

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

DAN LAZORCHICK

Interviewer: Lester Trachtman
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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Background	
Born in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania	1924
BA, University of Colorado-Boulder	1946-1950
MA/PhD, Stanford University	1950-1955
Department of Labor, International Bureau	1955-1982
Appointments and Assignments Board	
International Trade Union Division	

INTERVIEW

[Note: This interview was not edited by Mr. Lazorchick.]

Q: It is Friday, October 1st. This is an interview of Dan Lazorchick, being conducted by Les Trachtman in the offices of Plan. We are going to talk about Dan's background and how it relates to the Labor Attaché program, International Labor Affairs, his various experiences and to focus on the light that he can bring as to how this program has evolved over the years. Dan, why don't we start out with something from your personal background. Tell us a bit about your education, how you got involved in labor affairs...give us a good bio-sketch.

LAZORCHICK: Sure. I suppose a good place to start is to say that I spent my entire U.S. government career ... 27 years ... in the Department of Labor's International Bureau. Throughout that period, I was closely involved with the Labor Attaché Program in Washington and with labor attachés during extensive travel on business overseas. Before it was all over, I had visited some 70 countries, all over the world. In each instance, in an overseas assignment, I ended up in the hands of labor attachés who had an awful lot to tell about the situations that they found themselves in within their embassies and so on, as a matter of personal interest on their part. I joined the Labor Department in 1955 as an intern at age 31, after three years in military service and nine consecutive years of

university training. My university training enabled me to earn, first, a BA in Political Science and Economics at the University of Colorado in Boulder from 1946 - 50. Then I went straight on to Stanford where I got my MA and Ph.D. degrees during the period 1950 - 1955. I haven't said the most important thing that I wanted to mention here. I was born near Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, the son of a steel worker. So my orientation toward labor had been lifelong. As far as the Labor Department is concerned, I was recruited by Jim Taylor to work with him in the Foreign Service Division, which he headed at that time. That job exposed me to a wide range of activities affecting labor attachés and the Labor Attachés Program. It was a matter of backstopping labor attachés who served abroad or helping arrange for their training. Also, it involved service on the Appointments and Assignments Board, where the State Department made assignments abroad every week. The Labor department participated as did Commerce and Agriculture in that activity. We headed a weekly distribution of Labor periodicals to Labor Posts Worldwide.

Q: Let me interrupt and ask you what period of time we are talking about. This is in the '50s, you mentioned a number of years that you were doing this work, 27 years. Where are we now?

LAZORCHICK: We are at the onset of that. We are in the mid- and late-1950s. So, I would say for the first two and a half years that I was with the Foreign Service Division with Jim Taylor and working with all these kind of things that brought us daily in contact with State Department Staff Members, with Foreign Service officers for labor attaché assignments, who would come through for short periods of training and things of that character.

Q: So, you would get the impression that during this period the Labor Department had a very active role?

LAZORCHICK: That is correct. Even in the area of appointments and assignments. See, the Labor Department had statutory responsibilities, along with Commerce and Agriculture in the implementation of the Foreign Service Act of 1946. So State, whether it wanted to or not, could not function on many of these things without the direct participation of Agriculture, Commerce and Labor. So when they were assigning people overseas, Agriculture and Labor were there with Commerce to say, "No, you can't send him there," or something, whenever it evolved their own jurisdictions.

Q: So this was the Foreign Service Act of '46?

LAZORCHICK: Right.

Q: Was that Act subsequently amended?

LAZORCHICK: It may have been amended to allow Agriculture to pull out of the responsibilities there and get new responsibilities with regard to agricultural attachés.

Q: But how did it affect the Department of Labor? In theory are we still in the same position that we were in, in '46?

LAZORCHICK: I think, basically, we are in the same position, although as I recall it when I left in '81, we weren't involved in the appointments and assignments process., That might have been discontinued. We were involved in the promotion of Foreign Service officers through the selection boards.

Q: So, I just wonder whether the diminution of the Department of Labor's role, of ILAB's role, was as a result of statues, which apparently was not from what I gather from my own knowledge. Or if it was just that the pressures and the protocol of doing things seem to be reducing Labor's influence.

LAZORCHICK: I think that the latter is correct. And maybe an important ingredient along the line, was the creation of the AFL-CIO Institutes. That institute, in my judgment, dramatically changed the embassy's role in labor affairs in various countries where the institutes were operative. I think we'll come a little bit later to that, but I think you are absolutely correct. There was a diminution of Labor's significance in the role of the Foreign Service and mostly, I think, primarily through... I don't want to say neglect on the part of the Department, as much as changing circumstances that caused State not to pay as much attention to them as before, and on and on.

Q: So we really jumped right into this thing. We couldn't resist. But we talked a little bit about you and your background and the years you spent with the Department. You started out in the Foreign Affairs...Foreign Service Division with the State Department people and the questions of promotions, assignments, etc. And then I know you got transferred to another division. Do you want to say a word about that and how your own career evolved within ILAB?

LAZORCHICK: The transfer to another division was to the Arnold Steinbach's International Trade Union Division, where directories of national unions throughout the world were published on a regular basis to provide information about those unions and their political orientation to whatever organizations had an interest in that. The American Labor movement had a very large interest in that kind of thing and kind of benefited from that work. We can talk about Arnold later if you want, or we can do it now? Because he was an extraordinary individual who I think had a considerable impact on the labor attaché program, in general, but specifically on individual labor attachés.

Q: Well, why don't we jump into it and talk about this extraordinary individual, Arnold Steinbach.

LAZORCHICK: Alright. Arnold was undoubtedly, I would say, the most charismatic individual of the Labor Department's International Bureau during his tenure there, which was probably from 1948 to about 1972 or '73. Arnold was born and educated in Austria. He was a bundle of energy, enthusiasm, knowledge, dedication, and I would say no one exposed to Arnold for the first time, would ever forget the experience. He was that kind

of guy. Labor attachés, by the dozens, really regarded Arnold highly, because they would say there was a guy so dedicated, so energetic about his work and so on, that he was an anomaly, you know, in the situation and therefore got noticed right away. I went to his division; he badly needed somebody to help. The division was probably at fourteen or fifteen people. We struck it off well right from the start and the end result was that he treated me so well; I tried never to disappoint him. There wasn't anything that I was not prepared to do for Arnold because he was that way with me. We were extremely close, and as I say, in working to produce this valuable product he created, namely the Trade Union Directories, and I think rightfully he was widely acclaimed for what he'd accomplished. On the whole, I think that Arnold's larger contribution was the healthy influence he exerted on others.

Q: Specifically, how about the influence he exerted on the Labor Attaché program?

LAZORCHICK: Very much so, because there wasn't anything ... at that time, you have to remember, the Office of Labor and International Affairs probably had about 65 people. And those who were division chiefs, like Arnold and Jim and so on, had a small group of colleagues who were in on all of the important decisions that the International Office -- at that time under Arnold Zimple -- activities of that International Office. So there weren't any labor attachés that came to the office who didn't see Arnold. And somewhere along the line, Arnold was very much involved in helping supply the labor attachés overseas with the materials they requested in the backstopping process.

Q: Let's stop for a moment. Now we're referring to the "office." People should realize that at one point, the "office" became a bureau. Dan, do you want to elaborate further on when we went from an office to a bureau ... how that transition took place and its significance?

LAZORCHICK: Sure. Originally the Office of International Labor Affairs was a part of the Secretary's Office. The budget and everything of the Office was tied in directly with the budget that the Secretary would receive. Subsequently, probably in the early or mid-sixties, the Office had grown to the point where bureau status was sought and approved, presumably through Congress, and we went on. From that point forward it was known as the Bureau of International Labor Affairs, ILAB.

Q: Fine. Actually, when I came on in September of 1960, it already was being called ILAB, I think. So probably just around that year, in '60 that transition took place, I would guess. That's just to give a little perspective. Let's return to Arnold and his influence on the program itself.

LAZORCHICK: Well, as I said, my sense is that because of his presence and so on, his involvement in everything, in fact, that the International Office did, that Arnold had a substantial impact on the labor attaché program. It had to do with persons who were recruited to staff the program, it had to do with the backstopping of labor attachés, it had to do with the calling upon the embassies to furnish information to the Department of Labor about trade unions in Cairo or in Egypt, in West Germany, or wherever it

happened to be, so that those who were doing Labor Attaché work at those Embassies had an assignment to perform for the Labor Department. And it was through the regular communication between the post and us that the influence of Arnold and others on the labor attaché program manifested itself. Arnold also was a master, I would say, of accumulating friends at home and abroad who were in a position to do things to help the Labor programs of our Department. And in that regard I think he served the Department exceedingly well. More than 300 of Arnold's colleagues and friends, from academe, from the labor movement, from government all over the city and so on, came to his retirement party, which was held at the Washington Hilton Hotel. It was a wonderful testimony to Arnold's friendships and the work relationships that he has established.

Q: Okay, Dan, at this point, let's switch over to the basic questions of the Labor Attaché Program itself and get your perspective on what were its goals and basic perspectives, and how it operated. Why don't you elaborate. You were so close to it for so long. Give us your take on it.

LAZORCHICK: The Labor Attaché Program obviously was an outgrowth of the end of World War II, when we discovered abroad all kinds of new things concerning the influence of labor in other countries of the industrialized world, in particular. We discovered as well that the United States Government needed some experienced, mature, labor specialists to go abroad and do the jobs of, particularly, technical assistance in many of the countries that we were going to help rebuild under the Marshall Plan and whatnot. The end result being that in a short compass of time the State Department was faced with the prospect, of you might say, absorbing a lot of new specialists, some at a fairly high level, to do this technical assistance, but also ending up doing a lot of important political reporting as well, because of the contacts and so on that they had. So, what it meant then, it seems to me, that there would be an expanding corps of labor specialists to work alongside their embassy colleagues to produce the result that was felt to be necessary ... not only by the State Department, but also by the trade union movement, which had put a great deal into the war effort itself and expected to capitalize on a lot of these contacts in France, Germany and Italy... in places of the world where the work was still not done, and influencing those organizations. I think there was a general feeling along the way that somehow all of this would work out over time. It did work out over time in my judgment -- but it was not without a lot of awkwardness and difficulties of a personnel character as the system tried to absorb people who were not a part of the Foreign Service culture -- and we moved on from there.

Q: That sounds like something we should explore later: where the problems arose and where the successes came from, but we'll hit that as we go on further. Okay. What were the type of people that came into the Labor Attaché program?

LAZORCHICK: Well, my recollection is, and this you should well remember, at the time I joined the Office of International Labor Affairs, the mechanism for recruiting labor attachés, was one at which representatives of the CIO and the AFL-CIO sat at the same table with people in the Labor Department to make those selections. That was on a periodic basis and a number of Foreign Service Officers of U.S. Labor Specialists out of

the Labor Movement came into the Foreign Service in that fashion. Frequently, they came in as one AFL person, and one CIO person and there was a balance throughout, without tilting taking place between the AFL and the CIO during this important time, when the Labor Department was the site for the meetings and sat as chair. I don't recall the presence of any State Department people there in the sessions, but there may have been. But, I think what happened, the selections were made there, the nominations were made there to go over to State and I think the State Department was given in a rather perfunctory manner. That's my recollection.

Q: My recollection is in terms of when the merger took place; we're talking about 1955, so that what you're describing is something that happened before '55.

LAZORCHICK: Correct.

Q: You joined, what about....50?

LAZORCHICK: I joined in '55.

Q: So the year you joined was the last year that they were doing these things.

LAZORCHICK: That's correct.

Q: I can recall people like Mike Ross and a few others being involved in the program.

LAZORCHICK: Exactly. And Tom Lane was the Labor Department person who orchestrated that particular...I think that was his only function, was to preside over that advisory committee work that was done at that time. Terribly interesting.

Q: Basically, the State Department, as you say, went along. What would happen if a candidate came up, whom if for some reason they thought was politically sensitive or might cause problems? Did they have a veto?

LAZORCHICK: Ostensively they had a veto. My sense is that through guys at the very highest levels of State, and the involvement of those guys -- and I'm trying to think of the name of the Under-Secretary who was very close to the AFL-CIO -- I don't think the process was questioned. I think it was grudgingly absorbed at State and then they got on with it and tried to accommodate. I'm sure there were not ... I know that there were instances where it was a very unsmooth kind of integration of these people into the Foreign Service. Some of them came in at a very high level, and of course high-level State Department people did want their slots.

Q: Sure, there were slots, and they resented somebody coming in at a very high level and salary. They took so many years to reach a certain critical point, themselves, and then...

LAZORCHICK: Yes, and this is probably a good time to make this point. In my judgment the Labor Attaché program never functioned well because of some serious birth

defects.

Q: Interesting.

LAZORCHICK: Labor had always been a bone in the throat, in my opinion, of people in the Foreign Service who come from a segment of society where Labor is a dirty name. These are people who have never been comfortable in their families, or anywhere else, with labor stuff ... labor strikes, labor demonstrations, things like that. As a consequence, one shouldn't expect that when they went into the Foreign Service that they would suddenly be able to change their response. It seems to me, and I'm thinking ahead to a time when maybe there will be a need for the resuscitation. You might say, of a labor attaché corps, there needs to be an understanding that one, if the need is important enough to have a corps, that one must accept that on terms that make those who resent it, swallow, but accept it nonetheless.

Q: You raise a number of fascinating points there. In a sense, the economic background of many of State Department people -- to what extent is that still a case? To what extent has the State Department become a little more level in its approach to the economics of the American society as a whole, more representative of our total culture as opposed to more representative of, let's say, the Ivy League schools? There's always been the Foreign Service exam, and of course there are ways of getting around it and giving preference to some who are better born than others, and the degree we don't know. One has certain feelings, intuitive feelings and one has some documentation and conceptions and misconceptions, but you know it's a very important area to consider and look at it over time to see really what has happened, and I think it's going to be better documented. But in terms of the Labor Attaché program, it's a fascinating observation, because as you point out it's a built-in bias on the part of the Department against those who are coming in from Labor.

LAZORCHICK: And as I was saying this connection, if each of us looks at our own lives, you know, I think you come to the conclusion that it is very difficult to shake long-standing preferences or biases. There's another angle to this, and maybe this is a good time to raise that. It seems to me that one aspect of what I am alluding to in terms of anti-labor biases was indicated during a conversation I had with a U.S. Ambassador, in his office in the State Department, when we were talking about the Labor Attaché Program. I knew he had served in a number of African countries where we had labor officers and it was a matter of checking him out. I knew him also as a fairly close neighbor. During the course of this discussion, I almost fell off the chair. He said, "We didn't need a Labor Attaché in Germany." He said, you know, "We could easily cover all the political aspects of that situation on our own." And he said that the labor attaché was an extraneous position there. Like I said, I was nonplused by his assertion and I thought to myself, there really is no point in carrying this conversation on because it simply left out completely the kinds of initiatives and so on that a skilled labor attaché would take into an environment where the trade union movement was a very, very powerful influence.

But let me return to another aspect of this business, of the Labor Attaché Program that I

think is important and that has to do with the road to success in the Foreign Service, being the rise in political significance of one's work at the Embassy level. It seems to me that the vast majority, not all, but the majority of Foreign Service officers, see their careers evolving in the form of larger and larger political responsibilities and essentially promotions along that particular path. Now that's the way it used to be, and almost exclusively so, in the past. That changed when economic affairs became more and more important and more and more economic counselors and so on, rose to ambassadorial rank. What I'm trying to say here is this: the labor attachés in the Foreign Service are not immune from the kind of urging that all Foreign Service officers have for promotion. As a result in their work in the labor field, it seems to me, we always have to keep in mind what they do and how they do it and the possible impact that will have on their careers. I'm saying, it seems to me, if you are concerned about your prospects for promotion, you also have to be concerned about what you do to affect those. I think that the desire for ultimate political appointment and promotion along that line is something that you have to keep in mind when you begin as labor attachés. What are they prepared to do for the Labor Attaché Program? Will they all be satisfied to be Counselor for Embassies for Labor Affairs? Or will they not? And whether they are serving in State, or whether they are serving in -- maybe it's when they are serving more so in State than when they are serving at Embassies -- they mind their P's and Q's. Labor-types at State are not going to go head-to-head to fight for labor stuff when they see what might result in the process.

Q: I can't help thinking that along the route there are several labor attachés who became ambassadors, who rose to the top. And on the other hand, there were many of ability who never had the chance to have their ability recognized because they were labor attachés. It worked both ways, but at various points in time. Perhaps we ought to say something about the different points in time, the atmosphere which helped some grow, and the other atmosphere which hindered the progress of others. It's a difficult question.

LAZORCHICK: It is awkward. Ben Stephansky perhaps was the first labor attaché to become an ambassador, and that goes way back into the 1950s, I think. Sam Berger was another one.

Q: There are others. Before I went to Moscow, there was Bill Schaufele who became ambassador. John Condon became ambassador very much later. There were a handful.

LAZORCHICK: That's right. It wasn't a matter that it didn't happen, because it did happen. The question is, was the path open in the eyes of labor attachés as much as they would have liked. Maybe it shouldn't have been, but the point is how does it affect their thinking? How does it affect their behavior in their job? And I guess what we're talking about in this section, is that if you have a Foreign Service which is not open armed about the embrace of a Labor Attaché Program then were does that lead you? How do you respond to it and on and on? Considering that this is where your career, as labor attaché, is going while you are in the Service.

Q: Maybe this is a point where we should back-up for a moment and say, let's analyze for a moment what people were out there to accomplish. Did their responsibilities change to

the extent that they were political animals coming from a lower economic background and more close to the people who get their hands dirty...a blue collar background, per se, or an office background they could relate better. But now what happened when economic assignments came along and who was calling the shots as to what we wanted from our labor attachés? Maybe you ought to explain that because I recall the different reporting requirements that evolved over time. You want to say a word about that?

LAZORCHICK: Sure. Well, I think you touch on something significant because if you start from the proposition that the Labor Attaché corps was started because of post-World War II things, then you soon come to the conclusion that there were a number of different tracks and a number of different interests. State Department had special interests, you know, the Labor Department had certain interests and I'm sure many of the labor movement appointees were almost as quick to report back to their unions as back to the State Department. Then along comes the Department of Labor with the statutory responsibility and a feeling that when you come to a Comprehensive Economic Reporting Program, CERPs as they called them, the Labor Department had a big hand in saying what the content of that should be, so that you had a split responsibility. Perhaps labor attachés at the other end, who had an awkward time trying to meet all those responsibilities . . . my sense is, that from time to time we saw inspector reports that indicated not only that confusion, but sometimes there was apoplexy at the center because there were too many requirements that couldn't be filled in a timely fashion and that people were getting marked down because the CERP requirements had due dates. And on and on. So that all in all it was a hybrid that the State Department had to absorb. It wasn't ... in the type of situation, the environment was such that it was not the easiest for everybody involved to deal with effectively.

Q: Any idea what it was at maximum and where we are today? How many labor attachés there were at one time and where we are down to today.

LAZORCHICK: I can't give you any specifics about where we are today. My sense is that on the rosters of labor attachés put out by the Labor Department -- and often times Jim Taylor and I were responsible for pulling those things together -- at the upper levels we probably had maybe 45 or 50 so called labor attachés, some of them questionable, because what they really were was Foreign Service officers who were reporting enough back to Washington to be just like another member of the corps that probably had a number of other things that they did, too.

Q: Dual responsibilities.

LAZORCHICK: Sure.

Q: So now, a lot of the Labor Attachés were not out of the labor movement at all.

LAZORCHICK: Oh no. That's correct. That's correct. I would say, at one time the heavy hitters, so to speak, were out of the labor movement. Let me put it another way: Outside the Foreign Service scheme of things. They came in as a labor specialist to go out to do

Labor jobs. On the whole , if you start from the proposition that a Labor Attaché Program set to achieve certain goals is going to fall somewhat short of achieving some of those goals, then you've got to conceive that a lot of the labor attachés, or a number of labor attachés were going to fall short of the expectations of the people back here, at State. Now you've also got to take into account that one of the things that happened is that because of their labor work and the strong interest back in Washington's Labor Department of their work, it ended up that the labor attachés often times considered the Labor Department more of a home than back here. When the labor attachés came back here, we used to schedule meetings to let them be heard from this group from the Division of Foreign Labor Conditions and so on, so they came back here to a situation where they were kingpins and respected for what they did.

Q: As opposed to?

LAZORCHICK: They could go back to State Department and nobody would pay a damn bit of attention to them, basically. It was easy for the Labor Department to become home for them, because of what we did overseas and helping them in their jobs and that, and what we did when they came home, to find it much more comfortable.

Q: So we, and I'm including myself in the Department of Labor, we were very hospitable to them, and State wasn't particularly hospitable to them. What about the labor movement, what about the AFL-CIO, what we called the 16th Street?

LAZORCHICK: The AFL-CIO and its affiliated unions, labor attachés were generally very warmly received. I can't think of any instance where these people who were in a position to provide information did not help American trade unions when they traveled abroad. Some of the American Trade Union people expected to be met at the airport when they went abroad. They were, whether they went to Rome, Germany or wherever. When they needed other assistance from the Labor Attachés it was warmly given because they were all part of the fraternity. I would say in this connection that it is understandable that when they were at State there wasn't the same kind of reception for them for a very simple reason in my judgment. If you are the Labor Attaché coming home after three years in Germany, and you walk around the building at State, there are dozens and dozens and dozens of others just back from overseas and you are no better than they are, therefore you are not a novelty. In the Labor Department it was altogether different.

Q: You think that the International Labor Affairs Bureau was tuned into that.

LAZORCHICK: Exactly.

Q: Now, let's explore this bit about the American Labor Movement. Certainly within the International Affairs Department on the Labor Bureau they were interested in all these people coming back. Particularly because their roots were often as labor people, they had experiences which were very important to tune in on, but this reflects a very small group of the American Labor Movement, I'm wondering to what extent the labor movement as a whole, when you got out of Washington, or when you got into the staff

positions of various labor unions, was very interested in international labor affairs. Or, whether it was just the people at the very top of the AFL-CIO?

LAZORCHICK: Well, let me tell you. It extended to those unions affiliated with international trade secretariats throughout the world.

Q: Would you define international trade secretariats?

LAZORCHICK: Sure. An international trade secretariat is an international union organization composed of constituent unions in a given industry or trade. In the metal working field, in the mining field, in the transportation field, in the communications field, and on and on. So that, for example, in the United States, perhaps four or five American national unions -- organizations with 600,000 or 800,000 members -- would belong to the Postal Telegraph and Telephone International. They would go to PTTI meetings in Switzerland, to PTTI regional meetings in Africa, Asia -- wherever they happened to be -- so that in this post-war period, you had an expanding number of AFL-CIO affiliates. At that point, there were probably 110 AFL-CIO affiliates, at least by my count. You had an expanding number of those, probably I'd put that at 35 or 38 powerful U.S. unions. You know, machinists, transportation unions and so on, belonging to International Trade Secretariats. So these people were traveling, these people were using Arnold Steinbach's directories for use in their recruiting programs throughout the world, and on and on. Whatever Labor Attachés were working in areas of their interest, obviously they were warmly received.

Q: You used the word "recruiting programs", people might not understand what you mean by that.

LAZORCHICK: Where the International Trade Secretariats were recruiting Democratic unions, whether in Nigeria or wherever it happened to be, to join with them in an International Trade Secretariat, which was designed to work on a world-wide basis.

Q: I can't help thinking that we're talking about Democratic unions, that there is a corresponding type of Trade Secretariat that wasn't called that, that the WFTU was sponsoring. This obviously were not Democratic and there was a bit of by-play here for the Democratic international trade secretaries, or trade secretariats that were fighting the non-democratic or block-type of secretariats and the labor attaché had a role to play here as well.

LAZORCHICK: Well, there you have the essence of the Cold War in the labor field and you are absolutely right. It was a matter of pitting resources against resources in the hope of the Democratic side of winning out. There weren't only victories.

Q: No, there obviously were losses. We won many, we lost to some. But this was a field of conflict particularly in developing world.

LAZORCHICK: Right. Now there were a number of labor attachés during those years

placed in such a fashion to be able to file into Washington information that would be useful to the organizations that were in the free trade union movement, carrying on this fight. I will put it bluntly: those messages were of no value to the State Department, but they were extremely valuable to the unions that were involved in this Jell-O warfare so to speak. What I'm trying to say is, that production from the Embassy was terribly valuable to the effort to win free labor adherence.

Q: Well, you say it was of no value to the State Department, the State Department certainly was monitoring the state of the Cold War and the intelligence communities were monitoring the state of the Cold War and they were interested in any area, perhaps, in which we were winning or losing, and what were the main tools that the opposition were using and how successful were they in using those tools.

LAZORCHICK: I concede. I was too dramatic in what I was trying to say, but the point that I wanted to drive home loud and clear was that you had an Embassy producing reports and so on for the State Department in Washington and here you had an inflow from time to time of very significant reports that had far less interest in State Department per se, than to people who were, you might say, in the trenches on behalf of the trade union effort. Further, by saying much of what we are talking about changed dramatically with the onset of the effort to fund, through AID, the AFL-CIO institutes. Now, why that arose, I think, essentially was due to the desire for a vastly stepped-up effort to promote the development and education of free trade unions in the developing world, and the clear recognition that that job could not be done through any government agencies anywhere near as expeditiously as on a union-to-union basis. You can't beat a configuration where democratic unions are training and developing democratic unions, as much as you try. Put it in the hands of union people who accept one another, who understand one another, and who will get on with it. As I've said publicly a couple of times and in print a couple of times, I think one of the biggest bargains in the Foreign Aid Program was purchased in the labor field, where the institutes went out for \$25 million here, \$13 million there, \$16 million someplace else, went out and did a job very conscientiously, very ably, and where no government-type could have managed to design and implement a program.

Q: With a sense of commitment.

LAZORCHICK: Absolutely. I would go so far as to say, that I have run into trade union leaders overseas and Trade Union Secretariats who were far more willing to accept a Labor Department-type than they were someone from the Embassy. They would be courteous, and in a perfunctory way deal with the Embassy, but they never could get comfortable. So there you have it.

Q: The same language that the trade unionists would speak all over the world. What else do we want to cover? Are there any specific highlights that you could think of in terms of the programs? The ups and downs of the Labor Attaché Program? Particular events that stand out in your mind? Let's continue a little further here. You referred earlier to the promotions process and the possibilities of getting ahead that a Labor Attaché might have. That was undoubtedly influenced by the Foreign Service Selections Board, which

was how the Foreign Service evaluated all their officers and labor attachés were among the officers of the Foreign Service. What's your perspective on how these Selection Boards worked and particularly the role of the Labor Department in participating and influencing the outcome of the Selection Board procedure?

LAZORCHICK: Les, let me try and be brief. First of all, the evaluation process is an annual affair. And what this means is that the State Department calls upon the Commerce Department, the Labor Department and perhaps others every year to make available people to come over and sit on those promotion panels and go through all the files of all the individuals that are in given classes, FSO-5, FSO-4, FSO-3 and so on like that, or so it used to be. The end result is that whoever goes over there is of a mind to be very conscientious about the process. It's easy to become so involved in it. You are with people who are making judgments about the careers of Foreign Service officers. And whether the officers are labor attachés or economic officers or administrative officers, or whatever, those who are there day in and day out working with the other members of the panel become, I think, quite influential in helping to determine what the results of that process will be. It's a protracted period, six weeks, maybe seven weeks, and like I say, it oftentimes meant, in cases that I was on there twice, it meant not eight hour days, but sometimes ten or twelve hour days in order to get through this heavy workload. But there you are at the end of the period, and the end of the period was probably close to Thanksgiving Day, the deed was done and you got on with it. But it's another kind of element that goes into the participation of one or more other agencies with State, within the administration of the Foreign Service.

Q: Do you recall any basic evaluations of the whole Labor Attaché Program by either an outside body or a body composed of State and Labor people? I have a feel for how the process works on a day-by-day basis over time, but my guess is, bureaucracy being what it is, there must have been some commissions that got together from time to time. Do you recall anything of that sort?

LAZORCHICK: The answer is yes. Les, there have probably been five, six, seven different attempts to evaluate the labor attaché function within the Foreign Service. I can remember a report, I think it was done by the inspectors, I can remember the administrative assistant secretary having such a report done. My recollection, I don't know the name specifically, but there were at least a half a dozen of those. I probably read every one of them at the time they came out, and could refresh myself, but all kinds of attempts were being made. I would say all kinds of cosmetic recommendations have been made. My own feeling is that the only place to start on one of these evaluations is with a conviction that what you are trying to do is to make palatable a situation within built-in jurisdictional difficulties so that the end result can't be 100%. But an arrangement, whereby you have to be willing to accept 65 or 70% in the knowledge that what you are trying to achieve has got to be the ruling consideration and the niceties of the arrangement, the symmetry of the arrangement, cannot be foremost in your mind. In other words, you've got to say, what we're ramming down State's throat is being run down their throat in order to get a result. We know it's not going to be popular at the Embassy end; it's going to be hell to pay back here at this end. But, all in all, if it's the

only way that we can get the result that we want out of people who are not part of the system, who will never be part of the system and who will not look kindly upon regimentation of the system, if the only way we can get it is with those kind of people, then you have to go with it.

You mentioned Phil Delaney, for example, there were a lot of people who did not have many kind words about Phil Delaney who came into this work from the AFL-CIO. I almost have nothing but kind words about Phil, whom I got to know well, because I learned to know what his real instincts were, what his real motivations were. He was as patriotic and everything else as the rest of us. Okay, he got terribly impatient with bureaucratic obstructions and things like that strewn in his path and in the path of the Labor Attaché Program and stuff like that. There never was anything devious; that's probably not the right word. What I want to say is, Phil Delaney was a direct person. There was an objective, he knew a method to get to that objective, and he proceeded with it. If Phil picked up the phone and called George Meany from time to time, as he did, it was only because he felt this bear on his back from the State Department that simply had to be budged by somebody, and it usually was the Under-Secretary Robert somebody or other, I can't remember his name for the love of money, who was close enough to Labor to get some sense of what instincts drove him, what the U.S. government got for its money by involving the labor movement, and to hell with all this pettiness because this or that was not being done strictly by the book. It is that kind of arrangement that you would like to avoid, but if you can't avoid it, because of these built-in contradictions and so on, then you ought to shrug your shoulders and say, "Full speed ahead."

Q: Dan, how about a word about the relationships within the institutes which you referred to earlier and the Labor Attaché Program. To what extent did they help each other? To what extent did they just pass each other in the night? To what extent did they conflict with each other? How did people like Irving Brown or Bill Doherty or Palidino -- the three Institute Directors-- influence the Labor Attaché Program, the attitudes of the State Department towards labor attaché issues? What bearing did they have?

LAZORCHICK: Let me give you some off-the-top-of-the-head reactions. One, I think where the Embassy end was sophisticated enough to know that Institute programs in their countries were from time to time going to give them fits, or their host governments fits, things like that, where they were sophisticated enough to know that, it seems to me things moved along reasonable well. At those posts, it seemed to me that they knew that the value of what the Institute was doing was terribly important in the whole scheme of things of U.S. involvement in those countries. That's one thing. Also, I think where the labor offices were mature enough, they probably were in a good enough position to help, and did help to pass on information to country program directors and others responsible for Institute programs in those countries. Maybe even offering them some advise from time to time, but basically, I think they must have known that the Institute people had better inroads into the leadership of the trade union movement and so on, than any body else and it ensured order. You wouldn't have to be a very clever trade union leader, let's say in Senegal, to know that the pot of money controlled by AALC was a heck of a lot larger than anything they could ever expect to get in the way of help out of Dakar.

Q: Out of the Embassy in Dakar?

LAZORCHICK: In the Embassy, right. Now, if you start from that premise, and mind you I don't say this in a derogatory sense, if I want to build a union movement in Senegal, then I want Democratic help from wherever I can get it. What I'm saying is that the prospects were much better AIFLD than the other. I'm sure there were places, Guiana is one that comes to mind, where the AIFLD Program, Art Maxwell was the Director, was a real bone in the throat for any ambassador who was a nervous Nellie. And the story there was one that I don't want to go into. But a considerable story of how AIFLD had to proceed and what it was doing. Here was an AIFLD which had wonderful relations with the prime minister of the country, Forbes Brenner. They had worked with Forbes in the trade union field long, long before the Embassy was in a position to benefit immensely from that. The ambassador was afraid Forbes Brenner was consorting with the Communists. Crazy, crazy. I visited that country, oh I don't know what the year was, it must have been in the seventies, when Art Maxwell had such a feel for what was going on, an entre into what was going on, that Art arranged for him and me to sit with the Ambassador Forbes Brenner for 90 minutes.

Q: To sit with the prime minister.

LAZORCHICK: The prime minister. Art and I sat with the prime minister for ninety minutes at the summer home. I didn't know what to do on that occasion, because I was an official visitor to the country and here was Maxwell, at whose house I was staying, setting this thing up on a Sunday morning. What I'm trying to say to you, is that the Institutes were often times in a position, Irving was often times in a position, you guys were often times in a position, to do a number of things beneficial where there was a similarity of interests or an identity of interests between the U.S. and the local government and it depended upon what kind of relationship there was with the embassy. This goes to the heart of what I would judge to be a meaningful International Labor Program. What are the components that you pull together, how do you manage to weave them in a fashion that you get out of this whole series of contradictions and conflict and everything else, a result clearly in the interest of the United States government.

Q: Was it also in the interest of the International Labor Movement?

LAZORCHICK: Oh, I would say so. I would say so. You know better than I how many representatives from the U.S. Labor Movement got involved in the kind of work that you did and in many respects like the Peace Corps did. A lot of this rubbed off on the people who went back to their unions. I can remember, as a case in point, Les, that Wally Lagy prided himself on a program in Latin America where PTTI Unions in the United States contributed on a monthly basis, outside of everything else, extra money to go down to this country or that country, and it was a whole movement, you might say, of that kind of energy released to do things clearly in U.S. government interests.

Q: International Labor solidarity.

LAZORCHICK: Absolutely. What I'm trying to say, I guess, is that it serves so many different purposes. And not the least back here, because the people became internationalists almost by osmosis. That had to be a factor.

I think anybody who thinks systematically or carefully for more than a moment at a time about international labor and what we went through, can't escape the conclusion that you can hold you head high. From Steinbach's directories and what that meant to the trade secretaries who used them, it was part of the seamless effort. Not always the best, not always with winners who were sent overseas, but a heck of a lot of energy that went into doing things for a relatively small price, I think, paid high dividends.

You were talking about the labor attachés and their interest, their affection, you might say, for the Labor Department. I can remember sitting in Ray Marshall's, Secretary Marshall's, conference room and he's got twelve or fourteen labor attachés sitting in that room and they have an hour and a half with him. The secretary of labor. Very flattering kind of experience for them to get that kind of attention in Washington. I'm sure they never got that from the secretary of state.

Q: I'm thinking whether they would get it from Reich now, because I don't think that the climate is the same as it was when we were there. That's another question. We're looking back, rather than looking on the scene today.

LAZORCHICK: And what you are looking at too, Jim Taylor used to burn all kinds of rubber on initiatives for the Foreign Service. It seems to me now, Jack O'Terra, Jack's gone, but when Jack was there, he would have to have the moxie to say to Reich, "These people are going to have to come. When can we schedule the meeting?" Period. You take those initiatives to get the results you want. Like anything else you have to be greedy about your own programs, otherwise people just brush off you. Sure, you can live without them, but the question is, what does that kind of simulation mean to specific labor officers and so on, who are part of that. I was in the Department, but when I heard Marshall say, "More cat and dog food is being eaten in this country by human beings than by the animals in this country," he was demonstrating that we've got a lot to do. And when that stuff is going on, we ought to be ashamed. I'm saying that only to tie in what for me, here, was a fairly dramatic exposure to a guy who was prepared to (????) at the time. Somebody arranged it, I don't know who, but it was done and I've got to believe that it had its impact of the Foreign Service people, the labor attachés in the room. I think it was useful for all of that to happen. I think the program conceivable at some time will come back. I think your remark earlier, about an unmistakable decline over the last twenty years of the Labor Attaché Program, means that now we're witnessing a decline in the level of Institute activity. Who is to say there will not be developments that require some kind of turn around. If that happens, will we repeat the same mistakes? Or, will we be in a position to take a fresh look at where we are and have some experienced people map out a new thing. I don't know. Do you have any idea where we stand with Labor Counselor positions overseas?

Q: No, unfortunately I'm out of it, too. I'm out of the loop. You and I look back, it's easier than seeing where we are today or having good benchmarks to look ahead from. I think that's a very important consideration now that we don't have an active Cold War. It doesn't mean that we don't have a need for relating closely to the trade unions as they develop all over the world. That remains to be seen.

LAZORCHICK: Let me just give a brief final thought. Like elsewhere in life, it seems to me, we could play a passive role, get by, and not be overly uncomfortable. In contracts, it seems to me, one could take a look at what appear to be the opportunities out there and proceed to try and exploit them. I think we all know that whether we are talking about Italy, or Japan, or we're talking about Germany, Sweden and so on, we are talking about countries where there are terribly influential trade union movements. The question is, whether or not it is in the interest of the United States government to get closer to those situations regarding NAFTA, regarding new industrial processes, regarding personal workplace discoveries and all this kind of thing. I think that I would have no difficulty saying that we could energize a lot of labor attachés, and maybe they're doing it. Maybe they're doing it now. But we could energize a lot of labor attachés to represent a far more respectable effort. That effort, it would seem to me, to bring them back and retool them here in the United States, so they could come to grips with what Robert Reich and the others are digesting. It all depends upon what you are prepared to do. Let me put it this way, I can't envision a Labor Department with an argument big enough to require a Labor Attaché Program that responds only to the Labor Department's needs. I don't think that we'd have that many international needs. I would say this, in regard to the kind of things that we were describing a minute ago. I could envision a Labor Department being the site for the establishment for a Labor Attaché Corp which would get its sustenance, get its training, get all the other things that interest the Labor Department, from the Department of Labor and the Labor Department putting down a chunk of money to help fund that in conjunction with State. I think that's possible. Whether or not anybody has the stomach to fight that one through, if indeed they would identify important considerations, I don't know.

I can remember from time to time when we, at Jim Taylor's behest, would do cartwheels to find the kinds of things that the Labor Department needed for overseas to put into a certain program and things of that nature. It was so flimsy that it was almost laughable. Now I'm not sure if that would necessarily be the case. I'm just not close enough to know. If it were, then the question is how can you gear up to accomplish that. I would almost say that because of the attitude we talked about before, that program would have to be outside of State, the halls of State Department, and that program would have to be peopled by labor attachés who were prepared to become Labor Counselors, but not Ambassadors or DCMs and so on. That's a decent rank and a lot of people don't become Assistant Secretaries of Labor or anything else, some of us don't reach that high. It's not as if it wouldn't be a respectable achievement, but who can tell someday. We'll see.

Q: Well I think that's a good note. I want to thank you very much for the interview. The people listening to this later can get a lot of insight on how the Program has worked and how it might work in the future. Thanks again.

End of interview