

Interview with James L. Morad

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

JAMES L. MORAD

Interviewed by: Allen C. Hansen

Initial interview date: June 9, 1994

Copyright 1998 ADST

Q: Jim Morad began his career with USIA in May 1960 as a Junior Officer Trainee. During the next 33 years as a Foreign Service Officer he served in various capacities in Latin America, Europe, and Washington. His overseas assignments included Assistant Cultural Officer in Rio de Janeiro and Branch Public Affairs Officer in Fortaleza, Brazil; Information Officer in El Salvador and later in Madrid, Spain; Public Affairs Officer in Brussels; and Deputy PAO in Paris. His varied Washington assignments included Policy Officer for Latin America; Deputy Director of the Office of European Affairs; and Chief of the European Division of the Voice of America. In addition, he had two assignments with the Department of State, first as Public Affairs Advisor to the U.S. Mission to the OAS, and then as Public Affairs Advisor to the American Republics Bureau of the State Department. He retired in 1993 as a Minister-Counselor of the Senior Foreign Service.

MORAD: I planned to become a foreign correspondent; in fact, I studied journalism as an undergraduate, and one of my fellow students at the University of Southern California was Pete Synodis; Pete had become aware of USIA and was interested in joining it himself. He was a year ahead of me in school. He did join the Agency and inspired me to come along about a year and a half later.

Library of Congress

Q: This was when you were doing your undergraduate work?

MORAD: Well, he made me aware of it while he was going through the process of recruitment and getting hired. On my graduation, I went to graduate school at the Columbia University School of Journalism, and while I was there, the Agency sent a recruiter to talk to members of the graduating class, including myself. I completed an application and sent it in. On graduation from Columbia, I returned home to Los Angeles and went to work for United Press International. I pretty much had given up hope that I was going to be accepted, and then suddenly a letter arrived inviting me to come to Washington for language tests, entrance exams and interviews, which I did, and some months after that I was actually hired.

Q: When was that?

MORAD: That was in May of 1960.

JR. OFFICER TRAINING ASSIGNED TO MADRID

Q: And you went into the Junior Officer Trainee class.

MORAD: I went in as a Junior Officer Trainee, yes, and at that time, the training program was only three months long in Washington. The Foreign Service in my mind was completely associated with France. Being a diplomat to me was being a diplomat in France, and I fully expected to be assigned to Paris. When I wasn't, I was deeply disappointed. It seems ludicrous today, but I was very disappointed with my assignment as a Junior Officer Trainee to Spain, which to me at the time was the end of the world, which was a reflection of my faulty or limited world view and of what Spain represented in history and, of what a magnificent and wonderful country it was. Of course, everybody told me that at the time I received my assignment. I was the object of a lot of envy, but I didn't envy myself.

Library of Congress

Q: Did you have any foreign language competence at that time?

MORAD: I had studied Spanish and having lived in Los Angeles, I was exposed to some Spanish, but I wasn't really fluent. Then I studied French for two years in college and I tested at, I think, a 1-plus level in French, as part of my entrance exam. So on my arrival in Spain, I actually did not really speak Spanish at all. I had no Washington Language Training, only on-the-job training in the Embassy and just picked it up through those daily hourly classes and osmosis.

Q: What Junior Officer Trainee class were you in, do you remember?

MORAD: No, I don't remember. It was interesting because it was a class that was sandwiched in between two classes that had been previously scheduled. It was kind of an impromptu class and was relatively small. I think there were only 8 or 9 of us in the class.

Q: Madrid was where you got both good news and bad news because I was there at the same time you were, as you recall. The good news was that you met your future wife there, and I guess the bad news was that you became ill during the course of your tour.

MORAD: That's right. Both were in some ways related to each other. The fact is that I came down with hepatitis, which was not diagnosed properly by, I should not say a Spanish, but an Austrian doctor who practiced in Spain. Literally one day I could not get out of bed. I mean my body was so weak that I decided to go out to Torrejon Air Base for an examination. I had resisted up till that time.

Q: That was a joint American-Spanish Air Base.

MORAD: That was the joint American-Spanish Air Base, which had a modern American hospital and medical facilities. I resisted going there primarily out of ignorance, but also because it was inconvenient. I was admitted to Torrejon Air Base Hospital for treatment. I have to go back a bit. First, I spent a couple of weeks at the Anglo- American Hospital

Library of Congress

in Madrid and then was released, and it was during that period that I met my wife. It was through a mutual friend. She had come to Madrid to study art at the San Fernando Academy. During the period of my recovery from hepatitis after my release from the Anglo-American Hospital I met my wife and we dated and went out quite a lot. As you would expect from two relatively young people in Madrid, we had a great time. I did not properly take care of myself and I had a relapse. It was because of this relapse I ended up in the Torrejon Air Base hospital for over 6 weeks. I couldn't even officially call her my girlfriend; she was somebody I had just met recently and we dated but she came out to the hospital 15 miles from Madrid every day to visit me. It was very inconvenient for her because she had to take public transportation.

Q: It really impressed you!

MORAD: Every day, in fact, every day for six weeks. She kept me from going crazy in that hospital. We spent a lot of time playing gin rummy, in which she won a lot of money from me. But it was because of that experience that we established our relationship. Then my assignment was extended in Spain for further recovery. I had received an assignment to Bolivia as Assistant Information Officer, but because of the illness, the assignment was canceled and I was extended in Madrid. Six months later, I returned to the United States on leave without pay for an extended period of time for further recovery.

Q: My! Leave without pay.

MORAD: What had happened was that since the illness came shortly after joining the Agency, I had no accumulated sick leave, so I had to borrow the maximum two years advance sick leave. I used all that up and then went on leave without pay and spent three months at home in Los Angeles; then I returned to Washington on detail for another three months before being assigned to Rio.

Q: Before we get into that, how many months were you training before you got ill?

Library of Congress

MORAD: Actually, I completed the formal training program, and the illness kind of coincidentally took place at the end of my training program in Madrid. So, what it resulted in was an extension of my assignment there, and during that period I was assigned as Assistant Cultural Officer, mainly in charge of the library, distribution of materials and a variety of things connected to the cultural section.

Q: How was the training in general? Was it worthwhile, or was it not so good?

MORAD: It was hard to call it training, per se. It was kind of an accumulation of experience. I mean, you are there, you are assigned your task, you perform those tasks and in the process you learn the job. It wasn't training in the sense that somebody was standing over you saying something should be done this way, or that way. It was essentially work experience. You were gaining experience at it, and your supervisors were expected to take into consideration that you were a trainee and give you a wide array of tasks. In their evaluation of your performance, they also took into account that you were a trainee and not experienced on the job.

STUDENT AFFAIRS OFFICER—BRAZIL

Q: After your leave without pay for three months or so, you recovered completely and then went on assignment as Student Affairs Officer to Rio? Was this based on Robert Kennedy's emphasis on Youth?

MORAD: Yes it was. I was the first Student Affairs Officer in Rio. I was among the initial group of Student Affairs Officers assigned at the beginning of the Kennedy administration.

Q: Do you think that emphasis was warranted?

MORAD: Well, I didn't at the time. In fact, I resisted the assignment. I was not interested in student affairs. I was not a student activist as an undergraduate. I considered myself a journalist. Journalism, press and communications were my interests, and my main

Library of Congress

motivation for joining the Agency. The combination of my interest in foreign affairs plus my journalism and communications abilities were what motivated me to join USIA. Then suddenly I was assigned to what was essentially a job that was part of the cultural section and related to student politics, which never particularly interested me.

Q: Did you have any guidepost as to what you were supposed to do?

MORAD: No guideposts whatsoever. One of the interesting things again, is, as a young officer, I resisted the assignment as much as I could and finally I was told by Personnel that I either had to accept the assignment or resign. So, I wasn't given a choice. I think in today's Agency, there is much more flexibility in the assignment process. Officers are given more choice of positions and where they are assigned. In my case, there was no sympathy whatsoever for my background and my interest in the press work. So, in the end I accepted the assignment to Rio de Janeiro, which, as it turned out was paradise and quickly overcame my resistance to the assignment. There was a huge influx of official Americans in Rio at the time, primarily AID employees and AID contract employees, who were being brought into the country to accelerate our economic development projects in Brazil. There was a strong fear that at the time Brazil was on the verge of being dominated by the Communist Party.

Q: And Rio was the capital at that time?

MORAD: Rio was the capital of Brazil at the time. This was before the move to Brasilia and when many of the leading institutions in the country, the National Assembly, key labor unions, the Peasant Leagues, student unions, etc., were all under the influence or domination of the Communist Party. Because of the perceived threat and its size, Brazil, was a priority Third World country at the time, and the United States was pouring resources into it. The Foreign Service Institute even transferred the Portuguese language classes from Washington to Rio, and everybody assigned there at the time was taught Portuguese. As a result, my first three months in Rio were in language training. Picture

Library of Congress

this: I was still a bachelor, and my temporary quarters were an ocean front hotel on Copacabana beach. Portuguese classes would end at three in the afternoon, and by 3:30 I was on the beach, studying Portuguese while basking in the sun in one of the world's great resort cities. It was a wonderful experience.

Q: How long after that were you sent to Fortaleza?

MORAD: After language training, I started work as Student Affairs Officer. There was no job description and there was fundamentally no interest in USIS Rio in the job. Nobody really knew what it consisted of, what I should be doing, what its purpose was. So I was given free hand to do whatever I felt needed to be done. The National Student Union was essentially a communist-run organization at the time. So I decided that my job would be to rescue the Student Union from the hands of the communists; rather than pursuing the job in a cultural context, I pursued it in a wholly political way. In a sense, a Cold War warrior political way. As I gained experience, my contacts developed with students, student leaders including the communist leaders of the Student Union and they became rather close friends of mine; in fact, my daily "modus operandi" was to drift further and further away from USIS and more and more toward the CIA station, which was already active in its own way in that field. Essentially I became a surrogate CIA officer and worked very closely with the station in international student organizations, trying to prop up democratic students against the leftist rabble rousers and, in student elections, helping democratic students issue proclamations and giving them resources to mimeograph statements and that kind of thing.

Q: You did that for how long?

MORAD: I did that for 2 years

Q: And these were what years?

Library of Congress

MORAD: This was 1962 to 1964. Coincidentally, the job turned out to be a lot more interesting and challenging and demanding than I expected. It also turned out to be a lot more relevant because, increasingly, the Student National Union was seen as a major player in the national political scene because of its domination by the communists. In fact, there were four pillars of the Communist Party in Brazil at the time: fellow travelers in the left leaning National Assembly, the Peasant Leagues, the labor unions and the National Student Union. In the process, I gained a lot more attention and notoriety and was given more importance than a junior officer normally would receive in a huge operation like USIS Brazil, which had over 65 Americans and 250 Brazilian employees at the time. So it worked to my career advantage, and led to my becoming a protégé of sorts of the Deputy PAO, Hoyt Ware..I don't know if you remember him...

Q: *Yes, I know him.*

BPAO FORTALEZA Brazilian Coup d'etat

MORAD: He was an old salt of a newsman; he used to be a correspondent for Associated Press. In fact, he headed the Associated Press Bureau in Buenos Aires at one time. He was the Deputy PAO, and, for reasons that were never clear to me, he was very unhappy with the USIS Rio Press Office. Both the Information Officer and the deputy IO, were highly professional, highly experienced newsmen themselves; for some reason, Hoyt was always critical of them. Because he had no confidence in them, he used to feed me a lot of press work in addition to my regular job, including writing articles for Jornal do Brasil, the leading newspaper in Rio. These articles he got placed into Jornal because of his friendship with the publisher of the newspaper. Rather than assign them to the Press Officer, he would give them to me, and I became a kind of ghost writer for him. As a result of that collaboration I developed a close relationship with the Deputy PAO. Then we had an opening for a Branch PAO in Fortaleza when USIS had a branch post there. Hoyt offered me the job, which, for me at the time, was a real advancement since Brazil was only my first assignment following my Junior Officer Trainee tour. I accepted

Library of Congress

enthusiastically and went to Fortaleza which was in northeast Brazil. At the time it was seen as the real focal point of communist insurrection in Brazil. If the communists were ever going to get a foothold in the country and there was going to be rural and guerrilla warfare, it was expected to start in the northeast.

Q: Poverty had a lot to do with it.

MORAD: The Communists organized the Peasant Leagues and dominated them. On occasion they were involved in armed confrontations with the military and police and were seen to be only the beginning of what was going to be a larger insurrection at some future time. So a lot of AID resources were going into the northeast, and even though Fortaleza was close to the end of the world. In that context at that particular time the region was given more importance than it normally deserved. A few years later, the post was closed after the military took over. Actually the military coup in Brazil took place the day after I arrived in Fortaleza. With the arrival of the military, the communist threat literally disappeared overnight. All the communist student leaders, labor unions, labor leaders, Peasant League leaders and fellow travelers in the National Assembly either fled or disappeared. There wasn't much violence. The coup took place very quickly, and it taught me a lesson in terms of where the real power of a country lies. The labor unions and student leaders can make a lot of noise and seem to be disruptive but when the military decides to move, basically there is very little anybody can do, at least in the short run, to resist it. In the long run, of course, opposing forces can undermine the military but in the Brazilian situation, the military remained in power for 20 years.

Q: How long were you in Fortaleza then?

MORAD: I was in Fortaleza for a year and a half and then my assignment to Brazil ended. I could have extended if I had wanted, but I chose to move on and was assigned as Information Officer to El Salvador.

Library of Congress

IO EL SALVADOR Pre-civil war days Student unrest & the “Soccer War”

Q: This was in June of 1965 and you stayed there till June of 1968? This was before the Civil War broke out?

MORAD: El Salvador was a peaceful country that seemed to be on the verge of an economic take off. Remember the Rostow Theory of the...

Q: Stages of Economic Growth.

MORAD: El Salvador at the time seemed to be at the take off stage and a lot of American and Japanese investment was going into the country. A lot of joint ventures emerged. Exxon had just made El Salvador its Central American and Caribbean headquarters as well. So there was a lot of economic activity. AID was heavily involved, primarily in building schools throughout the country. One of my principal jobs as Information Officer was to promote the AID program and make people aware of what AID was doing in El Salvador. One of our most common activities was inaugurating little red school houses in the countryside with the ambassador. My job was to get press and television coverage of those events, which we did. Also, at that time, placement of news articles in the local press was still an important USIS activity. We managed to produce literally hundreds and hundreds of column inches in the local Salvadoran press every month.

Q: You had a very receptive press.

MORAD: We had a very receptive press, and our placement totals were still valued and appreciated in Washington. We used to get a lot of kudos for all this press coverage. One can debate the value of it all today, but at that time, it seemed to be valuable.

Q: Did you have any inkling at that time of what would happen in the future with respect to guerrilla and urban warfare?

Library of Congress

MORAD: Throughout my three years in El Salvador, everything was positive. The only exception to that was the university, where there were a lot of Castro sympathizers, including the dean of the university, and occasional student unrest and a lot of student hostility toward the United States. We had a Student Affairs Grantee at the post, Ernie Uribe, who has gone on to become a Senior Officer. He was the first student affairs grantee and as a Mexican American, he spoke fluent Spanish, so he made a lot of personal inroads on the campus, but things got so bad there that he was no longer allowed to go on the campus itself. That was a fairly restricted situation and didn't really reflect society as a whole. Everybody used to look at the university and say: "That is just the young kids at the university. They will get over it, and some day they will become capitalist just like their parents." So no one really took them all that seriously.

Q: That is the story of Latin America isn't it?

MORAD: That was very common thinking in Latin America at the time and with some justification. Apart from student unrest, the country was booming. It had two democratic elections for president while I was there; both were highly monitored, including by me, and they were, at least at the precinct level, honest elections. Behind the scenes there was more manipulation than we were willing to admit. About 6 months after I left, the situation deteriorated badly. The war with Honduras flared. This was called the "Soccer War," which was actually a misnomer because it began in the aftermath to a Salvadoran/Honduran soccer game during which there were riots. But the war was really unrelated to the game. More accurately it should have been called, "The First Population Explosion War of the 20th Century." It was a war that really took place because pressures had developed on the Salvadoran/Honduran border. Salvador is a densely populated country with a small territory. Honduras has a larger territory, is under populated, and its borders are not policed very much. So, over the years, 20, 30, 40 years—Salvadorans had migrated illegally into Honduras, established themselves there, built farms and raised their children there; but they never officially became Hondurans, in fact they were never officially

Library of Congress

recognized. Then the government at the time decided to crack down on all these people and started putting pressure on them to return to El Salvador which had never been home to many of them.

Q: The Honduran Government?

MORAD: Yes, the Honduran Government. The military government in Honduras started putting pressure on them to leave, to pack up their bags and return home and that created a conflict with the Salvadoran Government, which was a democratic, civilian government, fundamentally backed by the military. So you really had two military governments in conflict and that is what triggered the war.

Q: How did that war end, finally?

MORAD: It ended being more serious than people realize. There were many bombings; there were planes flying over El Salvador dropping bombs and vice versa for a while. It was very serious! It ended in a negotiated settlement which allowed the Salvadorans to stay in Honduras.

Q: The OAS probably got involved.

MORAD: The OAS was involved, that is right. I don't remember all the details. I was no longer involved, but essentially it was a peaceful settlement that held together, but the conflict itself began the downward spiral of El Salvador.

Q: You were there at a great time.

MORAD: Subsequently, what happened was that Salvador had its own civil war a few years later, and that was a ten year war that became a conflict of international proportions and involved the United States, and became a major political issue in the United States itself. Americans for the most part had never heard of El Salvador while I was there, and then it became a front burner country for many years. But what that civil war proved to

Library of Congress

me was in a sense prove the dictum that I had once heard to never trust the use of an expert because the expert model at that time was that internal insurrection urban guerrilla warfare rural guerrilla warfare such as you had in Guatemala and Uruguay, for example, was not possible in El Salvador because the country was too small, the population was too dense, and there were no safe havens for the rebels, but the military would hunt them down quickly and obliterate them. Of course that turned out to be not true at all. One spot in El Salvador where there was a basically unpopulated area near the Honduran border is where it became a platform for the guerilla insurrection and they were able to expand from there into adjoining towns and cities until they basically dominated a large part of what was the southwestern half of Salvador and again the military engaged them into the next decade. The experts were definitely wrong in that case as they often are.

Q: When you left there, you went to the University of North Carolina. How did you arrange that?

MORAD: The Agency had a mid-career training program. I was kind of early mid-career at that point. Basically it was offered to me by the Agency and I jumped at the opportunity.

Q: What did you do?

L.A. PUBLICATIONS OFFICER
Comic books, etc.

MORAD: It was September of 1968 to June 1969. I studied Latin American Affairs and International Communications. I was not working for a degree. These were just classes that I took to expand my knowledge of two areas that I was specializing in. I found it very useful course even though I had already spent a lot of time in Latin American affairs. The opportunity to study it systematically made a big difference. It is one thing to absorb knowledge in a haphazard scattered-experience way; it is another thing to learn it in a systematic manner. It takes on more meaning for you and helps you to look at a subject in a more analytical way. So, it had that value for me and it helped in my immediate assignment after that, which was a Publications Officer for Latin America. Much of

Library of Congress

what I picked up at North Carolina became immediately applicable in my production of pamphlets, comic books, and various kinds of written materials for Latin America. I was able to use that background knowledge.

Q: And the Agency was into comic books in those days.

MORAD: In fact, we printed cartoon books by the thousands. It was at a time when people were beginning to doubt the utility and the relevance of comic books in Agency programs, but we remained committed to them nevertheless, and I guess during the two years I was in that job, I must have produced a half dozen or more comic books. Producing a comic book is somewhat like producing a movie. With a movie you have to go through the same development stages. We contracted with an agency in New York that actually produced them. What we did was develop the idea and meet with the artist and story people. Then it was their job to develop a story board and sketches and so forth. While they did the actual creative work, they would come to Washington every few weeks for consultations with us during the process.

Q: What were some of the themes?

MORAD: The themes were The Alliance for Progress, Youth and Democracy, the most lavish one we did was a revision of an older agency comic book about the history of the United States. It was beautifully done on higher quality paper than usual.

Q: And who was the audience for these comic books?

MORAD: We never knew exactly who the audience was. The audience basically was young people, very young people and a less educated adult class in Latin America, which of course we were still appealing to in our Agency programs. We had not reached the stage where we had a DRS audience (Distribution and Record System audience) of primary and secondary targets, and had not yet systematized or created a scientific process for reaching our audiences. At that time, it was still the more the merrier. We

Library of Congress

reached the elite audiences with programs and materials that were appropriate for them, but we did not ignore the mass audiences and young people as well, and that is who these were essentially targeted for. On the other hand, comic books have a long and glorious history in Latin America. Even to this day, adults read comic books. They are somewhat like soap operas on television. You often got a much larger audience among adults than you necessarily were shooting for with these things, but we were never very precise in those days about who our targets were. We essentially produced the materials because that was our job and we were interested in the theme. The theme was what was principally important to us then. We would fund the appropriate vehicle for that theme, and then we would produce it and worried less about identifying the audience. That changed, of course, over the years.

Q: That was a fascinating experiment as always. The whole history of Agency programs, wouldn't you say, is that we had to learn by experimentation?

MORAD: In those days we still had mobile unit programs where we would take motion pictures out to the countryside, little towns and villages and show all of these illiterate farm hands and village dwellers movies about the United States. I still can't say with certainty that was not as valuable a thing to do as what we came to do later on. In some ways, as a job, it was more rewarding.

Q: Now, you were in that job for two years, and then you got another Washington assignment.

MORAD: At that time I was...

Q: Public Affairs Advisor.

PUBLIC AFFAIRS ADVISOR TO OAS

Library of Congress

MORAD: The Latin American Area Office created an experimental position, Public Affairs Advisor to the OAS.

Q: That was the United States Mission to the Organization of American States. You were the first one in that position.

MORAD: I think that I was the only one. Not officially. Up to that time, the job was handled basically between the PAO office of the Bureau of American Republics Affairs of the State Department. The Public Affairs Advisor in the bureau also handled the OAS.

Q: But now we have a USIA officer for the first time.

MORAD: The idea for that, as I recall, came from Bob Amerson, who was the Area Director for Latin America at the time, but it might have originated with John Hova, the United States Representative to the OAS. Anyway, between the two of them, they saw the need for the PAO exclusively to the mission and Bob Amerson asked me if I was interested in doing that.

Q: And he knew of you from your work in El Salvador.

More on EL SALVADOR—LBJ's VISIT

MORAD: Yes, Bob as Area Director came to El Salvador a number of times. El Salvador was the host of the Central American Chiefs of State Summit in El Salvador while I was there and Lyndon Johnson came there to attend it when he was president; that attracted a lot of attention to a normally obscure post because the President of the United States was there for four days.

Q: And who was the PAO, going back to El Salvador?

MORAD: We had two. The first one was Jack McDermott, who only had a year to live when I arrived. He had a very advanced case of emphysema. He could hardly breathe

Library of Congress

or talk at the time I was there. It was a very frustrating experience. It was tragic seeing him deteriorate in front of our eyes, but it was also frustrating because he was so ill. He wouldn't give up the reins and wouldn't allow the operation to go beyond his capability to run it. So, we had some younger officers there like me who were basically energetic and could do very little.

Q: Biting at the bit.

MORAD: Biting at the bit. He also had this irrational hostility toward the Peace Corps, which was very big in El Salvador at the time, and was a major user of our films. Volunteers were working in the countryside and used to borrow our projectors and films to show to their clients. We had a very close relationship with them. But one day Jack decreed that we would no longer cooperate with Peace Corps volunteers. We could not give them any more materials. Of course it was a totally irrational thing to do. He had this thing in his mind that the Peace Corps should not have been created, that the money that was used to finance the Peace Corps should have been used to finance and expand USIA activities.

Q: Took it out on the poor volunteers.

MORAD: That was a sign of his illness and deterioration, but it was a frustrating experience to work for him. Then he was replaced by Gene Friedmann. This was Gene's first assignment as a Public Affairs Officer.

Q: And he had been a former Junior Officer Trainee.

MORAD: He had been a former Junior Officer Trainee and had worked in television. Gene completely turned the post around. He transformed it into a dynamic operation, and he and I got along very well and worked well together. So what started out as a frustrating experience became during the last two years a very rewarding experience.

Library of Congress

Q: Can you tell us a little bit about LBJ's visit?

MORAD: LBJ's visit was an incredible circus. He was there, not on an official state visit to El Salvador, but to attend the Central American Chiefs of State Summit. The purpose of the summit was to accelerate economic development and strengthen anti-Castroism and anti-communism. All those issues were important in the 1960s, and it was hoped the summit would strengthen Central American resolve to address them. There was always this fear that Central America was the weak link or that any given country within Central America that went communist would cause a Domino Theory collapse of the other countries because they were always so unstable. The summit had all the paraphernalia of a presidential visit. All pressed into this tiny country, into very compressed space, with few resources. The thing that impressed me most about Lyndon Johnson was that he was commanding figure in person. He was literally larger than life. He was amazing. I was never that sympathetic to him or his administration, personally, although I consider myself a Democrat and a liberal. It was maybe due to an odious comparison between Johnson and, of course, everybody's hero at the time, John F. Kennedy, but I changed my views of him after that. He handled himself in a way "Latinos" respond to, backslapping, personal, and cowboyish. Lady Bird Johnson was very dignified and I think an outstanding first lady. One interesting story was that Johnson wanted to talk to Somoza, who was the dictator of Nicaragua at the time and somehow couldn't seem to buttonhole him. Somebody told him that Somoza was in the men's room, so he made a beeline for it but Somoza's body guards wouldn't allow him to enter without the Boss' permission. For me, personally, the visit was quite tumultuous because in the midst of working 24 hours a day and being involved in everything that a presidential visit entails, my wife had a miscarriage. I was called away to rush to the hospital where she had been taken. That was a week of high excitement as well as personal sadness and difficulty.

Q: When did you get married?

Library of Congress

MORAD: I got married while I was in Brazil. Before marrying, my wife stayed on in Spain after I left, to complete her professional studies. I came back and then went to Brazil. She returned home to Mexico City. She is an American, but grew up in Mexico City where her father was an executive with an American firm. It was in February of 1963 that we got married. I flew up to Mexico and we had a large wedding there, a mixture of her family and friends and some of my family members who flew down from the United States.

Q: Let's go back to Washington. Now you are Public Affairs Advisor at the United States Mission to the Organization of American States.

P.A. ADVISOR TO BUREAU OF AMERICAN REPUBLICS

MORAD: There was a problem with the conception of that job because, initially, I was the Advisor, but physically remained in the Office of Latin American Affairs in USIA.

Q: It was an awkward situation.

MORAD: And after a couple of months of trying to do it from a distance, I recommended the position either be abolished or that I be transferred to the State Department. And I was transferred over there.

Q: Over where?

MORAD: To the Mission in the State Department. US/OAS is part of the American Republics Bureau in the State Department. In fact, at the time, John Hova was the United States representative and the Deputy US representative was Henry Catto, who of course many years later became Director of the Agency. I think this was his first official appointment as a government official. My job wasn't very satisfactory. I didn't find that there was enough interest in the Organization of American States among the American press or at least that I was capable of generating to satisfy a full time position. At that time there were a lot of Inter-American conferences, usually about economic development or

Library of Congress

democracy and they were held in various locations in the hemisphere. Often I went on these trips as spokesman for the delegation, and I think in that context I was useful. Less useful in Washington.

Q: How did you then move to the American Republics Bureau?

MORAD: The State Department Officer who was the Public Affairs Advisor to the Bureau of American Republics Affairs was transferred. I was offered the job, but as it turned out I already had an assignment. I was going to be assigned to Portugal as Cultural Affairs Officer; a job that I wasn't enthusiastic about, but I wanted to leave Latin American affairs and get back to Europe.

Q: And also get out of Washington.

MORAD: I wanted my next assignment to be in Europe if at all possible and that was the only job available, so I accepted it and of course I knew Portuguese. Then Bob Amerson, again my benefactor, offered me a deal; he asked me to stay on in Washington for another year and take the job as Public Affairs Advisor to the Bureau of American Republics Affairs, which was a major position—much higher than my personal grade and which was positive from a career advancement viewpoint. Amerson, in exchange, said he would assign me as Information Officer in Madrid a year later because he was going there as Public Affairs Officer. Those were the days when area directors could manipulate that sort of thing more easily than they can today.

Q: Area directors had a lot more power in the earlier days of the Agency than later on. I think they got some of it back later.

MORAD: They went in cycles. He was a senior officer and highly respected, so he could negotiate all those things. Of course, I was somewhat concerned because he was leaving immediately for Madrid and wouldn't be around Washington to ensure my assignment. Would anybody remember the agreement? Would I lose my European assignment? Those

Library of Congress

were my concerns. But I didn't think about it too seriously because I was enthusiastic about the Public Affairs position, in fact, I wouldn't have minded staying on even another year because it was the most rewarding job that I had in Washington, mainly because it was a real line function. Most Agency jobs are support functions for overseas operations, but there was a real operational validity to the job of dealing with the American and Latin American press. We had an audience in the United States as well as in Latin America. And it was a big operation. It was combined with the AID information office as well and I was in charge of about 25 people. In addition, I was advisor to the State Department spokesman, who happened to be Charlie Bray and who later became Deputy Director of the Agency. In that job I found myself in a sense in the inner sanctum of the Bureau of American Republic Affairs at the State Department. Every morning I attended the inner core staff meeting of the Assistant Secretary of State, the Deputy, and the upper echelon of the Bureau. That was a great experience; one with professional growth involved as well. I came away with a tremendous amount of respect for the State Department, which is something one infrequently hears from USIA officers.

Q: They are not cookie pushers.

MORAD: Not at all. The intellectual brilliance in that building is beyond belief. And the amount of hard work that is put in there is truly amazing. People work 12, 13, 14, 18 hours a day. I was forced to just by being part of it. Often I slept in my office, believe it or not. It was a big office with one of those old federal leather couches. I slept in there maybe a half dozen times during that year because of work demands.

Q: What were some of the things that were going on in Latin America at the time?

MORAD: I seemed to be fortunate in a sense that I was in various places where there was a lot of interest at that particular moment when they are not high priority areas in the normal course of things. But the key country in Latin America then was Chile, under the Allende government. Allende was expropriating Anaconda and ITT's operations and of

Library of Congress

course without compensation, so 90% of the issues that we were dealing with related to compensation for the expropriation of American interests in Chile, plus dealing with the socialist Allende government and all that represented to the United States in those days. Looking back on it, of course, it seems somewhat ludicrous. But at the time, Allende was seen to be an enemy of America because he allowed the Communist Party to make serious inroads in a major Latin American country, which was a key issue for the U.S. at the time.

IO IN SPAIN Franco's final days—the transition

Q: So, when you finished there, then Bob Amerson did come through and you did go to Madrid as the Information Officer?

MORAD: I returned to Madrid and found a completely different country from the one I had left 12 years earlier. It evolved so much. Spain in 1960 and 1961 still was largely, one could say, in the 16th century, evident not only in the architecture but in the way people lived their lives. And it was a very poor country still, poor with dignity. In 1960, Franco had an iron grip on the country and the government, and maintained a repressive regime with little flexibility. Much of that changed 12 years later. Franco was still in power; the structure was still there, but society was changing around him. The people were becoming increasingly free, and the country was more prosperous, especially in the cities. The people were more Westernized, Europeanized and even Americanized in their thinking, and in their interests. By then the country alas had been open to massive tourism for over a decade, so that in the summer Spain doubled its population with tourists. All of them had a major influence on the social and political thinking of Spaniards.

Q: What were the other influences beside tourism? The economic programs of the United States?

MORAD: There were two major influences. The establishment of our military bases there in 1953 began the opening of Spain to Western Europe and to our allies and really to the

Library of Congress

20th century in many ways. That gave some legitimacy to Franco that he had not had since the end of World War II and then that legitimacy gave rise to other developments. The tourists gradually came to the country giving Spaniards exposure to other people for the first time. The Swedes, the Germans, and the French helped to open the country to modern ways and Spaniards themselves changed as a result. There was also American and Western European investment. The AID programs did not seem relatively as important as the other elements, the military and, what I think was extremely important, exchange programs. As a component of our military assistance, as part of the price we paid for maintaining our military bases in Spain, we had a very large economic and cultural assistance program. As part of that, educational exchange was a major component and a lot of Spaniards over the years came to the United States and Americans went to Spain on those programs, including the Fulbright Program.

Q: The Fulbright Program was just starting when you and I were in Spain, when you were there the first time.

MORAD: The Fulbright Commission actually was in charge of administering the military side of the exchange program as well, so it became probably one of the most important Fulbright Commissions in the world because it had all of these additional resources and responsibilities to administer. Over the years, little by little, all of these people coming to the United States and American students studying in Spain had a truly a major impact.

Q: What about the American Center when you were there the second time. That was a new location.

MORAD: It was there and very centrally located. The Center played a major role in domestic politics of Spain at the time. It was close to the end of the Franco regime which was still repressive but becomingly increasingly benign. If opponents did not directly challenge the legitimacy of Franco, the military, the church, and the monarchy, basically they could say almost anything and get away with it, and there were a lot of challenges.

Library of Congress

The big question was when was Franco going to die and what was going to happen after him. Nobody was overtly trying to overthrow Franco at that time because it was just a matter of months when he was expected to die; as a matter of fact, there were a lot of jokes about Franco's death and mortality at the time. One joke had it that he was lying on his deathbed and millions of people gathered at the window below his bedroom and were shouting "Franco, Franco, Franco" and he whispered to his wife and said: "What is that?" She said: "It's the people". "What do they want?", he asked. She said: "They have come to say goodbye". Then he said: "Where are they going?" Another joke had him at an annual pilgrimage to Lourdes, amidst hundreds of thousands of people and he collapsed and died on the spot and everybody was looking down at him and they all started shouting "milagro, milagro" (miracle, miracle). There were a lot of jokes like that at the time. Anyway, the Cultural Center programming was strongly influenced by the CAO, who I admired very much, who discreetly allowed the Center to be used as a forum for discussions of internal Spanish politics mainly among the democratic opposition. As a result a lot of lectures, seminars, discussions, and round tables were held and would draw full houses, I mean literally, people cramming to the walls. The crowds would have these tremendously animated discussions having nothing to do with the United States, but solely with Spanish politics and Spain's future. The fact that the United States Embassy through its Cultural Center made the forum possible gave us more credit and goodwill than we could have gotten doing anything else in Madrid at the time.

Q: Would you say that the United States Government and USIS in particular helped influence the movement toward a more liberal type of government?

MORAD: I think we did. The United States government was heavily criticized by liberals for supporting the Franco regime. Their argument was that we were sacrificing Spanish democracy and freedom for the sake of our military bases, which was basically true. On the other hand, our presence there also helped to stabilize the situation. While it may have prolonged Franco's regime, our presence allowed the country to evolve sociologically, mentally and gradually in a way that permitted a peaceful transformation from Franco and

Library of Congress

dictatorship to democratic institutions after his death. The people were truly ready for it and there was no longer any serious opposition to democracy. An old guard fringe of right wingers did try to cause some disruption, but they had no support whatsoever.

Q: Do you think Spain was a good role model then for Latin America— a lot of countries in Latin America with military dictatorships?

MORAD: I don't really know that with certainty, but my own feeling is that Pinochet patterned himself after Franco. Pinochet saw himself as saving the country from communism through what was a socialist government not a communist one, but in those days distinctions were not often made. Essentially Pinochet sat on Chile in a repressive way but allowed some freedom mainly in business and economics. He created a free market economic system with American advisors. That in itself influenced the political situation, and as it evolved, the country also gained some prosperity under Pinochet as Spain gradually did under Franco. Similarly, when Pinochet finally left you had a peaceful transition to a real democratic regime.

Q: Do you think the Spanish model might be valid in regard to the U.S. embargo against Cuba and the recent controversy about China..... whether we should stop trade or continue it? The United States embargo has been in effect for 30 years against Cuba, and there are those who think it should continue, particularly the Cubans in Miami. And there are those who think lifting the embargo would have a much greater influence on encouraging democratic development in Cuba.

MORAD: I guess I side with the latter. I think Cuba has become a domestic political issue more than a foreign policy issue in the United States. Without the influence, the very strong domestic influence that the Cubans have in the United States today, and policy would be the latter in Cuba. I mean, Castro does not pose a serious threat to anybody anymore, and I think opening up Cuba as we did in Spain would render Castro obsolete in his own country even if he remained in power. And that is what happened to Franco; he

Library of Congress

essentially became obsolete though during the last five years or so of his regime nobody paid much attention to him.

Q: Is there anything else you would like to say about your tour in Spain? Your second tour.

MORAD: You asked the question about the role the United States had in influencing the situation. Well, we also had a negative role in that we caved in to Franco government pressures not to have any contact with the democratic opposition. So for years these people were very frustrated because they couldn't get anywhere, and it was State Department and American Embassy policy to bar them, basically put them in the same category as communists. In defiance of that short-sighted policy and the same USIS officer who gave a forum to democratic opposition at the cultural center, developed personal relations with a large number of the democratic opposition, which later became the power elite in Spain. He was doing this because he was personally liberal and very idealistic. The ambassador at the time got wind of it and wanted to PNG him. He was allowed to stay on but it stalled his career. He didn't advance as fast as he should have, and he was never given the credit or recognition that he deserved for being the only embassy officer who for four years toward the end of the Franco regime, cultivated contact with these people. The CIA may have had some clandestine contact, that I don't know, but at least openly and officially they were barred. Finally through serendipity a new ambassador arrived the year before Franco died. That ended the tradition of assigning political appointees to Franco Spain, which was considered of marginal importance but a nice plum for political supporters. The Senior State Department career officer assigned was Wells Stabler. He was able to analyze that the end of the Franco regime was approaching and had to pave the way for new leadership. During that last year, he cultivated that same people befriended by the USIS officer. I was also part of that effort. I used to bring journalists to lunch with him usually 3 or 4 journalists from the democratic left. By the time Franco died, our relationships were very good with these key people. It was very fortunate because it just as easily could have happened the other way; if Franco had died a year or two earlier, we would have been faced with a lot of people who had become important and

Library of Congress

were hostile to or resentful of the United States for having barred them from participation in or serious discussions about the future of their country. Franco died the year before I left Spain. He had a six-week death vigil in which there were more than 2,000 journalists in Madrid waiting for his death. Because they could get no information at all from the Franco Government, they came to the next best source, the American Embassy. I had to feed morsels to journalists from all over the world even though it was not our responsibility to be spokesman for the Franco Government. We should not have been saying anything about Franco's condition and we didn't officially or openly. Informally, I did share the little information we had in an effort to be open and informative while trusting the journalists not to reveal their sources. Of course, we didn't really know that much ourselves, but we were able to help the journalists produce copy during that prolonged vigil. Spain also turned out to be an exciting assignment in other ways. We had three vice presidential visits and a presidential visit while I was there. Also at that time Kissinger's Middle East shuttle was going on and he always had to stop off at Torrejon Air Base for a refueling stop on his way to the Middle East. The refueling always took place in the middle of the night. Kissinger was there with a plane full of journalists too, so I and my USIS colleagues would have to go out there and set up an entire press operation to make sure these guys could file copy when they got off the plane. This was always at 3 or 4 o'clock in the morning. Complicating the visits was the Spanish Foreign Minister always insisting on being there and Kissinger's annoyance at having him there. Because the Foreign Minister insisted on being there and we could not refuse him, we had to set up a whole protocol situation for what should have been no more than a technical stopover. I remember one night about 3 o'clock in the morning; we were all there, in a large waiting room, Kissinger with his entourage, the Spanish Foreign Minister with his entourage and three or four of us from the embassy. The Spanish Foreign Minister got up and excused himself to go to the bathroom, just as he walked out of the room, Kissinger asked in a loud voice: "How do you say horse's ass in Spanish?" We were all shocked. The other Spaniards were still in the room and they all spoke English fluently. We thought we were all going to be PNGed the next day.

Library of Congress

Q: Interesting. Well, when you left Spain you went back to Washington again.

MORAD: Yes. Actually I had been assigned as PAO to Peru but I had a daughter who was four years old at the time and was born with a moderate case of cerebral palsy. She required a sophisticated form of physical therapy. I did a lot of research to determine whether a qualified therapist in that specialty was available in Peru. Finally, I was advised that it would not be a good idea to go there given my daughter's condition. I canceled the assignment and came back to Washington for what normally wouldn't have been a Washington tour for me. I should have gone on another overseas assignment. One reason I had so many Washington assignments relative to overseas assignments was my daughter and her need for physical therapy.

POLICY OFFICER FOR LATIN AMERICA 1976-78 Debates on reorganizing USIA

Q: You became policy officer; did you replace me? What I know is that I went to Peru as PAO because you were supposed to go and couldn't for the reason you just stated and so this affected my life.

MORAD: Were you policy officer?

Q: Yes, in A.R.

MORAD: Then I replaced you. For two years. Bob Chatten was the area director, and when I came aboard Vic Olason also arrived as the Deputy.

Q: This was from July 1976 to September of 1978?

MORAD: Right. It was an interesting assignment; I enjoyed it. The big thing going on at the Agency at the time were meetings about the reorganization of USIA at the onset of the Carter Administration. Various proposals to reorganize USIA were debated furiously. There were literally dozens of meetings going on at all levels to debate the reorganization.

Library of Congress

Bob Chatten was very much involved in most of them, often taking a contrary point of view from the one that was officially proposed. Following were those interminable debates over the internal organization of USIA, which were stimulated by Alan Carter and Charlie Bray. USIA had to find a new way of doing business, for Carter had created the so-called infomat system in Japan, which he was trying to apply to the Agency as a whole. The essence of it was that USIA should direct all of its programs to an elite audience of decision makers and opinion leaders who should be very clearly identified, and all of our programs should be clearly identified. According to Carter, all our programs should be limited to reaching those people in a very systematic way. He also advocated that nearly all programming should be centrally controlled and organized from Washington, so that essentially USIS posts abroad would be relegated to the end of a marionette string under the control of the masters in Washington. Much of the debate at the time was between people who believed that USIA should be run as a centralized operation and others who believed in continued decentralization with USIS posts largely responsible for their own programming. The debates were pretty vicious and the two most vocal spokespersons for keeping the Agency decentralized were Bob Chatten and Jody Lewinsohn. They took courageous positions at a time when it was difficult to do that, and, in the end, Agency management became so irritated with them they were transferred abroad. They transferred Bob to Thailand as PAO—an assignment he didn't want.

Q: Right. He had to study Thai for a year.

MORAD: It was painful for him, and, of course the whole Thai experience was painful. I mean, he saw himself legitimately as a Latin Americanist, and I think he had realistic hopes of becoming an ambassador in Latin America one day. In Jody's case, she went to South Africa, where she did not want to go as well.

Q: John Reinhardt was the Agency Director.

Library of Congress

MORAD: He was the Agency Director, and, in a way, I hate to say it, but think he was one of the least effective directors that the Agency has had even though as a person I liked him very much. As Director of the Agency, he was not a very strong leader. He allowed a lot of misconceived ideas to rule Agency operations during that period. Apart from that, I respect him for his own career success and like him as a person.

COMMUNICATIONS TENSIONS

Q: But that was the time of so called "communications tensions."

MORAD: So called "Communications Tensions" between the U.S. and host country had to be written into each post's country plan.

Q: That caused a great deal of controversy, particularly among field officers who could not understand what it was all about.

MORAD: I always thought it was a misguided idea or attempt by too many Agency officers to create something scientific out of a profession that by its nature cannot be systematized right down to the last letter.

Q: That's still the case.

COUNTRY PLANS & TARGET AUDIENCES

MORAD: To be able to write a Country Plan and all of its specifics and hold to that over a period of a year or two is so unrealistic. I think most rational, experienced officers felt that way and because they did, no matter what Washington said, the people who were actually running the programs in the field did what they wanted to do; they did what they thought was realistically the job to be done in the host country regardless of what Washington had to say. What happened was Washington got a lot of lip service back from the field; it got a

Library of Congress

lot of jargon and Country Plans that seemed as though posts were doing what Washington dictated, but, in reality, it was pretty much business as usual.

Q: But don't you think that you need some kind of format or Country Plan concept to at least keep within limits or boundaries?

MORAD: Oh, yes. I do think you need a Country Plan, but I think it should be flexible and one that tries to reflect the reality of the world you are dealing with locally. Also, I've become more of a believer in target audiences than I was originally. Having come from journalism, I was a mass media person and always liked the idea of the bigger the audience the better. Selectivity was less important. I think selecting a highly targeted audience was a sophisticated idea that came out of advertising and public relations, which I personally did not have much regard for as somebody who considered himself a journalist. Eventually I came to respect the cruel reality of limited resources. We had to be selective in who we were directing programs and activities to. Realistically speaking, there wasn't much purpose in sending a hundred thousand pamphlets out to the peasants of Brazil and El Salvador when they had no influence on their country's policies and directions.

Q: Right! Now, when you finished your tour as Policy Officer, then you went back to school in a way. You went to the Senior Seminar.

THE SENIOR SEMINAR

MORAD: I went to the Senior Seminar.

Q: The most prestigious seminar in the Foreign Service community?

MORAD: I guess you can say that, but there are other people who say that the Senior Seminar is a one year "dumping ground" for people foreign affairs agencies cannot find assignments for.

Library of Congress

Q: But, so many ambassadors who go up through the ranks have experienced the Senior Seminar.

MORAD: I think the Senior Seminar has gone through cycles. It was highly prestigious, and then, I think, for a while, the various agencies, primarily the State Department, used it as a holding operation for people for whom they couldn't find assignments, for one reason or another.

Q: Of course the State Department is notoriously top heavy in the Senior Foreign Service.

MORAD: The seminar lost a little bit of its glow for a while, but from what I understand, it's back now to being a prestigious assignment.

Q: How was your year there?

MORAD: It was magnificent! It was one of the most stimulating and rewarding year I ever had in my life. It was just incredible, the kind of experience that money couldn't pay for, because you had to have the institutional support to be able to do the kinds of things that were offered there, and essentially lectures and round table discussions with an endless parade of key policy makers in Washington. Scientists, cultural figures, social gurus and the like exposed us to developments in fields that were totally unrelated to our careers. We traveled nearly two weeks out of each month. We visited everything from the New Orleans Port Authority to spending a day with the top hierarchy of Boeing Aircraft Co. and Delta Airlines, four hours with the mayor of New York, two hours with the mayor of Los Angeles. We also went on patrols in the middle of the night with the Chicago police force. Really, a wonderful experience.

Q: So broadening!

MORAD: And in an intellectual sense that was where I first became exposed to the idea that the Soviet Union was a paper tiger, that the Soviet Union was facing increasing

Library of Congress

economic difficulty, that the “nationalities question” was a real “Achilles heel” for the Soviet Union because the nature of the population was such that the European population was declining and the Oriental population was growing and more and more the military was relying on Muslims and Georgians and other ethnics, whose loyalty they couldn't absolutely count on. All the demographic flaws in the Soviet Union that had not yet become public knowledge were discussed with us by academic and government experts.

Q: It was a well-kept secret.

MORAD: That is right.

Q: And it came as a surprise when it finally collapsed.

MORAD: Lectures, articles and press interviews on the subject from CIA officers, Defense people, and demographic experts little by little, raised some public awareness, but my Senior Seminar Tour preceded that. So it was illuminating. I'll leave it at that, it was a glorious experience, and I feel fortunate to have been one of the officers who had the opportunity to take advantage of it.

Q: So when you finished that seminar, you became Deputy Director of the Office of European Affairs.

DEPUTY DIRECTOR—WESTERN EUROPE

MORAD: That was a big surprise because in fact, I did not know what my next assignment was going to be and had not spent any time lobbying for a particular assignment. And I did not have close ties to the European area; my only assignments in Europe had been in Spain, and up to that point Spain was never really seen as an integral part of Western Europe, especially in Agency operations. It was more seen to be an extension of Latin America because of the language than it was a Western European post; so I didn't have close ties to the Western European area. Then one day, close to the end of my

Library of Congress

assignment at the Senior Seminar, I got a telephone call from Charlie Bray, who was the Deputy Director of the Agency at the time, and he asked me if I was interested in the job. I nearly collapsed; I said “definitely, but have you talked to Jodie Lewinsohn and to the big guns in the European area?” I mean, there is no way they would have chosen me for that job, because I know they all had their own cronies that they supported. He said: “Well, the decision is already made. If you want the job you can have it.” So I was very grateful to him for that, and to this day I still don't know how I got the assignment, except that I had worked with Charlie at the State Department when I was there as Public Affairs Advisor. I attended his daily meetings that prepared him for the noon press briefing and had on-and-off other contact with him as well. He was still relatively new to the Agency, so my theory is that when he was presented with a list of names of candidates of people at the appropriate grade level, he recognized mine. He didn't recognize anybody else's and he selected me for the job. Anyway that turned out to be one of my two favorite assignments. Terry Catherman came in at the same time as Area Director and Len Baldyga, who was with me at the Senior Seminar, became the Deputy for Eastern Europe when I was the Deputy for Western Europe. We were all new replacements of the previous regime there.

Q: And at that time did the geographic directors have the title of Assistant Directors of USIA, in this case for Europe, and so on, or had it changed?

MORAD: No. They were directors of the office of their particular geographic area.

Q: What were your responsibilities?

MORAD: Among them, I handled most personnel matters for Western Europe.

Q: You had to make some difficult decisions, I imagine.

THE ROLE OF WIVES—Changing Times

Library of Congress

MORAD: It was often a very touchy and sensitive business to be involved in. We too often had unreasonable ambassadors who wanted their PAOs removed unjustifiably. And dealing with them and trying to get them to be patient and change their mind and that sort of thing was required. But one of the things I remember was that this was the time when wives, were gaining their independence from the system.

Q: Gaining their independence from the ambassador's wife?

MORAD: More and more they were seen not to be official partner's of their husbands' careers and whose performance were judged at least partially on the performance of their wives such as how well they entertained or how social they were and that sort of thing. As I traveled around Western Europe, I met with all staff members, and often had dinner with the American officers and their spouses. This issue kept coming up time and time again, in fact more than any single issue because it was reaching its fruition at that time. Now it is an accepted reality, and I think not discussed as much. At that time people were still in the experimental stage of how to handle spousal independence. The thing that impressed me most was how generational the issue had been. It was almost exclusively the younger wives who wanted to have nothing to do with their husband's career, the ambassadors' wives, entertaining, or doing anything that they personally did not want to do. And it was the older wives who still felt a sense of camaraderie and community and obligation to help their husbands and help the embassy. But the practical effect of all of this was that wive's clubs and women's organizations, especially in Western Europe, more than in third world countries were ceasing to exist. More and more people were regretting this because the wives suddenly didn't have anywhere to go and anything to do. I mean they were off on their own and had no institutional importance any more. The younger wives really did not care but the older wives did. They didn't want to be independent or get their independence; they still wanted to be considered as a working team with their husbands. So in the context of dinners with the American staffs conversations often turned into tirades almost always along generational lines, about whether independence for wives

Library of Congress

was a good thing or a bad thing. Of course, its been resolved in favor of the younger wives. Clubs and the like still exist but, I think, without the same fervor that they had when we were young officers.

Q: Is there anything else you want to say about your experience as the Deputy Director for the European area? Or we can come back to it?

MORAD: I used my position basically to influence my next assignment.

Q: Which was?

MORAD: PAO Brussels, which was to be my first Public Affairs and only PAO position. I knew the opening was coming up. I was in a position to influence it. One of the unfortunate things for me twice was that my two best assignments in Washington came at the end of my Washington tours. I had already been in Washington for three years when I was assigned as Deputy. So at the end of two years as Deputy, I had to leave and go back overseas. Also, within a year after I left, Terry Catherman left unexpectedly as well. He became PAO in Paris, and had I still been in EU, there would have been at least a 50-50 possibility that I could have replaced him as Area Director, since I was the Deputy for Western Europe, which was seen technically as the senior of the two deputies. The fact is that even though Western Europe was seen to be more important, in the office context Eastern Europe was much more important because we had all of these cultural agreements with the Eastern European countries. The only way we could maintain programs there was to have annually negotiated cultural agreements, which specified every program we were going to carry out in their countries and they were going to carry out in the U.S.

Q: The communist countries insisted on it.

MORAD: Yes. We hated those agreements, but it was the only way they would allow us to function; so every year, I think with each government we had to have a negotiating

Library of Congress

conference and then endless follow-up conferences and correspondence to reach agreements. These took up a tremendous amount of time of the Area office, and made them virtually the most important thing the Area office did. In the Western European context, we had nothing that formalized our programs, and the issues were among our allies. So there was nothing as pressing in terms of workloads and deadlines compared to those cultural agreements that burdened the Eastern Europe side of the office.

Q: You also had Canada in your Western European Office?

MORAD: Yes. Jack Shellenberger was the PAO in Canada at the time. One of my most pleasant experiences as Deputy was visiting the post. It was the first time I'd ever been in Canada, and I had a great experience with him in Ottawa and then in Montreal. Next we flew across the country to Vancouver because there were some proposals to close the branch post there. Those proposals have existed ever since. I don't think it ever closed. But these proposals existed even then, and I went there to check them out. I have to admit I did the conventional thing. I supported maintaining the office.

Q: How do you feel today?

MORAD: Today, I guess I would take a different point of view. It was a wonderful assignment for anybody who was fortunate enough to go there, I'll tell you.

Q: Then you arrived in Brussels.

PAO BRUSSELS
The nuclear missile deployment crises

MORAD: Then I went to Brussels as PAO. Brussels, while it's a small country, was not seen to be a small PAOship at the time because it was the headquarters for NATO, the European Community and, in general, seen as the capital of European institutions, although that is debatable. It had a lot of high level traffic: Secretaries of State and Defense came through twice a year along with a continuous parade of Washington VIPs

Library of Congress

which gave it a lot more importance than a small post like that normally would have. Also, that was the period during when the United States was trying to deploy intermediate range nuclear missiles in Western Europe or I should say, NATO was. This became a very controversial political issue in the five countries where deployment was designated, Belgium being one of them. The two countries that had the most domestic local opposition to deployment were Belgium and Netherlands. And so it became a public affairs issue more than a political issue because the government supported the deployment; but in Europe you had these weak coalition governments that could fall at the drop of a hat and you could not put too much pressure on them or they collapsed. These issues were of such tremendous intensity with public opinion polls showing nearly 70% of the population opposed to deployment of nuclear weapons on their soil. In engaging in these arguments with the Europeans, we would ask "Well, why should the United States protect Europe with nuclear weapons when Europe is unwilling to have nuclear weapons on its own soil to protect itself?" The common European response: "Oh, yes, but that is different. You see, you are a huge country. You can have your nuclear weapons out in the desert near Utah, Idaho or Montana, and if they became a target, those are sparse population areas and there would not be much heavy damage. In Holland, all it takes is one bomb to obliterate the country and the population." We would reply: "The people of Montana, Idaho and Utah don't necessarily feel that they should be vulnerable for the sake of European security." Anyway, those were the kinds of issues that you would get involved in with an incredible rationalization concerning why they shouldn't have nuclear weapons on their soil. They also argued that just having the weapons made them Soviet targets when they would not be targets otherwise.

Q: Yet we won that argument in the end, didn't we?

MORAD: We won. The deployment took place in all of the countries, and it was uneventful after that. Once the decision was made and deployment took place, we never heard anything more about it.

Library of Congress

Q: Like the Panama Canal issue?

MORAD: Exactly. Before deployment there were parades and demonstrations. Thousands of people marching through downtown Brussels, organized by the leftist parties and various kinds of peace groups opposed to it.

Q: This was a major effort on the part of USIA?

WORLDNET & "LET POLAND BE POLAND"

MORAD: Correct. Throughout Western Europe, including Belgium, that was the issue we dealt with most. One exception to that was the military coup that took place in Poland; Charlie Wick, who was the Director of the Agency, created this television extravaganza "Let Poland be Poland" to muster world opinion against the cause and this was shortly after I had arrived. But let me go back a couple of steps. Charlie Wick's major priority project at the time was getting Worldnet launched. That global television network was basically being launched country by country, primarily in Western Europe at the time, and Belgium was one of those early launch countries. Unfortunately, before Charlie Wick arrived, European posts for a number of years had written off television. Television was considered an activity that we should no longer be heavily involved with because we couldn't compete with or place programs on sophisticated European television stations and because there was no need to program to European mass audiences. We couldn't get our programs on local T.V. We were dealing with sophisticated countries and therefore the decision was to use our resources in more people to people exchange programs, and that sort of thing, rather than mass media. As a result, we lost a lot of our contacts with television people, both on the programming and the political sides; then suddenly Charlie Wick comes along and wants to get these major commitments of programming in cooperation with mostly state-owned television operations, highly politicized themselves often headed by leftist political executives. To get their cooperation was a very difficult challenge for PAOs in Western Europe. There was incredible pressure coming from

Library of Congress

Washington to get Worldnet set up and none of us really knew what Worldnet was, or what it was going to offer, yet we had to get these commitments from the directors of local television...people we didn't really have much contact with any longer. So we moved along gradually, little by little developing their cooperation, getting their interest. But we were still a long way from the close relationships USIS officers often have with journalists, editors and broadcast executives that they have been doing business with for years. Then all of a sudden Charlie Wick conceives "Let Poland be Poland," a specific program that he wants on the air internationally in prime time on a specific date. He wants major European stations to carry it in the middle of their evening programming schedule. We thought what he wanted was unbelievable. We're not talking about little third world countries. It was like going to CBS and asking them to give us a block of time from 8 to 9 p.m. in the U.S. The French Embassy would never do that. So we were pulling our hair out. It was incredible and so frustrating. We could not get a 100% commitment from Belgium television to carry the program, and, of course, everybody in Europe was laughing at us. It was a ludicrous situation. The whole idea was such a joke with sophisticated Europeans, but we continued to cajole and plead with them. "Don't look on it as a program, I argued; "look on it as Belgium-American cooperation. Help USIS out with this and we will do a favor for you when we can. We have this crazy guy back in Washington, and I am sure if you do it, one way or another you will get credit down the line." That sort of thing. On and on. Finally they agreed to carry it, but on a delayed basis. The delay was only about two hours however. As it turned out, Belgium was only one of, I think, three or four European countries that actually carried the program within prime time. Many of them didn't carry it at all, others carried excerpts of it on their newscasts, three or four minutes, but others carried it in non-prime time the next day.

Q: As I recall, the program was originally supposed to have occupied an hour of satellite time, but at the last minute it was changed to an hour and a half.

MORAD: I don't remember that part of it. But anyway, the whole thing was a joke; it was embarrassing. The program had no quality to it whatsoever. It was like one long

Library of Congress

infomercial, you know, the kind that you see on cable television pushing hair replacement and just not appropriate for a sophisticated European audience.

Q: But out of that came Worldnet eventually.

MORAD: Fortunately it didn't torpedo Worldnet and gradually we established a working relationship with television in all these countries. In Rome, in fact, Worldnet became so successful that it quickly wore out its welcome because its software quality couldn't match its hardware capability.

Q: Just like United States television?

MORAD: Exactly. Worldnet was reaching its prime in Europe when I left Belgium. I moved to France, where we had an even more difficult audience to deal with. We were still in the initial stages, and had a lot of work to do on the format. Worldnet initially was composed essentially of press conferences with American officials. It featured an American official on a given subject in Washington or somewhere in the United States and a collection of journalists locally. It was one-way video, where they would ask questions and the figure would reply. That was essentially the format. The problem with it was that Charlie Wick, or the powers that be in Washington—I wasn't there at the time—decided to offer us, one, two, three or four of these talking head formats. They must have figured that if one was successful, two would be more successful, and four would even be more successful than that.

Q: Like Eisenhower's press conferences?

MORAD: Same idea. There weren't enough issues of interest and they required journalists to take time off in the middle of their workday, to attend. If we didn't have a real breaking story for them, they couldn't care less. They didn't care about background stuff or the Assistant Secretary of State, unless it was something really unique. You may get one or two journalists who would be interested in the background of some economic issue,

Library of Congress

but for the most part they looked at Worldnet as a source for a breaking story, and if we could not produce the goods, they became disappointed and disgruntled. That is exactly what happened more and more frequently, and as a result, fewer and fewer journalists attended. George Shultz was Secretary of State at the time, and, for some reason, some misguided people talked him into going on Worldnet too often. We were getting him sometimes two and three times a month, and you know Shultz, he never really had much to say or was willing to say it in a public forum. So we had to go to all this trouble to attract journalists. "The Secretary of State is going to speak on such and such a subject," we would call up and tell all these guys. They would show up and ask a question and the response more often than not would be "no comment". He invariably had little to say in his opening remarks, and he rarely would answer their questions candidly. Inevitably, the journalists asked "Why did you call us here, we thought you had something to say?" Because that wore out Worldnet's welcome as a press conference device, we began urging the agency to stop the regularly scheduled Worldnets. We don't need them on a regularly scheduled basis. We argued that less frequently and more substance would gain greater credibility. People would then see Worldnet programming as an important event.

Q: Also, you had a staffing problem at the time?

MORAD: Oh, a tremendous staffing problem. It was eating up so many of our resources. We ended up having two Americans on Worldnet alone. We couldn't afford it.

Q: After you were Public Affairs Officer of USIS in Brussels for a while, then you moved over to the United States Mission to NATO.

MORAD: I was fired from my job as PAO in Brussels.

Q: That's a harsh term.

MORAD: Well, that is essentially what happened.

Library of Congress

Q: What happened?

MORAD: I wasn't fired from the Agency nor from my career but at the demand of the ambassador to Charlie Wick, who caved in, I lost my job there.

Q: Because the ambassador wanted one of his friends there?

MORAD: No. The curious thing about it was that the reason for my dismissal was never explained to me. To this day, no one has ever told me. Not the ambassador and not the people on the Washington side who were involved, namely, Jock Shirley, Len Baldyga, who was the new Area Director nor Barry Fulton, who was the Director of Foreign Service Personnel. Neither did I receive an explanation from Charlie Wick, whom I saw frequently during my tour in Paris.

Q: They never told you why?

MORAD: The person I dealt with primarily about the matter was then Counselor Jock Shirley who called me from Washington one day and said, "I've got good news and bad news. The bad news is that you are losing your job in Brussels. The good news is that you are going to be Deputy PAO in Paris."

Q: How does that make you I.O. in the United States mission?

MORAD: What happened was notice of my dismissal came in January of 1983 but the ambassador agreed to let me stay on until the summer so my daughter could complete the school year. So I stayed and worked for him for six months despite the difficulty of knowing that I was working for somebody who had me fired. John Gardner, who was the Deputy PAO in Paris, was supposed to transfer that summer, but he received an extension. The post was in temporary quarters; the Talleyrand Building in Paris, our headquarters was being renovated, and the post was in a disheveled state. So he extended for a year to deal with that situation as the Deputy PAO and Executive Officer. The question of what to do

Library of Congress

with me during that year arose. The Agency already made the commitment to give me Paris, which was very important to me because Paris is where I always wanted to be—as do many people, often to their own disadvantage, but not to mine. The Paris assignment softened the blow of losing my job in Brussels, but then it looked as though it wasn't going to work out. Jock said: “Come back to Washington for a year and then you can go to Paris.” I said: “There is no way I am going to take my family back to Washington for a year and then go to Paris. Either I stay here or I go back to Washington to stay for a full assignment while I decide what I'll do as far as my career is concerned.” Coincidentally, Steve Strain, the Information Officer at NATO, was two years into a three year assignment there; he had one more year to go. He hated the assignment, the job, and Brussels. He was an Eastern Europeanist and wanted to go back to Eastern Europe. He kept negotiating with Washington but couldn't seem to find anything. Well, I had learned through the grapevine that the Assistant PAO position in Sophia, Bulgaria was opening up unexpectedly, but it was such a lowly position in what seemed to be the worst country in Eastern Europe, that I didn't think he would be interested in it. I talked to Steve about the opening and said: “Look, I can do you a favor. I can get you an Eastern European assignment and you can do me a favor by accepting it, which will allow me to replace you here for a year.” This was all of my own making and...

Q: It worked out?

IO NATO

MORAD: He was actually interested in it. He called Washington. Of course Bulgaria was never a highly sought after assignment. The agency gave him the assignment and Personnel agreed to let me stay in the IO NATO job for a year as a temporary assignment as quiet payment for my unjustifiable dismissal.

Q: What did you do for that year?

Library of Congress

MORAD: I was the Information Officer, which is essentially a misnomer; that is the position that administers the NATO tour groups. Are you familiar with the NATO tours? The United States Mission brings groups of Europeans from various countries on visits to NATO and NATO facilities around Europe, for three or more days.

Q: To educate them on the purpose of NATO?

MORAD: Yes. The posts do the nominating. It is like an exchange program. They can be journalists or political leaders or whatever, educators. And then, that was a major program; lots of money and lots of organizational detail and essentially the Information Officer ran that program. That is what I did for a year. Of course, it was below, way below my grade level and way below the kind of work I should normally have been doing, but under the circumstances, I was happy to do it.

Q: Then you get to Paris?

MORAD: Just let me go back to Brussels for a minute, because at the time that I was informed that I was losing my job, for some reason it didn't bother me so much, primarily because I saw Paris at the other end; but with the passage of time, I became angrier and more and more bitter about the experience, how it happened and the failure of the Agency to support me against decisions by political appointees which were totally irrational.

Q: And they never gave you an explanation?

MORAD: No, the Ambassador was Charlie Price, who went on to become Ambassador to London. That is also part of the story. He inherited a candy company from his father in Kansas. He was also very active in Kansas political affairs; he also became a banker on his own. He started from a family base of wealth. He fundamentally became a banker. And his wife was the daughter of the founder of Swanson's Food, the frozen food company. They were both friends of the Reagans, she, especially, was a close friend of Nancy

Library of Congress

Reagan. No international or political experience whatsoever, and totally Mid-Western American folks, who suddenly found themselves as Ambassador and Ambassadors.

Q: To one of the most sophisticated countries in the world?

MORAD: And with burning issues at the time. But Charlie Price is fundamentally an intelligent person. He just didn't have experience or knowledge of foreign policy at the time. He arrived at the post three weeks before I arrived. Bud Korngold, PAO at the time, was ending a five year assignment there. Bud was Mr. Europe. He still is. He had been in Europe as a correspondent and Bureau Chief for Newsweek.

Q: Wasn't he a specialist on Communist Affairs?

MORAD: He was the editor of Dialogue Magazine. He was hired by the Agency as a domestic employee but later went to Brussels as IO. When the PAO left, Bud replaced him and did an outstanding job. I was the Deputy Director for Western Europe at the time and wrote his performance evaluation for two years. I gave him outstanding marks because he did an excellent job. More importantly, he knew everybody in and everything about Belgium, England and France and was a tireless worker on behalf of the Ambassador. So Charlie Price came to town and Bud became the most important person in the Mission to him. The first three weeks he hosted numerous social affairs and introduced the Ambassador to the world. So, Bud knows everybody and is totally expert and then he leaves. About two weeks go by and Jim Morad arrives, you know, new and relatively uninformed. The contrast, needless to say, was odious. From a new ambassador's viewpoint because he was learning on the job and needed all the help he could get.

Q: It usually takes six months at least to find out what is going on.

MORAD: And at the same time this coincided with tremendous demands on European PAOs by then USIA Director, Charlie Wick. What I discovered in Brussels is that I didn't realize as Deputy in Washington was that while Bud ran all these magnificent and highly

Library of Congress

visible programs in the support of the previous ambassador, who was also a political appointee, the post itself, institutionally, was a hollow shell. There was virtually no information program. The Information Section had two local guys who stared at each other in a semi-stupor all day long and virtually did nothing else except lunch with cronies. The Cultural side was in better condition because we have a beautiful Cultural Center in Brussels, but the post essentially, institutionally was not functioning. So that is what I inherited to manage at the same time coinciding with my arrival. We had demands to get Worldnet placed, i.e. "Let Poland Be Poland," on local TV. All of this was a mess with the new Director, Charlie Wick. In addition I had to spend a lot of time on the Public Affairs aspects of the major issue in U.S.-European relations—the deployment of Intermediate Nuclear Range Missiles in NATO countries. Meanwhile the Administrative Counselor for the embassy, who was a conniving, manipulating guy decided that he wanted to take over the Post's printing operation. So during the summer interim, after the time that Korngold left and before I arrived, the admin counselor he had a so-called, time and motion study done of the print shop. He produced the report without ever showing it to anybody in USIS and then presented it to the new Ambassador without showing it to me after I arrived. The report was full of concocted false statistics and recommendations to merge the Embassy's and USIS' print shops under embassy control including giving the embassy two USIS local positions and all our equipment with no reimbursement in exchange.

Q: It is a USIS print shop?

MORAD: Yes. Totally and wholly run by USIS that would be incorporated into the Embassy's printing operation, essentially a mimeograph operation with key positions to be turned over to the Embassy. What happens is that a meeting is called to discuss the study. This happens during my first week in Brussels. The Ambassador, who never should have been involved in the issue in the first place because he is a brand new political appointee, calls the meeting. But we had a DCM who was an arms control expert, who couldn't manage anything and couldn't make difficult decisions. He was a total void when it came to administration or management, and he refused to touch the print shop issue;

Library of Congress

so it went directly to the Ambassador. The Ambassador read the study and accepted it at face value. It read convincingly. Then he called the meeting in question and was shocked to learn that I had not seen the report. So he said: "Why don't you read it and then we'll have a meeting next week." So I read the thing, studied it, consulted with the staff and learned the whole thing was full of holes and these concocted statistics. I then went to the scheduled meeting and said the report was "bologna." I argued that USIS needed to maintain control of its own printing operation for reasons familiar to all USIS officers. You know, timeliness, responsiveness, flexibility. We couldn't deal with bureaucratic work orders, that sort of thing. The usual arguments. The meeting then turned into a battle, a screaming and shouting match between me and the Administration Counselor. The worst of me came out. I lost my cool as did the Administrative Counselor in front of a new ambassador, who shouldn't have been involved in the issue in the first place. So it was a bad scene, meanwhile I thought I was protecting the Agency's assets and interests and, of course, reported back to the Agency everything that happened and the threat of the loss of our print shop. I expected to get Agency backing and be defended to the death. Well, in the end, nobody in Washington gave a shit whether we lost the print shop or not. What happened was I guess the Agency had been changing under the new administration. It changed a lot when Charlie Wick took over, but it wasn't common knowledge yet. Who Charlie Wick was and what he was going to do became known to people in Washington, but people out in the field didn't know much at that point. While I was concerned with the Agency's institutional interests the only thing that became important in Washington—and then later in the field—was that Charlie Wick wanted it. As it turned out, I fought this big battle and lost a lot of goodwill before I started at the post and nobody in Washington really cared. The interesting thing was, while I came away feeling bad and not very proud of my own behavior at that meeting, I felt I was doing what was necessary to defend our interest. Curiously after the meeting the Ambassador came down to my office about 15 minutes later and said that he was furious with the Admin-Counselor's handling of the whole issue. First, for producing the report, not showing it to me, and trying to create a "fait accompli", while people were not in place yet. Second for his performance in the meeting.

Library of Congress

Astonishingly he asked me: "Would you like me to have him fired?" That turned out to be an ironic story because I said: "No, it was a disagreement; I think he is wrong; I think we need to maintain control of our own print shop, but in the end, it is your decision. I don't want him fired, he is a very competent guy; he is one of the leading counselors the State Department has. Two weeks later, the Ambassador handed down his decision, which I thought was going to produce the worst of all possible worlds, but it turned out to be not so bad. He said "We are going to combine the two print shops and all the resources, but each side is going to continue managing and operating its own affairs. There will be a USIS supervisor for USIS activities, and there will be a State Department supervisor for State Department activities, bulletins and that sort of thing." I said, "Oh my God, this is going to get us into endless daily conflict." But as it turned out, the arrangement worked out very well and it was a good compromise decision. That was it! But I think my scorched earth defense was something the Ambassador never forgot. Even though the print shop itself eventually became a dead issue, meanwhile on another front, I made a calculated decision that the Ambassador was not prepared to be exposed to the press in a consistent and heavy duty way at that time. The issues were very sensitive. He was still not up to speed on them. He could be very ambiguous and easily embarrassed at a time when there were a lot of people in Belgium, Europe and American Press who would ask for interviews and could cause him to stumble, embarrass him and embarrass the U.S., particularly on the critical issue of the deployment of missiles. So I thought that we should groom him for about six months and then get him more actively involved with the press. We would still call on editors, meet with journalists and that sort of thing, but nothing really in public. He never complained about this; in fact he always said he did not want to be in the public eye. But I think, as it turned out, he saw other ambassadors around Europe, particularly political ambassadors getting press coverage and he didn't like it. I think he held this against me without ever really complaining about it directly. And ironically, about the time that I received notice of my premature transfer, I had just developed a written three-page plan Activist Public Affairs paper for the Ambassador because time had passed and he had become more knowledgeable and comfortable with articulating the issues; but before

Library of Congress

I could present it to him, I received notice of my dismissal. And then he wasn't even in Brussels when this happened; he was in Washington when I was notified; I looked forward to him coming back so I could discuss the matter with him because nobody in Washington would give me a reason for the Ambassador's dissatisfaction. When I asked Jock Shirley why, he said "It doesn't matter why. You are going to Paris and that is all that counts. Forget about it." And Len Baldyga—the European Area Director— told me that he didn't know because he wasn't privy to the meetings.

Q: Len just retired; maybe he will be able to tell you.

MORAD: I just had lunch with him a couple of weeks ago. He still says he doesn't know. Barry Fulton said he wasn't in the meeting either; he was Foreign Service Personnel Director at the time. He said that was being handled by Charlie Wick and the Ambassador. Jock Shirley was involved because he was the Counselor, but he wouldn't tell me. So I went to talk to the Ambassador about it when he came back. Of course I had to be very careful because of my interests at that time. It was difficult for me, even I would have packed my bags and left, but at that point I was more concerned about my daughter and not pulling her out of school in the middle of the school year. I figured, even though he is capable of getting me fired, he was good enough to agree to let me to stay on until the summer; I didn't want to jeopardize that. So I went to him and said, "Mr. Ambassador, I am really sorry that you are dissatisfied with my performance; I thought we had a good relationship here and we were doing a good job." The Ambassador replied, "Jim, you are doing a fantastic job. There is no problem, everything is great." Then for the next six months, while I was there, I used to hear that he would tell people in the embassy "Jim Morad is the most brilliant guy on the country team." But he wouldn't want to talk about his dissatisfaction. It was as though my dismissal hadn't happened. Strange as it seems I never got an explanation.

Q: Well, I think that almost every Foreign Service Officer has had a strange incident. Not exactly like that but something. The way the bureaucracy is, so politicized and so forth.

Library of Congress

MORAD: The story became even more bizarre. The Ambassador put me in charge of identifying the candidates for my replacement. So I had to work with Personnel and he would consult with me. "Is he a good person, or is that one a bad person?" Then he insisted on personally interviewing everybody who was a serious candidate. Candidates would fly into Brussels and I had to entertain them, I was their host while they came for job interview to replace me. He finally selected Chris Snow, who was the CAO in London at the time. Chris arrived in the summer of '83. I moved over to NATO on a one-year interim assignment before going to Paris and two months later the Ambassador was transferred to London as Ambassador.

Q: Everything changed.

MORAD: Everything changed. The Ambassador would have been gone anyway. He wouldn't have had to work with me if he didn't like me. I could have continued my assignment there, presumably with another ambassador who would have felt differently.

Q: But the good news is that you went to Paris.

DEPUTY PAO PARIS

MORAD: I went to Paris as Deputy PAO but I still considered Brussels a watershed that derailed me from what should I say, career advancement.

Q: In the short range...

MORAD: In the short range, somewhat, but I think permanently too because after that I was seen as the PAO who lost his job, who was fired by an Ambassador. I think had I followed the normal progression and had a successful tour in Brussels, my next assignment would have been a larger post and, who knows, I could have been PAO in Paris possibly and gone on from there and become Area Director or higher. So, for the rest of my career, I did think it limited my assignment prospects even though it wasn't

Library of Congress

visible in any way. One more point on that. While this was going on I asked Len Baldyga, who was my friend and Area Director, "Why isn't the Agency supporting me on this?" He said: "Nobody back here can defend your interests. Don't expect support from anybody," which was exactly what happened. There is another ironic thing, two other ironic things, in fact. The performance evaluation that I received from the Ambassador and DCM was for that year was one of the best I've received in my entire career. I received a performance evaluation from the Area Office, as well, and it also, was one of the best I've ever received. There was no mention, no reference to the fact that I was fired, that I lost my job, or to any dissatisfaction whatsoever. Everything on the record was as good as it could possibly be. It shows you the hypocrisy, in the situation. To my benefit, had it been on the record, of course, it would have been even more harmful for me, but it still hurt, you know.

Q: It grates.

MORAD: It grates that somehow the record reads so well and the reality reads so differently. To conclude this story with a final irony, despite the Ambassador's feelings reversed about the Admin Counselor over the print shop, even asking me if I thought he should fire him. After the Admin Counselor was returned to Washington at the end of his tour in Brussels and the Ambassador was assigned to London, he specifically requested the Administrative Counselor's assignment in the same position.

Q: C'est la vie! You have not lost your sense of humor.

MORAD: Because the irony is so humorous. Also, I'm not the only such victim. Three close friends of mine also lost their jobs since then. One not too long ago. The circumstances in each case were different, but the essence was the same—an ambassador requesting a PAO's departure and the agency going along with it. In one case it was the area director who engineered the dismissal. One can become embittered, and, of course, that is exactly how I became for a while. I went from no response at all, to a sense of gratitude for being able to stay on and because of my family interests and for getting to go to Paris. Those

Library of Congress

immediate reactions increasingly gave way to anger and frustration over what happened to me. I have seen similar reactions among my friends. However, the curve declined in time, and now I can be humorous about it.

Q: Well, Paris!

MORAD: Paris turned out to be a magnificent assignment for me. I was reunited with Terry Catherman. I had been his Deputy in Washington and we resumed the same kind of relationship in Paris. He basically set program goals and I pretty much ran the post on a day-to-day basis. No micro management on his part, and because he had some health problems during that period he was away from the post for a significant part of the first year, so I ran the post as acting PAO, always following his clear guideposts, of course.

Q: And you are fluent in French?

MORAD: No, I am not fluent in French. I studied French before going to Brussels. I had studied French in college and got into the Agency when candidates had to have foreign language competence to qualify. I qualified with a 1 plus in French but had not spoken at all in nearly 30 years. I took Agency-sponsored French at the International Language Academy on Dupont Circle. I had a private tutor, and got a 3-3 in 14 weeks, which was close to a record. In Brussels I had to speak French, but not consistently. It is a bilingual country and so international that much of our business is conducted in English. But in France you really do conduct business in French. I'd say about 80% of the time. It is important and gratifying to speak French but it is a much more difficult language to master than people realize. It's a romance language, but a very difficult one. The only Americans in the embassy who I considered fluent were those who had childhood exposure to French. Nearly all those who learned it in the Foreign Service and as adults were pretty much like me at about a 3+ and 3 functional level but far from fluent. Contrary to the common view that the French are insulting to foreigners who speak French and make mistakes, I didn't find that to be the case at all. They were always very tolerant; what they

Library of Congress

did not do is make concessions to you. If you are in a group of 3, 4 or 5 French men or women they wouldn't speak more slowly for you or make any concessions. You either had to keep up or you were lost. That was it. But if you spoke to the group, nobody would make fun of you or insult you because you happened to make a mistake in their language. They are more civilized and cultured than that.

Q: You were there at the time when the library was getting into computers, and became the center for the rest of Western Europe.

MORAD: The post had a little center, sort of an adjunct to the library that performed computerized reference and research work for Europe. It was a small operation. In fact we closed it down while I was there. During my assignment in Paris, we had one of those periodic deep Agency budget cuts and we were especially supposed to look at regional operations. That was a regional service.

Q: But I think one reason for that might have been that by then people in, let's say, Germany, could go directly to the United States and didn't have to go to Paris, for on-line database services.

MORAD: Or they had their own technical capabilities at post to do it.

Q: You had a big operation so that maybe you did not get directly involved with The African Regional Service based in Paris?

MORAD: No, I did not get deeply involved. That was strictly run by the ARS, the African Regional Service, which was basically under the supervision of the AR, The African Area Office. USIS, however, was responsible for ARS' administration, and we were in the same building at the time. We had a lot of serious problems and disagreements over the use of the building, facilities and that sort of thing. One of my regrets was that the two staffs never really had close relations.

Library of Congress

Q: That was at the Talleyrand building?

MORAD: Yes, the Talleyrand building, and it is still that way. I have gone back to Paris a number of times since I left there, and it is just kind of endemic. The two operations could be on opposite sides of Paris. The staff just don't have any real interchange. Working in Paris is exciting and covers the whole range of what USIS does at the most sophisticated levels, including an endless parade of visits of high-level Americans. Vice President Bush came there twice. Charlie Wick came there often while I was there. By the time I left, he was on his 19th visit to Paris. I was in charge of preparing and handling 13 of them.

Q: And what did you have to do when Director Wick came?

VISITS OF DIRECTOR WICK

MORAD: It was like arranging for a presidential visit.

He also required press type booklets. You know, the kind we prepare for presidential visits. We had to prepare them in detail, with the schedule, the name, the biography of every person he was going to come in contact with, the issues, restaurant recommendations, all of that. It had to be prepared every time he came to town. We had to have a full-time security escort and that meant being met at the airport and escorted into town by the French security. No other US government official of his level would either demand or receive that kind of treatment. But he demanded and received it.

Q: What was the big attraction to Paris, other than it was Paris?

MORAD: Mary Jane Wick often went there to do her shopping. Whenever she was along, you were talking about \$10,000 to \$15,000 worth of purchases.

Q: And how long would the Wicks stay when they came?

Library of Congress

MORAD: Oh, they would stay anywhere from one day to three or four days. A lot of the visits were related to negotiating the Worldnet for downlink contract with the French PTT.

Q: Satellite system?

MORAD: Bringing the signal down and disbursing it to other Western European countries.

Q: That turned out to be a pretty good investment.

MORAD: Yes it was. And, of course, it was all going on while I was there. A lot of what I did was not only to prepare Wick's visits, but support the negotiating team while it was in town. A couple of times Wick went to Morocco. He was a friend of the King. The King's private plane would fly him back to Paris, where he would stay over for a couple of days. Between Brussels and Paris, I was involved in about 20 Wick visits.

Q: You did great!

MORAD: Yes, to survive. I've talked to people who had one visit and nearly had nervous breakdowns. In a way, doing one is worse than doing 20, especially in Paris, because the staff had the arrangements down pat. They knew exactly what he wanted, what he demanded, and so we would just do it. We had a very good staff that we could depend on. But the very first visit was terrifying for me because it happened two weeks after I had arrived in Paris and I was acting PAO. I still didn't know anything and I had to face Charlie and Mary Jane coming to town. They said they didn't want a program. They were going to stay at the Ambassador's residence and wanted to relax there over the week. The Ambassador always charged them for their stay, as he did others, believe it or not. But that is where they insisted on staying.

Q: Who was the ambassador then?

Library of Congress

MORAD: Evan Galbraith was a Reagan appointee. Former stockbroker who had worked in France and supposedly spoke French but didn't really. As I said, Wick said all he wanted was to be met at the airport, dropped off at the Ambassador's and spend two quiet weekend days there and then leave. I thought, "Great, thank God!" So we picked them up and took them to the Ambassador's residence. This was on Saturday. But about 9 o'clock on Sunday morning, I got a call from Charlie Wick at home. "Mary Jane and I decided we would like to do a tour of the Louvre. But don't make a big thing of it. See if you can get somebody at the Louvre to give us an official tour, and don't forget about security arrangements. "What time would you like to go?" I asked. "Let's say about 11 o'clock," he said. It is 9 o'clock in the morning. I am at home, it is Sunday, and he wants no special treatment, only an official tour. So I said to myself: "Oh my God, what am I going to do"? Fortunately we had a woman who was a contract art consultant on the staff. She handled art openings liaison with the art community, that kind of thing. The kind of thing no other post would need, but in Paris was important. So, I got this brilliant idea. I called her at home. Maybe she could help. To my relief, she said: "No problem. I'll make the arrangements and call you back." In half an hour, the whole thing was arranged. She said, "I have somebody who will meet us at the side door with security and give us a private tour. I know this high-level official who is happy to do it." She also said she would accompany them as well. So the whole thing comes off without a flaw, and the Wicks are delighted. I didn't really do anything except call our consultant. If she hadn't been there, I don't know what we would have done. That is the kind of tenor Charlie Wick's reign instilled in the hearts and minds of PAOs. European PAOs suffered more than anybody else, I think, at the time.

Q: I imagine it was very nice living in Paris.

MORAD: Oh, it was wonderful! We had a wonderful apartment that the Deputy PAO has been living in for years. Half a block from the Seine a pretty walk over to the Talleyrand Building, which was magnificently restored in the 80's. FBO spent millions of dollars

Library of Congress

restoring it. There were till numerous flaws in the building but they were offset by its historic beauty. My office overlooked Tivoli and the Place de la Concorde. It was a glorious place to be.

Q: Is there anything else you want to say about France before we get on?

MORAD: I have one more personal thing. I won't go into all the details of this because there were too many people affected, but there was another PAO during the second year. It was Sam Courtney, who replaced Terry Catherman who went on to Bonn as PAO. There were four senior officers at the post. Sam Courtney, who was a Minister Counselor, me as Deputy PAO and a counselor, Kenton Keith, who was the Cultural Attach# in a senior CAO position but who was also a Counselor at the time, and Phil Brown who was the IO and also a Counselor. The PAO decided that we should all write our own performance evaluations.

Q: That is strange.

MORAD: Yes, and I fought with him vigorously about it and lost. I said it wasn't right to do that. I was talking as his Deputy. I didn't think it was right. But he said that he found that in his experience that officers could be more objective about their performances than he could be. I said, "Nevertheless, I don't think it is right." But he insisted on it, and in the end I finally said: "Well, if you insist on this, I am warning you now that I am going to be limited only by my writing ability in terms of the wonderful things that I will say about myself." And he said, "Fine, go ahead; write whatever you want." And so, the three of us did. We all wrote magnificent OERs on ourselves. The first year that I was in Paris, I spend about 75% of the time being Acting PAO because Terry was away; the second year I spent about 75% of the time being unofficial Acting PAO because Sam, during his first year, spent about four or six hours a day in language training. So basically I was running the operation. Anyway, after I left Paris and came back to Washington, performance pay awards were announced. Sam Courtney got a performance pay award; Kenton Keith got

Library of Congress

a performance pay award; Phil Brown got a performance pay award; Jim Morad got no performance pay award. And after I wrote my own OER. Puzzling. Maybe I was more modest than I realized.

Q: And you were probably the best writer of the bunch.

MORAD: I couldn't believe it. In the previous year I had gotten a performance award when Terry Catherman had written it.

Q: Did Sam sign these?

MORAD: Yes, he signed them.

Q: And who was your reviewing officer back in the Area Office?

MORAD: I don't think we had a reviewing officer. There are other off-the-record aspects of that incident that I won't go into. I just wanted to bring this up as an example of the flaws and unpredictability of the personnel system in the Agency.

Q: As you know, I was 32 years as a Foreign Service Officer in USIA and I never heard of that ever happening.

MORAD: I hadn't either. Although since then I have heard from a few people who told me they were asked to write their own OERs.

Q: I've told subordinates, "Give me some ideas, tell me what you think your accomplishments are," but I would write their OERs.

MORAD: Sure.

Q: But not say, "Write it and I'll just sign it."

THE ASSIGNMENTS PROCESS

Library of Congress

Q: Now, its July of 1986 and you go back to Washington. You become Chief of the European Division of the VOA.

MORAD: Before I left Paris, in fact a few months before, I had been called by Stan Burnett who was Counselor of the Agency and had been my PAO at NATO. He asked if I would be interested in the position of Associate Director of Press and Publications. I said yes, I would be. It was a position that top ranking Minister Counselors had normally occupied. I said that as a Counselor, I didn't think was eligible for it or that I would be competitive. He said that I would be and that there were two other officers who were in a position to take it. One of them was Art Lewis, who was probably going to get an Ambassadorship, and the other was Jim Rentschler who was also gunning for an Ambassadorship. If they got the jobs they wanted, the Press and Publications job would be mine. So I said, "Fine." I was delighted.

Q: It's one of the largest divisions in the Agency.

MORAD: Exactly, and directly in my field of interest and what I considered my expertise. I got a call some weeks later that the job was going to be paneled and the assignment was going to be made the next day. The next day I got a call from Stan who said there was a glitch. Remember him? Mike Schneider was the deputy to Charles Horner.

Q: He was Associate Director for Policy and Progress and a political appointee.

MORAD: He was a political appointee but a totally hands-off person. He didn't really get involved in the operations. And apparently Mike Schneider handled everything for him, including assignments in the office. So all the negotiations and discussions concerning the position were between Mike and Personnel. They apparently agreed on me. And then the job was to be paneled to formalize the assignment. But the day before Stan Burnett, who was counselor of the Agency, and Horner had to go to a meeting somewhere in Washington. They were in a car together and Stan said, "Charles, you are going to get

Library of Congress

a tremendous guy in Jim Morad, in the Press and Publications job.” And he said, “What, who is he? No one has ever said anything to be about this.” That is how the story was told to me. I wasn't there obviously. So, Horner returns to the office, consults with Mike, gets angry at Mike for not having conferred with him about the assignment and sees that whole thing as a Foreign Service plot to deprive him of his prerogatives to assign people to key positions in his organization. So he puts a hold on the assignment. But Stan called me “He isn't going to be able to find anybody, and besides there is a hiring freeze in effect.” He wanted to go outside the Agency, but Deputy Director Marvin Stone had put a freeze on bringing people in from the outside. Stan concluded, “In the end you will get the job; it's just going to take a couple more weeks.” But a couple of weeks dragged into week after week, after week and still the assignment wasn't confirmed. The day before I left Paris, Stan called and said, “Bad news. I'm sorry, you didn't get the job.” Because of my expectations, I had stopped looking and negotiating for others jobs. And so the day before I leave for Washington, I have no assignment.

DIRECTOR OF VOA'S EUROPEAN DIV. A “hero” in Eastern Europe

MORAD: They Barry Fulton, Director of Foreign Service Personnel, started putting pressure on me to take the job of Director of the European Division of the VOA. The reason for that was that some time before, I had put that job down on a list of jobs that were opening up at the time. You know, you list so many jobs. I never really wanted the job, and I never thought that I would get it to begin with. So in the end that's the job personnel zeroed in on. That's the one they insisted that I take. In response, I said, “I don't want the job. If I had applied for that job from the outside, you'd never accept me for it. I don't have any experience in broadcasting; I don't have any experience in Eastern Europe. And you are putting me in charge of an operation of ten million dollars and two hundred and fifty people.” Personnel's reply was, “You can do it.”

Q: At that time wasn't there a debate about why we were broadcasting in shortwave to Western Europe?

Library of Congress

MORAD: There really wasn't much shortwave broadcasting to Western Europe. Most were placement services, or telephone correspondent reports. The Services existed only in Spain, Portugal, Greece and Turkey. The real on-air shortwave programming was to Eastern Europe which was the most important thing the VOA was doing. And it was one of the biggest divisions in VOA. Anyway, I refused to take the job. I told Barry, "I'm going home. Call me if there is another job." and I stayed home for three or four days. Then he called and said, "Will you do me a favor and talk to Jodie Lewinsohn?" And I asked, "Why?" "Oh, I just want you to talk to her about the job," he said.

Q: And what job did she have at that time?

MORAD: She was the Deputy Associate Director for the Educational and Cultural Affairs Bureau. But it wasn't in that capacity that he wanted me to talk to her. It was because she was a senior officer, and simply because she was Jodie Lewinsohn. I said, "I don't see what purpose that is going to serve." Jodie and I never had a close relationship. And he said, "Well, talk to her anyway." So I agreed. I went to see her and she told me, "Take the job." You are going to break all this china and hurt yourself and your prospects if you refuse to take it. Take the job for three months, and if you don't like it, start negotiating your way out of it and nobody will hold it against you. But if you refuse to take it now, you are going to develop permanent animosities around here." I don't know why they were placing so much importance on this assignment. Of course I was still angry because I didn't get the Press and Publications job. That was part of the reason for my refusal. But, I said "Ok, that's good advice, that's what I'll do." I fully planned to negotiate my way out of the job as soon as possible. Well, I get there and, much to my surprise, I really liked the job. It really turned out to be interesting, and I had my own domain there. I mean I was king of a domain of 250 people. And it turned out to be politically and managerially a fascinating experience. But I still expected it to be the end of the line for me because I was in the last year of a time-in-class extension as Counselor during my first year at VOA. The promotion panel that met that year would determine whether I received either

Library of Congress

a promotion, which I thought was impossible or another three-year extension. I had already two extensions and was fully expecting to pack my bags. Also, I assumed the GS employees at VOA had no idea how to write a Foreign Service OER to impress a promotion panel. But there were a number of FSOs there, more than there are now. Most of those FSO positions have since been eliminated. There were three of us for whom 1987 was crucial for different reasons. So we all met with Al Heil, who was our rating officer. He was the Deputy Director of the Program Division, and we told him how important it was to say, whatever he wanted to say, but to write the OER in a way that was meaningful to the promotion panel. Al got the message and wrote the best, in the sense of the most effective, OER that I've ever received. He was a professional radio writer and had been around VOA for years. He is Mr. VOA and knows all sides of the domestic and foreign service. Plus he possesses great writing ability. I mean he wrote an OER that came alive. Miraculously, I got a promotion to Minister Counselor, something I never expected and probably didn't deserve, at least in terms of major assignments. The whole process is so unpredictable and subjective. You can get fired when you don't deserve it, and you can get promoted when you don't necessarily deserve it. The VOA turned out to be a great experience. I began to appreciate the VOA's importance for the first time. I went to Eastern Europe, my first exposure to Eastern Europe, and visited all of the countries in the region except Czechoslovakia, which wouldn't give me a visa. I found that as VOA representative I was a hero. I mean literally a hero among communists government officials as well as ordinary citizens, nearly all who listen every day to find out what was going on in their own countries and in the world. It was an amazing situation that really opened my eyes to what happened two year later.

Q: Yeah, and its so well recognized now. The importance of VOA to what happened.

MORAD: Yes, exactly. I never had that much regard for VOA, but I certainly did in the Eastern Europe context working with it and being on the receiving end of hero worship over there. The trip also made me realize that those countries had closer relationships, more interests, more in common with the United States than they did with each other.

Library of Congress

They had either disdain or ignorance for each other, despite presumably being members of the Communist Bloc. Unity was a myth.

Q: The same thing used to be true with Latin America, right?

MORAD: Sure. That is definitely true in Latin America, but here we are talking about the so-called Communist Bloc, which was no bloc at all. And of course, they were all equally hostile toward the Soviet Union which was the real enemy to them. I used to say, I never in all my years in Western Europe had seen so much open appreciation and admiration for the United States and these are people we have our nuclear weapons targeted on. Another example of the irony of foreign policy and world politics.

Q: Well, you were there for two years, enjoyed it, and learned a lot and were promoted. They you went from there to be a Senior Inspector?

MORAD: Yes. I became a Senior Inspector. I wanted to go back overseas, but I still had family reasons for not doing so. Two teenage daughters and an aging mother, posed all kinds of difficulties for me in leaving. Also, there was only one assignment at the Minister Counselor level, which interested me, and it was in Turkey. They couldn't fill it at the time, for some reason. Dell Pendergrast, who was the Deputy in EU, and who I had served with in Brussels asked me to take the job. I couldn't decide but he kept calling and I finally agreed to take it. I went into Turkish language training at FSI for three months, which was a very difficult experience.

Q: That language is difficult?

MORAD: Very difficult. It was the first non-romance language that I had studied, and of course, it had no relationship to anything that I knew, so I had a hard time. The further I got into it and the closer to departure date, I said, "How am I going to do this, leave my family behind, wife, two daughters, a mother who was in decline of health in California." I asked myself, "Do I really need this at this stage in life?" I said, "Christ, I can't do it." And

Library of Congress

so I went to Harlan Rosacker, Director of Personnel, fully expecting to give an ultimatum: Either take the job or resign. And I would have resigned if he gave me an ultimatum. But he said, "Maybe you are no longer in a position to be in the Foreign Service, if you can't take this job." And I said, "Well, you may be right. But I would like to postpone the decision for at least two years, and if you give me two years, there is a 99% chance that I'll retire at that time. And if not, I'll probably be at the end of my MC five-year-time-in-class, anyway, and you can retire me." Surprisingly he said OK. He didn't give me a hard time about it at all. And then, unlike three months earlier, there was a huge interest in the job. It became very competitive with a lot of officers bidding for it. I became a Senior Inspector for two years.

THE INSPECTION CORPS & BOOK PROGRAMS

Q: As a Senior Inspector, where were your inspections?

MORAD: I was part of the inspection team in Brazil on my first inspection and later headed inspection teams to Indonesia and the Soviet Union. I also headed the inspection of Libraries, the Amparts program and the Fast-Media Guidance Office.

Q: And then your final assignment was as Chief of the Book Program Division.

MORAD: It was a job that was far below my level, but at the point the handwriting was on the wall and I didn't want to spend more than two years on the Inspection Staff. There were difficult internal circumstances in that office and I wanted to leave. I had always been interested in the book program since my early days in the Agency, both in Spain and particularly in Brazil where the book program was in full operation when I arrived. It was a huge program then and was given a lot of importance. I've always been interested in publishing and the business side of publishing, so I took the job and was not disappointed. I found it very interesting and got to do quite a bit of interesting travel, including attending the American Book Seller's annual conventions, which are huge extravaganzas. One of the things I liked about the job was that again, I had my own staff and budget and basically

Library of Congress

was out of the Agency mainstream. Not that many people in the Agency were interested in the Book Program, so I had a lot of independence.

Q: Weren't you at that time building up the programs for Eastern Europe?

MORAD: We were. We received a tremendous amount of money for Eastern Europe and Russia.

ANOTHER LIBRARY STUDY

Q: Can you tell me anything about the time you were chairman of a library task force?

MORAD: Barry Fulton, who by then was the Deputy Associate Director of the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs, of which the libraries were a division, asked me if I would head a task force to study libraries and make practical recommendations for improving their management, administration, and cost effectiveness. He didn't want radical recommendations for closing down libraries, and he didn't want a pie-in-the-sky report. All the recommendations had to assume that there would be no additional funding available for the libraries. So, in a very practical way, I told him I didn't want to do it because I had done a little bit of research and there were something like 17 or 19 library studies conducted over the years and most of them were shelved without any implementation at all. Some had bits and pieces of recommendations implemented at most. I really didn't want to be associated with it because I didn't see it going anywhere. On top of that, I was no library expert. I was one of those FSOs who almost never stepped into an Agency library myself, although I did do a limited inspection on library and policy while I was on the OIG staff. But Barry convinced me; he said that this study was going to be implemented. He said that if he agreed with the recommendations and it was done well, the report would be implemented and he would make sure of that, given his position as Deputy Associate Director. So, I did agree to do it, but then we had a very difficult time getting it started. We didn't have the resources, we didn't have the personnel. The only person who was supposed to be the real library expert on the task force turned out to be unreliable. After

Library of Congress

about two months, I told Barry, "Look, I need help. I want to get off of this study and cancel it or I need some bodies who can perform. I gave him a few names and he agreed to them. They we got started in earnest and it worked out very well. I thing we produced the most comprehensive study of the libraries that has every been done in the Agency. There were recommendations for improvements in many areas, but the most valuable parts of the report were, in the Appendix. We had separate chapters in the Appendix, one of which showed what kind of library was appropriate for each type of host country. We had a matrix that related country characteristics and resources to the kind of library that should serve it. They ranged from a reading room and an electronic reference center with on-line, database capabilities in the information section to major open libraries. We also had an incredibly well-done chapter on the technology of libraries today, which was done by a library technology specialist. It was all in there, but unfortunately, as we were moving along with the study, which took about six months to complete, Congress was developing proposals to close down all European libraries and the libraries in all of the OECD countries, which included Australia, New Zealand and Canada, on grounds that they were friendly countries and there was no justification for spending tax payer's money to provide library services to affluent people who could easily afford them. The reason for dumping their libraries was that a congressman was looking for \$30 million to fund a nuclear energy project in a former Soviet republic and had his staff go through the federal budget to find out where they could find the money. They stumbled on the Agency's library budget and discovered that the cost of running the OECD libraries was about \$10 million. The Congressman and staff saw this as an easy target that would have little political support. So they proposed cutting then.

Q: Incredible!

MORAD: That's how it got started. The Agency handled the hearings and the negotiations with the Hill very badly, but finally it got a delay in implementation and the Agency promised to do a study and come up with some other recommendations. People thought that our library study was the response to this, which it was not. It preceded the

Library of Congress

Congressional proposal and was done for a separate purpose. But the whole issue with Congress came to a head at the same time our library study was completed and when the Agency was changing leadership. The new Agency leadership decided to put a hold on the library report until it had a chance to study it and to await the outcome of negotiations with Congress on the OECD libraries. That is where it stood when I retired.

Well, since then the Agency has gone through a major reorganization, and the library division was transferred to the new Information Bureau. As I understand it, the Library Division itself may be dismantled or significantly reduced, and the relationship to the overseas libraries changed as a result. I am not sure to what extent our library study's recommendations are relevant anymore, given the change that has taken place. That is probably why you haven't heard of it or it has not been published. And so my original prediction or concern about taking the job, of course, was justified. The library study is gathering dust on the shelves along with all of its predecessors.

Q: Well just a few more things and then we will wind this up. How do you see the overall role of the USIA? Is it a major influence or is it one of a number of support elements for pursuing U.S. foreign policy objectives?

FINAL THOUGHTS

MORAD: I think USIA is, basically, a support element. I think we liked to see ourselves as a live function over the years, in many ways almost competing with State Department and traditional diplomacy for achieving foreign policy objectives. I think that has always been a pipe dream and never been accepted by anybody except misguided USIS Foreign Service Officers who needed to think they were more important and what they were doing was more important than in reality it was. I think cultural and information programs are essentially components of support for our traditional diplomatic efforts. I don't think they stand alone or are separate or independent from traditional diplomacy. I have always seen USIA in a subordinate position to the State Department, unlike some Agency

Library of Congress

officers. I think that with the end of the cold war the Agency in one form or another will be dismantled, that some of its component parts will be absorbed into the State Department and maybe others by other Government agencies. People have been saying that for years and it has never happened. It is very difficult to dismantle a government bureaucracy. I was prepared to accept USIA's dismantling, in fact supported the idea in the late 70s when reorganization of USIA was being debated.

Q: Was it the Stanton Commission?

MORAD: It was the Stanton Commission, which in the end did not make the recommendation; there was little support for absorbing the Agency's functions into the State Department. My theory, which turned out to be partly true, is that the Agency was so small and insignificant that it would never enjoy much political support in Washington and would become vulnerable to political manipulation and to the appointment of political hacks to key positions. In my view, that is exactly what happened during the Reagan Administration. I understand that political appointees are a natural part of the political process in Washington, but I think the Reagan appointees were more ideological and militant and intent on churning and revolutionizing agency operations. They were also more suspicious of and hostile to career employees. I don't remember attitudes like that among previous appointees. I think that also began a more serious politicalization of the Agency than we had ever experienced before. We are still going through that process even today.

Q: Are there any other comments before we end this?

MORAD: I appreciate getting all these stream of consciousness thoughts registered on your tape recorder. I guess maybe I'll close by saying that despite the fact that I've been somewhat of a discontent with the Agency—over the years I have not always felt comfortable either with my role or the Agency's—looking back on it my career has been largely more satisfying and rewarding financially and in terms of experiences than I

Library of Congress

expected my career as a journalist to be. It also enabled me to tell my mother, if she were still living, that I proved her wrong. When I was a kid she would always say that I would never be able to hold down a job. I can say now, "Look Mom, I held a job for 33 years."

Lots of different jobs. And one reason I think I was able to do that is exactly the point that you made. In the Foreign Service we had a single umbrella organization, but within it there is built-in regular change. Every two, three or four years we are working in a different job, with a different cast of characters in a different place for the most part. So we have change, built-in change within a stable structure, and I think that is very advantageous.

Q: And variety is the spice of life!

MORAD: I agree. For somebody like me who has an impatient nature, if I had held as many jobs as I have had in the Agency I would have been a real itinerant and probably have no financial or seniority stake built up in any of them. But within the Foreign Service, we are able to experience change and have a stable career structure at the same time. I will close by saying it reminds me of the time when we were in the building at 776 Pennsylvania Avenue. I was part of a car pool of Foreign Service Officers driving in from Reston. One day after work we were waiting for our car in the garage and there were three or four GS employees also waiting for their car. They were all in a very festive mood. It looked as though they had all been drinking and partying. We asked them what the occasion was and they said, "We are celebrating the 18th anniversary of our car pool together." The four of us looked at each other and thought, "Oh, my God!"

Q: That is a good note to end on. This has been an interview with retired USIA Foreign Service officer, James L. Morad. The interview was conducted May 9, 1994 in Washington, DC.

End of interview