

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

MARY C. KILGOUR

*Interviewed by: John Pielemeier
Initial interview date: March 14, 2018
Copyright 2018 ADST*

This oral history transcription was made possible through support provided by U.S. Agency for International Development, under terms of Cooperative Agreement No. AID-OAA-F-16-00101. The opinions expressed herein are those of the interviewee and do not necessarily reflect the views of the U.S. Agency for International Development or the Association for Diplomatic Studies and Training.

Q: Alright. This is John Pielemeier on March 14, 2018. We're beginning an interview with Mary Kilgour, a very well-respected and experienced mission director. Mary is on the line with me with a phone call from Gainesville, Florida.

Mary, I want to first ask you where you grew up and what things led you towards international work.

KILGOUR: Hi, John. I grew up in Hartford, Connecticut. My parents were from Scotland and so from birth I had an international perspective. My grandparents and some aunts and uncle lived in Canada. I had other relatives in Scotland although we weren't in touch with them really until I was an adult and some of them moved to the States and I visited Scotland. But, I think the family background, my brother was in the Navy; my boyfriend at the time in high school was in the Navy. They were traveling all over and sending pictures of things back. And of course - by the time I was in college - this was the Kennedy era, with its "ask not" motivation and there were a lot of dorm-based discussions of international events. So, I think I had an international perspective to the point where, when Kennedy announced the Peace Corps I very quickly applied. I was only a junior, so I didn't get a letter back inviting me to join the Peace Corps until the end of my senior year.

Q: Where were you in college, Mary?

KILGOUR: My first couple of degrees were at the University of Connecticut.

Q: So, this was while you were a junior at the university. What were you majoring in?

KILGOUR: Political science. So, I had an interest in public policy and political things, government things already. But back then, before women's lib, most women aspired to either teaching, nursing or government as the most likely places they could be employed.

Q: Did you have any professors there who were particularly of interest to you for their work internationally?

KILGOUR: Well, interesting, I started college in '58, finished the Bachelor's in '62, and that was an era when, at least at UConn, quite a few of the professors had European backgrounds. Several of them were Jewish, their families had fled Hitler. We had at least three of them just in my department probably out of about nine or 10 professors. I also had a teacher who was very influential, my first political science class, who had been a Foreign Service officer.

Q: Oh.

KILGOUR: She quit the Foreign Service and went on to become a professor, but she told us a lot of her stories and that intrigued me very early on although I didn't act on it, of course, at that age. But I did shift my major. I was a phys ed major because that was the only subject that I liked in high school and I was very good at sports. As soon as I took her class in political science I shifted to political science.

Q: And she probably implicitly gave you the idea as a woman you could be in the Foreign Service.

KILGOUR: Yes, exactly. Well, that was government. I mean, government was always more open to employment for women back then than private sector was.

Q: Yes. So, your senior year you got the letter back. Did you apply for a particular reason or country for Peace Corps?

KILGOUR: I don't think they allowed that back then. Maybe they did and I didn't focus on that but I got an invitation to the Philippines and at first I was slightly disappointed because I thought well, that's an American colony so it will probably be Americanized but that's not true. I was a little bit afraid to try to challenge it, to look for someplace else so I accepted it. And I was very glad subsequently that I did.

Q: So, when you graduated did you immediately go into Peace Corps?

KILGOUR: I did, within two weeks of graduating. And that was very important to me because I was an orphan and I lived in an orphanage and after I left the orphanage to go to University of Connecticut dorm I lived basically in my dorm. And so, any time I had time off from university I had to scramble around to find a place to stay. Now, the orphanage always let me come back and stay there but I didn't want to overstay my welcome, so I was there for two weeks after I graduated and then I went to Peace Corps training.

Q: Mary, maybe we should just mention for background for readers your book that you wrote about your childhood.

KILGOUR: Sure. It's called *Me May Mary*. Anybody trying to find it nowadays may have to find a secondhand copy on Amazon because it's out of print. It was published in 2005. It's getting harder to find. But it does describe my childhood from age 11 to basically 19 when I left the orphanage at the end of my freshman year to go up to the campus of the university. And I wrote it not because I had any particular hang-ups about being an orphan or being poor and abused and all that. But because I was - by that time - retired and I was a Guardian ad Litem volunteer. I was working with kids in the court system because of their parents' abuse and neglect. And I was figuring out a way to communicate with those kids and so I wrote the memoir for them, basically, and that's stated in the book. But yes, it's probably worth reading if anyone wants to understand me and my perspective in life.

Q: I'm sure it is. I've read it; I liked it.

So, where was your training for the Philippines?

KILGOUR: San Jose State College back then; I think it's San Jose University now in California. Back then we trained in the States for three months and then got a week off, you went back home, wherever, to say goodbye to whoever and then flew to the country for another couple of weeks of in-country training. I think it's quite different now.

Q: And you went to Manila or where did you go?

KILGOUR: Oh, no, I went to Mindanao, the island of Mindanao. We had, just overnight or two in Manila, then we all got on a boat, an inter-island steamer, and went south to Zamboanga for two weeks of training. We lived with Lions Club members and four of us lived in the large house with a family. The man was an active Lion and prominent entrepreneur who started life in Tondo, a notorious Manila slum. He was a very interesting man. We did some training at the local normal school and then were moved out all over Mindanao to our different posts. I was one of six assigned to Surigao del Sur, although two were below where the road ended so they had to go in a different way. So, there were four of us in the part of the province we could reach by road from the north, two men about 25 miles south of us and my roommate and myself. We became very good friends.

Q: And what was your task as a volunteer?

KILGOUR: They called us teachers' aides or co-teachers, mainly because they didn't want to offend sensibilities of Filipino teachers who thought we might be supplanting them, taking their jobs. It was basically undefined beyond that. Each person had to come up with a way to operationalize that title. And my roommate and I basically did it by teaching some classes mainly serving as a model to the teacher and then also getting

involved with teacher training more broadly. We ended up having workshops for teachers from several municipalities, which was many, many elementary schools. My roommate and I were in different elementary schools. And so, we focused on teacher training as opposed to just being in the classroom. We designed our own materials teaching English as a foreign language.. It took a long time to grasp the job, try to make it work, and for energetic 22-year-olds it sometimes required more patience than we had; but I think in the end it worked; in our case it worked and it was a good experience.

Q: And what was the community like you were in?

KILGOUR: We were in a so-called image barrio. It was selected by one of the volunteer leaders because it was so beautiful, because it was full of flowers, but what she didn't focus on was that it was at the end of a dead end dirt road and there was not a single store or even a little *sari-sari* store where you can buy little essentials such as cigarettes, matches or a can of mackerel or whatever; I mean, there was nothing in the village except a small elementary school, a water pump and a multipurpose pavement that was intended to serve as a market, but the market never developed and eight houses. We had to go about three kilometers to a little *sari-sari* store on the main road. To get into the *poblacion* we had to go a total of about six kilometers. Now, this was a place that had very little transportation.

Q: Oh, boy.

KILGOUR: There was a local bus that went up and down the one road but you could wait two hours for that bus. We did finally get bikes and that gave us more mobility. And in fact, my school where I taught was five-and-a-half kilometers in the other direction. When you got down to the so-called National Highway, which was just a dirt road, if you went left you got to my school; if you went right you went to the *poblacion*, which was the main marketing area and where a lot of our more educated friends lived and where the post office was.

Q: Five-and-a-half kilometers every day?

KILGOUR: Well, 11 kilometers every day.

Q: Yes. Each way, yes.

KILGOUR: Yes. Before we got our bikes that was sort of difficult. And I did end up the second year staying at my principal's house in the barrio, the village, where the school was because it got a little onerous to be riding back and forth so much in the rainy season, for instance.

Q: Right, yes. That's quite an experience. Did you have a summer project?

KILGOUR: The only summer we were there we went to Cebu to study the language because they hadn't provided us with the language during the basic training in California

because we were going to be scattered all over Mindanao and Mindanao is a frontier for the Philippines that has received immigrants from all other parts of the country. So, you might be assigned in a Tagalog-speaking area, a Cebuano-speaking area, an Ilocano area, a Muslim area in the northwest part of the island. They didn't know where we would be going at that point so they didn't teach us anything except for a very small amount of Tagalog, which is the basis for the national language, *Pilipino*. But when we got there we realized that our place spoke a variation of Cebuano and so we went to Cebu for six weeks in a university to study Cebuano. And we realized when we went back to our village that, in fact, they didn't really speak pure Cebuano, they spoke a variation. Cebuano is the major Visayan language. Visayas are the little islands in the middle of the country between Luzon and Mindanao. The Filipinos love languages and they love to distinguish their place, their hometown, from other hometowns. They do that by varying their languages a little bit. And they might change Gs to Ys or Ls to Js or whatever. It depends on the place. And so, it took us the rest of this time we were there to figure out all the differences between pure Cebuano and Cantilangnon, named after the *poblacion* of Cantilan. And it would be different one *poblacion* up or one *poblacion* down the road.. By the end of it I actually spoke probably better *Cantilangnon*, mixed with Cebuano, than my students in the sixth grade spoke English and they had been taught in English since grade three. So, I spoke quite a bit of it, all pretty much gone now. But I took it seriously and I like languages, so I worked pretty hard during the class.

Q: Great. Wow. And Mindanao was safe and secure at that point?

KILGOUR: Much more so than now. The Muslim areas are fairly distant from my Christian area. I lived on the east coast of Mindanao and there was a New People's Army, a communist-based guerilla movement. At that time, it was fairly minor and it wasn't any threat, it was hardly spoken of. When I went back to the Philippines as the deputy director of USAID the NPA had gotten very strong and every time I visited my village I sensed their presence. One time I stayed in a lumber camp up in the mountains and there were machine guns set up on the porch and we were told by the people who ran the lumber camp that the NPA was everywhere, that they could attack at any time. I asked what their defense was, other than the machine guns. They pointed to a helicopter that was under a carport kind of a structure but they said it was broken right then. But we didn't have any trouble while I was there. I noticed, though, in the early '80s, that every time I went out somewhere during my visits to my village there were always young people in the outskirts of the crowd around me sort of looking very sullen. And I'd catch their eye and I'd make some Filipino facial expressions - they have certain ways they move their face like raising their eyebrows to say hello - and I would do that and these young people would just sort of giggle and walk away. I was aware of my surroundings but I didn't worry about it because I was very popular in that rural area because of the Peace Corps experience and knew my friends would protect me.

Q: Right. What was happening in Vietnam next door to you, or not far away?

KILGOUR: It was starting to heat up to the point where when we left in '64 we were told we should not travel back home via Vietnam. I had intended to stop in Vietnam, but we skipped it and went from Hong Kong to Bangkok.

Q: I see. Did you meet any people in the Foreign Service or USAID while you were in the Philippines?

KILGOUR: Not really. We met the ambassador at a farewell function at the Embassy and there were a few USAID people who came through Surigao City, which is in the province to the north of us and was the biggest city near us. It was 85 kilometers from us, quite a long way on the public bus. The USAID people we met tried to identify with us by telling us some of the war stories that they had experienced during field trips but we weren't too impressed. You as a former Peace Corps volunteer can appreciate that.

Q: Right, exactly. In those days we just thought they were high rollers, right?

KILGOUR: Yes, right.

Q: So, after your Peace Corps stay what happened then?

KILGOUR: I went to grad school back at the University of Connecticut. Having really being dependent only on Peace Corps salary, having been an orphan, and my brother was generous when he knew I needed money but he never really focused too much on whether I needed money, he was- by this time an undergraduate himself. He's older than I am but he started school later. He was earning his own money in the Merchant Marines but he needed it to pay for his own education at that point. I knew that I would be accepted back at UConn and that they would figure out a way to get me money to pay for it. So I went back to UConn and the same department, political science, and I was a grad assistant. So, I got a one-year Master's in two years by working part-time for them.

Q: Ah ha.

KILGOUR: But I focused more on political development and international relations than I had at the undergraduate level.

Q: And did you write a thesis with that Master's?

KILGOUR: No, it was just a one-year Master's.

Q: Okay. Alright. Once you completed that did they help you find work or what was your next step?

KILGOUR: This would have been '66 and the government was hiring apparently quite a lot, I guess gearing up for Vietnam. I took the Management Intern exam that followed the Federal Employee Entrance Exam. (I think that was its name.) That was back before it became the Presidential Management Intern program. It was based mainly on one's

scores in the exam and an interview with a panel of government officials; and, of course, reference letters. One entered the government in a training position one grade higher because of the MI status. Since I also had a Master's degree I started as a GS-9. So, The MI exam was an interesting experience. I went into Hartford for the required oral interview. and there were three men interviewing me and asking me questions. By then I realized that I wanted to go back overseas and do international work and it looks like USAID is the way to do that. I told them this, saying that I was not interested in any domestic agencies. I gave an example: for instance if you offer me a position at the post office I wouldn't take it because I'm simply not interested in what the post office does. And at that point one of the three men said that he worked for the post office. I said 'Oops'. But they didn't hold it against me. But, interestingly, I didn't get any feelers from USAID. I got feelers from the CIA, of all places, and from what I think is now FEMA (Federal Emergency Management Agency), it was called the Presidential Emergency Management Office or something like that back then. The way they described their job was to deal with the aftermath of a nuclear attack.

Q: Oh, my.

KILGOUR: I didn't want to spend my life waiting for a nuclear attack. That seemed a little bit strange. Finally somebody from the Civil Service Administration in Washington called me and asked why I hadn't yet accepted a job. I'd gotten other offers but they were more domestic-oriented. The CIA turned me off even though they offered me a GS-11. They said some of my professors had recommended me to them. So, I wrote back and asked them to tell me which professors did that and also asked why they were violating President Kennedy's executive order not to hire Peace Corps volunteers into the CIA? They wrote back, not mentioning my professors, but said that they were not aware that I had been a Peace Corps volunteer so they rescinded the offer.

Q: Wow.

KILGOUR: The lady from the Civil Service Administration said she'd look into the AID option and get back to me. That's how I got into AID as a Management Intern.

Q: What year was that?

KILGOUR: That would have been '66.

Q: '66. And what part of AID did you enter with?

KILGOUR: I started out in the Africa Bureau's Office of Regional Activities, which was a small office that supported programs that covered more than one country. The most important thing that office did was to start the measles/smallpox project. And so, when I'm asked if I ever accomplished anything while I worked for AID - actually, I did have a young returned Peace Corps volunteer ask me that after I retired - I replied, "Well, I did participate in eliminating smallpox from the world." But what I did at that time as a brand-new GS-9 was cut and paste a lot of the same verbiage for project agreements for all those countries starting up measles/smallpox projects. I stood at the Xerox machine

quite a bit and often wondered whether this really was suitable work for a Master's level GS-9 employee. But I did get to sit in on the meetings with the famed Donald Henderson from CDC (Centers for Disease Control) who was the father of the eradication of smallpox.

Q: Right.

KILGOUR: I'm sure he wouldn't remember me but I was there against the wall at these meetings and was introduced to him at some point. And so, sure enough, putting the project agreements together and then the grownups from RUA (the combined desk for several small African countries) went out to the individual countries and negotiated those agreements that I had so laboriously cut and pasted together. And that was the start of what ended up as the eradication of smallpox, the only disease in human history that's been eradicated.

Q: Wow.

KILGOUR: So, my role was miniscule but it was there and I am hereby documenting it for history.

Q: Essential, essential. Alright, so was Herman Marshall there at that time?

KILGOUR: Herman Marshall?

Q: Was a health officer in the Africa Bureau.

KILGOUR: Well, we didn't have a health officer in RA. I don't know where he would have been. The head of the office was Dave Alter. I don't know if you remember him. Dave Alter was an interesting fellow. He was the son of missionaries from India and he had gone to that school that a lot of missionary kids went to up in the hills of India. I know the man who replaced me in Bangladesh, Dick Brown, also went there. It was a famous boarding school. I can't remember the name of it right now. But anyway, Dave had gone there, was related to a lot of other Alters who had a long history on the sub-continent. They had been for generations in India. He was a good man; I learned a lot from him. And then, my immediate boss was a man named Val Burati. He had been out of the government for many years, having been "Stasson-ated." And that was the first time I'd ever heard that term and maybe close to the last. Harold Stassen was the head of AID and I think during the McCarthy time and he made everybody take an IQ test.. I think Val would have passed that. But he was fired for his activities in the Philippines while he was a State Department labor attaché because of his work with *Hukbalahap*-influenced unions. He fought for reinstatement and eventually was reinstated, but his lost years were never restored. So he was not able to retire even though he was well into his '60s by then and not in particularly good health. So, I heard a lot stories from Val about the politicization of AID and of every other federal government agency during the McCarthy era; a fascinating lesson.

Q: Wow. No, that's something, a new term for me. I wasn't aware of that.

Now, did they tell you you would eventually go overseas?

KILGOUR: Yes. Well, I applied to go overseas. The Management Intern program provided a year of rotations. Meanwhile, the Junior Officer Training (JOT) people were recruiting JOTs however they could get them, so I transferred into that program, which was a two-year program. I was in Regional Activities the longest but I had other rotations in the Africa Bureau such as the Preliminary Studies Unit. My final rotation was to be the Pakistan desk and it was at that time that I converted to the Foreign Service and they wanted me to go to Pakistan as an Assistant Program Officer. So, that's what I did.

Q: Had you known much about Pakistan by that time?

KILGOUR: I did not. I took the area studies course which was a good two-week course. I didn't know anything about the country, except what I learned by working on the Pakistan Desk for a couple of months. I didn't know anything about most places in the world at that point except the Philippines.

Q: Right. Wow. And upon arrival in, was it Islamabad at that time?

KILGOUR: No, it was Lahore, which was the capital of the Punjab.

Q: Lahore.

KILGOUR: I landed in Karachi. Between Europe or Washington and Karachi the zipper of my suitcase broke and so all my possessions were available for easy pickings. The only thing that got picked that I could see was a carton of cigarettes. But I couldn't maneuver the suitcase anymore so they repacked everything in a corrugated cardboard box tied with string. So I showed up at my first Foreign Service post with my belongings in a cardboard box. Fortunately it was quite late and I think one person met me and I was able to explain away the fact that I was traveling with a cardboard suitcase.

Q: Right.

KILGOUR: At that time the AID mission was in Lahore. I was only in Pakistan for two years, but my last three months were living in Islamabad and working in Rawalpindi. Back then Islamabad was just open fields. There was very little built. It was brand new, like Brasilia.

Q: Who was your boss in Lahore, can you remember?

KILGOUR: My boss in Lahore I remember well. His name was Bill Muldoon and I think he was not that old but I think he must have quit AID after a couple of tours more. He had a bunch of kids, like five or six, and his wife was a nurse who she couldn't easily work when they were overseas, so I think after Pakistan he may have had a Washington

assignment and then he went somewhere else. I lost touch with him but he was a very good boss. And the deputy at that office was Al Vestrich and he was probably close to retirement, but I think he might have gone on to Afghanistan after Pakistan.

In that same office there was Mark Ward, who you may know.

Q: Yes.

KILGOUR: Not the lawyer but the other Mark Ward. And then Arthur Silver, who you probably know.

Q: Yes.

KILGOUR: I was the junior person. And I think Arthur, who was in Somalia before Pakistan and probably graduated from being a JOT there.

Q: Oh.

KILGOUR: So, I was the junior one. It was a great, dynamic office. We all got along very well. Our office was one branch of the Office of Development Planning. There was another office just for economists and economic analysis. It was a large mission. And it was deep enough in staffing that I got a lot of good mentoring. And that's something I think as missions have gotten smaller they've not been able to do nearly as much. So, I understudied mainly Mark and of course Al and Bill. And then there was Jack Robinson, who was the assistant director for development planning and under him was Walter Furst; and then a woman economist, Evelyn Ripps. So it was a very deeply staffed office and a large program, a good Mission in which to start one's AID career.

Q: And do you remember who was the mission director at that time?

KILGOUR: Oh, yes: Bill Kontos. I later became good friends with him and his wife, Joan. He mentored me very nicely. I had a rotation in his office working for the deputy director, Vince Brown, and they were both very open to mentoring a young person like me. I also worked in the family planning program there, which was a big controversial program back then. This would have been '67. I think it was one of the first family planning programs in the world and it was quite controversial and not helped by having a rather rough-hewn family planning doctor, who quit- well, she may have quit or been fired by AID, I'm not sure. She ended up in the UN after that but she was a very difficult person. I learned a lot about difficult people with her. I didn't work for her, I worked with her as smoothly as I could, but it was a challenge.

Q: Why was it controversial?

KILGOUR: Well, it was new. And Pakistan, of course, is a pro-natalist country, I guess partly because it's Muslim. A lot of the Latin American family planning programs were equally controversial because of Catholicism. But I think maybe AID pushed a little bit

too hard in Pakistan and it backfired several years after I left the program. It was downsized and I think a whole different approach started to be taken. This surely was done in conjunction with the Pakistan government. The Pakistan government had some Westernized technocratic leadership in this program and they pushed hard and we supported them pushing hard and it backfired. The woman who later became the head of the UN population program, Nafis Sadik, was the deputy of that program under Enver Adil, who I believe was a senior civil servant. Nafis was a medical doctor. Mr. Adil was a very capable man, as was Nafis, his deputy. But they probably just weren't in touch with the more fundamentalist elements of the country and we weren't either. I didn't follow too closely after I left, but I think probably in the early '70s the program was downsized. And if you look at the statistics Pakistan has not made nearly as much progress in reducing birth and death rates as many other countries, including Bangladesh. Bangladesh, East Pakistan at the time, was so poor and so overcrowded that the people themselves realized that they had to limit family size just so that they'd have more children grow to adulthood. And they didn't have the fundamentalist element as much as West Pakistan did. I don't know how it is now; I've lost touch with that kind of detail. But back then it was a dynamic program for me to work in because it had the mission director's attention. It was problematic and new so he focused on it much more so than, say, an agricultural program or an education program.

Q: So, do you have any recollection what size the budget would have been?

KILGOUR: Oh, gosh. I don't. The whole program was very large and we had big Food for Peace program, we had a lot of program loans for agriculture. It was probably a \$200 or \$300 million program in total. That wouldn't surprise me. As I mentioned earlier before we got on the tape, I threw away all my EERs (Employee Evaluation Reports) a few years ago; if I had still had them I could have looked it up and seen that level of detail but I threw them all away thinking I would never have any use for them.

Q: Right. Did you travel around Pakistan?

KILGOUR: Yes, privately as a tourist quite a bit and then in conjunction with some field trips. We had big agricultural universities there which were supported under the education sector and I was in charge of education from the program office also, family planning and education, and so I went to visit them in Lyallpur and also in Mymensingh, in East Pakistan. They were following the model of U.S. land grants institutions.

I went on a wonderful, memorable week-long hiking trip up to a place called Chitral, which is totally filled with Taliban now but back then it was peaceful. I went with Mark Ward and his wife Ruth and some people from the Ford Foundation. We took a plane into the town of Chitral and then hiked along a river, staying for a week on the roof of somebody's house. After we woke up the first morning and found half the village staring at us in our sleeping bags, we put up a tarp for privacy. But it was a wonderful trip; Chitral was beautiful, but very, very poor. There were blonde, blue-eyed kids who were the descendants of Alexander the Great. It was just a wonderful part of Pakistan. And when we hiked back down the river - crossing one-plank bridges multiple times - to back

to the town, the weather was so bad we couldn't fly out. So we rented two jeeps and drove out over mountains. It was snowing at the summit. We slept overnight in a hotel that was right out of the Bible. It had straw on the floor and charpoys (native beds of woven rope). We were sure that we would be bitten alive by mosquitoes, bed bugs or something else, and we wouldn't be able to sleep at all. But we were so tired we all slept like babies, in charpoys arranged cheek to jowl.

When we got down to Peshawar and went to the Pakistan Airways office, because two of the guys had to get back that night to Lahore. The rest of us were going to stay overnight in the AID, the guesthouse at Peshawar but we happened to be in the PIA office when some airmen from the Peshawar U.S. Air Force base came in to also get reservations and they were all very clean cut looking, short hair and everything and we all looked like we had been hiking for a week, as we had. The zipper on my jeans had broken so I had it tied with a big safety pin and we looked pretty much like hippies. That's what they thought we were. They looked at us with deep scorn. Then the guys who were trying to get on the plane presented their official passports to the clerk - back then we had official passports but not diplomatic - and the airmen pulled out the same passports. After that they were friendlier toward us and we told them what we had been up to. And so, that was as marvelous trip. Hiking in Chitral was definitely the most interesting trip I took during my tour.

Of course, the six weeks I spent in East Pakistan was interesting. And I did take a trip through the Khyber Pass to Kabul to stay with John Patterson. Do you remember him?

Q: Yes.

KILGOUR: I stayed with him and his family in Kabul but I was not a very good houseguest. I had a bad case of amoebic dysentery, and they only had one bathroom so I was probably an unwelcome guest. But they were very hospitable, and it was just a week.

I took other shorter trips. I saw a bit of Pakistan and got a good flavor from Pakistan culture, which wasn't particularly easy for a young woman. I was 26 when I got there and 28 when I left so I missed the whole miniskirt generation. But I found it very interesting and because I was a single woman I ended up getting invited to a lot of things that other in the AID mission would not have been involved in. Frequently they needed a woman to fill out a table. So, the Kontos' frequently invited me to things and maybe because I was a pretty good conversationalist I got invited to a lot of things at their house, more so than you would think for a junior officer. And that may have been part of Bill's mentoring of me as well. I also dated a Pakistani professor who had just returned from getting a PhD. at NYU. That was a pleasant experience and enabled me to meet the younger academic crowd.

Q: I'll be darned. This is your first, aside from your time in Washington, introduction to a bureaucracy, a fairly large one, and were you considering whether you wanted to stay in AID at this point or were you pretty-

KILGOUR: That's a good question. I did. I was tempted to compare it to my Peace Corps experience because it was an overseas experience and it was very different. I mean, my first thought was where are the people I'm going to interact with. Well, of course eventually I did interact with people in the government but I realized it was more of a paper job at that point than a Peace Corps direct contact with people job. And I had to learn how to operate in a bureaucracy and that was a very good experience to have. The woman I mentioned who was my nemesis, the head of the family planning program, provided a very good lesson; I learned how to deal with difficult people and fortunately I was supported by the mission director. If I hadn't had his support I probably would have had a different take on it all. Because he tended to support me against her in various meetings, especially when she chewed me out for something, He'd just try to let her see how he saw things and usually they were supportive of me. I'll give you one example, though this one didn't involve the director.

We had just transferred from Lahore, living in Islamabad and working in Rawalpindi. The doctor was in my office chewing me out for some reason. Part of it was that I used to send her notes and she demanded that I stop sending her notes; "I never read your notes, I just throw them in a drawer," she said. As she was pacing up and down in front of my desk, I finally said, "you know, we're both adults, why don't we go have a cup of coffee and talk this out more calmly." She was twice my age, but she didn't notice the irony of that. She said okay, let's do it. So, we walked over to the canteen, which was in a different building, and as we walked we came upon the personnel officer, whose name I don't remember. He was a long-suffering personnel officer to the point where when he transferred, fortunately without his family with him, his car hit a horse; the horse went through a windshield and he had to negotiate with the village to pay for that horse and all the horse's offspring. It was a traumatic experience for him but he survived and he wasn't injured. When he got set up in a house with his family in Islamabad, they were all sitting in the living room waiting for dinner to be served. As they got up to go into the dining room the ceiling in their living room collapsed. Again, uninjured but traumatized.

Q: Oh, my goodness.

KILGOUR: So he had had some bad experiences.

Q: My goodness.

KILGOUR: So this doctor and I come upon him and she accosted him with: "when are you going to act on the promotion papers for my assistant that I sent you three weeks ago? You haven't done anything." She was challenging him in a rude voice and this guy had been in charge of moving the whole mission up to Islamabad and had been really, really, busy. He was calm but I could see the red going from his shirt collar up his neck to his face. It was like his whole head was filling with blood. And I was behind the doctor just watching him and he told her he'd get to it as soon as he could. He said, "I've been really busy with this move but it's in my in-box and I'll look into it." And she berated him again, "well, you know, this is important and his morale is suffering." She went on and on and again, the blood kept going up but this time it was at his hairline. I learned

that it wasn't just me she attacked. Until that time, I thought it was just bad vibes between her and me but it seemed she treated everybody as badly as she treated me. I was able to put that in perspective and it was a good lesson.

We had coffee together and I said, "Okay, I will never send you another note." Then she asked me to stop editing her material. I explained that I couldn't stop that because that was my job in the program office; the program officer's job is to make all the mission office's material consistent so when we send it into Washington it's not different styles and different approaches and different formats. And I told her that I couldn't stop doing my job to accommodate her. And so, we came to a little more peace between us, but not much, really.

But yes, I adjusted to the bureaucracy. Let me just jump ahead for a minute. When I started getting into management jobs, I enjoyed them much more because I was no longer managing paper but was managing people. You know, when you're a junior officer and even at mid-levels you're involved with paper, trying to accomplish things by writing things which are reviewed by more senior people. And you're interacting with the government, possibly doing a little bit of negotiation but usually not at a junior level. You're interacting with your colleagues but it's still paper based. And when I became a manager I realized the shift I had made was to be people based. I was much happier with the bureaucracy at that stage than I had been earlier.

Q: You mentioned something about learning how to work with difficult people. Are there other lessons or tricks to that trade that you learned over the years?

KILGOUR: I guess in retrospect I could say that I might have been part of the problem in some cases; you know, it takes two to have a difficult relationship. I might have been more understanding, especially in relations, once I got more senior, with ambassadors, for instance. Maybe I should have understood their perspective a little bit more than I did, rather than being overly protective of the USAID budget and prerogatives. But at the junior level, back before I was an executive, I would say one of the benefits of being in the Foreign Service was that you knew it was self-limiting, that when your tour was up it would be over; that person would leave or you would leave. And so, most negative relationships were short-lived. And the number of people I ran into who I considered very difficult was pretty small. Most people in AID were every bit as committed and positive to work with as I think I was most of the time.

Q: And after two years did you bid for your next job or did it come your way?

KILGOUR: Well, that's a good question. They were turning Lahore into a provincial office equivalent to the provincial office in East Pakistan and then there would be a central office in Islamabad. And I was asked to go back to Lahore as the provincial program officer; it would have been "the" program officer, maybe with a JOT or somebody underneath me. I got along well with the man who would be the provincial director; Fred Sligh. It was a very nice compliment to be asked to do that. But two years in Pakistan as a young woman was enough for me. I found it a difficult post socially and

to some extent professionally, to be a woman in that society. So, I said I wanted to go to some other country. I left Pakistan “post to be determined,” not realizing that that was not something you should do because people who leave “post to be determined” usually are people who haven’t been successful at getting another assignment.

I went back to Washington thinking I’d have to walk the halls and sell myself. Before starting that, however, I had to take the anti-communism course. The course itself had been abolished but the requirement to take it had not been abolished. That’s a true story. So, what did they do? They didn’t know what post I was going to so they put me back into the Pakistan area studies course. It was actually a good move because the people teaching it hadn’t been in-country for years and I had just come back so I was able to provide immediate comment about things that they were saying. It was really good for the other students and it was probably good for me in that it allowed me to consolidate some of my thoughts about the two years. But after I finished that, I did do some job searching and discovered, probably for the first time except for the generalized Pakistan experience, a little bit of bias against women in the system. But it was subtle. I was applying for a job in Afghanistan as the evaluation officer and the interview clearly was—they were not going to hire a woman for that job. They weren’t going to admit it but they weren’t going to hire a woman; that was pretty clear the way the interview unfolded. Just then Jack Robinson came to my rescue. He had been the assistant director for development and planning in Pakistan and he had transferred into Washington as an office director for Colombia and some other countries. He asked if I’d like to go to Colombia as an assistant program officer. I told him that sounded good. So after home leave I ended up in Spanish language training for four months in Washington and then went to Bogota.

Q: Only four?

KILGOUR: Well, I got an S-3 after four months, so that was enough.

Q: Wow. You were a good language learner.

KILGOUR: Yes, but I had to work hard at it because I don’t have a good memory. I’m a good mimicker. I guess that’s the other component of language learning. But I worked hard at it and they kept on moving me to more advanced classes. I didn’t know that was why I was being advanced. I could have slowed down and made it five months but I was diligent; I did the homework. So, after four months I had a 3/3 and off I went to Bogota. And within the first couple of days I went to a meeting with the government, thinking I spoke Spanish, and I understood about 10 percent of what was said. You know, having an S-3 at FSI (Foreign Service Institute) is not necessarily sufficient. You need to practice to get it to really be a minimal professional proficiency.

Q: What year did you arrive in Colombia, in Bogota?

KILGOUR: In 1970. That was the time when the Vietnam War was very much heating up. And while I was chilling out in Miami over the weekend before getting on the plane for Bogota, Kent State happened.

Q: Oh.

KILGOUR: So, that was the atmosphere then. And of course, in Colombia people were very anti-American, in part because of the Vietnam War but also just in general Latin Americans were opposed to the influence of the U.S. That was a constant feature that we had to contend with in Colombia. You never drove outside of Bogota after dark, well in part sometimes because the road might have disappeared and there weren't any signs to tell you that. But it was also because of the guerrillas; they would prey on people after dark.

Q: So, there were already guerrillas in Colombia?

KILGOUR: Oh, yes, going back to the 1940's. *La Violencia* continued with the FARC (Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia—People's Army (Spanish: Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia) and the guerrillas. They were maybe less strong and they probably hadn't gotten into narcotrafficking at that point but they were there. And then in the cities there was a lot of robbery. All your cars had to have alarm systems. They were very rudimentary; it was a little, they called it, a *placa*. I don't know what you'd call it in English. A little card with copper dots on it and when you stuck it in a housing installed on the car, the car would operate and if it wasn't in there the car wouldn't operate. And the houses were all alarmed and had bars around the windows. And if your windshield wipers weren't soldered on they would be stolen right off- you'd be in the middle of traffic and somebody would come over and grab your windshield wipers. So we'd park our cars in guarded lots. I saw more than once rioters, demonstrators, come by the embassy, which was where the AID mission was; it was in a commercial building in rented space. And the demonstrators would come by and if they saw a car with a CD license plate they would smash it with rocks. That happened to a newcomer who hadn't realized that she shouldn't park on the street; she was standing next to me on the 13th floor watching them smashing her brand-new bright red car with big rocks.

Q: Ooh.

KILGOUR: And then one time I got stuck in a mob, I guess you'd have to call it a mob. I had had dinner with the ambassador's and DCM's secretaries. The DCM's secretary lived near the embassy and the ambassador's secretary lived up near where I was, so I was driving her home, We came to a point where traffic just stopped completely and somebody ran up to my car and shouted - and to this day I don't know whether he was saying it in English or Spanish - but it translated as "get out of here, they're looking for black license plates to burn." The CD plates were black. And so, I immediately jumped out of the car, thinking I would take my license plates off, and my passenger jumped out, too, thinking I was fleeing. Then I got back in, realizing I didn't even have a screwdriver, then she got back in. I looked forward just as flames shot up. It wasn't a CD plate, they

just got tired of waiting and they'd put a match in the gas tank of the car three cars in front of me. And then I looked behind me and what had been solid cars was empty.

Q: Wow.

KILGOUR: I did a U-turn and went back to the embassy and we ended up sleeping on the floor of the apartment of the DCM's secretary. That was sort of scary.

Q: Goodness.

KILGOUR: But getting back to the AID program, we had an unusual program there. It was a period when AID was pushing sector lending, which was basically program lending but focused on a sector. So, for instance, in education they would try to get policy change in education in return for a generalized program loan to the sector of education and the money could be used according to the government's desires and of course they would get the use of foreign exchange and they would end up putting more local currency into the sector in return for some policy changes. I don't think it worked very well. I don't know whether that was the case just in Latin America or whether it wasn't as successful as program lending elsewhere. I don't think the agency stayed with it more than a few years but that was the predominant kind of program we had in Colombia. We did have some smaller project-based activity. And we had a family planning program there which was very different from Pakistan. It was run through a non-profit NGO (Non-Governmental Organization) because of the program's sensitivity to the government. And we had some manpower training programs but the big ones were these sector loans and that really didn't involve the program office as much as other kinds of programs did. So, our office was sort of marginalized from the big stuff that the mission was doing. And as loans the loan office was the main mover and shaker rather than the program office. I did do some direct technical assistance there. We had a PASA advisor from the U.S. Census Bureau and another one from IRS. I took over the census project because it hadn't been completed before the advisor left. It was with the National Statistical Agency. There was just some small stuff remaining like participant training and things like that. And that involved me directly working with the office. Interestingly, when I left the country I discovered that the head or deputy of that agency and one of the people that I had worked closely with and also the head of the office in the planning department that our whole program office dealt with were all part of an urban terrorist group that tried to kill a general and they succeeded at wounding him and killing the general's driver. They were both thrown in jail and the lower level officer I dealt with most fled to Mexico. This happened just after I left, so my colleague, Dick Archi, sent me the articles from the paper about it. That was a bit of a shocker. We always knew that the guy in *Planeacion* (government planning agency) was very anti-American, he was very hard to deal with, but we didn't realize he was an urban terrorist.

Q: Right. Wow. You were backstopping, you said, the education programs?

KILGOUR: Yes.

Q: And what were we doing in education in Colombia?

KILGOUR: Well, the main activity was that big sector loan but there were also a couple of small projects. Initially the office was headed by Stan Applegate, with Jim Smith as his deputy. Subsequently, Jim took over. They were doing a variety of technical assistance activities. I don't remember the details now. I just backstopped them from the program office.

Q: Do you remember if it was primary or secondary or university level?

KILGOUR: Probably a little bit of both. There was some technical assistance accompanying the sector loans. The sector loans concentrated on expanding and improving secondary education. There was one project, I think, for teacher training technical assistance. And then some backstopping for the technical assistance accompanying the sector loan. I don't remember the details. It was 45 years ago!

Q: Right. And did you, were you able to travel to different parts of Colombia?

KILGOUR: Yes, again both professionally and personally. We often went seeking warm weather. Bogota is up in the mountains so it's always like 55 - 60 degrees during the day and frequently cloudy. So we often went just an hour-and-a-half down the mountain to a place called Melgar for, long weekends. There was a big swimming pool down there at the hotel. We'd swim and relax., bring our own food and eat out at a local restaurant once or twice. And then I've been to Santa Marta, to the beach. And then professionally to Barranquilla, Cartagena and Cali, a couple of times to Cali. I never went to Medellin while I was there. Back then Medellin was a garden spot, a beautiful city. It later fell on hard times because it became a drug trafficking central area. But I guess now it's back to being a beautiful place, from what I've heard from travelers.

It was an interesting program but after two years in Colombia, I felt the need to get some retooling. And I was going to quit and go for a PhD. The mission director, Marvin Weissman, heard that I wanted to go back to school and was going to quit AID to do so. He suggested that they offer me an AID scholarship to get a Master's degree and, that way, keep me in AID. Now, Marvin was an interesting fellow. He was totally fluent in Spanish. He had a five/five, which is very rare for a non-Latino American to achieve. He was married to a Chilean and he was sort of gruff by personality but he was really like a big teddy bear, I realized later. He was mentoring me without really me being aware of it. He became the ambassador in Costa Rica when I was there later and continued to mentor me but in a gruff way that if I ever said "well, Melvin is my mentor," he would have denied it. But in fact he was; he was doing it quietly from behind the scenes. But sure enough, he made this offer and I decided since I didn't really know that I wanted to be a professor, I was just interested in getting more education, I took him up on that offer rather than resign. Resigning would have been like a reaction to a less than satisfactory work setting but I was still hopeful that AID was a good place. And so, I took the offer. AID/W wanted me to go to Syracuse but I had already been accepted at Harvard on my own, so I talked them into sending me to Harvard rather than to Syracuse. I went for a

one-year Master's in Public Administration at the Kennedy School and stayed a second year and worked on my PhD.

Q: Oh.

KILGOUR: But I had to do the second year on a leave-without-pay.

Q: What a change; what a change.

KILGOUR: So, yes, so I went to Harvard for two years and like I said, AID paid the first year so I was able to stay in a luxurious apartment; the second year I moved to a cheaper apartment. But before I left Colombia I was diagnosed with severe tonsillitis, based on the first earache I ever had in my life. I had no symptoms except this one-time earache. I had to have my tonsils taken out in Washington suddenly at the age of 31, something I highly recommend against.

Q: Oh boy.

KILGOUR: It was a horrible experience. But within two months I was over it and was well ensconced in Harvard in a summer program learning statistics.

Q: Really? That's what you chose?

KILGOUR: Yes. But the people I met during that summer course were the people I stayed friends with the whole two years and beyond. It was a good experience. After completing the Master's and all the coursework and exams for the PhD in Political Economy & Government, I went down to Washington to work for four years.

Q: Well, before we get to that a little more about the Harvard experience. What were you hoping to learn and did you- were you able to do it?

KILGOUR: I was hoping to get some economics under my belt. I did not have any economics except one undergraduate course and I was hoping to understand development more. By this time I was pretty much committed to development, trying to bridge the Peace Corps experience and then the AID experience. And I had enough experience now with AID to appreciate what we were doing, what we were trying to do and realizing even though I would stay in the generalist category of program that I wanted to learn more about international development generally in all of its aspect. And so, I took the Master's in public administration basically getting more economics under my belt; also, development administration and political economy and political development. I took political development classes with Sam Huntington, who was a famous professor at Harvard at that time.

Q: Oh, really?

KILGOUR: *Yes.*

KILGOUR: So, I was trying to delve into international development more deeply than I had already and give an academic underpinning to my practical experience. When I got the Master's degree, I was immediately accepted into the PhD program in political economy and government. That degree has totally changed now, apparently. It's now very quantitative versus in my time when it was more of a qualitative program merging two disciplines, two departments. It was a very small program focused on people who were mid-career like myself who already had their careers going and wanted to combine disciplines to support that career choice. I'll give an example; there were only three of us from the Kennedy School in the program and one other man who came over from the Design School. We didn't get to know him very well but the three people in my program from the Kennedy School were a Navy commander who was combining foreign policy and history, I think. And then there was me combining economic development and political development. And then the third person was Carlos Salinas, who was combining urban development and political development. I always thought of him as a Mexican Government technocrat. He was 25 or 26 years old, had worked for the Bureau of the Budget in the government of Mexico. I knew his father was the minister of commerce at that time. Carlos seemed like a nice guy, serious but friendly with a good sense of humor. He once fished a big black fly out of the back of my blouse in the middle of a class with Sidney Verba, another famed Harvard professor. I took a lot of classes with Carlos. And it turns out that within 10 years he was the president of Mexico.

Q: Right.

KILGOUR: I was amazed at that. I thought, good grief, he must have had more political connections than I realized. But within four years of his presidency he was PNG'd from his own country and fled to Ireland in exile and disgrace; he chose Ireland because it doesn't have an extradition treaty with Mexico. His older brother went to jail for murder. And when this was going on I would tell people I knew Carlos Salinas and they'd tell me not to tell anyone that, if I ever went to Mexico!

Q: Right.

KILGOUR: But he's back in Mexico now and hasn't been charged with anything. And the PRI is still influential in Mexican politics. Carlos is probably in his early '70s now, so he's beyond the point when anyone's going after him.

Q: Yes, yes. Gosh. So, you-

KILGOUR: But Harvard was a great program. I wasn't any smarter when I went to Harvard than I was when I went to UConn. The Harvard panache helps, I guess. The professors were all great. It was a wonderful experience. I now, by the way, interview undergraduates for admission to Harvard College.

Q: Good.

KILGOUR: I have not yet succeeded at getting anybody admitted, but it has been an interesting experience. I'm just amazed at the young people coming up now. It's almost sad because they are so driven that they don't have time to be kids anymore. The ones who apply to Harvard anyway; I don't know about the kids who go to UConn or UF. They all have GPAs (Grade Point Averages) of 4.0 and then with all these AP classes it's 4.7, 4.8. If I were trying to get into college nowadays I'd probably end up doing fast food for the rest of my life.

Q: Right. Well, we all feel that way, I'm sure.

Were you attracted at that point towards academia at all?

KILGOUR: I definitely was still attracted to a career with AID. But I did have in the back of my mind that I might try academia in retirement.

Q: Which we'll come to later but you did.

KILGOUR: Yes, right.

Q: Right. Were there very many women in those programs?

KILGOUR: Probably a minority.

Q: Alright. And most of the other people, have you kept up with them later?

KILGOUR: I've mostly kept up with two of them. One I'm in touch with her and she was probably my best friend at Harvard. She invited me to her parent's home for Thanksgiving a couple of years and I actually went on her honeymoon with her. I need to explain that: They were in France when I was there and I don't remember why I was there, as a tourist in between assignments. She and her new husband and I went on a trip together to Giverny. Thus, I can say I was on her honeymoon with her. We're still in touch. She's now married to somebody else and lives in California. We've gotten together when I visit my brother in California at Christmas.

And the other friend sort of fell on hard times. He was in prison for three years but I think he was fairly innocent. He's an independently wealthy man and he started an NGO. I have a feeling he mingled his own money with the NGO money and somehow he got caught doing that. I think it was unintentional and unfortunate. But he spent three years in prison.

Q: Oh, my.

KILGOUR: He's out now and lives in Boston. I don't think he's working anymore but he again would be in his early '70s by now.

Q: As you were finishing your second year did AID assign you somewhere or did you have to come back to Washington to get that work-?

KILGOUR: Actually, AID assigned me to Cambodia at the end of the first year when they thought I was coming back. And if I had gone to Cambodia I would have lost all of possessions because the mission was evacuated on very short notice when the area collapsed. But I asked for a second year there and they gave it to me so when I was ready to come back they started asking me where I wanted to go and I ended up wanting to be a special assistant to an assistant administrator. I can't quite articulate why. I thought that I wanted some insight into the senior ranks of AID. So, they assigned me as the special assistant to the assistant administrator for the technical assistance bureau, TAB back then. It did give me exposure to the senior ranks right at a point when I had to make a decision which way I was going to go. Basically, it taught me that I could aspire to those senior ranks. I didn't see any greater intelligence than I had, or any more astute or capable as a manager, that I at least had the capability of becoming. So, it made me realize that the senior ranks were not out of the realm of possibility for me. That's a very good lesson for a person to learn, particularly a woman back then. This was in '74 and women's lib, I guess had technically started by then but was pretty limited. So, I was a special assistant for two years. I worked for Curt Farrar, who was not easy to work for. Now, Curt was highly intelligent, probably close to genius, but he was not a touchy-feeling kind of person, to put it that way. He died a couple of years ago.

Q: He was an agriculture specialist, wasn't he?

KILGOUR: No, he was a generalist who came to AID after some early years with the Asia Foundation. He came from a privileged background: his father was the Farrar of Farrar Straus Giroux publishing company and his mother was the editor of the NY Times crossword puzzle. Curt used to describe the kind of high level conversation around the dinner table with various prominent guests.

Q: No kidding.

KILGOUR: So, he came with a bit of a silver spoon and a highly intellectualized background. He worked overseas briefly, I think in Taiwan, with the Asia Foundation. And then he came in to AID as a civil servant, and worked his way up in AID. When I first got to TAB, Curt was deputy assistant administrator to Joel Bernstein, who was a wonderful man. He was the one who hired me and then he came down with prostate cancer and decided to retire. Curt then became the AA. Marjorie Belcher, one of the pioneering women in AID's Foreign Service, and Ken Levick were the two deputies.

I worked for Curt for the bulk of the two years and I got some good experiences there. One was when Title XII was being put into effect. In fact, it was a lot of the work that Curt and Joel before him pushed Congress to support Title XII - a program to provide a grant-based support to U.S. land grant universities. I was appointed to one of the Title XII committees, the program committee, and I ended up interacting with university presidents and deans of agriculture from across the country. Curt wanted me on there to ground it, to

be the AID person there who would try to keep control of the money. It was a very interesting experience. Curt later went on, when he left AID, to the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research, at CGIAR in the World Bank. That's maybe why you thought his background was in agriculture.

Another interesting assignment was going to Italy for a month on an earthquake rehabilitation program. I was the only program type on the team. It was headed up by Arturo Constantino, who was the head of the American Schools and Hospitals Abroad program. I don't know if you ever knew him but he was a brilliant Italian-American. His father had been an Italian diplomat. Arturo was an American because he was born when his father was the consul general in New York. He either joined or was drafted into the American army and assigned to Japanese language training. But his father, meanwhile, was stuck in the Vatican for the duration of the war, to avoid being killed by the Nazis. Arturo was culturally fluent and language fluent and had a terrific sense of humor. One of the men, who must have been considerably younger than Arturo's father, but had been stuck in the Vatican during the war, was working for the American embassy as an FSN (Foreign Service National. He would have done anything for Arturo. He comes back into my life years later when my suitcase got lost- during a visit to Brussels and Rome when I was the deputy assistant administrator food aid. I was attending EEC and then the FAO (Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations) and World Food Program meetings and my suitcase went to Buenos Aires, BUE, instead of Brussels, BRU. And Arturo's friend from the embassy tracked my suitcase down the day before I left for three weeks in Africa. I was extremely grateful to him for that.

Anyway, I'll get back to the TAB experience with the earthquake. Arturo was a fascinating man to travel with. We would take an hour to get to dinner because he knew the history of every building we passed and he would explain it and notice this or that feature of the building and the history of that building. It was an education. There were four of us on the team. I was in charge of writing things up for a program that initially was for \$25 million; it was so successful it was later doubled to \$50 million. Basically the program helped rebuild old people's homes and preschools throughout the Friuli region in northeast Italy. It was a fantastic experience and one that was very different for me. I was the only woman traveling with four men (we hired a young student to help with translations). It was exhausting, frankly, in terms of the way men interact with each other compared to the way women interact with each other. That's a different story. But my month in Italy with the team was a wonderful experience that I still cherish.

And, finally, Curt also supported me to become the assistant director of rural development working for Charlie Blankstein and Harlan Hopgood. You remember those names?

Q: Yes.

KILGOUR: Charlie was quite a creative thinker. This was at the time when integrated rural development was getting started and he was trying to encourage that from the TAB perspective. We had quite a few university people in the office working as IPAs -

Intergovernmental Participating Agencies, I think. I was again the program person for that office. Harlan was a wonderful, supportive, compassionate deputy to Charlie. Harlan died a couple of years ago now. I liked both of them. And the other people in the office, like I said, were mainly university people coming in for two- or three-year stints with AID, bringing academic expertise.

While I was working there and considering whether I wanted to go the route of rural development and agriculture or go back to program, I was interviewed for the job as chief of the agriculture office in Guatemala, of all things.

Q: Really?

KILGOUR: Before I could make a decision (which likely would have been not to abandon the Program backstop), Curt called and asked me to be on the reorganization task force - this was during Gilligan's time, so the Carter presidency - because they were looking to reorganize AID and Curt knew that TAB was on the chopping block. He said I knew the bureau as well as anybody other than himself or the other deputy assistant administrators. It also occurred to me that I was expendable in the sense that I was still junior, the old FSR-4.

Q: Oh, really?

KILGOUR: What was that, an FS-2 in the new system?. Because all of the promotions stopped when Vietnam fell and there were a lot of excess people around, there weren't any promotions. I was an FS-2 for seven years.

Q: Oh, my.

KILGOUR: But anyway, I was expendable and available, so I went to the reorganization task force for eight or nine months and worked with Tony Babb. He was the head of it. He came to AID as a political person even though he had worked for AID as a junior officer in Cambodia, I think. But he was political at this stage. Other people on the task force were Bob Berg and Doug Clark, both career officers. There also were a couple of other politicals. That was a fascinating experience. They were trying to do away with TAB. It was replaced with the science and technology bureau, which was headed up by Sandy Levin, who's now a congressman. And we had to interview people and get the pros and cons and then write it up and after doing all that I personally fled the country. It was very unpopular. I was ready to leave, anyway. I was actually being pushed out because they thought two years at Harvard and four years in Washington -- this was during Gilligan's time of "over 40 and overpaid, and over here - in AID/W." I was not yet 40; I didn't think I was overpaid but I was in AID Washington so I was getting pressed to go out. I mentioned the Vietnam War was over and there were a lot of excess people around and so it was hard to move up. I was stuck by still being an FS-2 so the best job I could get was program officer in Costa Rica. And Costa Rica is a nice country; I'd actually started working on my PhD dissertation using Costa Rica as a case study. So, I saw the assignment as a way to finish my dissertation, after my original plan to knock

out my dissertation on weekends had failed. So, I took that job, knowing it was a lateral move rather than an advancement in my career.

Q: What was your dissertation title?

KILGOUR: At that time it didn't have a title but it later became "The Telephone in the Organization of Space for Development/" There was a writer named E.A.J. Johnson at Johns Hopkins who had written an influential book, I think called "The Organization of Space for Development." It basically applied location economics and spatial organization to development. It really intrigued me. There was a modern academic - EAJ Johnson - but there was an earlier location economist: Walter Christaller and even earlier, August Loesch. Christaller worked in Germany in the '30s and talked about how human settlements arranged themselves sensibly five miles apart and in octagonal space, basically it was the distance the somebody could walk in a day to the nearest market; Five-mile was the estimate and the pattern seemed to work up the line as markets got bigger. I won't get into all the details. AID didn't have much interest in it but the World Bank did. My topic, the telephone- Walter Christaller had used the telephone as his instrument to measure centrality and so I decided to try to replicate that but using the central plain of Costa Rica as the study area. Christaller had done it in Germany and proved that the theory of centrality worked. I decided to see if it was true in modern times using Costa Rica as the case study. it turned out it was accurate. This isn't the time to probably tell you the details of my dissertation but the World Bank was supportive in providing me with a lot of data. And I used the World Bank loans to the electrical agency in Costa Rica, then did a survey of rural telephone use in the flatter part of Costa Rica. The Bank used my findings probably for 10 years or more, in their books on telecommunications and economic development, quoting mainly my survey findings.

Q: That's impressive. So, back to Costa Rica; you arrived thinking you were going to work on the weekends on your dissertation and what were you-

KILGOUR: Yes, but I took up tennis instead. And that was the downfall of my dissertation. I became an avid tennis player, fanatical, not terribly good but good enough to beat Carol Peasley one time.

Q: Oh, alright.

KILGOUR: Well, If Carol were to overhear that comment she would remind the group after shrugging and grimacing that my partner in doubles was Bill Wannamaker, who was an outstanding player of 6'5" or so and was able to cover the whole court with me on the margins. Anyway, that's a joke between me and Carol, who really is an excellent tennis player. I became a fanatical player to the point of further injuring my rotator cuff, and I eventually had to give it up. All of a sudden I had all this spare time that I had been devoting to tennis and it coincided with the arrival of a very nice young man, Mitch Seligson. He was a contractor from the University of Pittsburgh and was doing some work on land reform with us. He performed the role, for me, of faculty advisor. I was distant from my Harvard advisors and so Mitch, every time I'd say well, I have this PhD

but I haven't finished the dissertation, not because I'm playing too much tennis, but because I'm too well known in town to be able to do it the way I thought I would. He'd respond, "then do a survey." And I'd say that I'd never taken a survey course. And he would respond, "well, read a book." He kept on overcoming all the obstacles I raised up to explain why I hadn't finished my dissertation. As it coincided with my injury, I started researching to dissertation topic and later used my home leave - I was in Costa Rica a total of three years and had home leave after two years - to go up to Cambridge to work full-time on the dissertation. In two months I succeeded in getting rid of all the tangents that had crept into my dissertation thinking. I had done the survey and brought the results with me. I had key punch cards and realized that they were using terminals by then, so I hired somebody to enter them into the mainframe via the terminal rather than me taking the time to learn how to do that.

Q: Right.

KILGOUR: And so, when I went back after the end of my home leave I knew exactly what I was going to write and I hired my secretary to type it all and I hired the pregnant wife of a State Department junior officer to do some of the scut work for me. Together we got it done just before I was mid-tour transferred directly to the Philippines. That was a better job by far and so I hand carried my completed dissertation, typed on Crane's Thesis Paper so my advisors would think that it was a finished project. To make a long story short, I was awarded the degree after fixing a few issues from the Philippines.

But let me backtrack now to the content of that tour. Costa Rica was a wonderful place. People were very friendly. Unlike Colombia, where they were anti-American, the Costa Ricans were very open to Americans and the country, of course is delightful. San Jose is a pleasant fairly small city with a spring-like temperature all year round. I really liked it a lot there. Our program was a nice, small one focused on agriculture, rural development and the environment, family planning again using NGOs, rural poverty and democracy and trying to strengthen the already strong democracy there through democratic development. The problem was that Costa Rica was starting to suffer from the effects of the Central American common market collapse because of the Nicaraguan war and they even themselves had a brief period of political unrest where a lot of left-leaning political refugees from different countries like Chile and Nicaragua, had come in and violated the hospitality that Costa Rica showed them by training some local Costa Ricans in terrorist tactics.. And they had a little urban terrorist group that caused a lot of havoc in San Jose. They made death threats against prominent Costa Ricans and also against my closest friends; he was the Peace Corps director and his wife did some contracting work with us on Nutrition, but he had been fired by Peace Corps when the administration changed and AID had picked him up to do some work with us. And then my boss, the AID director, also got a death threat. He was politically appointed but had bona fides in development. He worked in the private sector and he had been a Peace Corps volunteer in Dominican Republic; in fact, I think he was in the same group with Kelly Kammerer. He was a good director. Steve Knaebel, although I'm probably misspelling his name, went to work for Cummins Engineering after AID and then bought out Cummins' operation in Mexico, which he's probably still doing. Because he was a political appointee, he was maybe a

little more politically involved than the typical AID director. But he was leaving about the same time I was leaving. As the country changed, as it started getting affected by these external problematic factors I mentioned, our program became obsolete and I think probably the person who was able to recognize that, or articulate it first, was Bastiaan Schouten. He was an economist and head of the project design office in Costa Rica. Being an economist, he started seeing the numbers were showing that Costa Rica could no longer support its very heavily social development.

Costa Rica could no longer support the strong social development program that it had. For instance, Costa Rica had a very well developed social security and national health program, which I benefited from in retirement by having to go to the emergency room during a trip to get stitches in my head from a fall. And it was completely free.

Back to the early 1980's in Costa Rica: by this time I had left and Steve Knaebel had left and Dan Chai had come in as director. He and Bastiaan started agitating to Washington that our program needed to be increased and changed to a more program support kind of effort to get the Costa Ricans to change their economic policies away from some of this heavy emphasis on social development. It was a correct move and it shows one of the strengths of AID that through the country development strategy statement we do have the ability to respond although we might have been a little bit late in doing it there. But it was a successful shift of the program. It was a nice little program; we had land reform, helped develop the first ever ecotourism national park in Costa Rica which is still going strong. And we were very heavily supporting some local non-government organizations. But again, Costa Rica's problems became more severe and AID was able to respond to those problems pretty quickly for a government agency.

Q: Great.

This is John Pielemeier on March 20. We're beginning a second session, an interview with Mary Kilgour. And we were in Costa Rica, finishing up in Costa Rica when we last talked, Mary, and I know you have some other things you'd like to add.

KILGOUR: Yes. It was in Costa Rica that I made the transition into the senior ranks of the Foreign Service of AID. I went from being program officer to being assistant director.

Q: So, Mary, what year was this that the Peace Corps director and the AID director were evacuated?

KILGOUR: This would have been about 1980, late in the year.

Q: Back to your comments on the local terrorist group, did they ever find the people who made the threats?

KILGOUR: They did- this one group did try to kill somebody, I think a policeman. And they caught the girl - I remember her name was Viviana Guyardo - and at that time Costa Rica didn't even have a women's jail so they her on the roof of the men's prison in a little

lean-to; there was another girl with her. Somebody came up to deliver them a meal and he shouted out -- this was all in the papers -- Viviana Guyardo! She indicated who she was, and he put his tray down and shot her dead.

Q: Oh, my.

KILGOUR: The belief was that it was a coverup for some higher-powered people. But in any event, nothing else was ever done; the terrorist movement died down because the government did handle it strongly. And my boss came back about a month later and so did the Peace Corps director and life went on as usual.

Q: What were their names again?

KILGOUR: The Peace Corps director was Guido Del Prado; and the AID director was Steve Knaebel. And then, interestingly, there had been a blue truck with wooden sides spotted in the neighborhood of my Peace Corps director friends and when I was packing out of my apartment -- as I mentioned, I had moved by then -- I spotted what I thought was possibly the same truck. It was the same bright blue with wooden sides. It was right next to my apartment house. So, I contacted the admin counselor and reported this. He had me move to a hotel and told me to pack out of my apartment only during the day. So, here I was trying to finish out all the end of tour kinds of activities, finishing my PhD dissertation and pack- while living in a hotel and going back to the house in daylight hours. It was the most chaotic departure from a country I ever experienced!

Q: My goodness.

KILGOUR: But I wanted to add the transition that I made from program officer to assistant director. As most people who have made that transition know it's almost like a different personnel system and once you got into the executive ranks you were under the authority of Bob MacDonald only and you weren't on a backstop anymore. I almost think you had less control over your career than you did earlier. But it was more, certainly more personalized once you were in that small group. But what happened in my case was that- remember, this was about 1980 and that was really the very early stages of women's lib and women didn't automatically get thought of for these kinds of advancements. But I had been doing the job, basically, for several months because the then-assistant director, Rudy Fascell, had been elevated from an executive officer to an assistant director and I think he felt that he was out of his league, that he hadn't realized how much he'd be involved with programmatic things, thinking that admin was a big chunk of any mission so therefore he could make the transition easily. I think he found it a little bit more challenging than he wanted at that stage in his life, he was in his late '50s, probably close to retirement, and his mother was ill and she lived in Florida so he basically said no, I don't want to do this anymore, I want to go back to being an exec officer. And he was such a good executive officer, one of the best, that they wanted him to go to Kenya because it had some problems. But he said no, my mother is too frail and elderly, I don't want to be that far away and there's an opening in the Dominican Republic. So, he put his foot down and just hung in there and said I only want the DR, I don't want to go

anywhere else, and he may have said he'd retire if they didn't give him what he wanted but I don't know that for a fact. In any event, he did get the DR but it took about six months of waiting. And meanwhile, he lost interest in the job or wasn't doing it diligently, so I was picking up the slack. I figured I've been doing the job, effectively, so I'm going to put my name in for the job. I asked a good friend of mine - my former mission director in Pakistan, Bill Kontos - for his advice about how to do this and he told me to call in all the chips I could because that's what it will take. Now, I don't know if men go through the same- you can probably tell me that, John, whether men have to go through the same obstacles as I did back then or whether women now have to go through the same. But in any event, I called in my supporters. It turned out one of my best supporters was the ambassador in Costa Rica who had been my mission director in Colombia, I mentioned him, Marvin Weissman; he was, in a very low-key way, my biggest supporter, as was Bill Kontos. Interestingly, Steve Knaebel, because he was political and didn't really know how the system worked, didn't want to make himself look bad by only supporting my candidacy. He told me that he was going to say that I would be fine, he'd be happy for me to have the job but he also wanted to see who else was out there. So, that was sort of lukewarm support but understandable given that he was a political appointee and didn't know the system. In any event, I had a few other supporters and I asked people to write letters and to make phone calls supporting me. I was very happy to become the assistant director in Costa Rica. And a year later I was selected to be the deputy mission director in Manila.

Q: Okay. But were you- you had been promoted to counselor level?

KILGOUR: No, I was still an FS-3 back then. I had been promoted to the old FS-3, the current FS-1.

Q: Okay.

KILGOUR: But I was nowhere near a counselor level. I think I was promoted during Costa Rica to an FS-3. I was a brand new old FS-3.

Q: Okay.

KILGOUR: And that was back when- I don't know where you were in your career in the late '70s - but there was still the clog up from Vietnam.

Q: Oh, yes, okay.

KILGOUR: So, everybody's promotions were slowed down. So, no, I wasn't a natural for the job although I'm not sure- I guess maybe Rudy was a consular level officer; I'm not sure about that. I really didn't pay much attention to that. But in any event, I got the job.

Q: One more thing on that, Mary. Were there women in those similar positions that were role models for you?

KILGOUR: Throughout my career?

Q: Yes.

KILGOUR: Interestingly, when I first went to AID in '66, in Washington, I looked for role models automatically and there were only two in the Africa Bureau. Phoebe Lansdale, who was a GS (General Services) employee. I don't know if you remember Phoebe.

Q: No.

KILGOUR: Might have been before your time. And the other was a Foreign Service officer and I'm blanking on her name. But they were very different. The Foreign Service officer wore these expensive and elegant knit suits; one I remember was a navy blue, and she wore it with real gold Ethiopian jewelry. I think she had been the deputy director or program officer in Ethiopia. She was well-coiffed and very proper. And Phoebe was the opposite. Phoebe was often seen running down the hall to some meeting and her hair flying and more casually dressed. They were both highly respected and both very competent women. They were the only two role models in the Africa Bureau.

Q: Was it Sarah Jane Littlefield, perhaps?

KILGOUR: I didn't know her. That was a bit later, I think.

Q: Okay.

KILGOUR: I started hearing about Sarah Jane when she was in Senegal and I was in Liberia. Remember, this was '66 so Sarah Jane must have been overseas and she was probably fairly junior at that point.

Q: Right, right.

KILGOUR: Marjorie Belcher was somebody I got to know when I was with TAB. She was one of the deputy assistant administrators. She had been the deputy director in Turkey. I can't remember who else there was but there weren't too many of them; you could count them on one hand, I think.

Okay, so I go off to Manila. I hand-carried my dissertation to Washington with me and mailed it from there and then I had some briefings with AID/W people. The former deputy director, Dennis Barrett, was in Washington and he was very helpful. He was a delightful man with a good sense of humor. I learned later that he was a favorite of Imelda Marcos. He was very popular and well regarded in the Philippines. Did you ever know him, Dennis Barrett?

Q: No.

KILGOUR: Dennis was 100 percent American Indian. You'd never realize it until he told you and then sure enough, he looked sort of like the profile on the nickel.

Q: Oh, really?

KILGOUR: He looked like an Indian once he told you he was an Indian, just mainly the profile. I didn't know him from serving with him; I only knew him because he came in on TDYs. And he gave me a good briefing in Washington.

But the Philippines was a wonderful assignment for me for the obvious reason, that it allowed me to make a complete circle with the Peace Corps links and of course the AID links. And I had contacts with my village kids who I used to teach when they were 12 and I was 22 and all of a sudden I was 42 and they were 32 and much less of an age difference at that point. And some - even before I started going back to my village - would show up in Manila. One young man we had put through high school was in Manila trying to get a job in the Middle East. He saw me on TV and came to visit me in the office. I later helped finance that very bright young man's college education. It cost me \$250 but made a terrific impact on his life.

Another former student we also sent to high school was already working in the Middle East. He was on home leave in Manila and contacted me. I was able to have a meal with him, his wife and daughter before he went back overseas. Those were great reunions.

Q: Oh, yes.

KILGOUR: Anyway, it was a wonderful experience. Over the course of my four years in Manila I went back to my village at least four times and saw the changes, many for the good. A lot of progress had been made but there were some negatives; there was more of an active guerrilla movement in the area. You could see them on the outskirts of the crowds around me. I think I mentioned this earlier. They'd be staring at me sullenly and then I'd talk to them in Filipino face language and they'd sort of smile, put their heads down and walk away. But it was great to see my old place. And having been a Peace Corps volunteer in Mindanao, whenever I met anybody in Manila, particularly very senior people like congressmen and government ministers, if they were from Mindanao they immediately liked me. I was a fellow Mindanaoan. I made some really good contacts that way and I had a great time there.

The program was extremely interesting. It was an odd combination of a traditional development assistance program but one that had a lot of continuity. And a lot of things that Tom Niblock had put into effect, like provincial development, that he went on and tried to do in Indonesia later; I don't know with what success, but it had a lot of success in the Philippines. We had integrated rural development programs, excellent family planning and health projects, a big PL 480 Title II program and strong support for local NGOs. And then we had this big ESF (Economic Support Fund) program, which basically was paying rent for the continued U.S. use of the military bases. ESF money, as

you know, is more under the authority of the State Department but we have to program it like it's development money. I mean, we have to try to spend it wisely. And we were not involved in the negotiations over it, which determined how much money came in every year. The first year it was \$50 million and I think the next year it was \$100 million then it was \$150 million. It was going up pretty rapidly and we had to figure out how to spend it wisely. It was essentially foreign exchange support but with local currency being programmed by us. And we ran it through Imelda Marcos's ministry so you can image the challenges that presented.

Q: Right.

KILGOUR: The decision had been made before I got there that we would focus on infrastructure, nuts and bolts, buildings, things that we could count. The money wasn't for policy changes, but rather for building things we could control. And we had to focus on the areas where the bases were, which was basically Olongapo where the Subic Naval Base was and in the Angeles area of Luzon, where Clark Air Force Base was. And in a way it was sub-optimizing the use of that money because we didn't have the choice between even building a provincial government building in Angeles versus building one in a remote province where it probably was more needed. But Angeles got it because of the bases. The program was carefully designed, carefully audited. The auditors still got on us because they couldn't quite wrap their heads around the fact that Marcos was not misusing the dollars. Now, we didn't think he was because it went into the foreign exchange budget but of course money is fungible so they were arguing that he was making off with gold bars or something but we had no proof of that and our program didn't account for that; it went into the foreign exchange budget and we got local currency, which we used then to buy bricks and mortar and local firms to build things and that kind of thing. I think it was pretty successful. One of the most successful parts was building almost 1,000 typhoon-resistant schools that became shelters for the whole village during typhoons and most of them survived beautifully during typhoons whereas the more traditionally built schools would have their roofs blown off. We designed these with very short overhangs so the wind couldn't get underneath the roof and pull it off.

We also had a big Title II program. It ended up getting a bit politicized. We put a lot of it through Catholic Charities, which meant that Cardinal Sin, the senior Catholic authority in the country, would get involved and as the politics heated up in the Philippines this got more and more like an anti-government program which was fine with the AID mission and subsequently with the embassy as well. But we'd go down to the port and Cardinal Sin would bless the ship unloading the food. It would be in all the papers. And I have some funny anecdotes to tell with that kind of thing but at this stage I won't tell them. But anyway, it was a good program doing good things through NGOs and the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare. The development assistance program was also solid. With the ESF program we did as much as we could. And of course, after Mount Pinatubo blew up, that was after I left, and Clark Air Force Base closed down. Finally the Filipinos asked the U.S. military to leave. So, Subic and some smaller installations were also closed down.

The AID mission was a large one; I think we probably had at least 35 Americans. We had a very good local staff . We, both locals and the Americans, formed a very tight group. First, we had Tony Schwartzwalder as the director, a very solid guy. He took an early out when they offered it back in maybe '83 or so and was replaced by Fred Schieck. And both of them were excellent people. I think Tony came close to risking his career over family planning. I don't know how widely that story is known but toward the end of Tony's time in Manila we had an Opus Dei minister of planning who had nine children and believed in natural birth control. Clearly it hadn't worked for him but he was pushing it as opposed to any kind of contraception Things got very tense. At one point he complained to Washington and to Imelda Marcos about Tony. He got on Imelda's case and Imelda felt she had to support him. Tony stood his guns and fought back. And I remember one time when Tony was on home leave and I was acting director -- Placido Mapa was the name of the minister of planning - and he got me at a function of some kind and started describing the mucous method to me, which was a bit bizarre as cocktail party conversation. I was diplomatic in responding to him but I could see what Tony had been going through; every time this guy caught up with Tony he would be hitting him on various natural methods of practicing birth control. So, when Tony left AID he wasn't offered a distinguished career award, which he deserved. (Nor was I, but I was at the War College and I didn't care whether I got it or not.) But in Tony's case, I think because of his fight with Mapa, he blotted his copybook, as we used to say. So nobody in Washington wrote him up for the distinguished career award. He suggested maybe I should write him up and I felt that he deserved it; I thought he had had an illustrious, distinguished career. And so, I talked with the ambassador and asked him if he would endorse it and he said he would. So I wrote it up and he got the award. I was pleased with that; he definitely deserved it.

Q: Good. Very good.

KILGOUR: It was just a case of not having buttered up the right people in Washington, I guess, to get somebody on the desk or in the bureau to do it. It would have been more appropriate if they had done it.

Q: So, Mary, at that point in time family planning services were offered through government clinics or they were not?

KILGOUR: I don't recall whether our development assistance money all went to NGOs or some went into the government clinics. I have a vague sense that we did both. Otherwise, Minister Mapa wouldn't have been so incensed.

Q: I see.

KILGOUR: But it was controversial. The Marcoses supported it until it got politically sensitive because of Mapa. I'm not sure if the President ever got personally involved but Imelda reduced her previously strong support. There was a minister of health and social

welfare, and we dealt with her. I think we probably did have some general maternal child health programs through the ministry so it was probably both.

Q: Did you meet Imelda or Ferdinand?

KILGOUR: Oh, yes, many times. Americans are very popular in the Philippines and so it's the kind of place when you go on a field trip you eat eight or nine times in one day and get parades. They actually organize parades into the towns you go through and you'll see big banners across the road, "Welcome Deputy Director Mary C. Kilgour and Party." It was an incredible, crazy kind of place. I once was asked by a Japanese embassy worker, how it was for us to travel in the rural areas and I said oh, it feels like a big party. And he said well, of course, with them it was the opposite; they were not well regarded at all. And I knew that from my Peace Corps time; the Filipinos hate the Japanese because of World War II.

Because so much of our program went through the ministry of human settlements, of which Imelda was the minister, it was customary whenever we signed a loan agreement to do it at Malacañang, the presidential palace. Just as in Costa Rica it was always at the palace there; they didn't call it the palace, whatever it was, the president's residence. And so, President Carazo would always sign the loan agreements, just with the AID mission, sometimes the ambassador would come but usually it was the AID mission and the same thing in the Philippines. So, we were at Malacañang many times for ceremonies and parties.

Every New Year's Eve there was a big function for the diplomatic corps and the senior government and their spouses to celebrate New Year's. Imelda would walk around through the crowd and would whisper to her favorite few to come to the disco after. And Lawrence Irvin was one of her favorites and Tony was and probably I was and George Ladatto. Anyway, our group was always invited to the disco after the New Year's party so as people started to leave we would go up in an elevator to the disco and party for another three or four hours. And that included the men, like Lawrence, getting up and singing with Imelda and me dancing with Ferdinand and others. Lawrence has a very big, booming voice and for some reason knew all the songs from World War II. And then, of course, "Because of You" was a favorite of Imelda's. She had an excellent voice.

And I went on a field trip with Imelda. I went on more than one but this one in particular, a small group, went to the Dendro-thermal plant; that was another ESF project we were trying. And she insisted that I ride in her helicopter with her. And that itself was an interesting experience.

Q: You did eventually go with her?

KILGOUR: Yes. Mrs. Marcos is quite an interesting character. She's of course still active in the Philippines. I hope she doesn't read these oral histories. I read Bob Ritchie's oral history. He was the DCM (Deputy Chief of Mission) when I was there and he had some choice words about Imelda and how he had to deal with her. She was mentally eccentric.

And interesting. I mean, she would wax eloquent about odd topics. We'd go to meetings at her office and I remember one time Peter Davis -- I don't know if you remember that name.

Q: Yes.

KILGOUR: He was an economist. Peter was new to the mission; it was his first meeting with her. And when we got back in the car to go back to the AID mission he said something like "my, that was astounding. Does she always go on like that?" And the first time I ever met her I had the same reaction. Kathleen McNamara, Robert McNamara's daughter, was working as a consultant with AID on this Dendro-thermal program with another consultant. Because of who she was and the subject matter Imelda had a debriefing at Malacañang. She was sitting on a settee that she always sat on and our chairs were lined up on both sides. And I remember Kathleen and her colleague were on the other side of the room from me; it was a long narrow room. And George Ladatto was there and Lawrence Irvin was there and they were in positions where they could see me from the other side of the room. And Imelda sat on her settee with a big bowl of flower petals next to her. She would run her fingers through the flower petals and pick a few and sniff them and then put them back. And she kept doing that during the whole meeting while Kathleen and her colleague were discussing the program. Then Imelda started to make such off comments that I couldn't believe what I was hearing; it was bizarre. I didn't dare look at George or Lawrence because I knew they were staring at me to try to get me to laugh and I had my hand over my mouth to stifle a smile. The conversation was so strange and the comments that Imelda made had no bearing on anything Kathleen had said. It was like a surrealistic movie. That kind of thing happened a lot with Imelda. She was very spiritual. I'm not sure spiritual is the right term but she believed in black holes and that there were certain black holes over only Vietnam and the Philippines and that allowed certain universal ethers to come out of those black holes and affect the Filipinos and the Vietnamese. She actually believed this and she talked about it. And I think that particular story I saw in "Time" magazine. But she talked like that to us, too. And she ate like a bird. She would sit there and nibble at a piece of cake, just take a tiny little piece and the rest of us were scarfing it down fast. So, yes, I knew President and Mrs. Marcos. I won't say well or super personally but as the deputy director my job required me to know them.

And I'll tell you another story; they used to send us a Christmas gift every year, all the senior people in AID, and one time I was at a party and I came back and my maid,- who slept in my house, was sitting up in the living room ramrod straight and when I came in the door she said 'mum, mum, you've received a gift from Malacañang and it's ticking.'" She was so scared, she repeated, "It's ticking." I went to this big box and listened and I could hear the ticking. So I opened it. I didn't think my relationship with either of them was so bad that they would give me a bomb. And it turned out it was a very ornate clock and the battery in it was making it tick. My maid and I laughed with relief over that.

Anyway, the Marcoses made for a very interesting time, professionally. Ever since, New Year's Eve for me is dull compared to those four years in Manila. And again, with the

same people, with Don Presley and Lawrence Irvin and George Ladatto and Tony Schwarzwalder and Fred Schieck, Bill Carter and Peter Davis; just really good, solid AID people who I became very good friends with and I'm still good friends with.

Q: Wow. In terms of the decisions on the ESF funding and all of that was President Marcos involved in those discussions or decisions?

KILGOUR: He probably was involved through his minister of defense and probably planning the decisions on the base rentals and subsequent closures - at that level. But my own personal experience, or feeling, was that he was pretty aloof below that level of basic policy guidance, for instance, what kind of money to get and how. Imelda was very involved. So, yes, he was more detached, to me anyway. Maybe the ambassador or the mission director would have a different take. President Marcos was behind the scenes, he was very astute politically. He was in failing health, though, when I was there. There were all kinds of rumors about his health so he wasn't as prominent as he might have been five years earlier. He was on the elderly side; he was probably well into his- let me think. I was in my 40s; he was probably well into his 60s when I was there and Imelda was in her 50s. I'm sure the ambassador dealt with him a lot. We dealt with him more ceremonially, signing agreements, being present at functions. I think as my four years there went on he got more isolated, probably mainly because of ill health.

And then Ninoy Aquino was assassinated, Ninoy was going to run for the presidency. Our involvement with him was interesting. He had been getting in trouble with the government and I think it was Tony, or Tony's predecessor, who tried to save him by getting him out of the country. I think he was on a death list or something. So AID paid for at least a year to send him to Harvard and I think he stayed on a second year and then he decided to come back to the Philippines and go back into politics. He was assassinated as he walked off the plane. And that was a major shift in public thinking. I didn't know Ninoy Aquino at all. He was gone my first two years there but clearly it radicalized everybody and made the AID mission much more open to the opposition positions. And the embassy also later made a total policy shift against Marcos. The embassy had one political officer whose only job it was was to report on the opposition. I think that's not typical. This was a senior man in the political section, John Maisto, who later became ambassador to Guatemala. There were a lot of demonstrations after that. The funeral through Manila, I have pictures of it taken first from my office window of the huge crowd processing down Roxas Boulevard with the casket with the Filipino flag on it. Then I went down to the street. Everybody was wearing yellow shirts that said *Laban*, which means fight. People would flash you the L sign with their thumb and their first finger. Everybody was doing that to everybody else and it was the beginning of the end for Marcos though he didn't realize it for another few years. Cory Aquino, Ninoy's wife, ran against him shortly after I left. She was campaigning when I was still there. I met her several times, and have a photo of us together at a Cardinal Sin luncheon. When Cardinal Sin received a PL 480 Title II shipment he would throw a big party and Cory would be there.

There was an Asia Foundation representative in the Philippines named Edith Colliver, who's now deceased. She was somewhat abrasive. She didn't bother me; if she came on too strong with me I would just tell her to back off, but she really annoyed the ambassador and the AID mission director. Her job was basically to support the opposition. And I will say because Tony didn't want anything to do with her he basically left her to me and she often needed another woman at her dinner table. So, I got invited to her house frequently. And through her I met some fascinating, committed oppositionists; many of them were Jesuit priests. And we used to think sometimes that if anything that was said at those dinners ever got back to the government there would be people killed. That's how open and sensitive the conversation was.

Q: Wow.

KILGOUR: I considered it an honor to be included in those conversations. Some of those people went on - after Ferdinand Marcos left - to take prominent positions. One man became an ambassador and others had roles in Cory Aquino's government. One of them became her spiritual advisor. He was a leading Jesuit. When I left the country he had a small dinner party for me. Perhaps I shouldn't even mention his name at this stage. But anyway, he had a small dinner party for me and he invited a deputy minister from my island who had been trained by the Jesuits.

Q: From your island you mean your Peace Corps island?

KILGOUR: Yes, Mindanao, my Peace Corps island. The party was at the home of an American who had been a Jesuit but had left the order but stayed in the Philippines and remained close to the Jesuits. There were a couple of other Jesuits, the American's wife and Bill Carter, who was our NGO and Food for Peace officer and a friend. And then this deputy minister and his wife. We got into a political discussion and it got so heated that all of the Americans just backed off; not saying a word. The discussion continued just between this very senior Jesuit priest and the deputy minister. They were both trained in Jesuit thinking and debate, and it was incredible to observe. The deputy minister had intended to leave early to go to a birthday party at Malacañang but he ended up staying at our party until about midnight. I think I left around 2:00 AM. The deputy minister had had a lot to drink, as had the Jesuit priest, and they debated the merits of the Marcos regime. Finally, when the deputy minister left at his wife's urging - she was pulling him by the arm - when they both left one of the other Jesuits said to the senior Jesuit, "you know, you could get killed for what you said tonight."

Q: Oh, wow.

KILGOUR: By that time the Jesuit was pretty drunk and his shirt was unbuttoned halfway down his chest. And I had had way more to drink than I normally did and somebody took a picture of us. I could blackmail him with that picture. We all looked cross-eyed. I never drink things like brandy and I had had a couple of brandies and I don't know how I got home even; I guess I drove home. But anyway, it was a memorable night and it was memorable by just sitting watching maybe two patriots but one who was a

crony of Marcos and the priest who was a definite opposition patriot talking very, very frankly about their government. Of course, the minister was defending Marcos. He had to. But it was an evening I'll never forget. In AID you get these opportunities to be an observer at least - you're wise to remain an observer - when you're in that kind of setting. But it's a privilege, really. It's almost like witnessing history or witnessing bravery. That priest was exhibiting bravery or foolhardiness, I'm not sure which. But he was very brave, I think.

So, I left the Philippines reluctantly. Couldn't stay more than four years but it was a great experience, great program, good people to work with. Filipinos are very friendly. I had many close friends in the Philippines and to this day, as I mentioned earlier, I'm in touch with some of my Peace Corps contacts. I've lost touch with most of the AID- the Filipino contacts except through other people. I stayed in touch for several years with some of the oppositionists, such as the friend who became an ambassador; He sent me a piece of the Berlin Wall and also a vial of the ash from Mount Pinatubo.

Q: Oh, my.

KILGOUR: So, I went on then to Liberia where you and I met.

Q: Now, was this another Senior Foreign Service appointment; did you have any bidding opportunities, any discussions before you were posted in Liberia?

KILGOUR: Well, interestingly I did. I was being talked about for Panama and I did speak Spanish, of course. I would say it had gotten a little rusty but it could have been brought back up quickly. And I was being talked about for Panama. I'd never been to Africa so I was leaning, personally, toward Panama but Bob McDonald told me that my competition for that position was Ron Levin. Now, Ron Levin didn't speak a word of Spanish. But Bob pointed out that Ron had a Harvard law degree. I reminded Bob that I have a Harvard PhD. Ron was older than I, probably a good 10 years older, He had been a mission director in the Congo or somewhere in Africa, so that was his main strength, more experience. That wasn't something McDonald mentioned; he mentioned a Harvard degree. Of course you can probably get along without Spanish in Panama if you don't interact with the locals; the ruling class would speak a lot of English because of the influence of the Canal Zone. In any event, Ron got that job. I don't know whether women's lib or the lack thereof played into that or what. I wouldn't be surprised if it wasn't just his experience and maybe wanting to get out of Africa; he had been in Africa for quite a while. So, he did go to Panama and I was then offered Liberia. Ron, by the way, did not do well in Panama but that's his story to tell. So, I went to Liberia following Lois Richards, another woman. I always had the feeling that women followed women because they knew that that post would accept them. The same thing happened in Bangladesh; I followed Priscilla Boughton.

Q: Had you known much about Liberia before you-

KILGOUR: No, nothing; not at all. I mean, I had been in the Africa Bureau my first tour but that, as I mentioned early on, was in Washington dealing with regional activities. Of course, I went to African area studies and I read about Liberia but I knew very little about the people. So, I cut my teeth from a position of ignorance. Liberia was a fascinating country for me and the program was really interesting and evolving quickly as was the situation in the country. And the Liberians were delightful people. People ask me what was my favorite country and I say well, Philippines because of the Peace Corps connection and then I say, in terms of just sheer pleasure, Costa Rica was next; but the third is definitely Liberia. Liberia was just an interesting, challenging place with long-suffering people with good senses of humor. Do you agree with that assessment?

Q: Well, I was going to ask you, did you do a direct transfer or did you take home leave before you came to Liberia?

KILGOUR: I took home leave.

Q: So, you had a little time to learn about it and read about it.

KILGOUR: Yes. And I had some time in Washington to be briefed. Ambassador Swing tracked me down and briefed me, which I really appreciated.

Q: Yes, Bill Swing.

KILGOUR: Which wasn't very common in my experience, that an ambassador would track down an AID person for a briefing, although this was my first mission director position, so perhaps it is a common practice.

Q: Right, right.

KILGOUR: And yes, I did have time to read about the history, politics and culture of Liberia. It was still insufficient, as book learning often is, compared to actually being in country.

Q: And when you arrived in Liberia, aside from this fabulous party that was given for you-

KILGOUR: That I was starved at.

Q: What?

KILGOUR: That I was starved at.

Q: Yes, yes. Really?

KILGOUR: Well, yes. I told you that when you were hosting me in Gainesville. I was at the front door and the Liberians were coming in in masses, hundreds it seemed like, and

they all went through the receiving line and on to the table for the food. Finally, your wife probably had pity on me and brought me a dish of Lebanese olives, so I could nibble on an olive. When the last arriving person came in, the early arrivals had started to leave and they all said good-bye to me. Finally when the party was over I was starving and there was no food left; the Liberians had eaten you out of house and home.

Q: Well.

KILGOUR: And you were packing out. You were about to leave. I think this was your next to the last night in the house so you didn't have any food in the refrigerator and so I just had these olives to eat the whole night.

Q: Oooh.

KILGOUR: I was new enough that I probably did have too much in my house either.

Q: Right. What a welcome; what a welcome.

KILGOUR: It was funny.

Q: You're welcomed and put by the door to say hello to people as they came in and be introduced and then nobody brought you food except olives.

KILGOUR: I think that was Nancy taking pity on me.

Q: Oh, my goodness. Well.

KILGOUR: Anyway. It was a very nice thing for you to do as you were packing out. Where did you go after Liberia?

Q: Back to Washington.

KILGOUR: Okay, back to Washington. I remember you briefed me in Washington before I went to the country. I remember we walked back from some restaurant several blocks from the State Department, a little deli kind of a place over near the Executive Office Building. Do you remember that?

Q: You better remind me.

KILGOUR: Well, I remember we walked back; we had a good sandwich there and the whole purpose was for you to talk at me and tell me everything you knew about Liberia. You were in on TDY, I guess. I found the briefing very useful.

Q: Okay.

KILGOUR: That would have been within two weeks of my departure.

Q: I'd been there for three years so, in fact-

KILGOUR: But you weren't leaving at that point because you came back- when I finally got into the country you were still there.

Q: Right.

KILGOUR: So, you must have been in for some kind of a program presentation or something.

Q: Right. I may have been looking for a job.

KILGOUR: That could have been.

Q: Anyway. How did you find the political situation in Liberia when you got there? We were still propping up Sammy Doe, right?

KILGOUR: Yes, we were. But the program had a long standing development assistance program on basic education and basic health and agricultural research up at CARI (Central Agricultural Research Institute) and a rural radio program, I'm not sure whether it had started already or it started after I got there but it was designed before me.

Q: Right.

KILGOUR: It was a good, solid DA program. We also had ESF (Economic Support Funds) money basically allowing the Liberians to pay off their debt to the World Bank so the large World Bank program could continue.

Q: Right.

KILGOUR: And the first year I was there that was what we were able to do, so the program that you and Lois had designed, I guess with the ambassador, was ongoing. But then the debt got so high that it exceeded our ESF level, so we couldn't do that anymore and so we started looking for other ways to support the country. Meanwhile there was an election early, a few months after I got there. That was a wonderful experience. I was an election observer, as were many of the AID mission and embassy people. The Liberian people were joyous at the opportunity to cast their ballots; the only problem came in the counting. The people charged with that, which included some fairly prominent people in town such as the minister of health, were sequestered in the Hotel Africa and kept there for long after they should have been able to count votes physically. Apparently there was some question of who actually won.

Q: Who were the main candidates, do you remember?

KILGOUR: There were two: Jackson Doe and Gabriel Kpolleh, in addition to the sitting president, Samuel Doe.

Q: This is the presidential election?

KILGOUR: Yes, presidential. It was pretty evident that Doe had cooked the vote to win and so a coup was taken out very shortly thereafter and Quiwonkpa was the leader of the coup.

Q: Oh, right.

KILGOUR: Ellen Johnson Sirleaf was in country at the time. Ellen ran for the presidency in 1997, of course, and she lost then and ran again the next time and won. But she didn't run in 1985. She was just a part of the opposition and was arrested along with many other senior people. People who had a longer memory in-country than I did remembered 1980 when they arrested all the ministers and then executed a lot of them on Redemption Beach.

Q: Right.

KILGOUR: And so, everybody was worried that that would happen again when Quiwonkpa was killed. And that was a fairly scary time to be there. Were you there during the '80 coup?

Q: No.

KILGOUR: You came after. Okay.

Q: Came in '81. '82.

KILGOUR: Well, it was sort of scary. They had a lot of roadblocks and you could hear guns booming in the distance. And Quiwonkpa was caught and was being taken to Doe's mansion in a truck that stopped in front of the AID building. A couple of the men looking through binoculars said that they had dismembered his private parts right there in front of the AID building. I didn't personally see that, thank God.

Q: Oh, wow.

KILGOUR: But Doug Kline was the one who saw it and reported it to the Embassy.

Q: Wow.

KILGOUR: Anyway, they did kill Quiwonkpa and I learned later that Doe had forced the cabinet members to eat parts of him. One of the cabinet members himself told me that story later, the ritual killing kind of eating. And so, things were bottled up after that. We

couldn't move around very much, we couldn't go outside of Monrovia for a while. And one of our radio stations got in trouble. The leader of the whole radio program announced that Quiwonkpa had won, so he was called in on the carpet. But he was well connected and wasn't thrown in jail or anything. But people like Ellen and several others were, such as the minister of health, Martha Bellah. That gave me the first strictly diplomatic function that I performed because as you know, when you get into the senior ranks of AID basically you have a diplomatic function as much as an AID function. But this was the first time I fully realized that. The ambassador asked everybody who had senior government contacts to go to them and make representations that if anything happened to Ellen and the other people who were political prisoners that the Americans would be very unhappy and would have to respond. So I went on a Saturday morning and I talked to the ministers of finance and planning and the Central Bank governor. It was interesting because I wasn't too skilled at this. Maybe I was well trained by the Filipinos because I was very indirect in the way I did it. And I ended up showing up on a Saturday morning at somebody's office saying I need to talk with them. I started chit chatting for the first half hour before I got to the main message. And of course, they were all very careful about how they responded because their lives were also at stake. If they had run afoul of Doe they were in danger. But anyway, I passed the word. And Ellen actually publicly on TV announced that the Americans saved her life by their representations to the senior people around Doe. And the ambassador went directly to Doe. So, I thought that was a pretty interesting experience.

Q: Yes.

KILGOUR: After that Ellen and the others were released. She was at her home but under house arrest and she was afraid she was going to be picked up again. So a missionary plane smuggled her out of the country.

Q: Really?

KILGOUR: Yes. She went to Abidjan and then back to Washington or New York, I'm not sure. She didn't surface again in Liberian politics except on the margins. I'm sure she was talking to all the donors and the opposition all the time. But when she finally ran in 1997 for president. I was there for that election. I had retired by then; I went back to help run the Friends of Liberia election observation project. I saw her again several times. Before that, I had dinner with her in Washington with Janean Mann, who was the political officer when you and I were both in Liberia. She had transferred back to Washington and I was there on TDY. We went to dinner at one of the nice restaurants on Pennsylvania Avenue. Grace Minor was with Ellen -- do you remember her? She had a chop house and lived around the corner from the AID director's house.

Q: Yes.

KILGOUR: She later became a smuggler of blood diamonds for Charles Taylor.

Q: Oh.

KILGOUR: But Grace was in Washington, too, at the time and apparently used to work at George Washington University. Ellen and Grace were classmates in high school and knew each other pretty well. So, the two of them and Janean and I had dinner together at a fairly posh restaurant. The two Liberians were dressed in Liberian gowns. We got into a heated discussion and Ellen especially was blaming the United States for everything that was happening in Liberia. And Janean and I were trying to defend American policy and that was very hard for Janean because she had very strongly worked with the opposition in Liberia. But we tried our best to defend government policy. And the two Liberians got very raucous; you may recall that's a national trait. When we left the restaurant, we were still deeply involved in this conversation. As we walked out, we realized that everybody looking at us. Our argument apparently had been heard by the whole restaurant. Anyway, Ellen is a good person and I think she later did well by Liberia.

Back to Liberia. We ended up shifting towards the so-called operational experts' program. Do you remember that?

Q: Yes.

KILGOUR: That was a one-of-a-kind program. It came out of a visit to Liberia by Secretary Shultz and AID administrator Peter MacPherson. They asked Doe how the U.S. could help him because we couldn't keep doing what we had been doing. And Doe said "I need to get control of the money, of the budget.) They responded by asking whether he would accept experts being placed in the key ministries with operational rather than advisory responsibilities to help the president get control of the money? And Doe said yes. So, that started the 17 Americans who were hired and assigned line positions in all the key ministries that had responsibilities for money, such as the Budget Office, Central Bank and Ministry of Finance, but also Customs and Internal Revenue.

Q: Mary, what year would they have arrived?

KILGOUR: Let's see. I left in '88 and the program ended just before I left, maybe a few months before I left and it lasted about a year. So, that would have been late 1986 or early 1987.

Q: Okay. And it was led by Frank Kimble, is that right?

KILGOUR: Yes. Frank Kimble had been a very senior mission director including director in Egypt and he also had been Counselor to the Administrator. He had just retired but came back as a contractor to be chief of party for this project. He recruited a stellar group of people, experts in customs and taxes and budgeting and Central Bank financing. There were 17 in all, including Frank and they got into these ministries and found some confreres willing to try to do the right thing. Government employees were not paid in full and vendors were not paid and this was having an impact on everybody. So, the Americans came in and they straightened all this stuff out. Government officials were paid on time, as were vendor claims. The team got to the point where they knew where

65 percent of the total revenue was- where it came from and where it went. It was all legitimate. But then they started being stonewalled. There was one little kink. I'll just say this briefly.

The head of the City Bank was quite a fascinating man and his name was Len Maistre. He unfortunately died quite young. But he was influential in Liberia. He came to my office one day and said: "I need to talk with you and you alone; don't have anybody else in the room with you." So, I received him and he said that somebody on his staff at City Bank had come from Boston and knew that one of our experts, who was in a key position, had been involved in some big scandal in the bank that he worked in in Boston. It was some kind of corruption scandal; I don't remember the details now. Anyway, Len Maistre said "if that gets out it could blow your project right out of the water. Here you've got a crook giving advice to crooks.. And that could really blow up your project." I thanked Maistre for the head's up and said I would talk to Frank and the ambassador. I told him I'd get back to him, but for now, mum's the word for everyone. So, I called Frank and asked him to come in to see me on an urgent matter and to come alone. When he arrived I reported what Len had said. He let out a swear word because he recognized that this could kill the program. Then we went to brief the ambassador. Then Frank went to this man and told him to pack his stuff, you've got a plane ticket, you're leaving tonight." He asked how dare that man jeopardize the entire program by accepting the job. Clearly, somebody didn't do their homework right if they offered him the job in the first place. I don't know who did the basic hiring of the experts. Anyway, the tainted expert left and nobody breathed a word about it. Frank just said there had been a crisis in his family and he had to leave immediately. They fairly quickly found somebody else for the position.

Back to the point where they got to 65 percent and started getting stonewalled. It was clear that Doe was willing to do it up to 65 percent but he needed that 35 percent as wiggle room for his own purposes. So no further progress was likely. Shultz and MacPherson had told Doe that if your people stop cooperating with us we're going to end the program and that will be the end of our ESF assistance; we'd wash our hands of Doe's problems. And so the program ended, phased down and out very quickly. That was about the time I was leaving, a little bit before. But as I was leaving I was involved in all kinds of other stuff, including negotiating the annual repayment of money that Doe had taken in rice from the PL-480 program and used it for political reasons. I think that happened during yours and Lois's time and it was found out by an audit. So, every year we were making him pay back \$5 million in local currency, putting \$5 million extra of their money into the development budget before we would agree to give them that year's PL-480. And every year we went through this negotiation; it was crazy, somewhat reminiscent of the negotiating with Imelda Marcos in the Philippines.

Q: Right. Let me add a little story here. I don't think we were aware of the corruption that was going on with the PL-480 program, which is fairly large, but we had a friend who had lived in Liberia moved to Memphis, Tennessee, and lived there with her daughter, who started playing soccer. And it turned out that her soccer coach was the

Liberian who had run the PL-480 program and taken the money and was living quite nicely in Memphis, Tennessee.

KILGOUR: Taken the money from Doe?

Q: Well, out of the PL-480 program in concert with Doe, I guess.

KILGOUR: What I heard was that Doe had used the rice for political reasons, to pay off various people. Maybe this guy that you're mentioning was one of them.

Q: Right, anyway. So, the- after the operational experts team left the program started diminishing in size or did it remain more or less the same?

KILGORE: It started diminishing, focusing more on DA and PL-480. And the DA continued to do good to the extent it could. The Peace Corps was involved as our field workers. We had contractors advising each project, but then Peace Corps volunteers would be assigned as field staff to the radio stations, to the rural primary school and to the primary health care clinics. We had excellent cooperation with the Peace Corps throughout the program. And it gave the volunteers experience with functional, well managed activities. Those directly with the government tended to be underfunded and corrupt, which doesn't sit well with PCVs, as we both know. I don't know what happened after I left. I think the program became smaller.

Q: Was Charles Taylor on the radar at that point?

KILGOUR: In a vague way, yes. I kept following Liberia after I left, so I'm not sure exactly when he surfaced. He was working with Quiwonkpa so he definitely was in the picture but not in-country. The story was that he had earlier had a senior government position and had absconded with some money, so had to flee the country.

Q: Right.

KILGOUR: So, you may know- What was Charles Taylor doing when you were there?

Q: Well, I believe for a short period of time he was the head of sort of the general services office.

KILGOUR: Okay. That's consistent with what I knew about his history.

Q: And then he went to Boston or someplace like that.

KILGOUR: Yes. But he was behind the coup, stirring things up from that end.

Q: Right. So, yes. Well, it was an exciting time in Liberia. It wasn't too long after you left that they went into very serious civil war.

KILGOUR: Yes.

Q: And we won't go into that since you weren't there. But how were your relationships with the embassy during this period?

KILGORE: They probably could have been better. I mean, my own inexperience probably made me a little bit more defensive in terms of protecting the AID portfolio that I needed to be. But we had two good ambassadors there.

Q: Bill Swing?

KILGOUR: No, Bill Swing had left. Ed Perkins and then Jim Bishop, both good guys, very different but both good guys, experienced and supportive of AID. Perkins had actually had some exposure to AID way earlier in his career so I think he was a little bit more willing to let AID do its own thing. Jim wanted to use our budget to advance more strategic objectives. And at that stage in Liberia maybe it was understandable but I came out of a more development kinds of countries like Costa Rica and even Colombia and the Philippines were more developmental in their strategic focus. But I got along well with both of them. I'm still in touch with Jim Bishop.

Q: Right.

KILGOUR: But the program in Liberia was good. I always admired the Liberians for being long suffering and yet using humor to get through it all. I liked them as a people. I've told many people over the years the story of my last negotiation over PL 480. Just before I left we were negotiating the annual repayment of the missing \$5 million and we were in the ground floor of the planning building. With me were Ed Costello, the AID mission economist, his intern, Mark Gallagher, and Mike Rugh, my deputy. We were sitting in the pitch black because the electricity was off, so we sent Mark, the youngest of us, to walk up the six or eight flights to the minister's office to tell him that we had arrived to do the final signing from our perspective of this agreement that had already been thoroughly negotiated by both sides. There would later be a formal ceremonial signing with the ambassador, but the signatures that counted would already be on the document. So Mark trudged up the stairs in the dark and we waited and waited and waited and nobody came and it got hot very quickly in this windowless dark conference room. We had arrived on time but things are not always on time in places like Liberia. So, we're waiting and wondering what they are pulling now. Just as we were getting ready to leave - but we really didn't want to leave because we were under instructions from Washington that if we didn't come to agreement on this, the food would go to another country; it was that time of the year when they were doing the last-minute programming. Sure enough, the lights came back on and the planning minister showed up, then the finance minister, then the Central Bank chief and finally the director of the Liberian Produce Marketing Corporation (or LPMC).

Q: The full cast of characters.

KILGOUR: LPMC was the group that physically brought the rice in and sold it on the market. The government then placed the equivalent amount in the development budget and kept the foreign exchange for their own use. The Liberian government officials present started raising fundamental points of disagreement. We pointed out that this had been negotiated from A to Z and the agreement is to sign; and if they didn't sign it that day the money's going to the Congo or some place; we couldn't wait any longer. After diddling us for another 20 minutes or so they all agreed they ready to sign. So we handed around the book that everybody had to sign and finally the last signature was on it. We had a surprise prearranged: Ed had a big sheet cake that his three daughters had made with his wife Carol overseeing it all and it said "Congratulations PL-480 Negotiators." There was a little bag of rice with a few rice kernels in the frosting. Just at the exact second that Ed pulled that out from the chair next to him to put it on the table I pulled this huge cake knife out of my briefcase and I held it up and said "I knew I would use this one way or another today."

Q: Oh, gosh.

KILGOUR: They all laughed for a long time, then ate the cake. That's the kind of humor Liberians loved.

Q: Yes.

KILGOUR: So, then we signed and I left maybe two days later to go back to Washington to be a deputy assistant administrator in Food for Peace. But Mike Rugh told me that a few days later at the Fourth of July ceremony at the ambassador's residence he approached the ambassador and David Farhat as they were talking. David the foreign minister at that time and had been the finance minister before then and was a good friend. But David was saying that Mary had forced them to sign this agreement when they really wanted to renegotiate it totally. Mike said he just started laughing and then the ambassador started laughing and then David started laughing. So, they would try anything right up to the last minute to get what they wanted and then with good humor accept when they didn't get it.

So, I left Liberia but as I said I went back in '97 from retirement for the election of Charles Taylor and attended his inauguration and saw Grace Minor again. She was very deeply involved with him. I went to her chophouse and had a meal with her and that was an interesting experience. Fortunately, Ellen didn't win because she would have been dead within a month if she had won. She got 10 percent of the vote; Charles Taylor got 90 percent, basically because people wanted peace and they knew if he didn't get elected he wouldn't allow the peace to come.

So, anyway, off I went to Washington after a few days of sleeping and sightseeing in Scotland.

Q: Nice.

KILGOUR: I hadn't been in the States for assignment in 10 years. And by the way, I brought back with me from Liberia this cough that never went away and so I would spend a lot of time in my early months in Washington trying to get this diagnosed. Eventually it was diagnosed as a mycobacterium that causes lung infections. So I've had a bit of Liberia with me ever since leaving in 1988.

Q: Yes. Wow. That's amazing.

KILGOUR: So, I end up going to Washington and I spent a lot of time going to pulmonologists there and then I ended up buying a new house. I fixed up my old house, sold it and then bought a house out in McLean and went to work as one of the deputy assistant administrators for Food for Peace, which was headed up by a political assistant administrator, Phil Christianson. And that was a new experience. I won't say it was a particularly pleasant experience. I think most Foreign Service people prefer the field to Washington.

Q: Also, Phil Christianson, as I remember, is a name connected with Jesse Helms.

KILGOUR: Yes. He was a Helms staffer. I don't know whether Helms fired him or he left Helms but he ended up working on some committee in Congress and then he got the job in AID and he was later, shortly after I left, fired by the administrator of AID.

Q: Oh.

KILGOUR: Apparently, he accused the administrator, Ron Roskens, of some kind of irregularities with his travel. And Roskens got fed up with it and called the White House to ask them to get this guy out of his agency. So Phil was fired. Phil was a very difficult person to work for. He was very conservative politically, seemed to resent the Foreign Service, possibly because his parents were both civil servants in the State Department and he probably got a childhood full of complaints that they never advanced beyond GS-13s because of all the Foreign Service people coming in, taking the good jobs. I don't know if that's what happened but he seemed to resent the Foreign Service people; he would never admit it if you accused him of it but he was verbally abusive to the staff. He was always looking for his next job and he would admit that. He'd say well, you have a career position but I don't; I'm dependent on finding my next job myself. So, he tended to do things like butter up the lobbying people and the NGOs, hoping to land a job after he left AID. I don't know whether he ever skirted the ethical boundaries but it could be awkward sometimes, seeing how he was buttering them up. It was obvious. Owen Cylke was his senior deputy and Owen also had problems with him but probably was more diplomatic than I was at dealing with him, had done it longer. He was there when I got there. And there was a woman deputy assistant administrator over the PVO part; I don't remember her name offhand.

Q: Mary, I need to take a quick call. Hold on for a second. Hold on. Alright, Mary, we are back.

KILGOUR: Okay. Hold on for just one minute, please. I was using up the time to type something. Okay. I'm making political buttons for one of our local candidates down here.

Okay. Frankly, I don't know to what extent you want this kind of detail in your oral histories. We can always take it out later. I mean, if Phil read this he would have a different take on things than I do.

Q: Well, that will be your decision when you edit.

KILGOUR: Yes. I will ask, in terms of all the other oral histories you've done, have they gotten into this kind of difficult situational naming names?

Q: Yes, many of them have, yes.

KILGOUR: Many have. Okay. So, one time Phil called me into his office and he was complaining about the staffer who had sabotaged him, he thought, or had done something untoward and I was defending the guy. And I said "look, he was just trying to set up a meeting; he wasn't trying to sabotage you in any way." Phil said "Maybe I should just classify, make my calendar LOU." In the same conversation he started making a lot of other criticisms. And I finally said, "Look, Phil"-- this was well after I'd worked for him for quite a while -- "you don't like me and...", he interrupted me; "what do you mean I don't like you?" I responded, "well, you don't like me or you don't respect me." He asked why I said that? So I said "well, you chew me in a loud voice in your office when the secretaries sitting right outside can hear you; you make this kind of comment in meetings in front of other people; you invite my deputy and some of the men to your office for a drink after work and you don't ever include me in that; there are a lot of ways that I've concluded that you don't respect me or you don't like me, whatever. But that's okay, Phil, because I don't like you either." I followed that up by saying: "I have a good reputation in the agency and really there's not much that he could do to me. "And you're going to be gone from AID long before I am; you'll be gone in maybe four years at the most and so, that's okay. You don't have to respect me or like me. I'm doing my best by you as an employee and that's all you can ask of me." He sat there with his head thrown back just listening to me and he said he was sorry I felt that. And then I left. You know, after that he treated me much more respectfully in public and in private. It was a very interesting situation: how to disarm a bully in the workplace. In any event, Phil Christianson was difficult to work for. You never knew where he was coming from.

I will say that I learned a lot in that job. I had never really been exposed to the lobbying community or to the headquarters of NGOs, who do a lot of lobbying themselves. That was all new to me. It was interesting but I didn't really enjoy it; I didn't like that kind of political level stuff. And I had to go up on the Hill and testify a couple of times. I'm glad I had that opportunity.

After I was in the job less than two years Carol Adelman asked me if I would go to Bangladesh. Priscilla Boughton had died very suddenly of pancreatic cancer, so they were looking for a replacement. I said no because I wasn't ready to go overseas again. I'd

been out of the country for a long time. A while later, Carol asked me again and I responded in the same way: I've been out of the country for 10 years, I need time, I just bought a new house. So, then, several months passed and they had a reorganization that put Bangladesh into a different bureau. Henrietta Holsman was the person in charge of the bureau. And she called me up and I didn't really know her.

Q: Henrietta was head of the Asia Bureau at that time.

KILGOUR: Oh, then they divided up just Asia then.

KILGOUR: Anyway, she called me up and asked me to take the Bangladesh job. By this time I'd been talking about this with my deputy, Jim O'Meara, and he told me I was crazy not to take it because it was a way to get out of the clutches of Phil. So I started thinking that there was a lot of merit to that. I started giving it more serious thought after that and sure enough, when Henrietta called me again I said yes. Now, interestingly Carol Adelman got very annoyed with me because she thought that I had turned her down because it was she asking me rather than just the evolution of my own thinking. And she called and asked whether I had turned her down because it was her and not Henrietta asking. I responded, "no, no, no, that had nothing to do it; My thinking had evolved." I didn't tell her I was trying to get rid of Phil. So, off I went preparing to go to Dhaka. And I'd also just gotten a cat so I had to worry about how to get the cat to Bangladesh. But I left and escaped the clutches of Phil and had a great tour in Bangladesh.

Q: So, what year did you arrive in Bangladesh?

KILGOUR: I arrived in September 1990..

Q: And had you gotten a promotion in the meantime? Were you in the Senior Foreign Service by now?

KILGOUR: Oh, yes, I definitely had gotten a couple of promotion. I must have been a minister counselor by then.

Q: Okay.

KILGOUR: I retired as a career minister.

Q: Oh, wow.

KILGOUR: And I got the career minister promotion at the very tail end of my Bangladesh assignment, or maybe a year later when I was at the War College. I knew I was going to tick out by the time I went to the War College because there was nothing higher than a career minister and the Agency had stopped giving limited career extensions. So, I was definitely a minister counselor when I went to Bangladesh.

Q: We have a few more minutes before we're going to stop this interview but any other sort of lessons for people on management style that you learned from going back to Washington and working with a difficult boss?

KILGOUR: Well, I always think that you can learn as much from a difficult boss as you can from a wonderful boss, maybe even more. You can learn how not to do things, for one thing. It's an education to be forced to work with a difficult person and Phil certainly was. But I won't say he won because I fled because he was fired shortly afterwards. I do think he drove me out of the country. I often think that I fled the United States twice in my career with AID; once was after the reorganization task force when I went to Costa Rica and the other was from my DAA position with Phil. And so, I didn't hang in there and suck it up and figure out better how to work with him; I just left it to somebody else. And I don't even remember who replaced me.

Q: Really?

KILGOUR: Jim O'Meara might have been acting for quite a while after that. Well, because Phil did get fired; within six months he was gone. And so, I don't know who replaced him in the bureau. FVA it was called, I guess, Food and Voluntary Assistance. But yes, I think I became a little more sensitive to other people from how insensitive Phil was. Nobody got along with him. I mean, he was a square peg in a round hole in AID. Imagine taking on the AID administrator without any proof, accusing him of padding his travel vouchers or something similar? And there was nothing to his charges. Phil sort of reminds me of Trump in a way, just popping things off without thinking about the consequences of what he's saying.

Q: Were there any substantive issues going on during that time with the-

KILGOUR: With the bureau?

Q: Yes.

KILGOUR: With my part of the bureau? No, we had a very good GS staff who knew all the ins and outs of how to order PL-480 Title II. The Title I was all being done over at USDA (United States Department of Agriculture). Title II was programmed out of the office I headed: FVA/FFP. Jeannie Marcounis was the long-standing person in charge of the operational side and she was very competent. She had been around a long time and things were running smoothly. So I didn't make any changes, I didn't probably know enough to make changes. The one thing I remember, beyond interacting with the NGO community, USDA, Congress and food lobbyists was a humorous episode. A bunch of staffers approached me and asked me to tell another staff to take his Christmas poster off his door. We had one of those door decorating contests going on and there were complaints about his door. A couple of days later I went down to his floor and on the door was a very voluptuous Playboy bunny kind of girl with a Santa Claus outfit on.

Q: Oh my.

KILGOUR: A very skimpy Santa Claus outfit.

Q: Oh wow.

KILGOUR: And I went into this fellow's office. He was very well meaning. He worked on the NGO side but with Food for Peace. And I asked him, "do you not think your poster might be a little offensive to some people at this Christmas season?" He looked at it and he said, "well, maybe yes." So, he took it down. I didn't tell him to take it down, he volunteered. He said "you think it's offending people so I should take it down?" I said "that might be a good idea." That may have been my biggest decision in FFP. Well, maybe not.

I did have some interesting experiences there. We went on a couple of field trips out to the hinterland of the United States. And I had been overseas so much that I had not traveled much in the interior of the country. On one the trip we went to Kansas, to the people who deal with the PL-480 wheat. I had never been to Kansas. We went to Kansas State and then went out on a wheat farm and the guy had a computer in his office and \$3 million worth of equipment in his yard. It was an eye opener for me, really interesting. On a different trip we went to the Palouse Country, which is the Idaho/eastern Washington area where they have these rolling hills and grow a lot of peas and lentils. They were trying to get us to bring more peas and lentils into the PL-480 Title II program. On nutritional grounds we all thought it was a great idea but they were quite expensive. Of course, we paid for our own trips but the pea and lentil people were really lobbying us strong. I don't think we ever did anything differently because of the trip but I found it fascinating. I'd never seen those rolling green hills that they have in that part of the country; a beautiful area. They had a big picnic for us on the Snake River. And I saw the power of the lobbying people; whether they thought they were influencing us, I don't know. I mean, I certainly didn't ever make any decisions differently based on their efforts but I could see why people don't like lobbyists.

Q: Right. Mary, it's 5:00; let's call it at this point.

KILGOUR: Okay.

Q: Alright. This is John Pielemeier on the 3rd of April. Another interview with Mary Kilgour. And we are moving from Washington, DC to Bangladesh, a new assignment. And Mary, I'll turn it over to you.

KILGOUR: Good to be with you again, John. I think I was just about to go to Bangladesh, which would have been in the year 1990 in early fall. Desert Shield was going on when I got to Bangladesh. This was my second and last mission director job. Within a week of arriving in Dhaka President Ershad was arrested in a military takeover. And several cars that I was responsible for were burned by protesters around this time.

Q: Oh.

KILGOUR: I think five cars were burned in the protests that preceded the president's arrest. And the Gulf War was heating up. I'll jump ahead and say in the first year that I was in Bangladesh three major events occurred that influenced most of my efforts. The first was the period of unrest that culminated in the president's arrest and there were a lot of violent demonstrations and strikes (*hartals*, they're called) accompanied that. There's a funny story where the vice president took refuge to avoid being arrested in one of the AID employee's house.

Q: Oh, really?

KILGOUR: Yes. I actually wrote a story about this that was published in the "Foreign Service Journal" but I personalized it and made it a humorous story. I'm sure when it happened it wasn't humorous to the family who the vice president and his family descended on. Apparently, they had been staying in the chicken coop in the back of their property fearing arrest and there was some word, apparently, that troops were on the way to his house to arrest him. So he jumped over the fence and went to the Swedish ambassador's house and asked for refuge. The ambassador was to leave the country on home leave within a day or two, so he went next door to Zach and Pearl Hahn's home. I don't know if you ever knew them. Pearl herself was of Bangladeshi origin who was a long-time American citizen. She had married Zach when he was there in the 1970's when the country was fighting for its liberation. So, Zach called the Embassy security officer and asked if he could take in the vice president and family. I guess the ambassador got involved and said if it's a situation of someone fleeing, then yes, you can give them refuge. So, the vice president, his wife, a couple of kids and the wife's mother all took refuge in Zach and Pearl's house and the next day our ambassador came in a plumbing truck to take them to a safe house.

Q: My goodness.

KILGOUR: The ambassador went incognito to the Hahn residence. And that night in cover of darkness, they took the vice president's family out to a safe house. Anyway, Pearl was very fearful during this whole time because she was afraid that the mob would find out he was there and would turn on her family.

Q: Right. Who was the ambassador, do you remember?

KILGOUR: The ambassador was Bill Milam.

Q: Bill Milam, right. Okay.

KILGOUR: Then, of course, the Gulf War started in earnest and we had a voluntary evacuation of about 53 percent of the American staff. They mostly were families with young children at post and the parents wanted them out of harm's way. So 47 percent of us still at post, mostly singles or older couples without children with them, were left to try to keep things going. Now, there was a lot of unrest that accompanied the Gulf War

because initially the mullahs were stirring things up against the Americans. For instance, some of the Iraqi embassy employees were buzzing our school bus.

Q: Really?

KILGOUR: Yes. So, the Marines and some of the men who had weapons, got on our school bus and showed their weapons because the Iraqis had been showing their weapons to our children.. Meanwhile the ambassador put in a protest and very shortly those Iraqis were kicked out of the country by the Bangladesh government. Bangladesh was allied with us and Saudi Arabia but the mullahs were saying things like, if the holy places in Iraq are bombed then we should kill the Americans. At least, that's what one of the men who was my gardener and also an embassy guard was reported to have said. All the servants in the neighborhood got together over tea and he was overheard to say that. Somebody reported it to the embassy. I think it was my American contractor neighbor who was on his way out of the country. So my gardener was interviewed and he denied saying it. But the security officer told me to keep him out of the house. I didn't have to fire him but to keep him out of the house when he was working as a gardener. And they didn't assign him as a guard at my house. They didn't fire him, either. So I just had all the keys to all the doors that used to sit on top of the shelf above each door put elsewhere. All my other servants were Christians so I told them not to let him alone in the house in case he really decided to take this seriously..

Q: Yes.

KILGOUR: And I got a couple of other death threats, as did the ambassador and probably other senior officers.

Q: Oh, goodness.

KILGOUR: And we had curfews, imposed by the ambassador for our safety. Because the curfews usually were when night fell there was no social activity and, of course, our ability to travel outside of the city was very much curtailed. Everybody was going stir crazy because I remember when the ambassador raised the curfew to midnight I had a game night at my house and invited all the AID people still at post. Everybody got tipsy and played games. We were playing Pictionary, which is a fun game anyway, and we were just in stitches. It showed the tension everybody had been under that we all overdrank and over-laughed. Then everybody scurried home at 10 minutes to 12:00. I had a couple more of those parties in the course of the coming weeks, but none as successful as that first one.

Then the war ended and within a couple of months, we had a big cyclone.

Q: Oh, my.

KILGOUR: Cyclone Marian, that killed 139,000 people and over a million animals in six hours.

Q: Oh, my goodness.

KILGOUR: It was a category five, like Katrina. And it was interesting to compare it to Katrina because in Katrina it was the property damage that was so bad; there were only 1,000 or 2,000 killed whereas in Bangladesh the property damage was less. Much of the area were small wooden or thatch houses on these little sand spit islands in the Bay of Bengal; they were washed away. People were not able to get protection so 139,000 died. In Chittagong City there were substantial building and paved roads. I remember one scene where a huge metal barge was picked up by the storm and deposited in the middle of a major road. The only way it could be removed was by breaking it into scrap metal and that took months if not years.

Of course, we had a very good disaster response capability from Washington as well as the money we had. We had a total of about \$7 million with Washington's help and we had about seven NGOs - very good quality NGOs, mostly local but CARE was one of them - and they were well prepared for disaster assistance. Because Bangladesh was so prone to disasters we had pre-programmed everything so that when a disaster struck, we could move the money into the NGOs quickly and we knew basically what they were going to spend it on. But \$7 million was just peanuts compared to the need. Fortunately, President Bush, had the wisdom, probably with the encouragement of Andrew Natsios, the head of OFDA (Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance) at the time, to redirect a ship coming from the just ended Gulf War up into the Bay of Bengal to provide assistance to the area that had been struck by the cyclone. And at first the young soldiers were upset because they thought they were going to miss the parades and everything in the U.S., but once they saw what had happened there were more servicemen who wanted to volunteer than there was need for at any particular time. But the ship had communications equipment and transportation equipment and things that were desperately needed in the relief effort, so they saved the day.

A Marine general, Hank Stackpole, came over from Okinawa to lead a joint task force called Operation Sea Angel and he took charge. I sent one of our employees, Phil Buechler, who's now deceased, down to Chittagong to be our guy on-site. But I went down within a few days of the cyclone, before Hank Stackpole showed up, with the defense attaché, his assistant and a young army corps of engineers officer who happened to be in the country for a civic action program. He was about to go back to the army and in fact, he had a very painful leg that turned out later to be bone cancer; he lost his leg, I think. He was asked to stay on in Bangladesh for another six weeks and help with Operation Sea Angel. I hope the delay in Bangladesh didn't make things worse for him. So, four of us went to Chittagong in a Bangladesh Air Force plane. It was incredible to see the damage. There were still dead bodies out in the open and dead animals everywhere. In the city, every tree had lost its leaves to the wind and the storm surge.

We talked with a lot of people. We went on a Bangladesh Navy ship that was anchored in the Bay of Bengal. They had tied it down especially well and the admiral in charge who had stayed with the ship overnight, felt that it had been picked up and moved over some

buildings and then moved back into the ocean. I took a photo of the barograph which later was published in several places in studies of the cyclone and relief efforts. The barometric pressure went so far down it went off the chart and skipped along for several minutes or seconds, and then went up again. The admiral said he had never seen that in his life as a naval officer.

I had a supply of water purification tablets that I presented to the mayor of the city. We found out later they had expired, but they were probably still effective, if they went ahead and used them. And then we had the \$7 million to do through the preselected NGOs. I would say for six weeks I spent probably 18-hour days working on that cyclone, as did many of staff, the contract officer and certainly Phil Buechler, our man on site. And embassy people did the same thing.

When all that ended, there was a World Bank meeting in Paris that I had to attend. Talk about being a surreal experience, going to a big formal meeting in Paris after dealing with the cyclone relief effort. It was like going into a totally different world but it was a nice break for me.

So, the change in government, the Gulf War and the cyclone made up my first year in Bangladesh.

Of course, I did do some other things. You know, USAID/Bangladesh's program is, I think, justifiably quite famous in aid circles for being excellent. And I think part of the reason, somewhat like the Philippines but even more so, we have stuck with the same problems in Bangladesh for many years, family planning being one of the major ones. And consequently, it was a big success. We responded to the Bangladeshis' instinctive realization that they needed to reduce the number of children they had so that they would survive into adulthood. On their own they decided to reduce their birth rate and we helped; we provided condoms nationwide, we did a lot of social marketing, a lot of training and program support and it worked. Bangladesh at that time was the only country to reduce the number of children each woman in massive numbers and by their own choice.

We had other programs; there was the big fertilizer development program where we, for years, supported liberalization of fertilizer imports and various policy changes. That was a very successful program, run through the International Fertilizer Development Center.

Q: Was Steve Haggblade there at that time?

KILGOUR: Yes, he was.

Q: I know Steve wrote an analysis of those policies.

KILGOUR: Did he conclude that they were successful?

Q: Yes, I think he did. I mean, he was- part of it was part of the convincing process of making the case for the various policy changes and somehow I came across those at one point. He's a very talented guy.

KILGOUR: Yes, very talented. His wife, Helen Gunther, was our deputy agriculture and rural development officer. She's very talented, too.

Q: Right, right.

KILGOUR: She had her second child in Bangladesh. She was supposed to go to Bangkok but the baby came early and the embassy doctor was beside himself with worry. She pointed out that Bangladeshis have been having babies for a long time. The baby arrived healthy, a little girl.

Q: Well, I'll just add that I take responsibility for Steven and Helen getting married.

KILGOUR: Do you really?

Q: When we were in Botswana Helen was a new ag officer, I think an IDI (International Development Intern) at the time, and she had this boyfriend at Michigan State who was still studying there but we found a job for him in Botswana for the summer and he came out and by the end of the summer they were engaged to be married.

KILGOUR: Well, congratulations. That was good work.

Q: Right.

KILGOUR: They're retired now. How time flies!

Q: Yes. They're in California.

KILGOUR: Is he still working?

Q: Steve is, yes. He still does work, I think, for Michigan State.

KILGOUR: Helen's parents were also in Bangladesh. Her father, Jack Gunther, was our first exec officer.

Q: Yes.

KILGOUR: Phil Buechler replaced him. Helen's mother used to make kimchi. I don't know if it's true or not but the story was she made it in the bathtub and would share it widely in the American community. It was delicious.

Q: I didn't know that.

KILGOUR: They're a very lovely family.

Q: Right.

KILGOUR: So, okay. So, by the way, talking about being responsible for younger officers, I will say that I had two staffs in Food for Peace who wanted to be Foreign Service officers and weren't able to get into the Foreign Service because of hiring freezes and the like. I think both of them had been Peace Corps volunteers. The only way one could get into the Foreign Service at that stage was if a job was created for you. So, I created two jobs - justifiably, they were needed in the mission; so we got Herbie Smith, who is now a mission director somewhere.

Q: I think he's in Afghanistan.

KILGOUR: Wow. So, his family must not be with him.

Q: Yes, I don't know him but I was just told that.

KILGOUR: Well, that's a big one. His wife is a very interesting person. Well, let me backup for a minute. So, I got Herbie a job in Zach Hahn's projects office and then I got Gary Robbins a job as an assistant program officer, working for, at that point, Karl Schwartz. Gary is also still working. He had a tour in Afghanistan embedded with the Marines. I'm not sure if they're still in India or somewhere else. Do you know where he is?

Q: I don't, no.

KILGOUR: He was in Egypt for a while then he was in India; I don't know where he is now.

Let me go back to Herbie. And I say this in the spirit of talking about what a wonderful staff we had, including families, in Bangladesh. It was very close. I was very lucky that the Philippines, Liberia and Bangladesh all had very tight, American communities and it makes a big difference in the way you work and play and enjoy an assignment. Herbie's wife was an extraordinary person, still is, I'm sure. Her name was Sarah and she was an RN. They had been Peace Corps volunteers together in Ethiopia and had two little sons with them. Sarah was not working as a nurse but she was the true definition of a nurse. When she would come upon a suffering Bangladeshi, such as a woman with children, she would take them home with her and nurse them back to health. Then she'd be in touch with the Mother Teresa nuns. There was a branch of them in Bangladesh and she'd turn the family over to the nuns to arrange more permanent help. Herbie would joke that he never knew what he was going to find when he got home, that his guest room would have a mother and children in it or somebody who was very ill.

Q: Oh, my.

KILGOUR: Sarah did all that very quietly, not talking about it, just doing it. That always impressed me. Herbie's laid back attitude probably helped her to do that, to the point where before they left Bangladesh they were invited to visit Calcutta for a private audience with Mother Teresa.

Q: My goodness.

KILGOUR: So her work was recognized by Mother Teresa herself.

Q: Oh, my goodness. Talking about those three posts and the tight knit community - you mentioned party night - but what things did you do to encourage that kind of closeness and support it as mission director?

KILGOUR: Well, in Liberia I also had a game night and it was also during a time of political unrest where we were circumscribed in where we could travel and when. Again, there was a curfew. My house in Monrovia, as you may remember, had a basement. It was a big open space but it was finished. So I had a big game night there and people brought their games, including one that was quite large where you could play football by manipulating levers on the machine.

Q: Oh, yes.

KILGOUR: Everyone enjoyed that. And we had a man on the staff who was a Palestinian Christian and he brought backgammon and taught several people how to play it. We had ping pong in the basement. Pictionary, Trivial Pursuit and poker were all going on in various rooms and levels of my large house. I invited everybody who wanted to come and we had a great time. I had a couple of those, again, just to relieve tension. I also had a lot of dinner parties and invited people over to the house quite a bit for not just official ones, representational functions, but for Christmas Eve dinner for the singles who stayed in country over the holidays. So, I tried to be a little Mother Hen for the staff. I think it worked because I remember at one point in Liberia the psychiatrist shows up in my office and I couldn't for the life of me figure out why he was there, wondering if I'm losing it or something. He just wanted to tell me that the morale in the AID mission had improved significantly since my arrival.

Q: Wonderful.

KILGOUR: So, I thought I must be doing something right.

Q: Yes.

KILGOUR: But in the end it was fun for me; being single myself I needed to create my own social activity. I will say, though, as mission director it got to be so busy that probably 90 percent of my social life was strictly representational.

Q: Right.

KILGOUR: In Bangladesh, for instance, I was going out to three different functions a night.

Q: Oh, my.

KILGOUR: So, it was hard to keep up with that let alone organize regular, nonrepresentational events. I tried to go on field trips with different parts of the AID mission, and enjoyed those activities and made them, in a way, partly an adventure, not just an official field trip.

Let me get back to the Bangladesh mission. I said the rest of the program was excellent, long-lasting and effective. Even though there was a fair amount of unrest it wasn't enough to cause us to change the program. It was a big program, it was not affected by corruption. The government was probably very corrupt but it wasn't corrupt in our program. And we had just a really good, solid, in-depth staff, excellent Bangladeshis who had been in the mission for years. Many of them have since come to this country under special immigrant visas. They were very loyal to the AID mission through the Gulf War. USIS (United States Information Service) used to show DVDs -- I don't think they were called that back then but the equivalent of DVDs -- on the TV in the canteen at lunchtime. A lot of the coverage was strictly pro-American.. I asked some of the local employees whether it offended them in any way? They replied, "absolutely not; this is the only way we know what's going on." It was so much better than anything they saw on local TV. They wanted to be able to follow the war. Bangladesh was one of our allies in the war.

We were respectful of the Bangladeshis. There was a prayer room, for instance, in the embassy where they could go to pray, especially during Ramadan. It was a very high-quality group of people and we got along very well. We had parties; as in Liberia we'd have parties in the office. In Liberia we had that a shady little garden area outside where we used to have gatherings. And in Bangladesh we had them on the lovely embassy grounds.

The other thing about Bangladesh is that donor coordination was excellent. It's probably the best I've experienced in my career. Now, of course, every donor in the world was in Bangladesh but we had periodic meetings of the donors and we collaborated well across countries.

I mentioned in reference to the cyclone that we had a very big NGO support program there and we were trying to help local NGOs strengthen themselves and become effective and efficient. We helped BRAC, for instance. Even, in the early days, we helped Grameen Bank by providing local currency. We didn't provide dollar support to Grameen, in part because it got support from the Bangladeshi government. We helped BRAC and Proshika, both outstanding NGOs. They're world famous now. BRAC is so

impressive that the head of it, Fazle Hassan Abed, was knighted by the English government.

Q: Oh, my.

KILGOUR: And I had a very dear friend who was the head of Kumudini Welfare Trust. Her father had been an industrialist who took the profits from his companies and devoted them to charitable works. He had a big charity hospital in a town outside of Dhaka and on the same property he had a girls' boarding school for girls whose parents worked in the Middle East. He had a lot of handicraft activity for village women to help them get an income stream. Unfortunately, he and his only son were killed by the Pakistanis during the war for liberation. So, my friend, Joya Pati, was teaching in London at the time with her husband, who was a doctor, were called back to Bangladesh because the head of the family and the heir of the family had both been killed and their bodies were never found. So, Joya came back to run the whole operation. I became really close friends with her. She died just last year and was just a wonderful lady. She and her son and the son's wife visited me in Washington not too long after I came back from Bangladesh.

So, Bangladesh was a good posting, my last overseas assignment with USAID, so it was nice to have a good one.

Q: Let me ask you a couple of other questions. At one point there was a big effort to sort of prevent further disasters by especially flooding of the Brahmaputra and I guess the Ganges, and there was a big international effort with the World Bank involved to try to do things to keep those floods from-

KILGOUR: To train the Brahmaputra.

Q: Yes. And I wondered was that still going on when you were there?

KILGOUR: Yes. And we were opposed to it, basically.

Q: Right.

KILGOUR: The Americans were opposed to it because of our own experience with the Mississippi River. If you try to train a river you push the problems downstream or upstream. You don't succeed because it's not possible. And the World Bank was behind this but the Brits and the Japanese were also behind it, pushing it for commercial reasons; they wanted the business. I remember this was a big topic at donor meetings. One donor meeting in particular I remember vividly when the Japanese ambassador got so angry he lashed out at an American, thinking he was whispering about the proposed project. I happened to be standing next to him. We were laughing about something entirely different and the ambassador came up to us and accused this guy of trying to kill the project. The ambassador was screaming at the guy. There was big money to be had in consulting over big projects like that. And we just looked at him in shock; and the guy said no, we weren't even talking about that.

In any event, I got up and stated at one of those meetings that we had had so much experience in trying to train the Mississippi and realized we were unsuccessful and our efforts caused further problems; and if they built bridges across the Brahmaputra in 15 years they'd come back and they would find the approaches were washed away and the river had gone elsewhere and they had a bridge that was worthless. In the end I think they did scale back that project a bit, but it went forward in some fashion.

Q: That's good to hear. I was the director for South Asia in '88 and '89 when this big flooding occurred and was in charge of sort of putting together a response to it and we hired a couple of specialists, including a water resource engineer from Harvard and a guy from basically the group that had worked on the Mississippi and they-

KILGOUR: The Corps of Engineers?

Q: The Corps of Engineers and they prepared a document and the basic thrust was living with the floods.

KILGOUR: Yes.

Q: And that was the idea, that you could save people's lives and their homes by finding ways to live with the floods without penning in the river and allowing the silt to wash across the fields that would be productive in the future if you allowed the silt and the river to flow. So, I'm glad to hear we kept trying on that.

KILGOUR: Yes, we definitely did. Well, of course, I was there '90 to '93 so it wasn't too much after. And I don't know if we went back to Bangladesh now and looked at what they had done with that, to what extent they were successful. But we gave it the good fight; we tried to at least let them benefit from our experience.

Q: But it was, you're right, it was big money for construction and the Bangladeshis, I think, were also happy with that.

KILGOUR: Yes. And I think the Dutch were in our corner because they've done a lot but they haven't mess things up. They've built all those polders and things.

Q: Right, right. A couple of other quick questions. Now we are in 2018 and for the last two, maybe three years the mission in Bangladesh has been severely cut back. The school is mostly- almost closed. Families have been evacuated because of problems with threats to the American community and other European communities by, I guess by Islamic radicals. Was there any hint of that coming when you were there?

KILGOUR: Well, there were certainly a lot of death threats. For instance, during the war every time I drove around the corner to my house somebody had hung a sheet out a second-floor window that said 'Kill the American.' Since I was the only American living in that neighborhood, I took it personally.

You sort of sensed a potential for violence in the society, not so much from the Islamic radicals as they weren't prominent then. It was more from fringe opposition groups taking out *hartals*, or strikes. Or average men, not necessarily fundamentalists, were stirred up by mullahs during Friday prayers.

Q: Oh, gosh.

KILGOUR: But you know, you always rode around with your car doors locked and were wary around beggars. Giving money to one or two people outside one's car could quickly generate a mob. So, you were very careful how you interacted with people. I think, as in the case with Pakistan, the fundamentalists were there but they weren't as vocal as they have become. So, yes, I've heard in Bangladesh now that they're having the same problem, the Muslim fundamentalists, which is a shame. Interestingly, the government stays the same. The same two women who were vying for power when I was there are still vying for power.

Q: Right. And did you meet them? Did you have any interaction with them?

KILGOUR: I never met Sheikh Hasina; she was out of power. I met Begum Zia, yes, she was the prime minister when I was there. I went to the wedding of the finance minister's daughter. Begum Zia was there. And I was probably a couple of other places where she was in attendance, one I remember was at the closing ceremony following Operation Sea Angel. I don't think I ever talked with her. It wasn't the same kind of relationship as in the Philippines or even in Liberia.

Q: Right.

KILGOUR: But I suspect even the ambassador didn't have as close contact with her as might have happened in other countries. It's sad, but fundamentalism is taking hold in so many countries, it doesn't surprise me that it happened in Bangladesh. I always felt that the Islam in Bangladesh was a more gentle version compared to Pakistan. Back then it was West Pakistan and East Pakistan. There were cultural differences, with the East Bengal people differing culturally from the West Pakistan people. So, their religion was also different. For instance, they allowed folk dancing, whereas in Pakistan, if anyone danced it was the men.

But Bangladesh, I think, has done pretty well compared to Kissinger's time of calling it a basket case.

Q: Oh, certainly.

KILGOUR: And I think AID's programs had some contribution to that.

Q: I think so. And in fact, you had mentioned earlier the family planning program. I know we were supporting the International Center for Diarrheal Diseases Research Bangladesh (ICDDRDB). The mission also did groundbreaking work on child survival.

KILGOUR: We were very big generally in maternal child health, family planning being one big part of it. Yes, you're right.

Q: Was there an environmental program there when you were there?

KILGOUR: I'm trying to remember. I don't think so. It might have been on the margins and it might have been part of the agriculture program and even part of the fertilizer program. If anything, it was small.

Q: Alright.

KILGOUR: It wouldn't have been as big as the ones that I mentioned, the NGO effort and the family planning, and the PL-480 was big as well.

Q: Right, right. Were there education programs?

KILGOUR: My memory's not totally failing me. We didn't have an education program there.

Q: Okay. Right. And what did we do with the food aid?

KILGOUR: It was mostly PL-480 Title I; imported rice to sell commercially.

But let me go back for a minute to something that just popped into my head. A few months before I was leaving Bangladesh, we got the first-ever ability to send attachments via email. This shows you how fast things have changed. We had a mainframe in our part of the Embassy building and we had a Bangladeshi local employee who ran it. Back then we used to send airgrams and project papers through the pouch and they took forever to get to Washington. For the first time this young man sent a project paper, with thick attachments to it, over email. And somebody from the Bangladesh desk went to some central place in Washington and picked it up. That was a big breakthrough in communications.

Q: Right.

KILGOUR: And it happened in 1993. And if we look at technology now it's quite amazing.

Q: Yes. Well. Well, it sounds like you had a fabulous tour there and as you thought about departure what were your next thoughts? Were you coming back to- looking for a new post or ready for-

KILGOUR: Back then they had announced that there wouldn't be any more LCEs, Limited Career Extensions. That was when they were decimating the Senior Foreign Service and AID.

Q: I was one of those, yes.

KILGOUR: You were one of them?

Q: Yes.

KILGOUR: You were a Counselor level officer then?

Q: Yes.

KILGOUR: Yes. So, they got rid of senior people; some weren't even 50. I don't know how old you were then...

Q: I was just turning 50.

KILGOUR: Yes and you had young kids. The Clinton Administration just said, no more LCEs on the grounds that the agency was top heavy and they want to reduce the number of senior people. I had two years left so my choice was basically to stay in Bangladesh for five years or go to the National War College to teach -- because I had the PhD by then -- just to see if I liked university teaching. The thought of five years in Bangladesh wasn't too appealing. It was a great assignment but three years was plenty because it was a difficult place to live and to work. I'll give you just one example in terms of the living. I lived in a great big house, which I think the AID mission got rid of after I left. I noticed when I took a shower in the bathroom connected to the master bedroom I smelled of sewage. Literally, I'd sniff my arm and I could smell sewage. So, I complained: You can't have a mission director going around smelling like sewage. So, Phil Buechler ended up on the roof himself and he got people in the water tower up there, and they tried to figure out what it was. They said there's no solution. So, I said well you know, you're going to have to do something. Here I've got a houseful of male servants so I don't want to be going out and using another bathroom. I had a very large house, at least five bedrooms. There was a small room next to my rather large bedroom and there was a bathroom there. It was probably a nursery. But there was no door into my bedroom from that room, so I asked Phil to put an opening in the wall so I could at least go to that bathroom. They did and I used that bathroom. The only problem was that the tile in that bathroom was dark brown against sort of a dirty white and the dark brown squiggles on the tile looked like cockroaches. So, every time I'd be taking a shower I'd have this sensation that I was surrounded by cockroaches.

Q: Oh, Mary.

KILGOUR: That gets old after a while.

Q: Right.

KILGOUR: Anyway, I had a good tour, I think we did a great job thanks to the AID mission. And by the way, I didn't mention my first mission deputy was Malcolm Parvis and then he transferred; he wanted to be the director and when they chose me over him he was unhappy and left when his tour was up.

Q: Frank Young?

KILGOUR: Yes. Frank had been the program officer, replacing Karl Schwartz, and then replaced Malcolm as deputy director. Frank, of course, was superb and went on to become a mission director himself not too long after that. He and I worked well together and we're still in touch. He just recently moved to Florida, in fact. The mission generally was just really first-rate; good people who went on later, like Herbie Smith and our lawyer, Alex Newton.

So my choice was to stay for five years or to leave and go to the National War College. Nobody would want somebody just for two years except the War College. I mean, there was no time for me to become a mission director somewhere else. So, I pushed for the War College and I got it and that took me on a whole different kind of adventure. It allowed me to pull my career together. I had learned by being a senior officer with AID that foreign aid was an instrument of foreign policy and then I learned at the War College what I instinctively knew but I learned it in detail, that foreign aid and foreign policy were instruments of national security policy, alongside military programs. I, like all the teachers there, lead seminars based on a syllabus provided by the war college. Every morning started with a lecture by a prominent academician or government official. And then we followed that with the seminar discussion. And in the afternoon I taught a couple of advanced courses, one on African political economy and the other a team-taught basic economics course where we could come up with the syllabus ourselves because it was a new program.

The War College was a very interesting experience. The current secretary of defense was a student there in my first year, Jim Mattis. The students were a delight. They were all in their late 30s to mid-40s and had punched all the tickets so far in their careers to become flag officers. Most of them didn't reach that rank but they were open to that option at that point and one of the tickets they had to punch was to go to one of the War Colleges. Were you ever a student there?

Q: Yes.

KILGOUR: Then you know better than I, being a student, that it was started by Eisenhower to try to teach the military to work together jointly and also to get the civilian foreign affairs agencies to learn how to work jointly. It was a wonderful experience and of course the students were such self-starters that they really ruined me for teaching in regular civilian universities. They were outstanding and it was a pleasure to teach there. I learned a lot. And by being on the faculty for a year and sitting through all the classes,

even military operations, I got the same degree that the students get. So, I was in the class of 1994. I stayed at the War College until I retired in 1995.

Q: Alright, alright.

KILGOUR: I went on a couple of regional trips during my two years there. The first was to the Baltics - Lithuania, Estonia, Finland and Sweden. The second one was to Kenya and South Africa and for that trip I was the only faculty member. It was mostly men; there was one other woman on it. We had a fantastic experience in Kenya, mainly set up by the AID mission to show them what AID does in-country. We went to all these villages and the students were blown away - their reaction - with the kind of thing that AID was doing. There was only one student in this group who had been to Vietnam; all the rest of them were too young for Vietnam. He said it reminded him of the rural areas in Vietnam. Then we went to South Africa, which was an entirely different experience. We mostly spent our time in Cape Town with the military.

Q: How did you like teaching after having spent your career not teaching in the Foreign Service or not teaching directly? How did you find your role as professor?

KILGOUR: I found that I really didn't like teaching at regular universities. First, I taught at Georgetown and then at UF. I just found the students' motivations were totally different from the War College. The War College student was very bright, highly motivated, self-starting who were enthusiastic about where they were and took advantage of it to the maximum.

Q: University of Florida as well as Georgetown.

KILGOUR: Yes. The kids were mostly young, in their 20s, and their motivation was totally different. They wanted an A and they wanted to do the least amount of work for it. Now, that's a generalization that probably doesn't apply to every student that I had but I had students, when I'd given them a B+ tell me I was the only one in their entire life who had ever given them anything except an A, that I was ruining their chances to get into law school. I can understand that motivation before you've started your career and you're preparing for it but it wasn't very pleasant. I've since talked with quite a few other people who are professors and they said the same thing, that students can be fairly mercenary in their approach to education, people asking you to change their grades. I never in my life, as a student, would have even imagined doing that. And now it's done fairly frequently.

I just taught part-time. I realized that I wasn't competitive for a full-time teaching job because I had a PhD but I didn't have any significant research under my belt. I had only one academic article published. They weren't looking to hire 55-year-olds; they were looking to hire a 27-year-old who had just finished a PhD. So, adjunct was the best I could do, which is really cat food money; you know, some people put together four and five adjunct jobs because they can't get a tenure track position and how they do it I don't know. Fortunately, I had a pension and at that stage of my life I was probably much better off just doing part-time work and having time for other things. But I concluded that I didn't really enjoy it as much as I thought I would. It was a lot of work. The students

now evaluate the professors and I got acceptably good reviews so that wasn't the problem; it was more that it wasn't what I expected because I was coming out of the War College and that was the standard I had.

Q: Right.

KILGOUR: In 1997 I got an offer to go back to Liberia leading the Friend of Liberia electoral observation project and that took up about five months altogether of heavy duty, full-time work, the first month preparing and then three months in-country and then a month preparing the report and debriefing in Washington.

Q: What year was this?

KILGOUR: It was 1997. Charles Taylor ran against Ellen Johnson Sirleaf.

Q: Alright.

KILGOUR: And so, that was much more up my alley in terms of interest and it was a great experience. And then, I started doing some consulting on the NEP program.

Q: What does NEP stand for?

KILGOUR: New Entry Professionals.

Q: Right.

KILGOUR: When they were hiring all these middle-aged, experienced people.

Q: Right.

KILGOUR: So, I did the initial training. I don't think it lasted very long. They wanted a very detailed cookbook kind of approach, which is what I gave them. I don't know how it is now. You're involved in that program so you know- I don't know if any of the original sort of cookbook approach, where the student could be self-guided and have certain things that they would be expected to accomplish over a certain time period, if that's the approach that still governs that program.

Q: Well, I'm not sure either, at this point.

KILGOUR: They have mentors; you're one of the mentors, aren't you?

Q: I'm one of the coaches, right.

KILGOUR: Coaches, yes.

Q: But they have individual development plans that people develop.

KILGOUR: Right, that was part of it.

Q: Well, that's still being done. And that's sort of where you try to determine what you still need to learn as a new hire and what you already know a reasonable amount about and focus on the gaps in your knowledge rather than the strengths.

KILGOUR: Yes. It sounds like at least part of it survived.

Q: Yes, definitely.

KILGOUR: So, being retired I went on to live happily ever after learning new skills and meeting new people.

Q: In Gainesville, Florida.

KILGOUR: Yes. Back for a moment to when I did retired. I was still at the War College and I was going through all the paperwork that you have to do to retire and one of the political appointees in the Clinton Administration, in AID, approached me in the hallway. He asked whether I'd like to go to Egypt as mission director? I told him I was ticking out, so I'm retiring a month earlier to avoid being ticked out. He asked why I was doing that? And I answered, "because there are no LCEs and so I'm having to tick out." He said, "well, don't worry about that; we'll just get you an LCE." And I thought of- I didn't know you were one of the sacrificial lamb - but I thought of all these younger officers; I was 54, I mean, I wasn't that old myself.

Q: No, you were not, no.

KILGOUR: You know, all these younger officers with families and with plenty of room to still grow to become the senior officers of the agency and they were being summarily dismissed and I got very offended by this guy and I just said, "No, my papers are already in, I'm on the path to retirement and I don't want to change." But it left a sour taste in my mouth.

Q: Well, in a way it was an honor to be asked to run what was probably the largest mission in the AID world at that time.

KILGOUR: Well, yes, except that they were supposedly phasing it down. They probably wanted somebody with a reputation as a good manager because it wasn't going to continue to be a big program. I thought that wouldn't be much fun, just systematically phasing something down. But that was a minor consideration. It was an honor of sorts - the fact that the guy happened to run into me in the hallway.

Q: He wasn't asking everybody in the hallway, was he?

KILGOUR: Probably not. I think that my name had come up and somebody said well, track her down, and he happened to track me down when I happened to be over at Main State. But I'm glad I turned him down; I had a great career and it was very interesting, adventurous, exotic, challenging. I thoroughly enjoyed my time with AID, even the times when- back when I was seven years at the new FS-2 and I was frustrated, considered actually going over to State, even went through some interviews and it was going to happen but I realized I would be starting out as a brand new FS-2 in a new system and part of my frustration was that I thought I was ready to be a new FS-1 and why would I go to State? And I really realized that the kind of work that AID did was much more interesting to me than what State does so I didn't follow through on that. So, even in times of little minor disappointments in the course of my career in the grand scheme of things looking back they were minor. I hope the current generation is having similar good experiences with their careers. I know that terrorism has gotten worse. But I will say that in my time in AID and since I've had seven colleagues killed by terrorists.

Q: Really?

KILGOUR: Yes. Five of them were before 9/11; two of them were since 9/11. Of the first five, one was an AFL-CIO guy I knew in Bogota. He was killed in El Salvador, gunned down with some labor leaders he was having lunch with. And then, the second was Bill Stanford, who was assassinated on the steps of a hijacked airliner in the Middle East. And then the next three were killed in the Beirut embassy bombing.

Q: Oh, yes.

KILGOUR: And then, the sixth one was Larry Flynn, who was in Jordan but I knew him in the Philippines when he was with the Peace Corps staff. And the last one, of course, was Warren Weinstein, who was actually killed by Americans but he was being held hostage by terrorists.

Q: Yes, in Pakistan.

KILGOUR: Yes. So, nowadays, I don't know if people can say it's more scary than back then but I don't think I'm unusual in knowing people who have been killed by terrorists, among Foreign Service people. But back in my day and your day we had people in Vietnam and Cambodia and Laos and now, of course, they're in Afghanistan and Iraq and the threat of terrorism is more widespread and I guess somewhat more state-sponsored compared to my career time.

Q: Well, when you were- you're still very close to the University of Florida; if you had students or graduate students come up to you and say I'm considering an international career what would you say to them?

KILGOUR: Oh, absolutely, go for it. And I frequently do that. Somebody will say something, they're interested; a lot of them look at the NGO world now and I've said well, take a look at usaid.gov and see if you qualify. I do that frequently because I do run

into young people quite a bit. I also talk about the Peace Corps, going into the Peace Corps as a first step after graduating. And I tell my story to anyone interested enough to listen. I talk to young people in the pottery studio; that's probably the main place where I do it. And I talk to some of the lifeguards where I live in Oak Hammock. And the other thing is I do occasionally still speak to student groups. Just six months ago I gave a talk on foreign aid to a group of distance education Masters in Public Health because a friend of mine asked me to do it. I met her through volunteer work here 20 years ago and she had been working in Niger on public health but she had just married a man who's a member of a prominent family in the real estate business. His father had died and he had been required at a young age to take over the whole company. So, he wasn't going anywhere and he wanted her to marry him; she accepted but she had no children at the time and asked my advice about how she could keep her international interests alive while staying in Gainesville? I told her about the many spouses and female employees who were trying to fit together careers, tandem careers with their husbands and catch as catch can in the early years, frequently as a contractor rather than a tandem couple. I gave her all the wisdom I had learned from that, mainly from the women themselves. I suggested she go back to school and get an MD or a PhD in something with international work and pursue that to the extent that her married life allowed. And I thought an MD would probably make more sense but it turned out right after this time they University of Florida started a PhD program in public health; she's probably one of the first graduates of it.

Q: Oh.

KILGOUR: Then they promptly hired her and she's working for them now and she still goes to Burkina Faso and other places in Africa. She's got three kids now.

Q: Oh my.

KILGOUR: And a happy marriage. I still see her from time to time. She had a Planned Parenthood function at her house recently and I went and chatted with her. Probably six months ago she asked me to talk to this Masters program, just into the ether; it was all via computer. And I discovered how naïve these students are. They are mostly people who are working as nurses and doctors all around the country and they were trying to get this distance masters and they knew nothing about foreign aid. It was amazing to me that even those who had some experience - I remember there was one woman who had been serving in Haiti and she blamed AID because we hadn't provided housing for all the people displaced by the earthquake. She must have thought it was an easy thing to do and why didn't we do it. I tried to explain that really was a government of Haiti's responsibility and we could help to the extent we could but there was no way we had the resources to do that or the authority. It was an interesting experience. I periodically will do that kind of thing still. So, I stay in touch and I'm still stay a strong advocate for foreign aid and AID, and Peace Corps as a first step.

Q: Right, right. Wow. Anything along your career route that you wish you'd done differently?

KILGOUR: I think maybe I would have liked to have had better relationships with ambassadors than I did. I think I, maybe out of inexperience I probably took a more defensive route than I had to. I think it's pretty common for AID directors to do that. But none of them disowned me. I'm still in touch with at least one of them, so there were no hard feelings left. But I think I could have been a better country team member while still protecting AID's budget. Now, remember, for instance, there's one big program I didn't mention in Bangladesh called Bridges and Culverts. And we used mostly local currency money but we did have some dollars involved and we had a contractor running it. It was almost ending and all the money was programmed. Of course, to build bridges and culverts you had to have engineering studies and you had to do it right; you couldn't just build bridges and culverts without pre-planning.

Q: Right.

KILGOUR: So, we had pretty much done all the planning for the rest of the life of the project and the ambassador apparently had been out on a field trip or something and some mayor had asked him to build a bridge across some creek and he came to me and asked me to make it happen. I explained that we couldn't do that, the money was already programmed. And I guess a mistake I made was asking a staffer to write up a memo saying why we couldn't do it. That staffer was very thorough and took three or four pages to explain exactly why, what's involved in building a bridge or a culvert and how all this money had been programmed. The ambassador did not take kindly to that; he said "you could have just told me no." If I had told him no he would have probably been more annoyed but I guess he felt it was like hitting a flea with a hammer, that I overkilled him on the information. From his perspective I was being overly defensive about AID money and he thought of it as United States Government money and he should have some say in how it's spent. I don't think he realized all the nuts and bolts that we had to go through to get money and to spend it. But I wish I had been more skilled at finessing that kind of situation.

But other than that, I don't know. I mean, everybody who's a senior manager comes at the job with their own personality and experience and I had mine. I don't regret anything I did.

Q: Let me ask you one more question, Mary, sort of a general summing up question. You are one of a growing number but still a limited number of women who have been mission directors and how, I mean, are there any sort of conclusions you draw from that experience that made things even more difficult for you or in some ways may have made it more easy for you to carry out the programs you were carrying out; and also, you talked about having the reputation of a good manager and I know you do and does that relate at all to your management style?

KILGOUR: Well, I thought you were going to ask me what lessons do I have for young women coming up.

Q: Well then, answer that question.

KILGOUR: Say it again?

Q: Yes, go ahead.

KILGOUR: Well, let me answer that first.

Q: Yes.

KILGOUR: I think that women's lib has changed so much since my career that I'm not sure that I do have any lessons for that younger generation. I remember we had a group in AID Washington, a mentoring group of senior women to younger women. I remember being struck with almost all of the younger women assuming or expecting that they should all become mission directors, seeming to think that now that a few of us had made us it was going to be wide open to them and they expected it. I would say my generation didn't expect it. It was hard fought. I did relate to you the effort that I had to put in to becoming an assistant director in Costa Rica; it didn't come naturally. At that time they didn't think who is the best candidate or who are we grooming for these. They were probably grooming men, maybe white men; they weren't grooming women. You had to push yourself forward. I don't know if you've done an oral history with Lois Richards but I suspect she'd say the same thing. They weren't seeking out women to groom. It just so happened that when the women's lib effort came along there were some of us, many of us, who had slogged along up to that point and we were available when they started looking for women. I was mid-career at that point. I didn't have any expectations of becoming a mission director for the first half of my career. And so the mindset of the younger women is very different from the mindset of people my age and Lois's age. That's one aspect of it.

The other aspect, I think, of the question you asked me was, in terms of my personal journey, was it harder to be a woman or was it helpful to be a woman. I would say it did not help to be a woman under any circumstances. I think I mentioned in the previous discussions that with both mission director job I've followed another woman. I followed Lois Richards into Liberia; I followed Priscilla Boughton into Bangladesh. I have a feeling that the men who were making these decisions thought a woman had succeeded in those two countries so it's safe to send another woman into those places. In their cases they were the pioneers. I don't know how they concluded that Liberia would be a good place to send a woman. I know that Lois and I have very different management styles; I think my management style is very much influenced by the fact that I am a woman and I tend to be more gentle, more indirect. I tended to delegate more, I tend to be sensitive to men's concerns working for a woman. And back then they were, maybe less so now because there are more women around. When I retired only six percent of AID Senior Foreign Service were women and the bulk of them were probably consular level and not career ministers or minister counselors. And so, it was a very small group. And in my case, because of my personality I took the sort of indirect route of like, instead of saying I want you to do this or I'd like you to do this, I'd say what do you think about doing it this

way? You know, I would sort of try to get participation in a voluntary way rather than assert my authority. Now, I'm sure I did assert my authority when push came to shove but I think I tended to approach the job with trying to get buy-in and I think that was because I was a woman.

Then, of course, you always have to worry about some man in the host government coming on to you and how do you handle that. And it's happened to me a couple of times at least, especially as a junior officer. I would avoid the fumbling hands of some well positioned senior Pakistani or whatever. I don't think men have that problem. And I remember Bangladesh, I may have mentioned this of going to the home of a very, very wealthy Bangladeshi who expected the apocalypse to happen any time and had his own generator, his own water well and stocked food so he could live self-sufficiently in his compound if anything happened. He had black marble floors on his house, a mansion right next to the American Club. He had a big reception for me, for what reason I don't recall. I was in the receiving line and one of the ministers or deputy ministers came in, one I didn't deal with professionally. So he came through the line and walked by me without stopping, without putting his hand out, without even- a lot of Muslim men don't like to shake hands with women so you have to be ready to put your hand to your chest, a substitute for a handshake. But he just walked right by me as if I were invisible. The host grabbed his arm and said "this is Dr. Kilgour, the AID director," and the man's attitude changed. He was clearly surprised. I don't remember whether he shook my hand or not but he was at least courteous. I guess that kind of thing probably didn't happen all that much because it did make an impression on me. But I could cite others examples. There were many situations where being a woman was a disadvantage.

And I had had my PhD since Costa Rica but I never really made an issue of being called Dr. Kilgour but in Bangladesh I did. I let people call me Dr. Kilgour because I felt that I needed every bit of authority I could get to run that mission.

Q: Right.

KILGOUR: Actually, in Liberia there was a small group of Harvard graduates, I think there were five people in the whole country who had gone to Harvard. I made it known that I was one of them. We had the Harvard Club of Liberia, in name only. And you know, of all people Emmett Harmon was one of them.

Q: Tell people who Emmett Harmon was.

KILGOUR: Emmett Harmon was an assistant to President Doe and he was in charge of the election that President Doe won, with some question of how well they counted the ballots.

Q: Right.

KILGOUR: But he was a grand old man of Liberia. I don't know whether he in that position when you were in Liberia?

Q: No, I don't know the name.

KILGOUR: You don't? That's interesting. He was elderly back then when he became an assistant to Doe. I think he might have had a law degree from Harvard or at least a certificate from Harvard. And Rudolph- I'm blanking on his last name - had a law degree. And Winston Tubman had gotten a Master's in Law at Harvard. And Ellen Johnson Sirleaf had been in the Kennedy School the year before I was there. And then there was me, to make five.

Q: Oh, my. Oh, my. I'll just mention that the status, probably a year or two old, but I used to get the promotion lists for all the grades, including Senior Foreign Service, and in the last three years that I was looking at them, which would have been probably 2014, '15 and '16, and I remember women promoted in each of the grades was considerably higher than the number of men.

KILGOUR: Wow.

Q: Including in the Senior Foreign Service.

KILGOUR: Impressive. Do you have any sense of what the percentage is in the Senior Foreign Service now?

Q: I don't. But there are many- there are a large number actually, of mission directors now. I'm not totally up to date but if I- when I talk to people about going off to posts and who's going to be your mission director, often it's- probably at least half the time it's a woman.

KILGOUR: That's great and in fact mirrors what's happened in the rest of society. I gather there's now more women graduating from university than men.

Q: Right.

KILGOUR: And I think every law class and I think even medical school class that comes up is, if not a majority women, it's a very high percentage. That's different from what it was like in the- back in the '60s and '70s.

Q: It sure is. And when we talk to people about two career couples and working overseas and often, more often than not, now the spouse is a male.

KILGOUR: Yes. Well, of course, and we had Steve Haggblade-

Q: Yes.

KILGOUR: But they was few and far between back in the day.

Q: Right, right.

KILGOUR: Well, that's progress so I'm glad to hear that AID has caught up with it.

Q: Yes, I'm sure they have.

Well, Mary, is there any last thing you would like to mention that we haven't covered?

KILGOUR: I can't think of anything. I think we've been exhaustive.

Q: Alright. Well, thank you for this excellent, really wonderful interview.

End of interview