the Korean trade union movement. That yes, it was very much government controlled but as you get into the local level and out into the workplace there is potential there that is worth supporting.

Q: Is there any explanation or indication of why as far as the U.S. government is concerned we went in and out of having a Labor Attaché there? Was it because the Ambassador or American foreign policy or a particular thrust of an American trade union?.

SANDMAN: One, I think that the AF of L-CIO had probably never pushed for one because they had sort of "written off" the Labor movement there as being insignificant. I think that was the same view of the Labor Department. There was an Ambassador, Wynn Brown, who wanted a Labor Attaché. However, the history that I got was somewhat -- just what I was told. That he had turned down a couple of candidates who were offered because of things that they had done in the past. They were sort of active in ways that were not seen by the Embassy as being helpful.

Q: On the theory that they would be just as active in Korea as against the theory that they would.

SANDMAN: The CIA would quickly throw them out. And Sandman was sold to him as a nice, quite sort of guy, more reflective person. And would behave himself in a sober way and so forth. And so he accepted my name and I transferred from Malaysia to Korea. And I say, here again, a totally different kind of a country than Malaysia and India.

Another difference that struck me at the very early stages was that a Third World country was supposed to be short of skilled Labor. And I discovered that some 40,000 Korean workers were in Vietnam. And I questioned as to whether that was impeding Korean development. I talked to people at AID as to what projects are being held up by lack of skilled workers. And they said, "None". I said, "Where does Korea get all of these workers?" They never looked into that. And I began talking to many Koreans. And it turns out that all males go into the Korean Army. And in the Army they learn to type, they learn to drive trucks. And so you come out -- people who are truck drivers are quickly trained to drive bulldozers and backhoes and so forth. People who can work a keyboard can be quickly trained and so forth.

And also in Malaysia there was one university. In Korea, there were probably 30 or 40 universities. Education was very high in the Korean culture. And so you had many more people coming out of universities. And so we could send off 40,000 Koreans to Vietnam. There were some 10,000 Korean coal miners in Germany and there were nurses in England. Later the export of Labor became a major foreign exchange source for Korea. And so there was an interesting answer to: can military conscription be a very useful thing in terms of training? Developing ethics, work habits and discipline-everything that one needs to have a job. Which in growing sectors, perhaps in our own country, are somewhat alien -- the getting up on time and catching a bus and knowing where to get off.

Q: Did any of those things sort of apply to a civilian conservation corps type of concept?

SANDMAN: Look, we had our own CC program. It was very successful. The program that is being introduced by the current administration I think is not adequate to meet the needs where politically a larger program would be acceptable. I don't know. But then again it is expensive and we are working in a period where resources are very limited. And so we have a lot to learn.

Q: In conclusion, what you say is that we need constituency of a war situation to make it necessary to carry on good work which has a broader significance.

SANDMAN: It may be. But...

Q: I said it, not you.

SANDMAN: In getting back to Korea. I worked closely here with AID and began to look at how they were spending their money- what assets they were putting into the education system in Korean.

Q: Did they have a special program?

SANDMAN: They did not have a Labor program as such. I did talk to AID about having a major... Well, let me back up. There was a university, Jesuit University in Korea called Sogan, and it had a Labor institute which was run by a Jesuit priest. We became quite friendly. He had a Korean Labor leader who went to work for him; they began to run trade union training programs. These were independent of the government.

Q: These were American Jesuits?

SANDMAN: Yes, he was an American Jesuit. But the Germans largely supported that and they supported the trade union training program. And I thought, "Gee, Americans have such a bigger stake in Korea, we ought to be doing something." And I talked to people in AID. But it was just not in the books that they go into a major way subsidizing work education.

But in other areas they had agreed in terms of -- but you didn't have to push them because they saw so quickly that the Koreans were a very capable people. And what you spent in Korea was well used. Korea also at that time, and this was 1966, was judged a "basket case" by the U.S. government. That it was so poor in resources, etc., that it would perhaps always have to be on some sort of "dole" of the United States. And Park Chung-hee who had replaced Syngman Rhee in a military coup was a very dictatorial, military, authoritarian leader. Park Chung-hee had very, very ambitious plans. And he asked the American government for money to build a highway from Seoul to Busan in the South.

And this is what sometimes happens to American aid. We spent several million dollars to bring out consultants and teams etc. and so it was full employment for those people and they concluded that first there should be the system of feeder roads into a proposed highway so that the Korean farmers would have a way of getting to the highway, otherwise it would not be used. And Park Chung-hee said sort of, the heck with you. They financed the road and it revolutionized the countryside, because Korean farmers found their way.

As I say, the Koreans are very, very energetic and industrious people. I was called in by what was called the Korean Overseas Corporation which was the governmental organization that handled the export of Labor. Evidently he had been reading some old books about Alaska and he said that his government is ready to help the United States develop Alaska. He says, "As you know our workers are accustomed to the cold and have good skills," and I said, "Mr. Minister, I appreciate it very much and will report this to my government. But at the moment in Alaska one of the problems is unemployment." Because we had offered very, very attractive wages to people who would go up and build the pipeline and we had thousands of skilled workers who had finished the job.

Q: And are unemployed.

SANDMAN: Yeah. Koreans were, you know -- and it is in our own assessments which were made I think, by more traditional economists when looking ahead at prospects in Korea -- looked at it in very conventional economic terms and they didn't calculate the human resource factor: the skills, the determination, the character of the Korean people. They are very hard working people.

And when I sit today and see that our Secretary of State must go to Korea and plead that they buy more from the United States because we have a trade imbalance. In a very short space of time from this country that was a "basket case" that has now built its own automobiles. It is the leading ship-building country in the world. It is now running into some problems but so are the rest of the economies of Europe and some of Asia.

When I was there, the U.S. investors were just beginning to come in. We had three electronics factories; we had two banks and a couple of garment factories. And I kept in very close touch with them. When they called on the Embassy they usually saw the Commercial Attaché in the economic section. I told the Commercial Attaché that I think I should see any prospective American investor because they will want to know about wages and trade unions and so forth. And so he made sure that those who had the time got up and saw me. When they came into the section and they saw that it was the political section and they were impressed and they quickly got onto the subject of politics. This was the first opportunity to talk. Now this is 1966 and I am sure that much has changed in the way that Embassies handle briefings for American businessmen.

But business investment is largely dictated by the perception of political stability. They wanted to know that if the North Koreans were to attack, would we -- the US -- support

the South Koreans. They were interested in the question of corruption. Businessmen are not against corruption but corruption is very difficult to plan for. It is difficult to make cost estimates unless you know the components of all of the costs. And if you don't know how much you are going to pay off Minister X or Y, that is an uncertainty and business doesn't like uncertainties.

It was interesting that, later, as I met people and became more intimate, that the cost of the Labor component of a chip is 10%. I asked why do you bargain so hard and why do you set your wages low-you could double your wages. And they said, "Well, we didn't come here on any social mission. We really don't worry about Labor costs." Because where Labor is a small part of cost and important that they can adjust the technology. They use very primitive technology in Korea but when Labor prices went up they introduced better, more advanced technology.

Q: Like the United States did.

SANDMAN: Yeah. But now I was beginning to discover more about what we call "Industrial Location". Why U.S. investors go to certain places. It is true -- cheap wages, low wages is a factor. There are other factors which are more important. I asked why the first industries went to Hong Kong. And Hong Kong has superb communications

So Hong Kong had many attractive features to induce American investment, as did Taiwan. In Korea, another facet of my job and in some ways perhaps, one of the more important ones, is the Labor relations of the U.S. forces in Korea. And here again, the Embassy had not had Labor officers who had a background in Labor relations and trade unions and so forth so I immediately established contacts with 8th Army. I had the encouragement of the Ambassador and the DCM.

Q: Now we have which Ambassador-has it changed?

SANDMAN: It is still Win Brown and then later Porter. And they were very concerned because we have very crucial military interests, strategic interests in Korea. And Labor relations can be a very irritant in our relationships. Particularly as in the press the military is accused of abusing their workers, exploiting their workers and mistreating their workers.

And as I developed insights into the whole history of employment of Koreans by the U.S. military there are many examples of that in which there was indeed a lot of exploitation and abuse. It is a period of our history that I don't think we can be proud of. Perhaps there were reasons. We had just come out of a very brutal war. In North Korea we had military objectives and we had certain attitudinal problems perhaps in the military.

However there was at the head of the U.N. Forces a General Bonesteel [Charles H. Bonesteel III], who was a Rhodes Scholar and I brought up some of the issues to Ambassador Brown about what was going on in Labor Relations and the lack of current

wage surveys and the objections of the Ministry of Labor including a lot of poor employers in the sample for the wage survey. And he quickly...

Q: Poor employers, what do you mean?

SANDMAN: Workers. We were supposed to include in the sample of Korean companies that we surveyed to set the wages for the Korean civilians in the military and in the Embassy.

Q: A biased sample?

SANDMAN: Not biased. But out of some ignorance. They would include firms that we would sometimes call "back alley firms". They were not really progressive employers. Sometimes they were financially in poor condition and we should not have included them. But the Labor Ministry had no contact with the military or the people who were involved and they would come to me.

So I raised a number of questions and pretty soon General Bonesteel was over at the Ambassador's office and he recognized the importance of good Labor relations. He had an experience when he was a commander in Iceland that some of our failures to recognize the importance of good Labor relations led to the formation of the Communist union in Iceland. And pretty soon they were on the telephone to DOD and they ordered a wage survey to be done as soon as possible and one which would provide a substantial increase. So there was a lot of satisfaction. Of course you have to have an Ambassador who appreciates Labor and the role and the importance of Labor in our political relationships.

Q: You just mentioned a wage survey -- I assume in other posts you had something to do with a wage survey for national [employees]?

SANDMAN: Oh, every post I served at. I was brought in, very often at the urgency of employers. Because very often the personnel officer was a person who had risen up from a secretarial rank. Someone who was highly motivated. That was often a springboard to become personnel assistant and so forth.

Q: I just want this established for the record who are involved in the surveys. This is a survey though, to effect the military employment which was very important.

SANDMAN: Well, those affect 40,000 people. But the survey team had come from Vietnam where the Embassy said, "Hey, keep the wage increase down because it will be inflationary." And Vietnam was in a period of inflation. So they come to Korea and we said, "Hey, we have problems here and you have to produce an "X" percent wage increase." And it is interesting, we often thought that these wage surveys were objective and Ambassadors always favored them over collective bargaining and so forth. But wage surveys are highly subject to manipulation. What companies go into the survey, which jobs do you survey, how vigorously you include non-wage benefits, and how you

monetize them. So I discovered that the military was able to manipulate. And they even taught me the different ways of taking an average depending upon how you want the average to come out.

And that was very interesting. As I say, Korea was very fascinating post. From Korea, I went back to Washington and ended up as Labor Advisor in Bureau of Near East and South Asian Affairs-which today has been restructured because India and Pakistan are in a separate bureau.

Q: Now this would have been about 1969-1970?

SANDMAN: Yes, about 1969. I succeeded Paul Berman.

But anyhow the NEA assignment, for the first time, brought me into the operations of the State Department, and also the Labor positions are not very well defined. They are what you want to make out of them. And as long as you are not getting into trouble, nobody objects. If you are helping, even better.

I quickly got involved in reading up on country papers, policy statements, how policies are formulated, how decisions are made in department and other agencies, like the White House. And I began to have better insights into foreign policy: how we define U.S. interests, how we formulate our foreign policy, and the strategies through which we will achieve those policies. I realized that the Labor Attaché has to fit his or her activities into that framework. If it is outside of that framework they won't object or won't tell you not to report it because sometimes they look at you as a Labor Department representative. I discovered that I had to prove that I am a State Department -- I am a Foreign Service Officer first. My specialty is political Labor affairs.

And so I began to study every country's papers. And as these papers circulated in the Regional Affairs Bureau, I was able to make inputs in terms of how certain Labor programs could promote U.S. policy interests and so forth.

Q: Or how other objectives followed by other parts of the mission might inhibit the attainment of a broad objective?

SANDMAN: Yeah that could be there. But I had to look first at what are U.S. goals. And so often political stability is a goal. Social stability and economic growth and so forth. But our major concern was the Middle East and the Arab countries that had a lot of money from oil. But they needed ways to diversify their economies. Their biggest problems were lack of skills of their indigenous population. I did a memo on, well let me back up.

The then Assistant Secretary began to press for more innovative ideas and so forth. And I talked to my boss and wrote a memo about developing a Middle East Manpower Institute

which would provide vocational training in the Arab world and the Middle East. And that was sort of worked in.

Q: Who was the Assistant Secretary?

SANDMAN: Joe Sisco.

However, I was a few years ahead of my time. Because after the Arab-Israeli conflict, after the Yom Kippur War and the oil crisis, the U.S. government launched major manpower training programs in Saudi Arabia and in Iran. And so there is always the question of timing. You may have a good idea but it is just not the time for it. And something later happens and they say, "Hey, let's do this".

So, I began to see the Labor Attaché Program, its function, as being supportive of our Foreign Policy-of relating our reporting. I often saw reports on strikes. And long cables on a strike. And it was an interesting strike but how did it affect U.S. interests -- why are you reporting that? Every cable you write you have to say will the Deputy Assistant Secretary, will the Country Director read this? You are competing with other officers and you have to in your first sentence get to how a U.S. interest is affected by a strike. If it isn't, not too many people are interested -- put it in an Airgram and send it to the Labor Department or the Labor Advisor.

But you are really writing for the Country Director. You have to get to know the Country Directors and get to know their staffs; we still do a lot of things by personal contact. It is getting to meet people. Getting, earning their respect. And you will then find that you are accepted. And that the Labor function will be accepted.

I do feel that in many respects that the Labor function was not accepted and was regarded as serving the interest of the Labor Department.

The AF of L had an interest in what you reported and who you supported. And in the earlier days, when the Labor Attaché Program was divided between the AF of L and the CIO, certain countries were CIO posts and certain countries were AF of L posts. This is very hard perhaps for people today to appreciate because it no longer exists.

But they were very interested that you supported their perceptions of democratic Labor unions. Some of our efforts were to send to the United States people who had had contact with the Soviet Union but were not necessarily committed Communists and liked to travel, so they would go to the Soviet Union. In the Soviet Union, Communism was a very attractive concept to people who had lived under Imperialism or under very harsh forms of government. And in many countries, I would ask people in the Embassies, "If you were born in this country, from a poor family, would you possibly be supportive of the Communists?" Well, we didn't have that choice. We didn't have to make that decision.

But in the Bureau was, as I said, my wonderful learning opportunity. And an opportunity to contribute. How much I contributed is very hard to say. But every Foreign Service Officer asks continuously how much have I contributed? Ambassadors have the same problem.

From the Bureau, I went on to Israel. And Israel is perhaps the...

Q: Excuse me, before you get to Israel, who was the SIO at that point?

SANDMAN: Phil Delaney was SIO.

I did clash with Phil and even Harry Pollock. I had gone to Iran as part of my tour of my territory as NEA Labor Advisor. And the Labor was covered by the petroleum officer who did an annual Labor report and got information from the liaison of the Ministry of Labor to the Embassies. And he told them everything about what the government's policies in the Labor field were and what their positions would be in the ILO. But his main concern was oil.

I traveled around and I discovered by talking to people and seeing little blurbs in local papers, that there were strikes going on. There was certain unrest and that even within the Embassy that the Shah's revolution was not reaching down to the agriculture workers, to the rural communities. And that much of the affluence in Tehran was not being shared.

It was early in the 1980's and from the front Muslim religious people who opposed what they saw going on. And I then met Ambassador McArthur the third and in my exit interview I suggested that the Embassy should probably know more about what is going on in Iran amongst workers, amongst the lower income groups. And this trend, in every country, tends not be an area that is covered well, because we have the political section which covers the ruling party and the opposition party. We cover political institutions and the economic section focuses on trade and foreign exchange and so forth. Nobody looks at political trends, not in terms of institutions, but beyond the institutions. What is happening in the countryside.

I am not quite sure what the agency had ever done in that area. I saw the Labor reporting but I never saw anything outside of Labor reporting of those kinds of assessments. And I thought in Iran that we ought to have a very skillful, perceptive Labor Officer who was trained in political analysis and interpreting economic developments in political terms.

Well, the Ambassador said that the SAVAK which is the secret police, would not allow a Labor Attaché. I said, "Call them something else." I said, "The Yugoslavs I know in India call them the Social Attaché," and I said, "Does SAVAK run our Embassy?" And I guess that is when we supported the Shah. The history of that is now well known.

I went back to Washington and I saw Phil Delaney and I said, "Phil, if you had two countries in the world and you had two Embassies-an Embassy in each country-and you

had only one Labor position and these two countries were England and Iran, where would you put the Labor Attaché?" And he said, "England, of course!" And I said, "But Phil, you can read newspapers in England and read all about the trade union movement and it is a democratic country and there are unions in cities. You don't have to worry about England. But Iran is a major country in U.S. interest and we don't know anything about it." Well, he didn't see it.

I also used to kid that we ought to have a Labor Attaché in the Soviet Union. I said not looking at what are trade unions, they are instruments of the government, but what is happening in the country in terms of the welfare of the people and so forth. And along the criteria of a Labor Attaché at that time was whether the country has a so-called free, democratic trade union. And those countries which don't, don't get Labor Attachés.

But there are developments in every country amongst workers, involving workers. And workers are 80-90% of the population-consumers, people. The Labor Attaché is the people oriented person in the Embassy. And it is people, whether they are students or workers that will shape political relationships. And I think that is where the Labor Attaché program may have not taken that opportunity to focus in a broader framework.

I think for Europe it was ok because Europe had strong trade unions. They were very politically important. There was the fight between Communists and the free forces. But as you get into the Third World, whether Africa or Latin America, I think that every Embassy should have a person who focuses on workers, on people. And whether they are organized into trade unions or not. In Iran when the revolution took place, the whole country was on strike-those strikes were organized. There must have been organized elements throughout Iran in the American oil companies and in other institutions that we simply did not know about.

Q: You didn't go beyond Phil Delaney in this quest for a better representation of U.S. interests?

SANDMAN: No.

Q: What about the American trade union movement? But I must say that I think that Lovestone took a broader view later on and was willing to countenance coverage provided it was not called "Labor Attaché" of political events in the Soviet Union which he had not been before.

SANDMAN: Lovestone, I got to know him fairly well. And I kidded him when I would call on him. "Jay, when I was a kid you were the head of the Communist Party in the United States and I am sitting at the feet of a historical figure." And Jay liked that. But, I would watch Jay operate and he was like a Foreign Minister. His interests ran across the whole board. And it was like he was the Secretary of State of the AF of L-CIO.

Certainly Irving Brown was of the same character. But they got involved in the Marshall Plan period in the post-World War II reconstruction of Europe. Where the democratic trade unions were outlawed by Hitler, by Mussolini and where Communists got terrific hold in France. And that was a crisis. We had the Labor program within the Marshall Plan and that was good for that period of time.

But also, just as in the Marshall Plan, we were giving economic aid to countries that had skilled Labor forces and an industrial structure. They simply had been destroyed and we wanted to rebuild them. As we transferred to the Third World, we kept the same kind of Labor policies. In Indonesia, for example, well, I will get to that later. I am getting a little bit ahead of myself.

Let's get back to Israel because Israel is a Labor Attaché's paradise. For the first time I am in a country where Labor is important. And I had a lot of distinguished predecessors there. I think one of them who was very popular did a lot of reporting on the Ministry of Labor in great depth.

Q: Did you want to mention his name or you would prefer not to?

SANDMAN: No. And I quickly met the DCM and we had a very long talk.

Q: Zurhellen?

SANDMAN: Amongst other things I was the first Jewish officer to be assigned to Israel in many, many years.

And so I talked at length with Zurhellen and I asked him what do you expect from the Labor Attaché? And he said, well, all the reporting on the Ministry of Labor you want to do, you go ahead and do it. If your friends in the Labor Department want that. But I will tell you what the U.S. government wants and what the Ambassador wants- our most pressing need is to have a better perspective on who will follow Golda Meir as Prime Minister of Israel. And he said what we want to know amongst your friends in Histadrut, which is the General Federation of Labor, we would like to know what those people who have tremendous influence think and who they want to support. We are interested in how Histadrut people feel about the Arab-Israeli dispute. What their feelings are about how we might play a useful role.

And I realized yeah, very often we treat organized Labor in a sector but not part of society. And sort of getting back -- some of the countries where USIS had set target groups. And for Labor they gave Labor books. And I said, "Hey, these people know more than Labor. They have positions of influence and we want them to support U.S. Foreign Policy. Don't send them Labor books, let's send, you have to broaden, you don't give a Labor leader a Labor book and a scientist a science book. You want them to support U.S. Foreign Policy so treat them as part of a broader."

And as I said, Zurhellen sent me in that direction of what does the Embassy want, what is the department looking at.

Q: Did you ever discuss this with your predecessor, Margaret Hawkin? Because to come into a situation and to get an instruction of that sort...the first question is: Well, why didn't you tell that to the previous Labor Attaché because their reports didn't reflect that?

SANDMAN: Well, she wasn't there. No, she had left already. But Margaret was a beloved person in Israel. And she knew Golda Meir. Golda Meir was Labor Minister and I think welcomed Margaret as a Labor Attaché. And she had a wide circle of Israeli friends and was perhaps more "pro-Israel" than many of the Israelis.

But Zurhellen, why he was telling me -- whether it was reactive to a predecessor or in response to a question. He said, "Well, here's a guy who is asking me the right questions." And so it was again, understanding that I needed to fit my Labor work into the mainstream of departmental interests, of the Embassy's interests.

The Histadrut was a very unique organization. We think of trade unions as having workers organized from industrial employment and so forth whereas in the Zionist development of Palestine there were very few services provided, first by the Turkish government and later the British government. And when Jews from mainly East Russia began to settle with their Socialist-Zionist background there were no services. There were no jobs. And the first thing that Histadrut did was establish a bank to raise capital for investment.

Second thing was to provide health services, education. Very urgent-they mobilized the defense forces, security. They also began to build factories to establish employment. And the last department established by Histadrut was the trade union department. You can't have a trade union department until you have a substantial number of paid employees. And so Histadrut, prior to these, was sort of a government within a government.

When Israel became independent and asserted its governmental authority, the defense forces were turned over to the Israel Defense Force and schools were turned over to the government. But Histadrut kept the medical services and that was one of its most attractive features for recruiting members, their health service. And they kept the factories and the bank. So, they had considerable influence. So, in the Embassy, my clients were one of the more important people rather than some of the marginal elements in the political stream.

Also, I took an interest in Israeli Arabs in Israel. Israel did discriminate against them. I became very close with the Arab leadership within the Histadrut in the Arab Affairs Department. And it is easy, Arabs are very, very gracious hosts. When I established relationships with certain individual it led to an exchange of visits to his village and delegations to my house. It was really a wonderful relationship.

I did arrange for him to go to the United States. Today he is Deputy Minister of Health. And I am very concerned about him because of what is happening today. And he was always very pro-Israel. He recognized that Arabs in Arab countries did not live as well. That the Israelis had a lot of freedom; that it was a democratic state and so forth. But it did fail the Israeli-Arabs in many ways. That was sort of painful for me.

I began to look also at the questions of poverty and the growing rift between the two major communities which were called Ashkenazi, the East European and the Jews who came from the Arab world, the Sephardic. They came to Israel from very poor Arab countries with a much different culture than the Europeans. And there was a growing rift. Poverty was most dominant in the Sephardic community. Very few Sephardic Jews had risen into ...positions of power in the Histadrut or in the Labor Party.

Within Histadrut , there was a growing alienation between the European leadership and the *** leadership and the workers who were mainly Sephardic Jews. And there was a revolt-a quiet revolt. That was a problem to us. Our friends, our allies were mainly the Labor Party of Israel. The opposition party were people who were mainly more fundamentalist; more interested in the expansion of Israel's authority in the occupied territories. And...did replace. And we were all shocked. And I think the U.S. government was shocked. But the writing was on the wall. As I said, you had to look at the Labor scene. Who were the poor workers, who were the workers...

Q: From within the Histadrut they finally got a Sephardic Jew as the...?

SANDMAN: Well, yes. The present General Secretary when I was there was the Director of Youth and Sports Department. And he was very helpful to me. I had written a study of the Histadrut because my colleagues in the Embassy really had very little idea of what the Histadrut really was. And many friends -- it was something I wanted to publish. Because even in the United States, we had certain perceptions of the Histadrut which perhaps were not real. It was a fascinating organization. Very unique among trade unions of the world. And he did a lot of proof reading and gave me a lot of background. A very bright person and people say he would like to be Prime Minister someday. And so there have been many changes in Israel.

But here again, the Labor Attaché was in a position to look at ethnic problems, the same as in Malaysia. The elements that are destabilizing -- because where we have friendly relationships we don't like instability. We like to see our friends stay in power.

Q: And Zurhellen's successors were a series of DCM's with backgrounds in India, which is why I know them. Did they sympathize with the scope of your following?

SANDMAN: They welcomed it because -- I'd like to emphasize that later in another post.

Q: Ok.

SANDMAN: I had no problem but also again the role of the Labor Attaché. It was Yom Kippur in 1973. And I had gone to the synagogue in the village where I lived and had gone back home. And the phone rang. This is Billy, the Defense Attaché and he said, "Lenny, do you know the Labor force of Israel? And I said, "Billy, why are you calling me on Yom Kippur to know the Labor force of Israel?" He said, "Lenny, turn on the radio. The Egyptians just crossed the Canal and we are at war." I said, "Well, it is 1.1 million."

Q: Did he say, "We are at war?"

SANDMAN: "They are at war." However, it shouldn't have come as a total surprise because I was duty officer the week before when we had a query from the State Department asking about intelligence reports they had received about troop movements in Israel and on the Syrian border and would we please call the Ministry of Defense. And I saw the answer that went out. And I say, here again, the Labor Attaché sees everything on these little periods of being duty officer. And the Israeli intelligence told our people that to the best of their knowledge the troop movements were related to Ramadan. And we also had difficulty making contact.

Anyhow, it wasn't evidently related entirely to Ramadan. They did move and they caught the Israelis by surprise. And so during the war, I was assigned the role of following manpower to see if because of the full mobilization, , if there were any problems in maintaining the level of services and production that were required to support the war.

Well, this was very difficult. One, the biggest secret in Israel is the number of people at any one time in the IDF- they didn't tell and our Defense Attaché didn't know. Nobody knew. It was information that we urged -- you know let us know when you are calling up people because as soon as the Arabs see movement they call us and want to know what the Israelis are doing. They don't want the Arabs to know what the Israelis are doing. That was the major role. And it was important because we concluded from the 6 Day War in 1967 that the Israeli economy could probably stand a six day war. And the Israelis knew that it had to be a quick victory. But it was remarkable production, services, to the best of our knowledge, largely through observation, talking with people-continued adequately. And the war, I think lasted until about 10 or 12 days and the economy did not suffer.

And it resulted in a tremendous input by the people who were not mobilized: older people, many women, young kids also pitched in. And so I felt that I did play a role in our reporting in that situation.

From Israel I went to Indonesia.

Q: What a change!

SANDMAN: Yeah. Again, entirely different from any other country.

Q: Did you have home leave in between or direct transfer?

SANDMAN: No, there was home leave then transfer. And so the Labor Attaché does have to have great flexibility. You can't make it a very rigid kind of a job definition. Every political officer basically does a very similar job as another political officer.

But when I got to Indonesia they said, people as I met them, "What are you going to do here? Your predecessor spent all this time as chairman of the School Board." Well, the School Board -- there was a crisis between the government of Indonesia and the establishment of our American International School. So there were a lot of political problems that had to be resolved. And he spent much of his time there. I don't know how accurate that was but that was the perception.

Q: Who was it?

SANDMAN: It was Don Harris, I think.

I found it a little bit depressing as to what do I do now? And again, I began to say, "What are the problems that we face, that Indonesia faces?" I began to read in on U.S. assessments of Indonesia and so forth. And in talking with people within the Embassy, there was a Labor movement. It was not a militant movement. It did function within an Indonesian context. But it was not a very significant influence in the political system or in the economy generally.

But I began to read the history of the Dutch colonial rule in Indonesia. And there was a charge that the Dutch, that there was a flow of wealth from Indonesia to the Hague. You could see the Dutch taking their resources and not returning very much. As I began to travel and talk with the people, there was that feeling that the Javanese in Jakarta dominated the government. And that resources were being transferred from the outer provinces to the central government and that Javanese dominated the major development projects in the provinces and the other islands. While people in the provinces just washed the laundry of the Javanese. Just like the Dutch...the Javanese had become the Dutch.

One of our concerns in Indonesia was the fragmentation - the dissonance element in a province in the North, Aceh, a very fundamentalist Muslim. And it was for the Acehnese and the Sumatrans and the other areas that the Javanese dominated the political life, the economy, and flow of money into Jakarta and so forth. And the Ambassador welcomed this kind...we were aware but nobody was doing much reporting on that.

Then there was the question of employment technology. Should our development be Labor intensive or capital intensive? Now technology in the province of Java, which is one of the most densely populated areas, is whether rice should be harvested by a more modern sickle or the more primitive. And when you begin to translate that, it is millions of jobs. On that issue of the low level of the slight improvement in the technology in farm implements.

Well, the World Bank was a major player in Indonesian development. And the Indonesian government tended to be in favor of more capital intensive projects. I began to question, "Why?" because I thought job creation was the most important problem in Indonesia. And I was talking with some people and sort of concluded possibly because there is a lot of prestige in petro-chemical plants and so on. But when you spend lots of money like that there is lots more opportunity for the top people to skim off. And the higher income people tend to be the beneficiaries of...

Q: And the political constituency to oppose that is very weak.

SANDMAN: That is right. And I began to write memos within the Embassy. The World Bank began also to look for Labor intensive. But even at that time I realized that the creation of jobs is very difficult. And today, in the Clinton administration I still see that they are groping: How do you create jobs?

Today in the United States we don't have as many what we call "career jobs"-jobs that have benefits and vacations. Many college students are urged to go into business for themselves. Many of our aid programs also try to develop entrepreneurship amongst farmers and so forth. And many of them did not work, just as many of our efforts to create employment in this country have failed. We have poured millions of dollars into poverty programs. And somebody said, "There is lots of money to be made in poverty" by universities and researchers and so forth.

Again, in Indonesia, after listening to American employers complain about the Indonesian workers-particularly at the managerial level-I began to try to study Indonesian culture, value systems and how they affected Western concepts of management. And I talked to Indonesian sociologists and read as much as I could on culture and so forth. I talked to lots of people and began to develop a better framework of Indonesian values. I discovered that they were very often incompatible with Western management.

Many of the American companies because they were required by the government to Indonesian-ize all the way up to the virtual top, and had to give a schedule of when jobs would be converted. Many of them select a bright Indonesian, send him to university to get a master's degree, bring him on board at City Bank or what-not for a year of culture of City Bank and then bring him home, give him a good salary, and expect him to go to work. Well, it didn't always work out that way.

Indonesians place a very high value on family relationships. I've seen in the State Department, officers who want to reach the very top, very often give up their family life to work the 12 hour days, seven days a week in the Assistant Secretary's office or in the Secretary's office. They give up their family life. And sometimes their families suffer. But we have accepted that. There is a price that we pay in getting to the top -- of achieving the ambitions we are expected to have.

But the Indonesian has not. And one American employer told me that how they were supposed to do a big report. And everybody was supposed to show up over the weekend. One of the senior Indonesian employees did not. He finally came in the following week around Wednesday. And he said, "Where were you, you knew we had a big report due?" And he said, "But my Grandmother's third cousin died." "Yes?" "And I had to go to the funeral. And then I, being in my village, I had to visit all of my relatives." And that commitment to family.

Q: That shouldn't have been surprising to you after your India experience.

SANDMAN: I didn't deal as much. I spent a lot of time analyzing how the American managers found an experience with the Indonesian senior employees. And the Javanese culture-very much more alien, even than, I won't say Hindu culture. Indians were often very Westernized, elements of them. But an Indonesian, I used to kid: you can send them to Harvard Business School but when he comes back home and you prick his skin, Indonesian blood still flows. And in that blood is mysticism. And you have to understand mysticism.

Mysticism is doing things at the right time. And I think it is true-it was always bandied around the Embassy that the Ambassador, when he was planning a function, had some Indonesian who he would consult on what was the best day to have it. He just was hedging you know.

And so, to get from here to there were certain obstacles. An American almost instinctively says, all right it will take so long here and then we go here. And he plans how to get to point B in a certain given time. The Indonesian will consult his mystic who will say, "Open the factory on a Thursday". It is when you open the factory. It is timing, etc. not planning. And so he has come back with a degree from Harvard Business School but is still an Indonesian. And the concept of planning is a little bit more difficult for Indonesians to grasp.

Q: Would he come back to Indonesia? Or like the Indians stay in America and make money there?

SANDMAN: No. The Indonesians that I am talking about were people who were employed in Indonesia by an American company who sponsored them to university and an internship in headquarters office. And then brought them back where they were slated into a senior position. They would give them what they thought were very handsome salaries but then they found that, you know they are selfish. They come in asking for more money. And I said, "You know, when an Indonesian makes good, he's got a whole family out there. That Ahmed has made good, they come and they visit his house and they move in and now he is supporting 12 people instead of just his wife and mother or something. His levels of obligations have expanded.

Communications you see, are vital in whatever you are running to communicate upward so top management knows what is going on. Most of us don't like to bear bad news -- very, very strong amongst Indonesians. And they just don't pass on information that does not please the boss. Now we also are perhaps concerned with that. But it is very frustrating to a manager. The man at Union Carbide where a big motor burned out, it ran the whole assembly line. And he had paid an Indonesian supervisor to go feel that motor and check the plant and if it is running warm, let me know. He didn't. And the motor burned out. We closed down for a week.

And so this was one of the first times I wanted to seriously pursue a study in Indonesian value systems and Western management. Because increasingly as American companies go overseas they have to know the cultures of their country to operate effectively and this is up at the top management.

So that was one of the very intellectually challenging things. And I began to talk to business people about this. I later discovered, some years later, that the American Ambassador, after he resigned, went back as a consultant.

He also understood these problems. In my annual Labor report of my last year, I started with Indonesia's most serious political and economic problem- creating sufficient jobs to accommodate a rapidly growing Labor force. And I went on.

When I left the Embassy, when I was reassigned, I called on Ambassador Newsome and we had a fascinating talk. He was always very friendly, very helpful. And I said, "I know my Airgram, my annual Labor report went out of the Embassy and you signed off on it." He said, "Yes." I said, "Therefore you agreed that creating jobs is the most important political..." And he said, "Yeah." And I said, "Then why did the Embassy oppose having a Labor Attaché? You wanted to eliminate the job."

And he went in that well, you are a much more broadly based person than other Labor Attachés have been. And also that I don't want to be dictated to by the AF of L-CIO or the Labor Department. I said, "Yeah, but on the DCM if you don't like them, you turn them down and you get somebody you like. Why don't you fight to get the Labor Attaché you want." "Because," I said, "No one in the political or economic section understands what is going on in the field of employment, job creation, the problems." And he said well, he didn't want to fight. And if you agreed that this is a serious problem. He told me how much he enjoyed knowing us and we enjoyed knowing him.

And so here you have...the Labor Attaché can deal in particularly in the Third World...

Q: Broader issues.

SANDMAN: ...a bunch of problems that in the United States today the President does feel that job creation is a very serious political problem. And our Secretary of Labor who

has written widely, I'm not sure really understands, nor do we as a country understand how you create jobs in a free market economy.

Q: Without a whole lot of deficit financing.

SANDMAN: That is true. But what are these other countries.

Q: But if you measure the cost in terms of long term unemployment, lack of social programs, to deal with the problems in the cities, then an investment in that might actually be saving money in the long term. But we can't face that.

SANDMAN: In the long term we are all dead. We tend to live for the short term. And we are criticized for that. But the Labor Attaché position to me, was one of the most interesting in the Embassy. I thought it must be terribly boring to just cover the opposition political party or even the ruling party, or external affairs or internal affairs.

Q: Without understanding the broader issues?

SANDMAN: No. Not having the opportunity to range across. When the inspectors came to Korea and I spent an hour or more talking to the inspector about what I do, we talked in terms of the political role of organized Labor, the economic problems of employment, manpower development and assessing these. I worked closely with the 8th Army. I worked closely with the Commercial Attaché because of the information that I can provide and help the health business people to understand Labor law, to comply with the Labor law. And to prospective investors in terms of what wage rates are, etc. Which is information that at that time was not readily available.

And that I worked with the Commercial Attaché. I worked with USIS in terms Labor exchange programs of Labor books, of providing the Labor leaders with information about U.S. foreign policy and work with AID, Labor aspects of development. And he said, "Gee, you know in talking...you are very broad interests...why do you stay in the Labor Attaché Program?" And I said, "Because the Labor Attaché needs to range across the entire Embassy." I said, "I think next to the Ambassador it is the most interesting job."

Other people are in these...

Q: Compartmentalized...

SANDMAN: Compartmentalized...military, agriculture. And I said, "Even agriculture. I get out among agricultural workers." The Agricultural Attaché's job is to promote the sale of American farm products. He has no concern with farm workers. And I have talked to many.

Q: But they are an inhibiting factor in obtaining our objectives there.

SANDMAN: Well, no. I have talked to several Agricultural Attachés and wanted to know what they know about peasant organizations and so forth. And they have said that is not in our field.

Q: Of course I feel for the DCM. You say that only the Labor Attaché has support. And I think that the DCM...

SANDMAN: Well, the DCM is the Ambassador's alter-ego. Either runs the Embassy or is supervised depending upon what the Ambassador likes to do.

Q: I think you are entirely right. But again, you enjoyed that experience. You learned the hard way.

SANDMAN: My wife and I both look back at the Foreign Service career as an exciting, a fascinating period of our life. We were fortunate in having what I would call, "good assignments" at interesting times.

We were in India when the Chinese came across the border. My role, my contribution in that was giving up my office to the delegation from Washington. In which I discovered if anything very important happens, Washington sends out a delegation. And so they needed my office. And they told me to work out of my house or something.

Q: How long did you stay in Indonesia, two years?

SANDMAN: We were there two years. As I say, we were in country in interesting times. In Malaysia it was during the period of confrontation with Indonesia, the expulsion of Singapore. Korea, the Pueblo Crisis. Israel, the War.

I didn't mention, my last tour was in Barbados. I covered the Caribbean.

Q: You haven't gotten to the Philippines yet!

SANDMAN: Oh, do we have time? I will try to be briefer. Again, as I say, I found every place fascinating. The Philippines was also a shift in what I was doing.

...But again, in the Philippines we had a major interest in our bases.

We had a Naval Base at Subic Bay and the Air Force Base at Clarke Field. The DOD considered those what are called "vital" interests. We can get into what is "vital" and when is it "vital" and so forth. But it is very important. It meant that basically we would go to war before we would give up the bases. That we found them...

Q: Essential for our defense.

SANDMAN: That was our major interest in the Philippines. We were the second largest employer, employing some 40,000-50,000 people between the two bases. And they were highly skilled people. They were in the ship repair yard and they were in the ***. And they were very critical.

We had very serious problems with the Philippine work force. They were highly organized. And again, I was always proud of the United States. The U.S. government sent these Labor leaders to the United States for training and they came back and made life tough for the military commanders.

But they were highly organized. Always pressures on wages. We had many disciplinary problems. And this is again very interesting that both in Korea and the Philippines is that theft to the Filipinos was not all that serious. It was more the "Robin Hood" theory of robbing from the rich and giving to the poor. And they were the poor ones. And so theft was a major problem in both Korea and the Philippines. And the Philippines would plead that you know, you don't fire the man because you are really hurting the family. Again, cultural differences.

And so I probably spent the majority of my time at the bases understanding what was going on and being in touch. And at one point I began to argue within the political section of the Embassy that should the bases be that vital? Shouldn't we really move out of the Philippines anyhow, because if they are vital we have to be able to use them when we want to use them and have total access to them. The workers control the bases because we depend on them and they could go on strike for a political reason and the government is not going to shoot Philippine workers. The Philippine government will not shoot Philippine workers on behalf of the United States.

If there was a war in the Middle East, the Arab countries have 100,000 Philippine workers there. And they will say if you let Subic Bay service your warships we will take your Filipino -- just as in Vietnam, the Filipinos did not let us use Clarke Air Base for offensive operations against Vietnam. So I said, "Basically we don't control those bases. That they are staffed by Filipinos and if Filipinos don't want to work, they will not. We do not really know the true nature of the leadership in the bowels of the shipbuilding yard" and so forth.

There were Communist elements in there that we were aware of. But we didn't have the intelligence. We didn't use means of gathering information as sometimes we did in Korea where we had intelligence people. I said that always the basis is a source of disagreement between the ruling and the opposition parties. And we ought to get out. DOD liked it. It was a cheap place to repair ships. It provided space for a lot of aerial training programs. It was a wonderful rest stop for the Navy. An aircraft carrier pulls into Olongapo which is a bay city and 10,000 guys get off who haven't seen a woman -- and there are 10,000 registered prostitutes. Our bases were ringed with prostitutes, slums and so forth.

And I found that politically we ought to get out and have our bases in territory that we could control.

Q: You wrote memos along those lines?

SANDMAN: Within the Embassy. I had an alliance, there were other people in the political section and there were people who really did not approve of our support of Marcos.

Q: Did you ever use the "Dissent Channel" to ...

SANDMAN: No. The bases were so entrenched. If we decided to pull out the Filipinos would have said how exploitive we are. They had very good jobs. There was a lot of money that went into the economy and so forth. However, there was a big volcanic eruption in the Philippines and the bases were covered with volcanic ash and we closed down the bases and we have survived. And the Philippines have survived.

Q: I want your response on this question of the "Dissent Channel". Frequently I get this strong view on the part of, not on the part of Labor Attachés and then when you raise them within the facility I had never had available before, the dissent channel. It is looked upon as not effective.

SANDMAN: It was an effort during the Vietnam period to defuse the opposition among Foreign Service Officers of the Vietnam policy. And to provide some option to leaking to the press. I don't know. I have said to people, "If you don't like Foreign Policy go to work for Congressmen or somewhere else, and pretty soon you will have much more power than you ever dreamt about in the State Department if you can be the guy who writes the questions and drafts the letters." And so I don't know.

Q: Anything else remarkable about the Philippines? That was only two years too, wasn't it?

SANDMAN: That was three years. I guess one of the things that stand out is my efforts to befriend a former Communist leader who was expelled by the Party and was still active in the Labor unions He took initiative in forming, I think they called it the "May Day Movement". This was a coalition of opposition forces.

He was, during World War II, with the Communists and stayed on. He broke over the issue of the rural versus the urban. Where we should be. And he tended to be a Maoist and was expelled once, twice and so forth. And I called on him. At first he wouldn't talk. He said, "You are CIA agent". And I said, "Everything you tell me I may want to report to my government because we are interested in your views" and I said, "I am here in front of you, telling you and if I was in the CIA, I would go out with your secretary and she would steal your reports and give them to me." "I don't operate, I am telling you who I am and I will report anything you tell me."

He reached in and took out a bottle of brandy -- Filipinos love brandy -- and he ordered coffee and poured brandy. And we drank. We became friendly. And I could not often disagree with him. He complained about the debt that the Philippine government -- we owe seven million dollars. He complained that we don't even manufacture a sewing needle in this country yet we have major textile industry. Of the corruption that we supported and so forth. And I enjoyed the relationship.

I invoked the displeasure of Afley. And I don't know whether he reported to AF of L [American Federation of Labor]. I know that when I had a Labor Day celebration that I invited across the board and Afley threatened to boycott it because I was inviting the WFTU [World Federation of Trade Unions] guy and my other friends. And I sent the invitations out. One for five and one for six and I told him you come at five o'clock.

Q: On that question of how do you weigh the costs and benefits of inviting a Communist, semi-Communist, someone like that in order to maintain a contact of somebody you may be influencing in a direction you want. How do you weigh the cost of that in terms of losing the friendship of Afley doesn't bother me as much as losing your bona fide trade union contacts because they feel that it hurts their objective have you deal with a Communist trade union? How do you weigh those things?

SANDMAN: I found often that my friends in the ruling party were interested in what was happening in the other and that I had better information.

Q: So you don't think that it cost you anything?

SANDMAN: I don't think it ever really did. And in the Philippines there was the question of : does Afley support a number of independent unions and so forth. The WFTA affiliates you know, they shouldn't. But there was Johnny Tan from the Federation for Free Workers. A number who applied for affiliation to the Philippine trade union congress and denied because they were a rival union and so forth. The Philippine Labor movement was highly, highly fragmented and the position which I respected was that we would simply encourage the fragmentation.

And their goal was the unification. The Ministry of Labor recognized that the fragmentation was a weakening element and they were trying to force a merger. They had a program of 20 federations and so forth. That was going to be challenged in the ILO- you know, denial of freedom of association. It was a Labor movement highly dominated by lawyers who controlled the collective bargaining and took a percentage-a commission.

And the trade union congress had some shortcomings. I just thought as long as they were committed to at least the democratic form of government we should not exclude them. But that was a tough problem -- it is are you encouraging fragmentation as opposed to consolidation?

Q: Cost benefit analysis.

SANDMAN: Yea. Cost benefit analysis. Well, there were other countries like Sri Lanka where there were some Trotskyist. They were not really Communists. They were just intellectuals. We didn't select a lot of those people. In India, when I was there, there was the growth of modern industrialization in the Bangalore area. Unionization in aircraft and other factories but they were independent. They had no use for the other trade unions. And there was this growth of independent unionism.

Q: Tell me about your time in Barbados.

SANDMAN: Barbados. I took that position mainly because of my wife who had worked abroad as what was called Family Liaison Officer, when I went back to Washington, she had a job in the Washington office of the Family Liaison Office. And she was in charge of employment opportunities for spouses and negotiating agreements with various countries for reciprocal rights of their spouses and our spouses for work.

That had become a major problem in the Foreign Service as women increasingly became professional and had their own careers. This is a guy that they married that mentioned that he worked for the Foreign Service and that sounded glamorous until he came and said that we are going to Mogadishu. And she said, "Are there computer research jobs?" And he said, "No, darling, you will stay home and take care of the children". And she said, "You go. I don't go." So he goes back to Personnel and says I can't go. And pretty soon we have all of these people who don't want to go overseas; they join the Foreign Service and it was also a substantial decrease in income.

And so, creating jobs for women, for spouses, because a growing number of husbands who are married to Foreign Service Officers and they become the spouse. And so for the first time in her working life Sonja now had her own office and travel allowance. And she wanted to stay in Washington and I wanted to get back into the field. And so Barbados was open and it was within commuting distance. And so I accepted the assignment or sought the assignment in Barbados.

It was a regional job. The job was responsible for all the English and Dutch speaking country in the Caribbean. And sometimes I thought it was kind of sinful. Much of the time I rode the Ambassador's airplane. If he was not using it then staff people could use it and it was sort of scheduled and so forth. It was very nice flying into an airport in your plane and four or people get off and go through customs and so forth. And going to these places where tourists came-5 Star Hotel.

But I got off at the airport and drove into town and looked up the Labor Minister and the Labor Ministers. And maybe at night I would go out to one of the nicer hotels and have dinner.

But the Caribbean is very interesting. Somewhat similar to Africa. During the 1930's there were riots amongst plantation sugar workers in a number of the British-owned Caribbean islands. So the British established a commission of inquiry. And one of their conclusions was that there are no minimum wage laws, no Labor standard laws, and no rights of the workers to organize and have representation. And that there should be Labor laws, trade union rights and so forth. And those were decreed.

So trade unions were the first organizations permitted in the colonial Caribbean. Then when independence came to these countries after the war, the trade unions became the nucleus of the political parties. And the top trade union leader became the Prime Minister. And so you had, in a country, about a dozen countries, some with populations of 300,000 to two million, in which historically trade union leadership played a major political role.

And in many countries that continued. In Jamaica and in other countries it was very strong. And so the Labor Attaché had access to top-level Labor political leadership. But the other aspect of the Labor job was to follow the development of what was called the Caribbean Basin Initiative of President Reagan, which was to promote employment in the Caribbean by giving trade privileges to American companies that invested in the Caribbean.

So I monitored how that program was going. Most of the jobs that were created were for female workers with some dexterity of assembling circuitry and so forth-very little for males. The Caribbean also always had an escape valve in free immigration to England. They were British subjects and they could go to England. Many professionals did, many skilled workers did, the more ambitious may have. And then England cut off free immigration and there was a movement towards Canada.

Q: Cut off entirely?

SANDMAN: They no longer could come in freely. And there was a flow to Canada and the United States. And then both Canada and the United States began to screen more carefully people who would apply for tourist visas but may end up staying. And so it became more difficult. Then people went from the smaller, poorer islands to the bigger, richer islands. Then the bigger, richer islands said, "Enough! No more people coming in because we have unemployment too." And so, one could see that there was a growing unemployment amongst black workers.

Many of our AID people urged agriculture. But the black workers associated agriculture with slavery and they would not go into agriculture. What was often left was tourism and they didn't like tourists. They were very menial jobs of you know, serving tea to American tourists and so forth. Many governments had to convince their workers that hey, be nice to tourists -- because they bring money in.

Anyhow there was an element of monitoring. I was somewhat not persuaded that it was really benefiting...and actually amongst some of the AID people and economists...our

efforts to create viable economies in these fragmented Caribbean islands is perhaps not attainable. I think there are some explosive elements in the Caribbean. There are a few which are still under British control but the British want to get out.

So it was, you know, a very posh kind of assignment but it was culturally very boring. India is never boring. India you can sit on your porch and watch snake charmers and camels and diversity and so forth. But the Caribbean has a very pleasant climate. A beautiful climate -- but then you discover that when every day is beautiful that no day is really beautiful. You have to have some rain and snow to appreciate sunshine.

Q: And then you decided to leave the service?

SANDMAN: That was the point at which I decided to retire. In part I look back at some 25 years in the Labor field and I thought I had become a good Labor Attaché. I was not sure about the law that one rises to their level of incompetence. Maybe if I had to be forced into becoming the chief of a political section that I might not do as well. I did like the Labor field. I thought it was one of the more satisfying experiences and a wonderful career.

And so I took my pension. And I discovered that I had also "maxed" out because there is a limit to 35 years and when you added in my military service, other federal government service, plus time and a half in hardship posts, that I had 35 years. And I said, "Well, that's enough." And that chapter was closed and I have since done many other things that were quite different.

Q: Without any relationship...

SANDMAN: I had seen colleagues retire and hang on to the periphery of Washington life but I think that once you retire from the Foreign Service, don't hang on the periphery. No one is interested in your views. I read that even Dean Rusk -- who is one of the longest reigning Secretaries of State, when he retired and went to Georgia University -- they never called on him. And even Kissinger, today, I don't think is consulted by -- he writes but he is...

Q: Can you expand on your comment on the relevance of Labor work to the mission to which the Labor Officer is assigned? Not in terms of looking at the Labor situation in the country, but rather how the Labor situation in the country is effected or affects the viability of the U.S. objectives in that area?

SANDMAN: As I said, after having served in the Bureau as a Labor Advisor and becoming more familiar with the foreign policy making process and how we define our interests and so forth, I realized that the Labor Attaché can make a major contribution. But it has to be integrated into the framework of what our policy goals are and how we attain them. Also in terms of the intelligence reporting role. I think it just has to be more integrated into the main flow of the Foreign Service. There was always the feeling of

colleagues that you worked for the Labor Department and I was surprised that colleagues really thought that you were employed by the Labor Department.

And then when I was in the Bureau reading a lot of the Labor reports that came in, and always saying, "Why was this reported and is this to interest of the country director and not to me because that is who we all work for-the country director, the DAS, the Assistant Secretary, etc. And I have spent a long career in the Labor field. And it perhaps pains me that organized Labor in the United States has lost the influence that it had in American politics and that collective bargaining had in the field of wage setting, condition setting and so forth.

I am aware that perhaps many of the Foreign Service Officers who might possibly be listening may not even know the name, Lane Kirkland. Most of your predecessors did know the name, George Meany. They did know that the AF of L-CIO existed. But in my retirement looking mainly at the "New York Times" I notice there is not even a good Labor reporter anymore in the "New York Times" whereas 20 or 30 years ago the Labor columnists were respected people. And so we don't report on organized Labor as we once did.

And at the same time, organized Labor does not have the influence that the Walter Ruth's, the giants of the Labor movement, John Lewises and so forth. We have lost a lot of the flamboyant powerful Labor movements. But the "New York Times" does report on social issues, manpower -- the whole problem of employment creation in the United States. There still is an awful lot of what I would still say is Labor reporting but is reporting in terms of more jobs, of better kinds of jobs, lack of opportunities for people, unemployment, Welfare. And that kind of reporting is required from all of our posts. The better understanding of culture and that is where there is a need for that kind of reporting.

Now who does it is not as important as that it be done. But I think that the position of the Labor Attaché could be used. And to develop within the Foreign Service the role of the Labor Attaché in a more integrative way. And not somebody who is attached to the Embassy for purposes of convenience have an office and secretary and access to cables and so forth.

Q: In terms of what you have said so far that raises a question: What sorts of people should be the source of that Labor function being performed in an Embassy? Generally we've had four sources so far: the trade union movement itself, the Labor Department, academics who were much more prevalent in the early days, and Foreign Service. Obviously it is not exclusively one group or another but what are the strengths of each of those groups in supplying the manpower for the Labor function as you see it?

SANDMAN: Well, I feel that all of them have certain shortcomings. Let me say that in the old Labor Attaché Program, which was largely people out of the Labor movement, it was a wonderful group of people. Very committed ideologically to what they were doing. They were not as much as pure reporting officers as advocates for freedom and

democracy. They played that ideological role. They played it but worked in the CIO and the AF of L organizing, bargaining and negotiating and so forth.

There were some very, very brilliant people. But if you take today a Labor trade union official or staff person they may not have that background to bring them in at that lateral entry. People from the Labor Department may have the same problem. I always felt that there was an area of study or training that the department never gave, and that was how to analyze political or economic developments in political terms.

I always wondered at what level of unemployment would there be riots and revolution? And I remember in Malaysia when I reported or found out that the statistics showed that 40% of young males were unemployed, this borders on revolution. I came back to the United States on home-leave and read that 40% of black youth are unemployed.

So we had some staggering figures. What about unequal distribution of income? When is that going to induce political changes? Well, if you look at some of the figures, we have some mal-distribution of income in the United States. It has been retained. Just a better understanding of the interaction, of political and economic developments, and to express them in terms of how they can impede or promote our Foreign Policy interest-whether in the field of trade which is dominating thing today and may well be the major function of Foreign Service. To, you know, our role of the military, their presence in foreign countries.

We taught our trade union Foreign Service Officers at the Harvard Trade Union Program. And we taught them the history of American Labor, the National Labor Relations Act, collective bargaining and so forth. And most of that is not very relevant when they go on their assignments. What should they know? And I think that is, in this sort of position it is very hard to develop a curriculum.

But I thought that nowhere in the Foreign Service are political or economic officers trained in what is expected of us, working in countries as different as Africa and Latin America, Asia and Europe. At one point is I saw the Labor Attaché in France just a couple of years ago when I went to France to visit. And I said, " Do know that there is no French Labor movement, Communist Labor movement?" And in France the Labor movement has also been severely weakened and is not a force in French political life.

Q: Well, it is not a positive force in the sense of being able to -- but it is a negative force in terms of the disturbances that they can create.

SANDMAN: Well, the Communist Labor movement in France has no influence. There were big changes in France as in the United States with the influx of the North Africans, the Muslims and so forth. The whole French economy has changed and industrial life has changed. Scandinavia was one of our strong posts and one has to read very far to look for the LO or initials that meant much to Labor Attachés. I have seen no reference in

anything I have read about the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions. I don't even see much about the ILO.

Well, this doesn't mean you get rid of the Labor Officer because the other aspects of Labor in its broader sense which is people. And we still have to understand what is going on in the country as it affects our interests.

Q: Maybe what is necessary is the inclusion into two different education programs in the Foreign Service. One is the initial one and one is the final or semi-final one. The A-100 course. What should it include to introduce people to the concepts that you are talking about?

SANDMAN: Well, I think you sort of look at. You say the Labor field or the Labor Attaché Program, the conventional Foreign Service as a political cone and an economic cone-information. We have about four or five cones in the Foreign Service. I gather in my reading of the journal that there is some problem that people are not cone-ized right away, they get a chance to look at the Foreign Service for a year or two before they decide a cone.

If we are talking about having a Labor cone I am not sure that would be the direction because all of the cones tend to be artificial just as I feel the separation between political and economic. It many have been done for the purposes of facilitating teaching. You had a professor of economics and he made economics its own study.

Recently I've begun working in the field of victims of violent crimes and I discovered that there is a course on victimology at the local college. And you can get a degree in victimology. It is just as valid as any other field. And so if we continue with this cone system, should we integrate Labor into it? But then we would lose the identity of a Labor program. But, that has happened already. I went into the Foreign Service and just wanted to do Labor work. I wanted to do better and better Labor work. I didn't feel like I had to become an Ambassador to have a successful career.

...The traditional or historical ways of recruiting Foreign Service Officers do not look at Labor as a career. Many of those that I have talked to look at it as another assignment. They want to get back into the political stream because that is the way upward. We have had a couple of Labor Attachés become Ambassadors. But they were very exceptional people. I think it is to integrate Labor into the mainstream, into the political and economic reporting. That is sort of painful to say get rid of the Labor Attaché Program. There is no longer a group of people who have made Labor a career in the Foreign Service.

My impression of the Foreign Service Officer who goes into the Labor Training Program might like to serve a year, a tour or two tours. But we are all forced to look at how to get promoted. And that is the name of the game, I think, increasingly in the Foreign Service which is threatened today by the contraction of government and the reductions of budgets. My contact with colleagues says that life in the Foreign Service is a matter of survival.

And so I don't think we can expect a "Labor corps". This should be in the training of the Foreign Service Officers at the junior level and at every level. The education and training on how to do the reporting on Labor. Again, I think we have to define what the word "Labor" means. And I am not prepared to do it at that time but I saw it in seven different posts. The job was handled a little differently in each post.

And so what the future holds for the Labor Attaché...

Q: ...depending upon the situation in that post. That is the point you are making.

SANDMAN: It varied from post to post. It varied in accordance to what our goals and objectives were, the importance of organized Labor, how extensive unemployment was as a political threat-a destabilizing element in the country. I think the Foreign Service itself has to decide. Where that decision would be made, I don't know. But we have had so many study groups on the Labor Attaché Program but they were offered in terms of how many we needed and what grade level we should function at and having access to the top of the career ladder.

: Rather than the substance of what we are doing.

Q: What is the use of having a segment of training for any Foreign Service officer, including the Labor Officer of things like U.S. Labor law, U.S. Labor history, as against the things you were talking about -- find out something about that country's situation and then find out what you need to know about where you belong or to effect what is being done in that country?.

SANDMAN: Well, there is a sort of general kind of background that I think all Foreign Service officers should have. And to me, Labor history is part of American history. Now I admit, when I worked at the AF of L, we made many efforts at the federation level to have Labor history better represented in our history books. Labor was taught more in terms of strikes. And so students may have learned about the Homestead Strike, the Pullman Strike, although today I'm not even sure they include that. And our Labor leaders who are more infamous appear in newspapers and are familiar to people. And so the teaching of what organized Labor has done. And there is the word "organized Labor" which are the trade unions, what has been the role of collective bargaining. And so Labor is part of the broader stream of American history, the American economy, etc. And I think that is where it should be taught.

Q: Lenny, thank you very much for this interesting interview.

End of interview