United States Foreign Assistance Oral History Program

Foreign Affairs Oral History Collection

An Interview with

Donald S. Brown

1996

Association for Diplomatic Studies and Training
Arlington, Virginia

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ASSOCIATION FOR DIPLOMATIC STUDIES AND TRAINING
ORAL HISTORY COLLECTION

The Association for Diplomatic Studies and Training, a non-profit, tax-exempt organization, was established in 1986 to enhance the training of foreign affairs personnel and to instill in the public a greater appreciation for our diplomatic history.

The Association's Foreign Affairs Oral History Program was established in 1988 and is housed in the Lauinger Library of Georgetown University and at the Foreign Service Institute in Arlington, VA. The collection is comprised of oral histories taken from a number of projects, with the unifying factor that all concern the conduct of American foreign affairs and experiences of those employed in the field of diplomacy and consular affairs and their families.

The oral history collection includes interviews done under the auspices of the Foreign Service History Center of George Washington University, which was amalgamated into the Foreign Affairs Oral History Program, the Foreign Service Family Project, the Women Ambassadors' Project, the United States Information Agency Alumni Association Project, the Foreign Assistance (AID) Oral History Project, the Senior Officers' Project, the Labor Diplomacy Oral History Project and others.

The aim of the US Foreign Assistance Oral History Program, in particular, is to develop a collection of oral histories of those who have served USAID and predecessor agencies and those who have served in foreign assistance programs of associated organizations such as private firms, private voluntary organizations, and other US government agencies. The Center for Development Information and Evaluation (CDIE) of the USAID has made a grant to help finance the preparation of 120 oral histories.

For the most part these interviews are carried out by retired USAID personnel on a volunteer basis, directed by the Oral History Program. The interviews are unclassified, and unless so marked are available for use by researchers. Most of these interviews have been transcribed and then returned to the person interviewed for editing. The transcript is an edited version, and is not a word for word rendition of the cassette tape. The editing usually consists of correcting of names and dates that have been missed during an interview. The individual interviewed may also choose to expand upon topics that may not have been developed in the time allotted for the interview.

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Administrator Douglas Bennett
Administrator Bill Gaud
Administrator David Bell
Administrator Peter McPherson
Administrator John Hannah
Africa Bureau, USAID
African Development Fund-USAID
agricultural education
agriculture
Algeria
American University of Beirut (AUB)
Assistant Administrator Samuel Adams (Africa Bureau)
balance of payments support-commodity import programs
Basic Human Needs
block grants
BLS countries (Botswana, Lethoso, Swaziland)
Carlucci Commission on Peace and Security
cash transfers
Club du Sahel (Club des Amies du Sahel)
Congress
decentralized development programs
democracy programs
education programs
Egypt
Ethiopia
family planning programs
food aid
food for work
Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)
geological survey
Grameen Bank, Bangladesh
Hassan II Institute of Agriculture and Veterinary Medicine
industry
infrastructure
institutional development
International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD)
Iran
irrigation - water retention dikes
Israel
King Idriss
King Hassan
liberalization
Libya
Libyan-American Commission
Morocco
Oklahoma State University
participant training-overseas education
PL 480
policy reform
policy dialogue
poverty programs
President Ford
President Carter
President Kennedy
President Nixon
President Mobuto
President Anwar Sadat
President Johnson
private sector
Private Voluntary Agencies (PVOs)
Sahel
Sahel Development Program
Senator Kennedy
Senator Humphrey
Shah Reza Pahlevi
Somalia
State Department
subsidies
Sudan
Technical Cooperation Administration (TCA)- Point Four
United Nations Development Program (UNDP)
USAID Executive Secretary
Vietnam
water resource program
Wheelus Airforce Base
World Bank
women in development
Woodrow Wilson School- Princeton University
World Food Conference 1974
Zaire (Congo)

United States Foreign Assistance Oral History Program
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Association for Diplomatic Studies and Training

An interview with
Donald S. Brown

Interviewed by: W. Haven North
Initial interview date: December 4, 1996

(Note: This Oral History combines the text written by Don Brown in advance of the interview. The text from the interview provides a supplement to the written text and is incorporated in various sections of the overall text.)

Early years and education

Q: You served with AID for how many years, Don?

BROWN: I was with AID for a little over thirty years. I retired from AID in 1983 and went on from there to the United Nations and IFAD.

Q: Let's start off with a description of where you grew up and your early education with the emphasis how you got interested in international affairs and international development.

BROWN: I was brought up in Garden City on Long Island, New York. I had two older brothers. The oldest, Dean Brown, later being involved in the diplomatic services and the middle brother, Bob, having had a lot of interest in foreign affairs although his work in that area was largely in social research and the like.

I graduated from Garden City High School as did both of my brothers. Somebody had suggested that I should be an engineer as my father had been so I went to Cornell for a year. But I must say I didn't do very well because my math was lousy. I ended up on probation and I decided that I had better go off and think about what I wanted to do with myself. I joined the army for two years. I was lucky enough to get into Officer Candidate School and spent the last year of my time in the military as a Second Lieutenant in the infantry.

Q: Were you overseas?

BROWN: Always in the United States. I was fortunate to be in that period in between wars in which the United States was involved so there was no real need to be overseas. It was clear to me as I thought about things that I liked the concept of doing something with social benefits, whatever that might mean. I also needed to look for a school that thought in those terms and I ended up choosing Antioch College because it has a very open system and liberal concepts, as well as its work-study program. I studied economics and labor relations with the thought of

going into some form of work in labor relations. And my work periods at Antioch were related to that.

However, at the end of school, Mark Gordon, who was then the executive director of the Technical Cooperation Administration-Point 4, and who had been recruiting Antioch students for part time work activities in Point 4, met me and after some long conversations asked if I would join him when he was going out to become the first Director of the Point 4 program in Ethiopia. That sounded interesting although I didn't know too much about it, but I had felt very positive about Truman and his policies including his concepts of aid programs and particularly the Point 4 program.

Q: Had you had any work-study programs at TCA before that or was this the first time?

BROWN: No. I had never had a work-study program at TCA, although I did a work-study program with MSA for a period of time where I worked with Joe Mintzes, with whom I worked many years later in Zaire.

Q: What kind of work were you doing then?

BROWN: I was just doing some very simple research work.

Q: How did you get connected with the Foreign Aid Program from Antioch? Why that as opposed to something else?

BROWN: Well, as I say, Mark was interviewing people for work-study programs in TCA for 2-3 month periods. In that process, the fellow that runs the study program from the college, knowing I was graduating, made it a point to bring Mark and I together. We hit it off very well. And Mark needed a junior officer to go with him. That was all very well and we thought we would welcome such an assignment. But then we discovered that because my wife was not yet an American citizen I was not allowed to take a Foreign Service assignment. Instead, I took the junior management test, passed it and managed to come in as an intern into the Washington offices of Point 4, working in part on back-stopping to the Ethiopia program. So, why did I do this? Because, as I say, I had an interest in humanitarian issues without having very much direction and I realized that my studies in economics and labor relations were useful in some respects and my Antioch studies gave me a broad enough background. And Antioch was the kind of school that gave you a broad background. So, that is how I got started.

Q: Was your brother in Foreign Service then?

BROWN: Yes. He was a Foreign Service Officer. He had returned from the Second World War and finished up his college and went directly into Foreign Service at that point. He was on his first major assignment in the Congo...Zaire today.

Q: Did talking with him stimulate your interest,?

BROWN: Oh yes. Of course. There was some interest that flowed from that. I think it was a range of forces and to be perfectly frank when Mark Gordon talked to me and told me about Ethiopia, I looked it up on the map to make sure where it was... I thought I knew. And I saw it was on the other side of France and I thought if I could go there then Micheline could come with me and see her family. It was incidental, but a nice thought.

Introductory assignment with TCA 1952-1954

BROWN: I joined TCA in 1952 for an initial Washington assignment. I worked with Cedric Seager, Ed Felder and Adele Boke largely in support of this new Ethiopia program. While much of what I did was relatively routine operational work, I did become directly involved in negotiations with Oklahoma State University in what would become an important agricultural education project in Ethiopia, one which proved over time to have a major impact on agricultural training there. I was also pleased that part of my functions indirectly involved the recruitment of Haven North, one of the stars of U.S. economic development programs.

During this period I deeply appreciated the action of my supervisors when they fought to get me my first promotion well ahead of normal time and then when they sponsored me to take part in a summer-long State Department seminar involving about 20 officers from State, Defense, CIA and myself at the American University of Beirut (AUB) followed by brief visits to several Near Eastern countries. Micheline was able to join me during the time in Beirut. This was our first real exposure to the Middle East and we began a life-long interest in the region and appreciation of Arab culture. At AUB we were thoroughly exposed to the deep concern felt in the Arab world by the establishment of the state of Israel and the strong concern about the future of Palestinian refugees. This same concern was repeated in each of the Arab countries which we visited thereafter — and, of course, in Tel Aviv we heard equally strong Israeli views on the legitimacy of this new State. It became clear to us that the region was facing deeply antagonistic cultures and states and that establishing enduring peace would not be easily achieved — and those antagonisms have in fact led to continuing conflicts which have not yet been overcome.

After two years in Washington, Cedric Seager arranged for me to have an assignment in Iran.

First overseas assignment in USOM/Iran 1954-1956

BROWN: We found Iran to be a fascinating first field assignment. We arrived shortly after Shah Reza Pahlevi had been restored to power following a CIA organized coup d'etat which overthrew the Mossedeq government— a regime then considered dangerous to Western petroleum interests. It was considered an important part of American policy to support Iranian development efforts to demonstrate the validity of the Pahlevi regime. As a result, the Point 4 (TCA) Mission was enormous, over 200 Americans, 10 field posts, a relatively large budget, and strong influence on governmental developmental (and, indirectly, political) policy.

In the first year I worked as Special Assistant to Director Bill Warne, a wonderful, thoughtful, very politically attuned activist, a former Director of the Bureau of Reclamation. A close

colleague and friend, also a Special Assistant to Warne, was Reza Ansari, who much later became Prime Minister of Iran. We lived an often contradictory and fascinating life — as the youngest and most junior staff member, my wife and I were relatively free to wander around Tehran and to meet a wide variety of working and middle class Iranians. At the same time, because of my close working relation to Warne, we were often invited to dinners and receptions given by high level Iranian officials. It was not unusual to spend a day poking around nooks and crannies of Tehran and then that night go to a gala dinner at the home of the Minister of Planning or the Minister of Court. It was a heady mixture.

We also had freedom to travel extensively—privately and on USOM business, often accompanying Bill Warne. When he first asked me to go on a trip, he recalled his own first trip with a senior, one-armed Bureau of Reclamation official. When Warne asked that official what should be his functions, the official pointed to his missing arm and said "carry my bags". In a sense, that was my role working with Warne—seldom directly involved in decision making, I was working so closely with him and his immediate associates that I had a wonderful chance to see how that process was carried out. I would note that Micheline and I had the great pleasure of seeing the Warnes again many years later when he was in Egypt on an assignment with the International Executive Service Corps.

When I first arrived in Iran, Lucy Adams was head of the Isfahan field office. Her idea of a vacation was to accompany Isfahan tribal groups on their annual trek from the mountains to the plains. After my first year, Lucy became Program Officer and asked me to join her there. This gave me good experience in watching the program formulation process. Again my work was essentially routine as such, although I did have an important role in better organizing and chronicling what was done as part of the historical record. However, I was engaged in all the key meetings which Lucy chaired or attended. It was a wonderful working with someone like Lucy with her dynamism, charm and gracious manners.

Still, some of the senior staff were rather fuddy-duddy. A sign of this was the comment by one senior mission official who objected to the lack of clarity in dinner invitations calling for informal dress — he noted that things were clearer when he was young, when informal meant black tie.

It was clear from our range of contacts with Iranians that Islam—Shiite Islam—played an important part in the lives of many. It was also obvious that poverty and misery were wide spread. At the same time, however, the Shah and his government initiated extensive land reform measures which were bringing significant improvements to at least some small farmers and these efforts were firmly supported by the Point 4 Program. However, they raised strong antipathy among the clergy and the landholding class—the clergy, since some religious lands were affected. I must admit, however, that, despite what had already happened in the Mossedeq period, we did not foresee the kind of changes which took place in Iran several years later—though on reflection they were not totally surprising.

Certainly, in the short run, the TCA program achieved many of its prime objectives—a certain amount of political stability, the beginning of important agricultural changes, a vast program of education and training, including sending thousands of Iranians to the U.S. for training. But perhaps it laid some of the seeds of destruction of the Pahlevi regime by supporting change which was imposed and sudden, by the exposure of thousands of Iranian students to democratic regimes which contrasted sharply with that of the Shah, and by an overly close association between the U.S. and Iran—an association which became even closer in the decades which followed.

A great event during our stay in Tehran was the birth of our first son— Alain Bahram Brown—whose middle name derived from a close friend who later became Minister of Health, Bahram Farmanfarmaian.

While life in Tehran was fascinating in many ways for the reasons already mentioned, it was not always easy. Water was a major problem. There was no central water supply and the bulk of our water was delivered by "jube"—the open gutter through which water poured down from the mountains and then was distributed throughout the city. While we were better off than many, living at a higher point than much of the city, we carried the smell of Iranian jube water in our linen and clothes for a long time thereafter. It is maddening when you have to boil all water, even the baby's bath water. But the fascination of Tehran outweighed the difficulties for both Micheline and I.

Transfer to USOM/Libya program office — 1956-1958

BROWN: Four years after he had brought me into the organization as a Junior Management Intern, I finally got to work with Marc Gordon who had moved on to be Director in Libya. At that time, Libya was the quiet kingdom of Idriss, years before the Ghadafi revolution and turmoil.

While the USOM program was an active and interesting one, Libya was in many ways a disappointment after the excitement of Iran. The Government was largely without resources (this was the pre-oil period when the largest export was scrap metal left over from World War II) and trained staff. Most people we dealt with lacked the worldliness of many of the Iranians we had known. Women in particular had few educational opportunities and possibilities of meaningful exchange with them (even by Micheline and other caring wives) was difficult. Tripoli was a pleasant but unexciting and plain city and Cyrenica was little different.

On the other hand, there were exceptionally well preserved Roman, Phoenician and Greek ruins scattered along the coastal areas and these made for interesting outings. Housing was certainly adequate if simple and the beaches were a pleasure.

There were really two U.S. aid programs going on. One, the USOM, ran a modest range of rather useful programs, with heavy emphasis on training and on water resources. I have been pleased over the years to meet many very able Libyans who participated in USOM educational

programs, both in Libya itself and in the U.S. Major contributions to the agricultural education system endure to this day. Heavy emphasis on water conservation techniques still mark Libyan agricultural programs.

Q: In your discussion of the program in Libya, you made a comment about major contributions in agricultural education and so on. Could you elaborate a little more on what were the contributions you were talking about?

BROWN: We helped in the establishment of a structure of agricultural secondary schools. And while there was no agricultural university at that particular point in time, we did a lot of participant training of people intended to develop future capacity for university level teaching.

Q: Were there any agricultural schools before?

BROWN: There were no true agricultural schools. There were a couple of schools that professed to have some responsibilities for agriculture but they had no farms. They had very little in the way of practical agriculture. We were interested in introducing the concept of practical agriculture training for agricultural leadership. And I think we did something. I have met Libyans since then who have gone out of their way to talk about the fact that they had been to those agricultural schools and really benefitted enormously from the system that we helped to establish. So I think that was important.

The second American aid program was organized as a form of compensation for the installation of a major U.S. defense facility, Wheelus Air Force Base, which continued to exist until closed by the Ghadafi regime. This program was run by the Libyan American Commission and concentrated on building a wide range of infrastructure facilities—highways, urban improvements and the like. Nominally headed by a Libyan official, the program's Executive Director was Erv Hannum, a U.S. official on secondment to the Libyan Government. Erv was a dynamic and able man, but many of us in the USOM were concerned at the heavy emphasis on infrastructure of a nature and capacity of questionable viability (although some of the Commission programs proved very useful once petroleum deposits were exploited).

The Commission programs certainly met their political objective, to assure continued access for Wheelus Air Base, at least up until the Ghadafi coup. While it can perhaps be argued that the coup was engendered in part as a reaction to the existence of the base, it is likely the base would have disappeared in time under even favorable circumstances as defense needs varied. As for USOM programs, their most important impact was that of exposure through training and education. Even in today's circumstances, one remains able to deal reasonably effectively with many senior Libyan officials because of that earlier exposure.

Marc Gordon was normally an active and concerned leader but was weighed down in this period by two problems —certain family concerns plus the "support" of a very nice but extremely weak political appointee as Deputy. Dick Cashin provided very strong leadership as Program Officer

and Lloyd (Doc) Jonnes' economic analyses were exceedingly thoughtful—he more than anyone else saw the potential role that petroleum might play. For my own part, I had far more opportunity to work directly with senior technical advisers than had been true in Iran. For someone like myself, with no technical training or background outside of economics, it was good to begin to work with education, agricultural, health technicians and the like and to understand better the kinds of issues with which one needed to be concerned. But I cannot deny I still approached these issues far too much as an outsider with too little appreciation for how our ideas should fit into local circumstances.

One thing I certainly learned was the ability of Roman builders. A large Bureau of Reclamation staff was doing useful work on water conservation. They located a large wadi where 2,000 years earlier the Romans had built a series of water retention dikes for several kilometers down the wadi which had obviously been successful in their time. The Reclamation team rebuilt the system using all the Roman foundations and following the overall Roman plan. The result was wonderful—the valley flourished once more and the project became an outstanding success. The Reclamation people decided to do the same on their own, so they went through a similar process in a nearby wadi — but using their own designs. It looked like the other—and cost even more. But when the first floods hit the valley, the entire reclamation effort ended as a huge pile of stones at the bottom of the system. After that it was back to basics! But the U.S. was not alone. The British built a huge damming structure in the plains between the Jebel and Tripoli intended to control flooding in the city. The first real storm created rubble surpassed only by Libya's Roman ruins.

Libya produced another Brown, when our second son, Dean, was born at the hospital at Wheelus Air Base. While this was certainly a good hospital with some capable staff, there was a strong tendency among male doctors to look down on and act poorly with women patients, including unfortunately Micheline. In the end we regretted having relied upon it.

On the whole, I would rate Libya as having been at the low end of our assignments, overtaken only by many of the hardships encountered in our next assignment—Somalia.

Program Officer in the USOM in Somalia—1959-1961

BROWN: We arrived in Mogadiscio, where I was assigned as Program Officer, about 18 months before the 30 June 1960 Somali Independence Day and stayed about one year after that date. Since Italian and British Somaliland joined together only at independence, our first 18 months were in the Italian area and we worked largely (though not entirely) with Italian officials — most of whom stayed on as important advisers in the post-independence period.

The rationale for a program in Somalia at that time was not abundantly clear, although it was considered that the Horn of Africa was a geographically important area where stability should be preserved. In effect, it appears to have been undertaken largely as a result of Italian interest in assuring some economic improvement in a country where they had important stakes. The mission itself, up to independence, was in fact an off-shoot of the USOM mission to Italy. While

the U.S. presence had been promoted primarily by the Italian Government, there were substantial differences between what the U.S. sought to achieve and Italian interests. As in many other Point 4 type technical assistance programs of this period, the United States sought to build capacity for the future —in agriculture, in educational and training programs and the like (but also in a strengthened national police force). The Italians, on the other hand, were far more political in their efforts, aimed primarily at assuring a continued major presence and role after independence.

Will Muller was a capable and active Mission Director. We had some excellent senior technical staff, but also some with really strange ideas—our senior engineer wanted to create a new port at Chisimaio by using nuclear explosions! Although the diplomatic mission was only a Consulate in the initial period, it had highly able young officers, especially Dick Post as Political Officer and Mike Ely as Economic Officer and they were a constant help to us in the aid mission.

Although I was then only an FSS-5, I was named as Program Officer in an FSS-3 position — and my deputy was Clark George, who was himself an FSS-3. This could have been a terribly embarrassing and difficult situation for both of us, but especially for him. I give him great credit for taking it well, making it possible for us to work productively together. Will Muller's understanding was also critical in making this relationship work.

Life was certainly not easy in Mogadiscio—with water again a major problem. The household system used saline water delivered by truck while drinking water was limited to that in jerry cans and large glass demijohns delivered every two weeks (but the demijons at least serve as lamp bases in our household today). The first house to which we were assigned by the administrative section had shutters but no windows—but lots of bugs. While we sprayed the interior once every two weeks, the lack of windows made this a rather useless process. The geckos were useful for some bug control although rather annoying when they fell on us in bed. One had to close all water passages (sinks, bathtubs etc.) tightly or the cockroaches invaded in force. We gave our dog to friends because of the heavy tick infestation in the yard. Constant illness hit family members, all exacerbated by an absolute lack of decent medical facilities. Our son Dean became so sick and so weak Micheline had to take him to Nairobi for over a month of care and recovery. We thank to this day the thoughtfulness and consideration at what was then Gertrude Gardens Hospital in Muthaiga.

Soon after that, the senior State Department Medical Adviser visited Mogadiscio and immediately condemned the house and ordered us out of it. Amazingly enough, several years later a State regional medical adviser was assigned to that same house and ended up being evacuated with gangrene infections. One does wonder whether our systems couldn't have better memory banks.

The USOM mission was located in a compound of several buildings which had earlier been used, we were told, as a brothel for Italian military officers. It had gone downhill by the time we occupied it. I was fascinated when several years later I visited Mogadiscio (as IFAD Vice President) and found myself calling on the Permanent Secretary of Interior who was located in the same office which I had occupied when assigned to Somalia.

At the time of independence Somalis proclaimed their singleness, whether coming from Italian, British, or French Somaliland, the Ogaden region of Ethiopia or the Northeast province of Kenya—thus the five pointed Somali flag—because of common heritage, language (spoken but not then written), religion etc. Little was then said, particularly at the political level, of the importance of clan relationships although some clan based songs were forbidden. At one point the Somali-American Women's Club, of which Micheline was President, organized a sort of dancing lesson for those Somali women whose husbands had studied abroad and enjoyed Western dances. Some of the Somali women then demonstrated their songs, several of them being forbidden. The police finally came and closed down the affair — and the next day Russian diplomats were quoted as saying this was another example of Western cultural imperialism. In any event, I must recognize my own lack of foresight in failing to understand just how deep these currents were running and what they would mean in terms of total breakdown of any kind of organized state 30 years later.

At independence there were virtually no Somalis with university training. To the degree we could, the USOM program put heavy emphasis on educational activities, and these were pursued by others who followed us. It was good to see, during my visit many years later, the much larger number of trained and able Somali technicians, many of whom had studied in the United States. It is regrettable that political wisdom did not match that growth in technical ability.

We were blessed during this period with the birth of our third son, Christopher, although that event had to take place in Nairobi because of the lack of proper facilities in Mogadiscio. On the whole, while we had many Somali friends and found them an attractive and agreeable people, for a variety of reasons this was our hardest and least well remembered post.

A new assignment as Program Officer in USAID/Sudan 1961-1963

BROWN: Having passed through Khartoum airport on many occasions, when the temperature was in the high 90s at 2 am, we had some reservations about going to the Sudan after Somalia. However, these were soon overcome by the pleasure we had in gaining many Sudanese friends, in finding so many sophisticated men and women who were well educated and well trained and real experts in their field and who gave us a warm welcome wherever we went.

Bill Wild was the USAID Director. A wonderful, colorful figure who looked remarkably like Yul Brynner (and loved signing Brynner's autograph when asked by people in the street), Bill was well liked throughout the international and Sudanese communities and that made the work of all his team easier. More an activist than intellectual, Bill gave his senior staff lots of room to make their own contributions. That in turn gave me broad scope to work again with technical leadership on a range of programs in health, education, agriculture, geological services and the like, programs which seemed to make reasonable and enduring contributions to these particular activities.

Important funding was also provided in the form of budget support through food aid and commodity import programs. When I arrived we were seeking to reduce this dependence on

budget support but Sudan's huge and unending financial problems remain in an even more grave state today than was true at that time. But the circumstances did give me my first opportunity to work closely with the Central Bank Governor and senior Ministry of Finance officials on broad development and financial policy issues. Many of these senior economic officials were exceedingly able and went on to important functions in international organizations, banks and the like. Yet their ability to bring real change to Sudan was limited, largely I think because there is something in Sudanese culture which resists decision making and problem resolution. It is discouraging to see how the Sudan, whether under dictatorial or democratic regimes, seems to be incapable of real movement and improvement despite these many able people. When I read about Sudan today, virtually all the problems we were dealing with in the early 60s remain largely unsolved, causing continued poverty and misery.

An important Sudanese personage has been Sadik el Mahdi. Even when we first met him as a young man he was well known due to his father's and grandfather's religious and political roles but he was still only at the edge of the political scene during our period when a military government reigned. I was deeply impressed by his wisdom and his views on how to deal with Sudan's difficulties. I thought it was good when he became Prime Minister many years later. I then had the pleasure of a long conversation with him in Rome when he took part in one of IFAD's Governing Councils. I was once again struck by his understanding and thoughtfulness. His comments on failures of the previous Nimeri dictatorship and his very sound analysis of Nimeri's errors in dealing with the problems of dissidence in Southern Sudan seemed very accurate. Unfortunately he became another example of the disappointments one can face in Sudan when some months later he carried out many of the same kind of negative actions towards the South which had been part of Nimeri's downfall — and also became a part of Sadik's own downfall.

I have always tried to work in close harmony with State colleagues. However, Ambassador Moose, a fine Arabist but strongly conservative about the usefulness of assistance programs, was difficult. At one point we were called upon to prepare a multi-year major program document (I believe it was Jim Grant who, at the time, designed the format to be used), which was to be submitted to Washington through the Ambassador. I worked very hard on that presentation which projected the need for continued technical assistance in many fields and also called for continuing but diminishing budget support. It was reviewed carefully within the aid mission as well as with senior Embassy staff. It was fully supported by DCM Tom McElhiney and Political Counselor Peter Chase. We presented it at a two hour long Country Team session. Again there was essentially unanimous support among the USOM and Embassy staffs.

At the end, however, Ambassador Moose expressed his view that any aid to the Sudan was a waste of money. He stated we could submit the program but he would prepare and submit his own commentary, which he did in a two page State Department condemnatory message. The result was that our proposals became a Best Seller within the Department —and in the end were fully endorsed by both State and ICA.

Q: What was the character of that program that you were putting forward that seemed to cause some controversy?

BROWN:BRO I don't think it caused any trouble with anybody else but Ambassador Moose. Simply put, Ambassador Moose was basically opposed to aid in any form. Ours was a fairly straight forward presentation. We had put a lot of work and effort into the justification and so forth. It was justification for certain types of technical assistance, a small amount of capital aid particularly in the transport sector which we felt was an important one and a certain amount of financial assistance including PL-480 because of the extreme financial circumstances which were facing Sudan at the time. And I must say have been facing Sudan ever since then.

Q: Do you remember any particular technical assistance projects that were unique at that time or special?

BROWN: Again, we were doing a lot of work in the field of education. I must say I found that interesting since I had not dealt very much with educational programs before that time. On reflection I realize that it wasn't a very focused program. To be perfectly frank, I'm not sure just what was the longer term impact.

We worked very hard with the Geological Survey which was important for the Sudan, being such a vast country and so badly charted. It was important for them to have better geological survey information and we did a lot of work with them. There I think we were particularly successful because they had a small cadre of very good people. We also provided a lot of training, along with equipment and new ideas.

Q: What were they surveying?

BROWN: They were developing essentially better mapping and geographical understanding. How the country was structured and where there might be various minerals and so forth. Where good agricultural land was located and what this meant for transport systems and the like. It was just basic information which really was a part...

Q: Was it part of an institution?

BROWN: Yes. There was in existence a small geographic or geologic service but it was mal-equipped. And while it had some good people in it there was no depth. But it gave us a good structure with which to be able to work and I think we did a lot to bring it along to become really become quite a first class geologic service.

Q: Any other projects you want to mention at this point?

BROWN: Well, there were some specific road projects. Again, Sudan was a country with vast distances and vast difficulties. And we provided some help in this area. Particularly connections into the Gezira where the Gezira cotton development scheme was taking place. We did some

work in industry and helped to bring about some industrial investments by helping to make connections to the right people and that sort of thing.

Q: Was the program country wide or mostly south or mostly north?

BROWN: It was mostly north. Later AID moved the program much further afield and particularly out into the desert areas of the west. It was a relatively new program and really concentrated largely on needs as seen from Khartoum. Before, for several years before I got there, it had essentially been a financial program and not a technical assistance program. So the technical assistance program was really just beginning. We concentrated heavily on the north and not even the northwestern desert area.

Q: So you didn't have much exposure to the problems of the south?

BROWN: No. No. Very little. We were well aware of them of course, because of the conflict that existed even at that time. But, no, I never traveled in the south. Our people did not travel in the south. We knew very little about the real circumstances there.

Q: You say here that you were involved for the first time in broader policy issues. Do you want to elaborate on what those issues were?

BROWN: As I say, the Sudan was facing then, as it has ever since, major financial problems-shortages of resources, poor allocation of resources, great gaps in social services and the like. And part of our assistance was in the form of financial aid, direct financial aid, as well as PL-480, and it was a question of trying to assist in developing reasonable policies for budget management and for proper allocation of those resources. It was essentially that. It was not a deep, broad program. But for me who had never dealt in that area, it was a strikingly interesting thing to think about.

Q: What kind of reception did you get from the Sudanese?

BROWN: I think certainly from the financial crowd we got a good reception. We worked closely with them and they recognized full well the importance of our resources. They were not disturbed by our taking an interest and a role and working with them on the utilization of those resources. The Sudanese economists, while they tried valiantly frankly had much less success in getting the Sudanese government to keep the kind of discipline that was necessary. And that again, has been a perpetual problem of the Sudan ever since then.

Life in Khartoum was far more agreeable than we had anticipated. While there was much hot weather, the winters were cool and refreshing, a real delight. Year-round dryness made Khartoum far more comfortable than the muggy climate of Mogadiscio. We had a modest but pleasant house — with no bugs. We traveled less than usual, partly due to difficulties of transport to many regions. Khartoum was well equipped with wonderful tennis clubs and Micheline and I played more actively than before. A group of us enjoyed night time picnics on the edge of the Nile,

hoping we had found locations where there were no crocodiles. Another group enjoyed music and we had a series of musical suppers going on. Downtown movie houses were open air but equipped with boxes and several of us would go together, sharing a form of picnic supper while watching the show. In almost all of these events we were a mixed group of Americans, Sudanese and other nationalities.

One distressing element of the weather, however, were the haboobs or dust storms — storms which would suddenly gust up bringing absolute clouds of dust which filtered into everything and left one blind if outdoors. You could always tell when a haboob was coming, even on a clear day, by a smell in the air and then the first traces of dust. During one of our nighttime Nile picnics, a dozen of us smelled such a storm coming. We rushed back into our cars and headed for the city — but within a few minutes we were absolutely lost in the sand — barely able to follow each other. We circled around and around, getting even further lost. Finally, someone spotted a well lit "road" and we all started rolling down it, waiting to see where it led. Only when this "road" came to an end did we discover we had been driving down the main runway of Khartoum airport.

We have always had a wide range of pets around the house — a gazelle in Tripoli, a cheetah in Mogadiscio, dogs and cats in every post. In Khartoum we adopted for a while a young white mehari (racing) camel who was great fun. We nursed him with milk in a beer bottle with an ingenious kind of nipple. He would wait at the gate when we went out for the evening and then nuzzle his neck around ours when we returned. He later became very famous as an actor on television advertisements for Camel Beer, and drinking his milk from a beer bottle made him a real success.

As a whole we enjoyed our time in Khartoum. We had a good mission and I was involved for the first time in broader policy issues. We thoroughly enjoyed our Sudanese and international friends— Micheline in particular had a much more active interchange with Sudanese than had been possible in Libya and even in Somalia and she particularly enjoyed her time teaching French to young students at the American school. This time we regretted leaving the post.

Deputy Executive Secretary and then Executive Secretary in Washington: 1963-1965

BROWN: I started off this assignment in Washington as Tunisia Desk Officer for a short while. My Assistant Administrator was Ed Hutchinson. Hutch was a tough task master but open and fair and I came to admire him greatly. Many years later Owen Cylke and I asked Hutch to come to Egypt to chair a mission staff retreat, which he did in his usual admirable way. One Saturday I met with him to make a presentation on some program ideas for Tunisia on which we had been working very hard. Hutch listened carefully, asked probing questions and seemed close to agreement. However, at the end he said he simply could not buy the idea — but "I admire your manner and the way you put the case so strongly". That made up for the disappointment in having our ideas turned down (Hutch, by the way, was probably quite right in the decision he took).

After a short while, Fred Simmons, who was then the AID Executive Secretary, invited me to join the Administrator's office as Deputy Executive Secretary. I leaped at the chance, even though Fred warned me the hours would be long and difficult. I later welcomed the chance to take Fred's place when he moved on to other activities.

Following a decade in the field, it was fascinating to work at the center of AID decision making. This was the time when most economic development activities had been brought together in one organization, AID, and Dave Bell was its first Administrator. He remains my ideal of what an AID Administrator should be all about. Highly intelligent, well grounded in finance and budgeting, deeply concerned about what assistance programs ought to aim at, idealistic at the same time as pragmatic and realistic, concerned with the problems of the poor but knowing the need to respond to political necessities, highly able as a bureaucrat and in his relations with the political world, and obviously well thought of in the White House, he was a great leader and a wonderful person with whom to work. While he sometimes seemed somewhat cool and reserved, I will never forget his thoughtfulness at one particular time. I was called to an emergency when one of our sons was rushed to the hospital. I did not get back to the office for two days. In that period, Dave called us at home at least three times to inquire how our son was faring.

Obviously Bell had some major issues to face in bringing this single AID agency into reality. He was wonderfully partnered by his Deputy, Bill Gaud. Bright, energetic, strong in his manner of expression (which often approached that of a master sergeant), Bill proved an excellent foil to Dave Bell and different as were their personalities they worked in excellent harmony.

The strong leadership of Bell and Gaud led to selection of a group of very able Assistant Administrators and Mission Directors. One important lesson I learned from them was the necessity to devote substantial time to personnel issues — selection, indoctrination, leadership, discipline, recognition. I had never realized that senior managers would spend up to a third of their time on various aspects of personnel issues, but that was certainly the case with Bell and Gaud.

While "growth" was still very much the central theoretical focus of development programs (Rostow's take-off concepts), Dave Bell showed great insight in his recognition of the problems of poverty and particularly of the need to build strong institutions to support development efforts. While faced by a President —Johnson—who travelled widely and often wanted to leave expensive development gifts behind him, many of which proved to be non-viable white elephants, Bell sought to insist that the vast bulk of resources go into meaningful longer term institutional and financial actions. I give him great credit for taking leadership in showing that neither gifts nor growth alone were the solution. As former Director of the Office of the Budget, Bell was extremely conscious of costs and demanded the highest possible level of performance per administrative dollar.

As the managers of the Executive Secretary's office, Fred Simmons and I were expected to remain neutral and avoid taking positions on issues which were being debated between the

Administrator's Office and the rest of the agency. Thus, in theory our jobs had little to do with real decision making. However, we saw that process in its most intimate manner. Further, by deciding what matters needed more consideration before going to Bell and Gaud for action, Fred and I carried a substantial substantive role. Bell and Gaud would often ask our views on particular issues which they were considering. Though some senior staff occasionally felt we carried our interventions too far, I think the majority appreciated what we were doing and were especially responsive when we demonstrated the manner in which the Administrator might react to an unsupported or inadequately vetted proposal.

Q: What was the development policy or strategy of AID at that time? I've gotten mixed views of what it was trying to encompass. This was in the early days. But, what was it?

BROWN: Well, really, I can't answer all of that. Although while I was around that office, a lot of this decision making was taking place far beyond my camp. But it was the first effort to try to bring various strings of American assistance together. There had previously been one agency essentially dealing with capital assistance, another one dealing with technical assistance and all that. This was an attempt to bring it together. It failed in one sense to do that adequately-which has been, frankly, a bane of AID ever since, that is, the relationships with the international banks and international organizations which stayed with Treasury. But in that period, Dave Bell was a strong enough person that he had substantial influence on US policy with respect to the World Bank and the regional banks.

So, one major effort was clearly to bring some order into programs which had been managed and carried out by a variety of different organizations. It was also of course, a period when despite the interest of people like Bell in development issues, the agency was being at least partially torn apart by Vietnam and increasing involvement of AID in Vietnam. And that was hard.

Q: You saw the effect of that while you were in this position?

BROWN: Only the beginnings.

Q: In what ways?

BROWN: A lot of time spent on the issue. Some people shifting their interest from development towards interest in combating guerilla warfare and the like. It was an era with Kennedy and then Johnson were interested in these kinds of things, that you could contain Communism by containing insurgence. Those ideas were always around.

I don't honestly know what Bell felt on those issues but certainly my exposure was to a man who wanted to deal with development. Bell's concern, I must say, as far as I could see, was primarily and largely with the broad set of policy issues in a particular country. He was therefore especially taken by problems in India, Pakistan and the like where there was a capacity to deal at the policy level. That was true also to some degree to some of the programs that were of most

interest to him in Latin America. At the same time, I felt certainly that he had a deep recognition that pure development growth without concern for equity was not enough.

I don't say that he did much in that direction-he did not impose new ideas. There was no basic human needs that was built into the program. But it was there in his psyche and it did seem to me that it had some impact on the direction in which certain programs went without being that carefully articulated. So, it was a policy of development with a sense that the world is a better place if there is less poverty but seen in terms of poor nations more than in terms of poor people. It was a period of seeking to look holistically at what we were doing in countries and trying to develop meaningful strategies for how you dealt with major recipients. But all that was beginning to be affected by the elements of what was going on in Indo-China.

Q: There wasn't any particular limit on what activities we could be engaged in when you have the basic human needs, and so on and certain things were ruled out as well as things ruled in and so on?

BROWN: I don't think so. I don't think there was any particular limitation. Bell was very attracted by policy frameworks and he was a starter of what were essentially policy type lending in a few cases. I recall, in a couple of countries in Latin America there were major education sector programs for example where the flow of resources had depended on the evolution of the education system. In India and Pakistan there were broad financial packages aimed at underpinning the development budget.

Q: How did you find AID as an organization at that time from looking at it from that top-level perspective?

BROWN: I must admit it was difficult for me to have very strong views on that. I had been in the field. I had not experienced working in Washington except in those very early days as an intern. It did not seem to me to be an unreasonable structure. Regions were given "relative preeminence" if I can put it that way. Obviously the technical people were listened to but it was largely a question of regional concentration and that was in part Bell's concern with national strategies. And the fact that those strategies had to flow from the country though the regional offices rather than too much emphasis on technicians. That is an organizational structure that I personally prefer. I think that the emphasis must be on the country level and on the regional level. And while your technical people are absolutely essential in making sure you are doing the right things, they should not be up front in organizing programs as such.

While my job satisfied me very much, life in Washington was less appealing for Micheline. We had a pleasant small house in a nice suburban area. But we were far from the center of Washington. The children were young and needed lots of care. Salaries were small and the cost of theater prices and baby sitters meant we got little enjoyment from the best parts of Washington life. She was only too happy to move on to our next assignment, a year at Princeton. Before leaving Washington, we had to pack our personal things — some to go to Princeton, some to go into continuing storage and some in preparation to go overseas a year later — but without

knowing where we would be going. What proved amazing is that we made largely the right choices. After our several moves we had become more expert in this part of foreign service life.

A year's sabbatical at Princeton University—1965-1966

BROWN: I deeply appreciated Bell and Gaud's support for my application for mid-career training at the Princeton Woodrow Wilson program. One reason for my choice of this program was precisely because the Woodrow Wilson School refused to give any academic credit for courses we might take, urging us to follow those activities which could be valuable to us rather than better filling a formal academic record.

Arthur Lewis' course on economic development best responded to specific economic aid program issues. I enjoyed it although I found his theories on rural-urban labor exchanges to be too theoretical and too general in nature. By far my most stimulating professor was Jim Billington, who ran a fascinating program on Soviet history. He introduced me to a wide range of Russian and Soviet literature. He had a way of making intricate matters clear and was deeply responsive to the specific interests of individual students. I loved that course not just for its content but for the wonderful way in which it was conducted. Jim Billington is now the Librarian of Congress and I gather he is doing a great job in that complex function.

Princeton was a good place to be. I was challenged by young graduate students who had what were often for me new and different views and debate with them was refreshing and fun. Course work was enjoyable and evenings were filled with exciting guest lecturers, artistic and cultural events and the like. Our house was 100 meters from the football stadium and it was great fun for the family to become involved as Princeton fans. The same applied to basketball, especially since this was the time of Bill Bradley's domination of the court. We liked living in a relatively small although very sophisticated town while being only an hour away from the excitement of New York City. Our sons loved their schooling and the openness of life in general—and even enjoyed it when they fell through the ice while learning to skate. The university invited Micheline to take part in classes of her choice which she did with great pleasure. She became the star of her Russian class and added Russian to her (then) collection of English, French, Persian, mid-level German and some Italian (she later added fluency in Italian and in Cairene Arabic). She also ran, as usual, a wonderful household full of friends and family — and did some tutoring to Princeton undergraduate students as well.

Back overseas as the USAID Representative in Algeria—1966-1967

BROWN: Our first assignment after Princeton was to Algeria where I was to replace Phil Birnbaum as AID Representative (some years later I again succeeded Phil as Deputy Assistant Administrator for Africa and then again as Vice President of IFAD). We arrived at an inauspicious time—Algeria was adamantly opposed to U.S. activity in Vietnam, leading to very cool diplomatic relations and the occurrence of a series of carefully controlled "demonstrations" in front of U.S. offices to show the anger of "the people". Consequently, the AID program was necessarily small and limited in impact—a little PL 480 food aid, some participant training

programs, support to various Algerian voluntary agencies, management of what was then called the Ambassador's Special Fund (for small but possibly politically interesting activities or those having useful small institution impact). Getting to know Algerian officials was hard because the Government sought to build a fence between Americans and socializing with Algerians. However, I did have some dealings with a young, bright Algerian official, Idriss Jazairy, who later became President of IFAD and with whom I worked for eight years at IFAD. We also managed to build a friendship with Mohamed Shaker, who later became Ambassador to the United States and then Executive Secretary of the Economic Commission for Africa. Through our neighbors (Mme. Claude Radievski, who as a lawyer had defended Ben Bella against the French), we also enjoyed a strong friendship with an Algerian Surete official who later proved very helpful. But mostly our Algerian friends were private citizens in no way associated with government. We were fortunate to be quickly accepted into a group of very nice Algerians and international types who shared the costs of running an old beach house to which we all retreated when the weather allowed. We did manage to travel a moderate amount, despite the need for official permission for every sortie outside of Algiers, and came to love the varied beauty of Algeria. Life was made pleasant because we had a wonderful place to live at the top of the hills above Algiers which we inherited when AID Agricultural Adviser Leroy Rasmussen left Algeria. The house was small but the grounds included a small pool and a tennis court and this was one place we could bring many friends in an enjoyable but discrete setting.

Our stay was short, however. In April of 1967, as U.S.-Algerian relations deteriorated further, it was agreed there was little prospect for a useful aid program. I was therefore asked to move on and become Deputy Mission Director in the Congo (now Zaire). Micheline stayed in Algiers to permit the children to finish the school year. But her stay ended with a bang with the Middle East Six-Day war in June, 1967, which led to a break in relations between the U.S. and Algeria and then an evacuation of the Embassy staff. Micheline had a difficult but, in a sense, fascinating time at this period. When the war broke out she happened to be spending a weekend in Paris visiting family, with the children remaining with friends in Algiers (one of them with a prominent Jewish family, the other two with the U.S. military attache!). It took a lot of dealing to get back into Algiers but she succeeded, only to find our house had been sequestered and she had to spend more time getting to the right people in order to get back in and bring the family together. As soon as she got in, the evacuation order came. While she and friends tried to get some of our belongings packed, in the end she had to leave most just where they were. However, the Surete official with whom we had become friends, assured her that he would take personal responsibility to get our belongings safely and properly to us in Congo/Zaire— a promise he kept (except for Micheline's Russian-English dictionary and some of my Princeton books on Soviet history). He also came to the airport to make a public showing of seeing Micheline safely off on the evacuation flight. For reasons I will soon explain, Micheline then ended up in Paris with the children for the rest of the year. I had one chance to come up to Paris from Leopoldville (now Kinshasa) for a short visit — and when I was there the same Algerian official was in town and made it a point to invite us out to lunch to be sure all was well. How he found out where we were I do not know, but the Surete seems to know all and there he was bidding us a final farewell.

Despite all these limitations, we enjoyed our time in Algiers. Algiers itself is a beautiful city, and there were a number of other places, on the coast as well as in the desert oases, which were a delight to visit. Those Algerians we got to know were unfailingly pleasant although the tough side of Algerian personalities was certainly apparent. While the program was very small, its emphasis on small self-help projects gave me my first real opportunity to work with a range of PVOs (NGOs) and I certainly appreciated the fine work they were doing.

An amusing (but somewhat costly) experience in Algiers is that we got two telephone bills at home— one for our own regular use, the other for the Government's tap on our phone.

First assignment as a Mission Director in Zaire—1967-1970

BROWN: As noted, I went to Leopoldville (Kinshasa) in April, 1967, leaving the family to follow me at the end of the school year. The Director at the time was Joe Mintzies, for whom I had once worked on an Antioch College job assignment with ECA (the Economic Cooperation Administration). Joe and I had gotten on well in ECA and had the same good relationship in the Congo these many years later. However, our time together was relatively short since Joe was getting ready to end his Congo tour. Joe amused me by one of his habits—he had the New York Times Sunday edition delivered to him, but it always arrived several weeks late. No matter what day of the week it arrived, he and his wife put it aside and then read it in leisurely fashion over Sunday breakfast—just like back in Washington.

Micheline was to join me during the summer. But just as she was travelling from Paris to Rome to catch a flight, another mercenary rebellion broke out in the Congo and no dependents were allowed to arrive. She was informed of this just as she was about to board her plane from Rome to Leopoldville. She had first to return to Rome itself (with hardly a penny or lira in her pocket) where she waited several weeks to be told the suspension of travel would be indefinite. She then had to scurry back to Paris, get the children installed in school, find housing and all the rest. It was amazing how well she survived all of that. Finally the travel suspension was lifted and the family joined me for Christmas, 1967. I was fortunate during this period that my brother, Dean Brown, was in charge of Central African affairs at State — one of only two times our career paths crossed—and he was able to add substantially to the sometimes difficult communications between Micheline and I through this uncomfortable period.

Those first months in the Congo were very difficult. The country was still reeling from a series of mercenary rebellions and from the efforts of secession by the copper rich Shaba region. Foreign exchange was virtually unavailable and shops were bare (I lived next to what had been a very impressive supermarket which had aisles and aisles of shelves — all filled with nothing but plastic buckets and sandals). Foreigners were leaving, and since few Congolese had benefitted from adequate education or managerial level experience, the kingpins of the economy were in peril.

But in 1967-1968 there was the beginning of limited political stability in the form of Colonel, then General, Mobutu, who emerged from the chaos of the Congo to become its Prime Minister

and then President. While the effects of this last gasp (at that time) of mercenary activity were still being felt, over the next few years insecurity decreased and some form of central government control took place. Even Lubumbashi and the copper region seemed gradually to become secure. While Mobutu proved himself over time to be a scandalous dictator who stole vast amounts from the Zairois treasury and people, in this 1967-1968 period the growing stability that he represented was well recognized (and rewarded).

And while the Congolese Government suffered from a severe lack of trained officials at all levels, it was blessed by an outstanding Central Bank Governor and by a small group of very able officials at the top levels of the Ministry of Finance. Some thoughtful IMF officials as well as two or three excellent Belgian Government officials worked closely with these key officials as did we in the AID mission, seeking to build new strength in the overall economy. Together we developed a package of reforms, including a major devaluation, which the Congolese officials then had to sell to Mobutu. He finally accepted it when together they concocted a clever political approach. They replaced the Congolese franc with a new currency, the Zaire. Although the exchange rate between the Congolese franc and the new Zaire actually represented a major devaluation, it was given a new and positive twist by making the Zaire equivalent to two U.S. dollars, or 100 times as much as the Belgian franc and announced proudly as such by Mobutu. This reform movement did work for several years, and launched a period of important growth in the Zaire economy — destroyed later, of course, by the thievery and peripatetic changes introduced by Mobutu over time (when also those outstanding Congolese officials had left the country). From then on it has been largely a case of chaos.

This was a very exciting time for me. While I had dealt with some economic policy issues in the Sudan, I was here deeply immersed in these extremely complicated deliberations, which had to be conducted in deepest secrecy because of the impact that such a steep devaluation was expected to have. With the growing effectiveness of the reform program and as political and financial stability increased, the need for a strengthened assistance program also meant a large growth in our activities. Increases in Commodity Import and PL 480 programs provided Zaire needed financial backing during this period of transition. Important new resources were devoted to educational programs at all levels. Efforts were made to strengthen agricultural education and research; while there were several reasonably well trained and well motivated Zairois agriculturalists, the very limited ordinary budget resources devoted to agriculture along with the great distances and transport problems meant our programs had only limited impact. In a country as vast as Zaire, improved transport was a major necessity. Starting in this period and for many years afterwards AID (and later the World Bank) devoted substantial resources to maintenance and upgrading of roads and to better river traffic; as far as I can determine, the long term impact of these efforts was very limited, again due to the lack of consistent support, and financing, provided by the central government.

Q: In your discussion of the program in Zaire, you did make a few comments about the activities that you were supporting: like educational programs and so on. Could you elaborate any more about what you were trying to do in those programs? Were there any new institutions being created or any new...?

BROWN: No. The institutions with which we worked were in existence if in often a moribund state of existence. There was an agricultural service and there were regional agricultural centers and offices but they were very weak and our concern therefore was not to try to introduce any new organizational structures but to first get more resources into the agricultural system and to work with people to try to plan better the way they use the relatively small resources they had available.

In the general field of public administration there was a nascent new public administration institution which had been organized primarily by a combination of Ford Foundation and United Nations assistance. And we certainly supplied a lot of support to that because we considered it particularly important.

Q: Was it effective? How did it do?

BROWN: It seemed to me at the time that it was the beginning of a very good institution. I was there through three graduating classes and I was impressed by the kinds of people who were coming out of the school. And having looked over its' relatively short history-it was in existence perhaps five or six years when I got there-it seemed to me that it was coming along pretty well. And the people it was turning out were pretty good.

You have to remember this is a country which had a terrible shortage of able and trained people. And this was an institution which was beginning to do something about that. We did work, as I mentioned, in the financial field. Which was largely technical assistance worked out in very close conjunction with the International Monetary Fund as well as representatives of the Belgian government. Certainly I felt during the period of time we were there that was extremely helpful and...

Q: We were able to have effective policy exchanges and policy reform efforts?

BROWN: We participated along with those others. I must say we were not the lead but we participated with the IMF and the Belgians and the Zairians in a major economic reform. An economic reform which involved a major devaluation and cleaning up of the financial and fiscal system. And yes, we played an important part in that.

It was difficult because in these types of circumstances, you had to be very, very cautious-very secret-frankly when you are going to introduce a major devaluation it is not something that you talk about in the newspapers. But it was very successful. The country's financial situation quickly stabilized. Investments began to flow in again. And that was also associated with the fact that Mobutu, in his early days, represented political stability and political dynamism of a positive nature.

So that there was this combination of political and financial stability in a country which has enormous resources. It helped bring new investment in. It helped open up and legalize a range of exports which had been taking place but had all been going through illegal channels and so

forth to increase the foreign exchange earnings. And therefore permit greater liberalization on the import of goods and vastly broadened the access and availability of resources of all kinds to all levels of the society. I would say, in its time, it was extremely successful.

Q: Was corruption still prominent at that time?

BROWN: The corruption issue became prominent later. I mean it was growing. It was nascent. We certainly saw examples of it. We had a team, I can't remember from what company, but one of the major consulting firms that was trying to negotiate with the government to provide broad services in a number of different sectors. It fell apart at the end when the Zaire minister made a huge demand for payment by the company to him personally. So corruption was there and it became much worse in the years following.

There wasn't much to be corrupt about frankly when we were there-until after the financial reform. It was only after a little while that people really got into this and of course, President Mobutu led it from the very beginning.

Q: Did you meet President Mobutu?

BROWN: Two or three times but on a limited basis I must say. I did not...

Q: Any impression of him?

BROWN: An interesting person. Strong personality. Intelligent and quick witted but certainly not intellectual. And with relatively little real understanding of how the world as a whole works. It was understandable given his background. But there were some real limitations...

Q: Did he have any interest in the development of his country as such, as opposed to...?

BROWN: False interest. False interest in the sense that it was the promotion of some silly programs which did not really have any impact-in the name of the people-but did not really have any impact.

Q: He wasn't really concerned about their welfare?

BROWN: Let me give an example. There was an American doctor there who was doctor to Mobutu and had a lot of influence. And together they dreamt up this scheme of river hospitals which sounded nice. And they put some boats on the river and ran them up and down as hospitals. But they never dealt with the problems of preventive medicine at all. And so to me this was a farce. This was a showboat of development.

Mobutu was interested in the big schemes. The Shaba Power Program and things like that. Frankly there were also the activities where you could rake off the largest amount whereas programs for people didn't matter much. Those are impressions and they are certainly partly impressions from that period and partly impressions that came from later on.

Q: Anything more on the Zaire experience or programs?

BROWN: No. I think that between them things are covered.

Q: Ok. But you were economic counselor as well as AID director.

BROWN: Yes. I was economic counselor which is in part why, a part of my involvement in all these financial discussions was in that function and part of it was in the AID director function.

Q: Well that is quite unusual, isn't it?

BROWN: Yes it is. Very unusual. And I had insisted under the circumstances that my formal deputy be the person who would otherwise have been the senior economic officer in the Embassy.

Q: How did it work?

BROWN: He was a deputy on both sides. I think it worked very well because of the number of the personalities that were involved in it. The Ambassadors in particular were supportive of this and willing to give it a good, hard try.

People from State in the Economic Section were open to it and willing. Obviously the most senior person would prefer to be counselor himself. But we worked well together. A lot of the day to day economic section work that was involved, I just turned to that deputy to do. And in many of those areas, the economic section was working as an economic section without any relationship with AID as such. But when it got down to major policy considerations, we worked together. And we had joint staff meetings of senior staff from the economic section and AID. We talked these issues out together. We made joint presentations to the Ambassador and back to Washington and so forth.

Q: This apparently worked reasonably well from your observation of the relationship between AID and the Embassy. Is that a pattern that you thought was generally applicable or unique to this situation?

BROWN: It is partly unique because of the particular circumstances of Zaire. It is also workable it seems to me only if you have an important AID program. People in the State Department are not about to be subordinate to an AID director if the program with which he is working is not a particularly important one.

But I think that in a number of countries it is a workable thing. Now would it have been workable in Egypt when I went there? I don't think so. Only in the sense that the management of the Egypt program was such an enormous affair in itself. Also to worry about commercial affairs and other issues in the economic field would have been impossible. In any event, it is essential that the Ambassador assure that the senior economic officer or the senior economic

counselor and the AID director work very closely on the economic policy issues. But it is not necessary to bring them together in a single institutional unit. For that to work in Egypt took some very able senior State officials and I was glad I had the right people to work with.

Going back to Zaire, it can be said that AID programs of the period certainly contributed sharply to the initial financial reform efforts and provided the basis for modest stability, greater investment and political consolidation for a period of time. They also contributed to training of a range of officials who have worked mightily to try to improve the economic well-being of the country against heavy odds. But over time Mobutu's economic mal-leadership, the squandering and waste of resources, the exceptionally high levels of corruption and the breakdown in meaningful political development have led to a Zaire today which is a chaotic morass. Throwing resources at development problems may have favorable political impact (and that was true in those first critical years in Zaire), but there is little chance of having a real effect on bettering the lives of poor people if the leadership and the will are lacking.

Charley Mann was Mintzies replacement. Charley's background had been mainly in Asia, but he relished this new assignment. He was smart and generally quick thinking, although somewhat stolid and germanic in his personal relations. We got along well enough but I must admit that I was not unhappy when, after a while, he was asked to take over the Laos Mission and I was named as his successor as Mission Director, but also as Economic Counselor of Embassy.

We had a good if small mission with some excellent staff members. I deeply admired the way Ambassador Bob McBride presided over the American community in a difficult and sometime dangerous period. In my combined role, I worked even more closely with my Embassy colleagues. I travelled a good bit of the country, often to visit agricultural programs with Leroy Rasmussen whom I had known in Algeria. Travel was always difficult due to unmaintained roads, limited and poor railroad connections and a substantial breakdown in river and air transport, circumstances we sought without much success to overcome.

During this period Dave Shear was head of the Central Africa section of the AID Africa Bureau and we worked closely together. I quickly recognized his admirable abilities and his strong and consistent support to our work in the field. We built a relationship then that flowered even further when later we worked together on overall Africa development issues.

We were fortunate to find a somewhat odd but pleasant house right on a bend of the Congo (Zaire) River which had good entertaining space and which again became a center for lunches and dinners with our Congolese and international community friends. The children had good schools and thoroughly enjoyed some of their outings into the countryside. We had a parrot who adored women and children but hated men. The rest of the family loved that beast, but he made a special effort to come pecking after me whenever I would settle down in comfort at the end of the day. Our youngest, Christopher (then about seven) adopted (or was adopted by) a chimpanzee who belonged to neighbors and they took happy walks down our street, hand in hand.

While we had several Zairois friends, there is no question that many Zairois had been deeply affected by the often cruel and highly racist Belgian regime and settlers. As a result, it was often difficult to know how individual Zairois might react to situations which were fairly normal in other societies. This was particularly upsetting to mission wives, who were too often faced with confusing and sometimes unpleasant situations related to the households.

As a whole, we all enjoyed our stay in Zaire. Certainly I had an exciting job and learned a lot during our time there. But the sense of tension made us feel it was time to move on.

A second Mission Director's assignment in USAID/Morocco—1970-1972

BROWN: We went to Morocco in February, 1970 and stayed about 30 months. Morocco was considered an important country for U.S. defense concerns, both because of its physical location at the opening of the Mediterranean but particularly for the wide range of defense facilities (mostly Air Force) which were provided to the United States by the Moroccan Government. The United States had maintained a sometime prickly but basically close relationship with King Hassan over many years. The AID program was justified, therefore, largely in terms of its support to these mutual security interests. This had a double impact— it did mean that reasonably important resources were devoted to the program without many questions being asked — but it also meant that the program must be carried out without causing any grief in U.S.- Moroccan relations, i.e. without putting any large demands on Moroccan leadership for the manner in which they supported the program.

There were good and reasonably well organized activities underway there when we arrived and it was easy to move into the Director’s position. Before long I was joined by Harvey Gutman as Deputy, who consistently played an upbeat and helpful role.

We put heavy emphasis on social programs which would have some impact on poverty, including important Food for Work activities designed to stimulate self-help programs. Despite affecting an interest in and support to these programs, few Moroccan officials really seemed to have real involvement in them and there is real question as to their longer term utility. When Assistant Secretary of State Dave Newsom made a visit, he was at first impressed by the appearance of some of these small projects until it became clear Moroccan staff had been out painting them the night before to make them "attractive" solely for his visit.

In the field of agriculture and water resources, however, AID played an active and useful role and its programs were well supported and welcomed. There was a good team of agricultural specialists, including some fine consultants from the Universities of Minnesota and Michigan State. They made particularly useful contributions to agricultural education and to agricultural planning through university to university relations with both the university agricultural faculty and with the Ministry’s research staff. Eliot Berg played a special role in managing these technical relationships and also brought economic analysis into agricultural planning for the first time. Moroccan officials comment to this day on the lasting value of what was achieved. AID

also financed several irrigation projects which were generally very successful in physical terms but we had much less impact in assuring who would be the proper beneficiaries of these investments. However, I was interested to see, when I joined IFAD many years later, that several IFAD irrigation programs were in fact based on extending activities initiated by AID during this period, and that IFAD did have greater influence on the question of participation by the poor.

Living in Morocco was very pleasant. It is a beautiful country, with great variety evolving from its site between two seas, Atlantic and Mediterranean, its impressive mountain chains, its beautiful deserts, and its marvelous ancient urban areas such as Fes and Marrekech. The road system is excellent as is rail travel. Accommodations from simple to luxurious were available almost everywhere. Moroccan cuisine is outstanding, outpaced in my view only by French and Chinese cooking. As a consequence, we thoroughly enjoyed all our chances to travel widely throughout the country. We lived in the same house occupied by AID Directors for two decades and it was comfortable and a good place for representational activities. For the only time in our whole career, we had a Moroccan cook who really knew how to cook—on his own with minimal direction—giving Micheline greater freedom from the kitchen than at any other time.

Moroccans with whom we dealt were invariably pleasant, seemingly open and generally hospitable. But most non-Berber Moroccans seem to have two personalities — that within their own culture and the other when faced by foreigners. And foreigners are seldom allowed into more than a very superficial relationship with them. There is almost a sense that certain Moroccans are chosen by the system to deal with outsiders. My brother Dean, who had been DCM in Rabat several years before we arrived, gave Micheline the names of ten Moroccan ladies who, as part of this system, would surround her and treat her as a friend. He was right in nine of the ten cases.

While there certainly are Moroccans who care about the problems of poverty, they seem fairly rare. It was my impression that even the opposition, while proclaiming concern about the poor, was primarily concerned with bringing about change in the political system rather than seeking a real change in the situation of the poor. In a country with such deep contrasts between the ultra-wealthy and the poor, these attitudes are distressing. More than that, the obsession with wealth leads to corruption, cruelty and mismanagement.

It was these attitudes, as well as the major effort to assassinate King Hassan in the Skhirat attacks of 1971 followed a short while after by the attack on Hassan's aircraft led clearly by General Oufkir, one of Hassan's closest associates, which made me question whether the United States was not too dependent on its relation with Morocco. I provoked an extensive debate within the country team on this issue. While there were one or two others who agreed with my concern, the majority felt strongly that U.S.—Moroccan bonds were too important to be put to any test over equity issues. But I admired Ambassador Stuart Rockwell for the impassioned and thoughtful way in which he allowed that debate to take place. We remained close friends despite his strong disagreement with me on these issues.

Q: You have made a number of comments about contributions to Moroccan agriculture and the Hassan II Institute of Agriculture and Veterinary Medicine project with the Universities of Minnesota and Michigan. Could you elaborate on the institutions that were created by this work?

BROWN: Well, I think the major and lasting institutions were in the field of agriculture and particularly in the field of agricultural research. Both within the structure of the agricultural faculties and within the structure of the resources.

I think.an awful lot was learned together on how to deal with issues of Moroccan agriculture. A lot of people were well trained. A number of concepts from American educational and research systems were built into that. And I think there was really some lasting impact.

In our efforts in dealing with programs impacting on the people broadly, I think of the Food for Work activities that we had for example. As far as I am aware, they have had little lasting impact.

Q: Why is that?

BROWN: Frankly Moroccan officials don't care. They make passes at being interested in humanitarian affairs and problems of poverty but they are not very serious about it. And while we had institutions that functioned fully well during that period and after I left and there is no question that they were not institutions which could rally meaningful support at the policy level within the government.

Q: You made a comment IFAD had picked up on some projects initiated by AID. Can you be more specific about what those projects were?

BROWN: Part of the AID program involved some major irrigation schemes, particularly a pair of dams in a new irrigation area in the north of the country. We put a lot of money into that. Basically into the infrastructure and so forth. We tried to assure that there was a broader concept of participation by poor farmers in the utilization of those resources. It was the nature of the geography and so forth of that particular area which made it difficult to carry that out even if one was willed to do so. And since the Moroccans weren't particularly willed to do so, it didn't get very far.

But a lot of the ideas that we were talking about at that time were then picked up by IFAD in other irrigation schemes where IFAD itself was primarily concerned not with the up-stream infrastructure but the down-stream infrastructure at the farm level. And as I say, a lot of ideas that we in AID had put in place now were carried out by IFAD and the Moroccan government. It is true that the geographical and social circumstances of the IFAD projects were of a nature where it was easier to get agreement to insure reasonable equity in the allocation of those resources.

Q: Anything else on Morocco you would like to mention at this point?

BROWN: No. As a whole, Morocco was a very pleasant interlude in our lives, especially after the tense and busy lives we led in Zaire.

Return to USAID/Washington as Deputy Assistant Administrator for the Africa Bureau—1972-1976

BROWN: In 1972 we returned to Washington for our second long assignment there, when I was appointed as Deputy Assistant Administrator for Africa. I worked then for the Assistant Administrator Sam Adams, a wonderful, thoughtful and generous man whom I love to this day. He gave me broad scope to undertake a range of different activities and did it in a manner which was constantly supportive without being interfering. I give him special credit for his insistence, too often over extensive opposition, on a special intern program for minorities — a program which over the years led to some outstanding senior minority officers in AID. I was deeply unhappy when later he was essentially forced into retirement to permit a White House appointee to take over the AA position. While Stan Scott was a decent person, he had no experience whatsoever in development issues and little understanding of Africa. However, Stan and I got along well enough and I gave him my loyalty, which he repaid by giving me wide freedom and support.

Africa has always received short shrift by the United States and one could see this in the way the Africa Bureau was given the least possible resources but constantly put under active scrutiny. I remember presenting a $3 Million project to the agency's senior review committee in an intensive discussion which lasted an hour and a half — followed by Committee approval of a $100 million loan to Pakistan after ten minutes of desultory discussion. .

Sam Adams was deeply distressed by this inadequate attention and a major part of our work together was an effort to induce greater interest and support to African development needs. Sam was especially concerned that the Sahelian area (a term with which I, along with many others, discovered only at this time) was largely ignored in American policy. He saw a gradual decimation taking place in the region and its rather special culture due to a lack of resources and lack of interest. He was one of the first to point to the gravity of the awful Sahelian drought of the early seventies—really the first of a series of African natural disasters which have since received support from the United States—and Sam recognized that this awful event could also bring about greater public interest and concern.

Q: How did you find the Bureau as an operation at that time?

BROWN: The Bureau was not strong. It had some good people in it but it was not strong. The leadership in various offices was moderate but not great. There was also a heavy tendency for people with predominately AID/Washington backgrounds to be in the more senior positions rather than people with field experience.

With all my great admiration for Sam Adams, and I trust that comes across clearly in what I've said, Sam was not that interested in organization and was not pushing that hard on "who" did "what". I think...I was concerned about and I think we made some organizational changes, particularly with the structure and direction of Washington sub-regional offices and field regional offices. We also made a very serious effort to get more and better senior staff and particularly people with field experience. Those are the changes, if any, that I would have made.

Q: How did the African Bureau rank in relation to the rest of the Bureaus in the agency? How was it treated?

BROWN: As I think has been almost universally the case, the weakest. The weakest in terms of impact, the weakest in terms of resources available, and that was part of the reasons that it tended to be weak in staff in Washington. Now that is not the same as staff in the field because I think the issues of Africa attracted a lot of very good people in the field. But as soon as they got very good, they got stolen off by the other Bureaus which were stronger and had better capacity to get at the administrator or whatever.

The Sahel Development Program: Over time I became more and more involved in the Sahel disaster, especially as public criticism, particularly in the black community, grew over the inadequacy of American response. The Administration, already buffeted by the public over other issues, recognized the need to take stronger action. Among other things, Maury Williams, then AID Deputy Administrator, was named overall Sahel disaster coordinator and I spent a lot of time working directly with him. Maury was demanding and sometimes harsh in that period, but he got things done and drove the rest of the agency to give the Africa Bureau the support it needed. While the disaster still caused thousands of deaths, in the end United States relief efforts were essential in keeping the toll as low as was the case. A lot of lessons were learned—preparation against potential disasters, pre-stocking, transport and logistical needs, building disaster prevention capacity etc. Fortunately the AID Disaster Relief Office paid considerable attention to these lessons and this helped AID be more active and effective in subsequent disaster situations.

While the drought response was first priority, several of us felt that there was real need to look past it and into how resources could be used better to build an economically stronger and more disaster resistant region. Encouraged especially by Sam Adams and Maury Williams, I worked closely towards that end with many able Africa Bureau hands concerned with the Sahel, but especially with Dave Shear and Princeton Lyman. We were interested in two levels — what could AID itself do aimed at more fundamental and longer term support to the region; and how could the Sahelian nations and many interested donors work more effectively together using shared understandings and goals.

For the first purpose, we sought direct legislative support for strengthened aid programs while at the same time putting major resources into defining the most effective kinds of responses for AID to undertake. We used every trick we knew. The Administration being under considerable stress related to other issues, we tried to show the political benefits it could achieve by a positive

response not only to the disaster but also to longer term Sahelian needs. Fairly quickly we got the broad support, in State, in AID and in the White House, needed for this programmatic approach. At the same time, we worked closely with Hubert Humphrey, who had returned to the Senate and the Foreign Relations Committee, on legislative tactics. Davy McCall of the Committee's staff, was exceptionally helpful in his support. In the end we did get legislation which established the Sahel Fund. Years later this initial Fund evolved into the broader African Development Fund which provided the kind of recognition and program basis for U.S. support to Africa which Sam Adams had so strongly advocated.

I remember one amusing conversation we had with Senator Humphrey during this period when I asked him why his views on a particular issue seemed different from those he expressed when Vice President. His response was that "where you stand depends on where you sit!"

With funding more secure, major efforts were underway to provide meaningful program content. I must admit I was probably overly concerned with showing early results while many of my colleagues in the African Bureau argued that we knew too little and needed to build a stronger research base. We managed to achieve a reasonable consensus on these points and did devote considerable effort to building for the longer term while putting reasonable resources into agricultural projects which did have some more immediate productive impact.

On the Sahelian and international fronts, there was a growing recognition of the need for a large scale international effort—accompanied by a mad scramble as to who was going to be in charge--each party recognizing the need for coordination while fighting to become the ultimate coordinator. On the African side, the states did come together to establish a regional Sahel planning office. While this was welcomed by donors, they also wanted a mechanism by which their views would be taken fully into account. The World Bank organized its own Sahelian section. Brad Morse built a Sahel Affairs Section into UNDP. The French and Belgian Governments each sought a leadership role. Edouard Saouma, the then new Director General of FAO, was convinced FAO should be in the lead. In AID we convinced our colleagues that it would be a mistake for any single donor, including the United States, to be the lead organization since no single external coordinating donor would be acceptable to Sahelian leadership. We urged a new form of relationship which would bring the Sahel planning group into close liaison with a combined organization of donors. From this was born, with great difficulty, much debate, innumerable visits to other donors, and several international conferences, the Club des Amis du Sahel. The idea of the Club was that it was a gathering place for donors and Sahelian states to work out ideas and develop planning models for investment purposes, but to do this in a collegial manner. While no one organization or nation was in charge, it was recognized that different groups had special abilities and sectoral and sub-sectoral committees were established under the leadership of different national groups. It is very much my impression that this approach has worked generally well and it has served as something of a model for AID's current approach to meeting the needs in the Greater Horn of Africa. Equally there are some similarities between the approach of the Club and the way in which donors have worked within SADEC on southern African development needs.

I remember vividly the international conference in Dakar where the concept of the Club was finally given unanimous consent. Up to the last vote we were unsure if it would be accepted and in fact several hours were spent the night before convincing Saouma of the rightness of this approach. After that final vote Dave Shear and I went off to have one royal celebratory dinner.

Q: On the Sahel program itself, would you elaborate on what the strategy was for bringing Sahel from this famine-drought period into a more development mode.

BROWN:: First, one has to recognize these things are all overlapping.

Q: Sure.

BROWN: And that you were putting your concentration, more concentration on certain stages and elements of a process than in others. And in the first years, there was nothing. There was hardly a program in the Sahelian states until the drought came. So you were dealing with the weakest probably the weakest program in AID in existence anywhere in the world.

Sam Adams was insistent that more attention needed to be given to that part of the world. But it was hard to find the justification. There was little in the way of economic resources, mineral resources, etc. These were countries that did not have any for the most part any major influence on US interests. And one could talk about humanitarian concerns and one could talk about economic potentials for the future and what that could mean for trade and so forth but it didn't have much of an echo. So you are starting from a very weak situation.

You had a terrible drought. A terrible problem with the need for massive amounts of food. Coming at the same time that the United States was selling off enormous amounts of food to Russia because of the weak harvest in Russia at that immediate time. The prices were going up and the availability was going down. It was a huge struggle just to get people to accept that they had to devote resources to provide food aid to the region. And that took a lot of effort.

Then you had to spend a lot of time worrying about the infrastructure. Some kind of infrastructure through PVO's; through AID itself. Through the nascent missions that we had in place. To get that food where it needed to go. We certainly did not succeed in that process nearly as well as AID was able to respond to subsequent disasters but I think we did as well as one might hope in retrospect. We also helped the agency learn a lot about pre-stocking, organizing, planning, communications, transport and logistics and the like.

I don't know how much I would have thought about the need to move to development in Sahel if it hadn't been for Sam Adams saying, "By God, we will". And it was he who really said this was an area of neglect and these are cultures that are going to die without some help and we need to do something. And he whipped us up in the gentle and mild way that Sam whips anybody up to begin thinking in those terms. And as I've said, some of our concerns were could we not get a stronger legislative base? And we spent a lot of time on that.

As noted, there was also the question of how the international organizations, the international system, was going to respond and we spent a lot of time trying to deal with the institutional basis for that. We worked a lot with the media and the public about the need for movement in this direction, while at the same time being heavily criticized by the black community for not doing nearly enough. There was a combination of those two things. And both sides, the black community was absolutely right. We weren't doing enough but the other side had to be whipped up to do something. So, then the question is, "What?"

The paucity of information was horrendous. At the local level there wasn't much. Given the weakness of our programs, there was little historical knowledge. But it was obvious to us that what was needed was longer term solutions.

Q: Was it also true that the French were not very interested in having us get interested in that area or not?

BROWN: Well, they were not eager, I will say that. But I will also say that I think we worked in good cooperation with the French technical assistance agencies and we were not stopped. But clearly the French feared that if we became too active that there might be a shift in attention by leadership in those countries away from France to the United States and they didn't want that. But I don't think that kept us from things and in fact, to the degree that there was any kind of meaningful background and knowledge about the region it came from the French government.

As I say, it was obvious to us is that what was needed were long development program strategies that would take into account the degradation of soil, the limitations due to soil, water and climatical conditions. And I knew an awful lot of people who kept saying, "We need to study, we need to study." And, of course, they were right that we needed to study things if we were going to have meaningful programs over a period of time. At the same time, we needed to produce something. We couldn't just study and call on the time of officials to learn about livestock or sorghum production and we had to get in there and do something.

And I suppose I probably put more attention than I should have on trying to get people to turn out working projects. Working projects which could be urban or rural but primarily rural obviously. Primarily agricultural of one kind or another. They were usually such things as small irrigation schemes or improved seed or improved marketing systems and the like. And some of that was useful and some of that worked and stayed. But some of it obviously, the institutional backup structures were so weak that at any time we backed off a step, they would collapse.

But still, I accepted the fact that those longer term strategies were needed and the kind of studies that were involved were undertaken. And one of my interests in the concept of club of "Les Amies du Sahel" that I've talked about was that bringing together the knowledge of the French and the Americans and FAO into some kind of cohesive structure was likely to bring about the kind of knowledge and development of institutions that was necessary faster than doing things solely by ourselves.

Now, I understand later evaluations have said we didn't do enough in institution building in that period and I certainly understand that. And it is both a valid and invalid conclusion in my opinion. I think it would have been extremely difficult to do very much more in institution building at that period. Now, did we do enough over a longer period in trying to develop the right help and the right institution doing the training programs etc. I can't say because I was by then off in Egypt and not following the program that closely. But certainly people like Princeton Lyman, Dave Shear and others were making every effort to try and have a balanced, reasonable and rational approach to the region including longer term strategies.

Q: The concept was really to talk about or deal with the region as a whole and so there was an effort to mount a major regional projects as such. That was part of the strategy, wasn't it?

BROWN: It was part of the strategy. I don't think it was a major part of the strategy. I think we recognized that there were sufficiently important national differences and even local differences that you had to put the concentration of your interest at the local level. At the province level. At the national level. There were certainly some things that could be done regionally. There were some transport things that could be done. There was the whole question of the Niger River and its utilization which had regional implications. There were the interconnections between the in-land states and Senegal and the Ivory Coast as coastal states which were important. And we looked at and worked on some regional activity. But I personally, while I tried to do what we could on the regional level, I thought it was far more important to work at the national level. Always seeking to take experiences learned in one country and see to the degree to which they were applicable to another.

Q: To what extent did you find the African leaders in the Sahel interested in a common program approach to their development?

BROWN: The African leaders were interested in a "Marshall Plan", as they constantly called it. A massive resource transfer program. And since it seemed to appeal to a lot of people if that could be done in regional terms, they talked largely about the need for regional programs. But, that was essentially simply to get more resources at the national level. And of course, that didn't work.
There was an important increase in flow of resources into the region but never anything approaching the dimensions of a Marshall Plan or anything that you could even conceive of as being that. And of course for good reasons. Circumstances were totally different.

But there was an increase in resources. And there were increasing thoughtful and able people at the national level and within the framework of some regional institutions which over time better and better utilized those resources.

Q: This was a time of a great debate...I don't hear it so much now...of whether the desertification process was expanding .We had a big MIT study on that subject, I believe , at that time?

BROWN: Yes

Q: Where did that work come out?

BROWN: I don't think it came out anywhere exactly. Like the number of dead as a result of the drought. You never knew what the result was and I've heard numbers that were different by 1000%.
My assumption is, from my limited reading on the subject, that there is a major cyclical problem for the region but it is not a continuous decline. We are seeing this year good rains in most of the Sahelian states. In fact flooding in some areas. But there is a cyclical problem there. It was interesting in IFAD as we built into our programming a greater recognition, not of average circumstances, but of cyclical circumstances -- an attempt to recognize perfectly well that one year out of four or five you were going to have a disaster and you had to build your programs around that concept. I don't think any of us were doing that back in the Seventies. I assume AID is probably doing more of that sort of thing at the present time as well. But I still think that is what it is. It is a cyclic problem—a serious one. And one which will never end in the Sahel. I mean you are not going to reach a point where there are no more droughts.

Q: Well, finishing up on the Sahel. What do you suggest from your experience are the lasting results of the effort of the "Club de Sahel?" What do you see as continuing benefits and effects in these countries? Are they better off because of it?

BROWN: I would certainly hope that the people of the Sahel are better off now than those who lived there twenty years ago and that there has been a flow of resources. There has been a flow of knowledge and there are better trained people. There are programs going on in every one of the Sahelian states in the field of agriculture which give promise for broader agricultural production; for more safe agricultural production. There are capacities to deal with disasters which didn't exist before, so that when they occur, the impact on people's lives is still terribly important but not so deadly. So yes, I think a lot has been done. But I am constantly fearful of the decline and ebbing of US interest in Africa, in general. And I think we are certainly seeing it in terms of AID flows at the present time. Which is one of the reasons that I was so interested in getting a legislative base at least for the Sahel at that time. And I was very pleased to see that in subsequent years others managed to broaden that to the African Development Fund.

It is hard to give all the hard-headed justifications for doing a lot in that region except perhaps in very selected countries. But to me there is no question that Africa is going to continue to be an element which cannot be forgotten by the world, whether you like it or not. That there are opportunities for broader understandings, broader trade, broader opportunities back and forth between the United States in particular in Africa. And I think it is important for this country to continue to participate with others-not alone-but participate with others in reasonable levels of support to African development.

Q: Were there any other major initiatives while you were in that position?

BROWN: The Sahel was dominant. There was no question. We had obviously other programs of importance in other countries—Kenya, Tanzania and so forth. It was a period for the beginning of programs in the BLS countries: Botswana, Lethoso and Swaziland and we gave a lot of attention to trying to get those programs underway in a meaningful way. There was certainly recognition at that time of the strong and deleterious impact of the relationships with South Africa on the rest of the countries of Southern Africa. But I would say there were no major new initiatives of any kind. We did get AID levels up as a whole, not just in the Sahel but AID levels in Africa. And that was because of increased interest in Congress, by the administration and by the people in African problems as a whole. And that, in itself, was something of an accomplishment.

Q: You spent a lot of time on the Hill, I guess, during this time.

BROWN: Yes, I did.

Q: How would you characterize your experience with testifying?

BROWN: Very diverse.

Q: Very diverse I'm sure.

BROWN: I have had some very hard experiences in the face of people who simply did not believe from two different perspectives: those who simply did not believe that we should be doing what we were doing; and those who simply did not believe that we were doing as much as we should be doing. And I had some very sympathetic hearings where people still may have felt we should have been doing more but understood the limitations within which we were working and trying to find ways to be helpful.

As I have also mentioned in my other comments, the big thing one learns is the importance of Congressional staff. You can't convince a member of Congress very readily on a one-on-one basis. You must work with the staff, both the committee staff and appropriate individual members. And we did an enormous amount of that. Both in terms of meeting with them and bringing them into regional meetings. Making sure they got to travel to programs in the region and the like. It is something I have done a lot of now between that period and later in Egypt.

It is not something I revel in. I would not want to be a Congressional Liaison Officer, I can assure you that. I have great admiration for IFAD's representative here in Washington who has done a marvelous job in working with the Congress but I would not trade positions with her for anything.

Summing up on work in the USAID Africa Bureau: It was a great honor for me to share the Rockefeller Public Service Award with Dave Shear for our work in the Sahel. This was a

recognition I had long aspired to but never felt I would achieve. I thank AID Administrator Dan Parker and others who took the time to prepare a thoughtful and effective recommendation.

While Sahelian affairs were certainly the center point of my four years as DAA, there was much to do in the rest of the program. As noted earlier, despite considerable public interest in Africa, the United States has consistently devoted little attention to the continent except during emergencies. Some progress had been registered in Anglophone Africa but Francophone Africa remained very much at the margin, except for our efforts in the Sahel. In order to understand better the needs of the continent, I travelled extensively, visiting all but a handful of African countries during that period. We tried, as a result, to bring some greater order into regional planning, with greater emphasis on a narrower range of objectives and with more insistence on attention to the problems of the poor and less on politically inspired physical monuments of dubious value.

We worked hard to keep the Washington African diplomatic community informed. We spent much time seeking cooperation with State Africa Bureau officials. Much effort went into working closely with PVOs (Private Voluntary Agencies) and to keep the media properly informed.

I have already stressed the importance of Congressional contacts. This was my first real exposure to the legislative process and it was very revealing. One learned quickly how intricate it could be. As I have said, important as are close ties with members, working with Congressional staff — both Committee and members' staff—is equally critical. While some members of Congress, especially on the Democratic side, were highly dubious as to whether we were doing enough in Africa, especially in response to the Sahel drought, I do feel that I was received with reasonable grace and decency during those presentations I made to Congressional committees and in smaller private meetings. In one hearing Senator Kennedy raised a number of very direct and hard questions to which I responded as best I could — and at the end of the hearing Kennedy made a point of recognizing the limitations which faced us in the Bureau and the efforts we were making to overcome those limitations. I learned a lot about how to work with the Congress during this period that proved highly useful not only then but also later in my Egypt and IFAD experiences.

My deep preoccupation with these problems left me with less time to think about family issues than should have been the case. While the children had adapted well to life in the United States when they were younger, all three had some re-entry problems now that they were in their teens. Micheline was left too much alone to deal with those problems. Living again in the Maryland suburbs we took little opportunity to enjoy the nicer aspects of Washington life. It seems I managed to get Micheline into the city more by dragging her to endless diplomatic receptions than by taking her to the theater and the like.

After a few years of this life, both Micheline and I were ready to return overseas. A few opportunities came up, but none seemed particularly promising. However, in early 1976 Johnny Murphy, then AID Deputy Administrator, called me to his office. He told me how important the

aid program in Egypt was going to be due to significant political changes and Egypt's potential role in the Near East peace process. He said that a big expansion of the program called for experienced leadership. He noted how much I cared about the development aspects of AID work. Despite the fact that the Egypt program would be highly political, he nevertheless urged that I take on that position. I did not immediately respond but as soon as I got out of his office I called Micheline and we both revelled over what was for us wonderful news — and the next morning I went straight to Johnny to say yes.

A major new assignment as Mission Director in Egypt— USAID's largest program—1976-1982

BROWN: Egyptian-American relations had been cool and distant for many years, particularly during the latter years of the Presidency of Abdul Nassar. Such assistance programs as had existed earlier had all been terminated. Even at the beginning of the Sadat Presidency there remained coolness in those relationships until two events—the "October War" of 1973 in which Egypt for the first time had some decisive military victories over Israel (even if the final outcome of the war was initially a return to the pre-existing situation); and Sadat's termination of a range of relationships with the Soviet Union. From that point forward, Secretary of State Kissinger and President Nixon saw new opportunities to work with the Egyptians, particularly with regard to regional peace. A first major step in that direction was negotiation of the first Sinai accords, which provided Egypt with at least partial recovery of lands lost in the 1967 war.

It was at this point that the United States announced its intention to provide major economic assistance to Egypt—assistance which almost from the beginning reached $1,000,000,00 a year in combined PL 480 and AID Supporting Assistance funds. It was at this point, facing the high political stakes of this new aid level, and having to move aid levels up sharply in response to the Kissinger announcements, that we arrived in Cairo. (It should be recalled that the initial steps towards seeking regional peace taken by Egypt at that time were then followed up on a relatively consistent basis over following years by the Second Sinai accord, by Sadat's visit to Jerusalem, by the Camp David negotiations and finally by the establishment of diplomatic relations between Egypt and Israel.)

As far as I am concerned, being able to manage the Egypt program was the absolute pinnacle of any AID manager's career. Certainly for me, and my family, it was a wonderful experience. While running the biggest aid program since the Marshal Plan was exceptionally demanding, it gave the opportunity to use all the skills which had been acquired over more than twenty years. And while it was true that there were highly political and public elements to what we were doing, we were able to convince both Egyptian and American leadership that an important part of these vast resources must go towards development which could strengthen local democratic institutions and ensure greater equity.

My first years in Cairo were devoted to the task of making this point with American and Egyptian leadership and then finding the programmatic means by which it could be achieved.

The efforts of the AID Mission in that direction were helped by Congressional concern that money should not be an answer in itself but that the program should concern itself with issues of Basic Human Needs (then a central concern of AID's regular Development Assistance Program) and this was built into appropriation legislation. While the USAID Mission certainly did not succeed in meeting all our aspirations in this regard, I am convinced that the program has had a significant impact on the lives of many Egyptians, that it laid the groundwork for increasing decentralization of development decision making and that as a result there was better use over time by Egypt of its own resources.

But moving the program in that direction took time and effort. In order to commit these high resource levels, substantial amounts were initially devoted to large infrastructure projects—cement plants, power generation and distribution, telecommunications and the like. Food imports under PL 480 also played an important part in easing the Egyptian financial situation and represented about 25% of the total aid effort in these years. Although many of these major capital projects contributed substantially to overall Egyptian growth by providing the underpinnings which were critical to expansion of the productive sector, I was not alone in believing that there was need to broaden the impact of the program in order to have a greater direct effect on as wide a range of ordinary Egyptians as possible. As noted, language was inserted in appropriation legislation calling on greater attention to Basic Human Needs. Roy Prosterman, a college professor now with the Hunger Project, was then running a rating of the Basic Human Needs contents of selected AID programs—and the Egyptian program initially achieved an almost zero score. While we had lots of reservations about the way Roy concocted his scores, it meant a lot to all of the staff to see the program receive higher and higher ratings as we moved more actively into agricultural programs; health and family planning activities (it was during these six years that the Egyptian family planning efforts turned population growth from a constantly growing figure to one in major decline); basic education activities with special emphasis on girls' education; low cost housing including AID's largest family centered, do-it-yourself tenement upgrading program; and most particularly for a wide variety of urban and rural based programs of decentralized development activities which brought decision making far closer to those concerned than had ever been true in earlier Egyptian development efforts.

I am particularly proud of this variety of decentralized development programs. Given Egypt's long history of highly centralized government decision making, I initially had questions as to whether it was in fact feasible to work with and strengthen local government and popular mechanisms. Much credit goes to a number of key USAID staff members who travelled widely and developed strong relations at central, governorate (state) and local level, which in the end convinced me (and others) that there was a real will and capacity to undertake this new approach. Equally, it was helpful for some key Egyptian leaders to find that the United States had a strong interest in the same things which they had been advocating and which could help bring their own ideas into focus and force.

Q: Let's add bit more on Egypt. Particularly on your interest in decentralization programs. That is of some interest in AID now. How effective was that effort in a highly centralized

bureaucratic situation? Was there willingness to really decentralize? Or what was being decentralized?

BROWN: Egypt of course, is absolutely dominated by the Nile. Everything in Egypt is dominated by the Nile. And for 5000 years the government has promulgated from the center all the rules. And people have not participated. Under Nasser there was some opening up of that.

There were some efforts at democratization. There were some efforts at getting views from the public on issues of development and issues of interest to them. Although that began to fade in the last few years of the Nasser administration. Sadat was too involved in the broad issues of the Middle East, Egypt-Israel, Egypt and the United States, Egypt's financial situation to really care very much about that sort of thing. I think he was a great man but that was not his strength.

At the same time, I felt two things. One: while the AID program was having an important impact on certain urban areas and on certain infrastructures of one kind or another, it was important for the people of Egypt to see the results of the Egyptian-American relationship. And that wasn't going to happen by just doing things in Cairo. That there was need to get out in rural areas.

It was also clearly my feeling that while the Nile would always dominate thinking, more and more people needed to be involved in the decision making process. They had to be there. They had to be represented. They had to be listened to. Decisions could not just be promulgated. You could see some of the failures in the functioning of the Egyptian irrigation system because too much of it was imposed and too little of it was farmer motivated. So, I certainly felt it was important to try and find ways to work with local communities. I wasn't sure at the beginning whether this was possible, because I was afraid of corruption. I mean we knew that there was a lot of corruption in Egypt and were very fearful of it. We were fearful of misuse of resources even if it wasn't in terms of corruption.

And, as I said, our staff did an enormous amount of traveling at that time talking to people...at all levels, all over the country. And they came back convinced that those with influence at the local levels were more interested in influencing the decisions of the central government than local government. At the same time, they shared some of the things that we were feeling. That is, that it was important at the local levels that there be greater participation. And we came to the conclusion that it was safe to try and find ways.

There were a couple of institutions in the government that were concerned with local government and local development. They were weak. We worked very hard in trying to improve their capacity. None of this took us very far until a particular person became Minister of Planning. He and I had talked before he became minister -- he had been a special assistant to Sadat -- several times on this question of decentralization. And he had indicated and had a strong interest in it.

When he became minister, we pushed and he accepted and he took the lead in working with other elements of government in saying that this was something that was necessary. We couldn't have done anything without him. And from that relationship we sought to devise a series of programs of one kind or another which put resources into the hands of local governments and local citizens - local programs for the development of simple infrastructure based on decision making-organized through the governor of the province in open sessions with the people to decide what they were interested in and where they were willing to put in some of their labor to get these things done.

Programs of resources, going again through the governors and the governorate system for financing of small scale enterprise of one kind or another. A range of things of this sort. I think they were evidently successful in themselves. We saw a lot of things happen. We certainly had, I thought, the political impact that had been of particular consideration at the beginning. We were beginning to open things up. I think we were getting a lot more people both in central government and locally interested in the concerns.

What had not happened in my time was any significant enlargement in the governments own resources going out to local government. And obviously during my time we all felt that was absolutely critical. No such program was sustainable only with US government resources. We talked a lot about that. Unfortunately the minister with whom I had been working went and got himself into some difficulties and he was out of power and his successors did not have the same strength of interest as people in the Ministry of Finance who had gone along with this but were still not prepared to see allocation of the resources up until the time I left. Now, I understand that more has taken place since then. I'd love to see an evaluation of that whole process now to see to what degree it has in fact had any significant substantive continuity within Egypt.

Q: But your impression is that there was fairly wide-spread participation in the decision making about the use of resources within the local areas?

BROWN: Yes. And then I've seen this more particularly in some IFAD projects that picked up on what AID started during that period in which I could see very clearly. We were working in IFAD projects specifically on agriculture at the governorate level. Agriculture which had always been dominated by Cairo. And still is in many respects. But in the IFAD projects some important levels of decision making were in fact shifted to local government officials. Those local government officials were making significant efforts to try and group farmers in one form or another in order to hear them...to talk with them and to respond to them and to get them involved. So, yes...I do think...

Q: Was this process being institutionalized for as long as AID had money to provide?

BROWN: Well, as I say, it was being institutionalized but those institutions were not being funded adequately up until the time I left. And I don't know the degree to which they may have been properly funded since then.

Q: Was any of the financial operation decentralized or was that still very central?

BROWN: That is exactly what I am talking about here. The bulk of resources received at the governorate level were received under programs already decided by the central government. There was very little local tax authority. Very little local income generating, very little local influence on what programs would be undertaken. This is what we were trying to change. And that, as I say, required certain block grants or whatever you want to call it. Something to go to the governorate which they would control and which they would decide on. I just don't know the degree to which that...

Q: You found the other ministries were...?

BROWN: Agriculture at first was very resistent. But then Youssef Wally was named as Minister - he still is the Minister of Agriculture as well as Deputy Prime Minister. In AID we had only a limited period to talk decentralization issues with him, but again, IFAD was picking that up. And IFAD has worked exceptionally well with him and he has been fine in this area. The Minister of Education at the time was very good in accepting proposals on our part first to look at educational mapping to try to get a better idea of where schools were in relationship to kinds of populations and then how schools could be built which were responsive, both to centrally seen deficiencies and to local initiatives. And he was very involved in that.

While strong support existed in the U.S. Congress for what we were doing, it was somewhat startling when a Reagan appointed Assistant Administrator criticized these efforts as "simply building new levels of government". Given the thousands of years when Egyptian leadership focussed its attention around central control of the Nile, one must recognize that little can be accomplished in Egypt by ignoring government. But much was possible aimed at broadening public involvement and support and that, it seemed to us, was more important than simply seeking to eliminate layers of government.

Over the years, then, we introduced a range of different programs and projects which supported efforts at decentralized decision making. First was a program to provide governorates (states) with resources for small scale, local rural infrastructure in which public participation could be readily assured. While there is no question that some Governors failed to understand the importance of participation, others responded wonderfully and did excellent work. Second was a program of small loans for investment in small scale rural enterprises — either private or public but which had been agreed upon at local levels and accepted by governorate administrations. A somewhat similar program aimed at supporting small scale urban enterprises was rather less successful since it became far too immersed in local politics.

Finally came a program of support to locally initiated small-scale urban infrastructure projects, initiated at the community level—local roads, school improvements and the like. In addition to placing substantial resources into programs specifically designated as supporting decentralization, other technical programs emphasized the same theme. Thus a nation wide program for strengthening basic education, especially for young girls, worked through decentralized planning

mechanisms. Much of AID's family planning programs had a similar basis and initial efforts in greater emphasis on decentralized agricultural undertakings were also part of our efforts. Initially little in the way of Egyptian resources (other than leadership at the local level) was devoted to support of these programs, but by the time I left Egypt there was a clear increase in Egyptian financing —and I hope that is something that has continued since that time.

While proud of what we achieved in supporting equitable development, I achieved far less in an area of concern to both Republican and Democratic Administrations, that of strengthening the private sector. While I certainly shared that objective, I felt that we were being asked to put too much emphasis on direct support to the private sector rather than seeking better to reform the policy environment in which the Egyptian public sector functioned—and the positive impact that public sector reform could have on incentives for the private sector. I felt strongly that without a more level playing ground between public and private investments, the private sector was unlikely to undertake useful productive investments no matter what other incentives might be provided.

Public sector industry in Egypt is to be found everywhere. From the time of Nassar it has been heavily subsidized. It depended on resources from the Treasury rather than from the banking system, meaning that there were no effective means for rationing resources into the most productive activities. This is why the USAID argued strongly that we should put much more emphasis on seeking to bring about reforms which would make public sector companies act on a par and equal footing with the private sector. I felt this was a more effective way to strengthen private investment than by providing direct financial and other support to private investors while castigating the public sector. I did not get too far in this direction and I think we achieved far less in the productive industrial sector than should have been possible with the overall resources we had. (However, it is my understanding that we must have made some of these points with Egyptian officials since there has been a certain movement in these directions in more recent years).

There were two outstanding U.S. Ambassadors in Egypt during this time—first Hermann Eilts, then Leroy (Roy) Atherton. Hermann was a highly able Arabist, an intellectual, a distinguished diplomat, and an activist. He wanted everything done right — and quickly. At first he was hesitant about me, questioning whether I would be sufficiently politically responsive. We developed a close and highly effective relationship after I showed him that the USAID could respond rapidly and with considerable political acumen in ticklish periods. One example was a package we put together out of existing resources but which we could sell as an important response to Egyptian needs following the food riots of 1976. With this stronger working basis I could then get Hermann's recognition of the importance of equitable development—of assuring that a reasonable part of AID resources were devoted to programs that could have a broad effect on the lives of ordinary Egyptians — and what we could do to nurse it along. He became, over time, a strong advocate of what we aimed at — and gave me personally his full support while avoiding being overly directive. Roy was also an accomplished diplomat with substantial experience in the Middle East. He was a lower key manager than Hermann, but that did not

diminish his effectiveness. He came with greater appreciation for what aid programs could do and was consistently supportive of the USAID programs.

It was not easy working for different masters — AID and its leadership, State and its leadership, and Ambassadors in the field. Both Ambassador Eilts and Ambassador Atherton made all these problems far easier than might otherwise have been the case -and they did this at a time when changes of an enormous character were taking place in Eygpt and in the region as a whole which called on all of their diplomatic skills. I am deeply appreciative to both of them for that period.

The entire USAID team was outstanding. We were able to draw on the highest levels of skill throughout the agency and many people made real sacrifices in order to join the staff. Of major help to me was my Deputy Mission Director, Owen Cylke. Owen was a constant source of ideas, new approaches, enthusiasm, and spirit. We simply could not have done as much as we did without his major contributions.

John Hannah was AID Administrator when I was appointed to Egypt, but the election of 1976 brought in Jimmy Carter and a new AID Administrator, John Gilligan. I had little opportunity to get to know him except for one very brief visit he made to Cairo. Being so occupied by changes he was seeking to bring about in AID/Washington, and beset by considerable bureaucratic infighting taking place within AID and between AID and other agencies at the time, support out of AID/W was weak and contradictory. I had a couple of run-ins with some of the new senior AID/W staff who, I felt, were undercutting me personally and, in some cases, taking broad swipes against Mission Directors as a class (the "pots and pans" campaign was an example of the latter). We survived that and continued to build the program effectively. But it was a great relief when Doug Bennet was named Administrator. Doug not only took on a deep personal interest in the program but he provided me and the whole USAID staff with an enormous sense of support and understanding. I have thought of him as a real friend ever since and have called on his help on several occasions in more recent years. When a new Republican Administration was elected, Peter McPherson became Administrator. Peter also took a deep personal interest in the Egypt program. He visited us a few times (once at the airport between 2 and 4 am on New Year's Eve!) and was in regular touch. While I felt that Peter's emphasis on the private sector was perhaps partly ill-placed for the reasons I have already mentioned, I did welcome his close and constant attention.

Another person who was always thoughtful and helped overcome many roadblocks was Joe Wheeler, serving first as AA/Near East, then as Deputy Administrator, then as AID Counselor. He had a clear understanding of the many incongruities in the Egyptian economy and what this meant in terms of our program content. He worked hard at seeking to assure agency wide support for our efforts. He worked well with Egyptian officials who were well impressed by his sharp mind and his broad understanding. While we had occasional differences (one always had differences over a program as vast as that in Egypt) Joe and I worked well together.

We had one amusing incident with Joe —he, his wife, Micheline and I were making a trip into southern Egypt. Without prior notice we dropped in on a small village to see how social services were functioning. Among other things, the four of us walked into a primary school. The moment Joe entered the room, children started screaming and leaping out the windows. It was only afterwards that we learned that an inoculation team had been there the week before and the kids assumed Joe, in his suit, was going to stick nasty needles into them once more.

The Egyptian economy was a series of major contradictions. Many policies were put in place during the Nassar period which were intended to help the poor, especially the rural poor, but which had become so distorted or corrupted that they were serving largely the elite and an urban middle class. Subsidies on bread certainly were important to the poor but were provided to the whole populace, to the point where bread became the cheapest available poultry feed—but at an enormous budget cost which drained resources from programs that might really have been more helpful to the poor. Subsidies on fertilizer, again intended to help poor farmers, seldom reached them and were siphoned off by large holders — but the prices paid to small farmers for their crops remained low on the assumption they got the fertilizer subsidy. Enormous subsidies on energy — electricity, gasoline, etc.—were far more beneficial to the rich than the poor and diverted use of energy away from petroleum exports and foreign exchange earning exports. Subsidies to public sector industry became so high that several Egyptian economists estimated that it would be cheaper to import fertilizer and to continue to pay the salaries of one particular fertilizer factory than to keep it open if one calculated the real costs involved.

It was the business of the international community — the World Bank, IMF and AID in particular—to try to convince Egyptian leadership of the need for change. This was certainly not an easy task and in the end only the beginnings of reform took place during my period. However, our continued insistence on the need for reform, especially of such items as energy subsidies and narrowing eligibility for food subsidies, did appear in following years to have more meaningful effects on Egyptian economic policy—or at least that is what my former Egyptian colleagues tell me now. But this demand for reform did place USAID leadership in a difficult position— on the one hand, we needed to respond to AID/W expectations for reform (expectations often expressed in the form of possible quid pro quos) at the same time that the political forces of the Embassy and State wanted maximum levels of stability in our relations with the Government since the search for peace in the region was to have priority. I give credit both to Hermann Eilts and to Roy Atherton for their help in defending what we were trying to do and the way in which they assisted in the negotiation process with the Egyptians (while still telling me to keep it as cool as I could).

I did feel that AID/W (and IBRD/IMF) held some wrong priorities as to which subsidies to fight. Particular pressure was applied to adjust bread prices. Although those prices were obviously out of line, and the subsidies were universally rather than selectively applied, there is no question the poor did benefit — far more, for example, than from energy subsidies. The argument that adjusting bread prices to give a greater incentive to grow wheat was also probably wrong, since Egypt's agricultural comparative advantage did not lie with wheat but with other products which could better bear the heavy cost of irrigation water—and 95% of Egypt's agriculture depends on

Nile water. When the Government, in a badly organized maneuver, did seek abruptly to adjust bread prices, major riots with many deaths took place. Not only were the adjustments then withdrawn, but the political repercussions of that ill-thought-out venture remained in the forefront of thinking of Egyptian and American political leadership. It is true that the donor community also emphasized the need for reform of the energy sector and I am informed that much more has taken place in that regard in recent years.

One issue on which I simply could not give support to Egyptian leadership concerned land reclamation, i.e. expanding the irrigated area into the sandy desert regions on the edge of the Nile Delta. I argued that standard cost/benefit analysis could not support such investments. My Egyptian colleagues responded in rhetorical terms that population increases, etc. required provision of more agricultural land and they also argued that there were hidden costs (urban infrastructure, etc.) that were being borne because of this limited land availability. I urged my Egyptian colleagues to establish a hard and satisfactory economic analysis going beyond standard cost/benefits which could take their concerns into account and which could show a real economic betterment to be achieved through land reclamation. That simply was not forthcoming and the justification was almost always simply in nationalistic and political terms. On one visit of Doug Bennet and Joe Wheeler we went to see President Sadat at his home in Suez. On the way Doug and Joe spelled out all the arguments they would use with Sadat against Egyptian reclamation policy. When we arrived, Sadat was sitting on a lawn by the Suez Canal. He arose, walked to us, escorted us back to where the chairs were gathered and immediately went into a long defense of reclamation — to the extent it seemed to sweep Doug and Joe off their feet since none of their well planned counter-arguments ever got expressed. I did my best to find ways to satisfy in part the lust for reclamation work through some limited research programs aimed at testing out best agricultural practices for different reclamation activities, but my best Egyptian friends still call me that anti-reclamation type.

One thing we all learned quickly was the need to deal with the media (Egyptian and international) and also to back up high level U.S. Government officials and Congressional delegations (Codels) during their visits. Working with the Egyptian press and radio/TV was not particularly difficult, but American media, especially TV, made a real effort to trip us up over difficult issues. I am thankful that I had had some exposure to the media over Sahelian matters during my time as DAA/Africa and managed to minimize problems which might have resulted. In some cases I managed to reach an understanding with a TV or radio interviewer over the major issues to be discussed so I could be reasonably prepared. In other cases, however, questions were raised which were really rather out of bounds and responding was difficult and since the interviewer had the power over what was included and what was excluded from the final broadcast product, one could always find oneself appearing to say things which were not what was meant.

Q: Anything else on the Egypt experience?

BROWN: Well, a big concern I felt was that Egyptians tended to assume that things would never change. I feared that there could be a sudden or a rapid decrease in US economic assistance

without preparation on the part of the Egyptians as to what would be the impact and implications on their own operations. That decrease hasn't taken place. But you never know in this world now. Certainly there has been a decrease in IDA support. The World Bank provides no IDA support to Egypt at this time. And while our work seems legislatively sacrosanct at the moment, that could change at any time.

Q: Is this sort of an almost artificial support effort for Egypt that leaves them at high risk?

BROWN: In a sense. Not in my view as nearly as high a risk in terms of its intrinsic role in the economy as that with Israel. But in the Israeli case they are probably better protected from change than is true for Egypt.

Q: Right.

BROWN: There are a lot of people who broadly support AID to Egypt that are sort of uneasy. They don't quite understand why. They understand why AID to Israel. They don't understand why such high levels to Egypt.

Q: Were you involved in the issue of why not make the Egyptian program simply a cash transfer like we do for Israel?

BROWN: This is where I had a lot of difficulties with both some of my closest colleagues in the Congress and with a number of them in Egypt itself. I was certainly prepared to see certain areas made into block grants. However, I felt it was important, for political as well as development purposes, that the United States continue to have a role, a function, in the decision as to how resources would be used. And I felt that until the Egyptians were better prepared to support the institutions and the funding arrangements to support programs for the people, that if there were a shift to block grants of any kind it would not work. Now, can we do better in sectoral or perhaps geographic grants of some kind where we reach broad agreements on how resources should be used and then move ourselves out of the center? I think that is very possible. And I don't think it has been pursued very much. I was not encouraged to pursue it when I was there. Either people wanted to have full control or there were these others: Jim Bond was one with whom I argued for years on this one...who wanted to just turn it over: you know, it is a political gift and it is a political sale let's take care of it that way. So, I wasn't given much encouragement on sectoral lending or sectoral grants.

Q: What have you perceived as the change or increase in capacity of the Egyptians to manage a major program?

BROWN: Oh, I think they have been substantial.

Q: Are they in a better position now to do that sort of thing than before?

BROWN: Substantial. Much deeper understanding of the need to deal with the reality of economics. There are institutional improvements: the structure of the Ministry of Agriculture has shifted to be much more responsive to the needs of farmers. A variety of things of that sort where I think, yes, there is the capacity, and importantly to me and this is why I would have even liked to try regional block grants was the growing strength of capacity at the governorate level.

Q: But some people describe the democracy as very rigid and impossible to deal with and function in.

BROWN: It is very difficult. It is very difficult. And certainly that is true for ordinary daily issues-daily problems-getting your permit, getting your this...getting something else. It is almost impossible to find the right people in the bureaucracy and when you do it is almost impossible to get what you need without some kind of bakshish. In that sense the rigidity is there.

But at the leadership level I think there is much greater creativity and thoughtfulness. I think they can do all right on their own without much difficulty. I would like to see them give greater attention to what it would be like if they didn't have that American aid supporting them.

Q: Anything else on Egypt at this point?

BROWN: High level visits were an enormous demand on staff. It seemed that Codels in particular did not want to visit Israel on the Sabbath and therefore made it a point to use the weekends for their Cairo stops — meaning an even longer week for the staff than usual. Some delegations were thoughtful and well briefed. Others simply expected the staff to be their purchasing agents in the bazaar. Others were very demanding but clearly deeply interested and we welcomed seeking to respond to them. I remember one Congressman from New York who required that he be supported by two Embassy/AID Control Officers because of the wide range of his interests — and he was right.

Visits by Secretaries of State, Agriculture and the like were a huge burden, although tending to affect the Embassy rather more than the USAID. Presidential visits, of which there were several, were even more demanding for the whole staff. One particularly charged period was for the funeral of assassinated President Anwar Sadat. For this three Presidents (Ford, Nixon and Carter) attended, along with previous Secretary of State Kissinger and then Secretary Haig. I was assigned as Control Officer for President Carter and Micheline provided support to Ms. Carter. I must say I found it a delight to serve Carter who acted in an extremely pleasant and gentlemanly manner and Micheline has the same reactions to her work with Ms. Carter. Micheline was also envied by all the other women members of the American delegation since Ms. Atherton arranged for her to sit with her, Ms. Sadat, Ms. Nimeri of the Sudan, the wife of the deceased Shah of Iran, Ms. Carter and herself during the funeral proceedings.

At a dinner among the American party, the three Presidents each made short speeches. President Nixon lauded (perhaps for the first time in his life) how American diplomats were so

good in their treatment of Presidents — but forgot to say anything about Sadat. President Ford made a rather maudlin and unfocussed statement. Jimmy Carter made a moving and thoughtful speech which was just right in its assessment of Sadat.

The whole family loved our time in Egypt. Our oldest, Alain, was then at the University of Colorado, but spent one semester at the American University of Cairo (AUC) and made several vacation period visits. Dean did a year at AUC before going back to the States for university studies and Christopher finished his high school studies in Cairo and then spent two years at AUC. Christopher in particular has a wide range of Egyptian and other classmates who remain his close friends to this day.

Micheline loved it. She learned to speak Egyptian Arabic because she could not stand being in such a wonderful city without understanding everything possible. She explored Cairo from end to end—one of our Thanksgiving days was spent with her taking me on a walk of the old city from the Western Gate to the Eastern one, stopping at innumerable different shops, museums, mosques and the like where she was known. We travelled extensively — both on official activities and on private trips. We visited all of the Nile Valley from end to end. We had a series of visits to the Sinai once this was back in Egyptian hands and had one particularly spectacular visit to Mount Sinai and to Ras Mohamed. Petroleum company friends arranged a one week visit to "the New Valley", the series of oases west of the Nile with half a dozen fascinating but seldom visited towns. Our last major trip was to Siwa, the western most oasis and one that we could visit only in our last year because of earlier security considerations. Alexander the Great visited Siwa and there are some who claim he is buried there.

Throughout our stay we were overwhelmed by the friendliness and openness of our Egyptian friends. They welcomed us into their families and homes and made us an integral part of their lives.

At one point Micheline criticized me harshly (and rightly). We had gone to an official dinner. Our Egyptian hosts took me off to the head table and I simply left Micheline to fend for herself. She did so, but then told me in no uncertain terms that I was becoming too self-centered in the glory of my functions as AID Director. I tried from then on to be less obsessed with my self-importance.

As already noted, Egypt was a wonderful experience for all of us. While I knew that after six years change was due, it was hard for us to accept that our time there had come to an end. Certainly I did not foresee any future assignment in AID which could be as stimulating, as exciting and as much pure fun as our six years there. Still, it was time to move on.

A brief period in USAID/Washington and service as the Executive Director of the Commission on Peace and Security—1982-1983

BROWN: Peter McPherson, USAID Administrator, understood that I hoped to be able to find a function outside of AID and he was very helpful in that regard. It took a year to settle on such

an assignment, as Vice President of IFAD. In the meantime, while trying to find the right opportunity for me, Peter asked me to serve as a Special Assistant to take on various tasks he wanted done.

During the last several months of my Washington stay, Peter also asked me to serve as Executive Director of the Commission on Peace and Security, the "Carlucci Commission". This was an interesting period since it gave me a chance to get to know the members of the Commission, including Frank Carlucci himself, Cliff Wharton (then President of the University of the State of New York), several members of the Congress and so on. My brother, Dean, was a member of the Commission and this was the first time since Zaire that we worked on a task together. It is my impression that what Peter McPherson was seeking out of the Commission was a reinforcement of the interrelationships of economic and security assistance (a view to which I have never fully subscribed myself, although I understand the political usefulness for development aid which this connection once held). He was particularly concerned at weak interest in both the Administration and in Congress for the World Bank soft window — IDA—and I think he saw the Commission as a means for reinforcing that interest. Certainly the final report of the Commission backed up these views—but given the continuing Administration reservations about IDA at that time, the Commission Report was basically buried and little concrete happened as a direct result of it (the Mexican financial crisis of a few years later was far more emphatic in making the Administration recognize the importance of these international financial institutions).

Appointment as Vice-President of the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD)—1983-1995

BROWN: For thirteen years I served as the second Vice President of the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), following in the footsteps of Phil Birnbaum. I worked with the first three Presidents of the Fund — Abdulmuhsin El-Sudeary of Saudi Arabia, Idriss Jazairy of Algeria and the current President, Fawzi Al Sultan of Kuwait. I think earlier my years working with Arab officials were helpful since I was able to perform effectively with each of these three rather different individuals in circumstances of mutual respect. Working with IFAD was a welcome culmination to a long career devoted to development activities since it centered its programs on concerns which had become increasingly important, in my view, as to what should be the central concern of economic assistance — fighting hunger and poverty.

When I joined IFAD it was still a new organization—only five years old—and it was still struggling to establish its own place in the international organization system. IFAD was initially organized as a follow up to the World Food Conference of 1974 with an emphasis on improving food production, and was seen as a particularly attractive instrument for increasing OPEC country participation in the financing of development programs. (In the first rounds of IFAD funding, OECD countries provided about 60% overall funding and OPEC countries came up with about 40%, with other developing countries initially providing only marginal amounts to the Fund’s overall resources). IFAD found it necessary to carve out a workable niche in the development field and gradually this came about through a concentration of efforts aimed at

overcoming rural poverty. At first IFAD had little new to contribute in programmatic terms and organized poverty programs much as had other donors. But over time, the Fund experimented with a wide range of new approaches (while always seeking to safeguard the financial benefits of its projects, since they were being financed by developing governments with borrowed funds). By the time I left at the end of 1995 IFAD had become an acknowledged leader in dealing with participant oriented and beneficiary planned development efforts which sought to help poor rural people make their own lives better.

As Vice President, I had a variety of different functions, depending in part on the particular abilities and interests of the three different Presidents that I served. From the beginning I had a strong interest in program content and how it should evolve in a manner which could be most beneficial to poor rural people. My long experience with AID provided me with a rich background which was fully recognized and acknowledged by my colleagues and gave me considerable weight in these program deliberations. For example, I was insistent from the beginning that IFAD should give greater attention to the specific needs of women and must organize its projects and programs accordingly. After some considerable resistance (in that sense IFAD was little different from other development organizations at that time), we got the whole team on board and brought women's concerns directly into the mainstream of all our programming. I participated actively with others in a programmatic evolution which gave increasing emphasis on participatory development, assuring that the beneficiaries themselves played an important role not only in implementation but also in planning of projects which would affect them. At a time when other development agencies were emphasizing market forces, we pursued vigorously the need for targeting — for establishing means which could assure that the impact of projects really flowed to the persons intended.

All of these programmatic concerns were of deep interest to me and I welcomed opportunities to have my views taken into account. But we also had to demonstrate to the world at large — both donors and recipients—that what we were doing was useful and that it worked. I therefore spent an enormous amount of my time on various aspects of what could be broadly called public affairs.

Before I even joined the Fund I met with some key Congressional members and their staffers to be sure they found me acceptable in this new role and would be prepared to work with me. I must say that in those first days I found only a small handful of persons in the Congress who knew anything at all about IFAD. We worked very hard to change that and by 1995 we had built very solid Congressional backing on both sides of the aisle. The time I had spent on legislative matters in the Africa Bureau and with respect to Egypt aided me greatly in this period — but so did the strong and consistent support we received from certain members and especially from some key staff representatives. While I concentrated heavily on U.S. support, I was also very much involved with a range of other donors and spent a good bit of time travelling to capitals of actual and potential donors in reaching out for further funding. While occasionally we claimed more than reality, I think that basically we became known for being forthright and honest in our various presentations of IFAD's usefulness and its funding needs and that certainly boosted the Fund's reputation as well.

As Vice President I also had overall responsibility for overall financial management, including both Treasury and Controller functions. While I had long been familiar with Controller and audit activities, I had never previously dealt with organizational investment programs and I had a lot to learn in this area. For a variety of reasons (generosity of certain donors paying in cash, long lead times between receipt of contribution and disbursements against long term projects, etc.) IFAD gradually built up an important investment portfolio — over a billion dollars—the income on which paid for all the Fund's administrative expenses as well as adding to its committable resources. I can not deny that having responsibility for such important financial resources was scary at times—for example when the Iraq invasion of Kuwait took place and we had been holding important Kuwaiti and much smaller Iraqi investments. Fortunately the three Presidents I worked with were skilled in this area, we had excellent staff work and we developed solid relations with external advisers—and as a result our investment portfolio grew and our income became an important part of our overall operations. I also had responsibility for personnel matters and as I have noted before this took an enormous part of my time as well as that of the President and other senior managers.

Those thirteen years with IFAD were very satisfying. We were a small organization (about the same number of professionals for a world wide program as had been on the USAID/Cairo staff) with a wide range of nationalities involved. The staff was highly dedicated and motivated, caring deeply about the Fund's narrowly focussed attention on rural poverty. We experimented a lot, but did so always recognizing that we needed to keep our borrowers interest foremost. We did become, I believe firmly, what Idriss Jazairy liked to call the Lighthouse of Knowledge on rural poverty issues — a lighthouse whose rays affected the thinking of many other donors and contributed importantly to the way they have now approached the problems of rural poverty.

Q: It would be useful to elaborate a bit more on what you saw as the unique role of IFAD in relation to all other development assistance programs. There was some controversy as to why we needed IFAD, wasn't there?

BROWN: Well, IFAD was born on the basis of bifurcated political interest. There was a world food conference. There was great concern about world food production. There was a sense that something needed to be done. But there was a resistance certainly among several Western countries including the United States to the establishment of any new institution until the OPEC countries indicated a strong interest in being supportive of some kind of new institution which would be deeply concerned with agricultural production.

While the language of the agreement establishing IFAD makes reference to poverty, that was not initially a predominant consideration. It was agricultural production that was the priority, flowing largely from the World Food Conference concern. But IFAD came into existence more because of the OPEC interest in an institution in which they would have influence and the West's interest in bringing more OPEC money into the development process than for its functions.

Once it was established, it became important for the Fund to find its own place. The word that was constantly being used within IFAD was its "niche". What was it that IFAD could do which

would over time justify its continued existence, whatever might happen to the OPEC role. This was important since there was growing weakening in OPEC support. Iran had been a major factor in the establishment of IFAD and of course after the revolution, that changed totally.

Long before my time, senior staff, particularly Assistant President Sartaj Aziz from Pakistan, argued for greater concentration on the poor. For understandable reasons, the first President El Sudari was interested in getting something happening...getting some programs in place so he could demonstrate impact was more important to him than poverty issues. But Artaj-Aziz kep pushing on the need to address poverty.

When Jazairy became President, after Sudaris's term ended in the seventh year of IFAD's existence, he was deeply interested in both the problems of poverty and finding that niche. And from that point on the Fund devoted the vast majority of its resources to programs that could be demonstrated to have an impact on poor farmers. Now there was always a big argument within the organization between the poorest and poor. You know, some people love to say, "We were serving the poorest of the poor," without even being even able to define who the poorest of the poor were. I always preferred talking about the poor as a whole because in cultures of this sort, you can't deal with the poorest of the poor by themselves. You have got to deal with larger issues. That is a side issue, but it was one which continues to haunt the Fund.

Q: Can you give some examples of the kinds of thing you were trying to do?

BROWN: Everybody talks about the Grameen Bank in Bangladesh. There is no question that Grameen is essentially the work of a brilliant man, Mohammed Yunif. But it was IFAD that was the first international organization to provide support to the Grameen Bank. This to us was an exciting and interesting new approach to how you could get resources into the hands of poor people and especially women. It was a nascent little organization. It was lending to a couple of thousand people when we moved in. I think we helped put it on the map. The World Bank wouldn't touch it when we did. We asked them to appraise the project. They wouldn't do an appraisal much less put any money in it. Now we are out of the bank. We have no need to continue to finance the Grameen Bank because others came along and gave it all necessary resources. But that was an institution that was very much in the heart of the sort of things that we were concerned about.

We were highly interested in programs with indigenous people. The special castes and groups in India, and particularly in Latin America the indigenous people. I think we devised some programs which sought to be structured within the culture of the indigenous people and sought to respond to how they perceived things should happen, but were also sellable to government to get government support.

I think that was interesting. Again, we were the first international institution to be able to work with indigenous groups in India. And we, after our first program, we were asked repeatedly to do much the same sort of thing. And I don't think that anybody else from the outside, except some small NGOs, are doing that sort of thing.

We gave much more attention to traditional crops because these are the crops of poor people. We gave much priority to small scale irrigation, simple irrigation, things of this nature. We were saying look at the issue from the point of view of these people who are poor and what is it that is most needed by them and how can one build it. I think IFAD has helped establish institutions in a number of countries and programs of continuity, whether public or private, which are having a strong impact.
The Fund is now looked upon within the United Nations system as the leader in dealing with poverty issues and it is believed that the Fund has more useful things to say about poverty issues than any other agency. One great advantage of all this is we have one issue that we deal with-rural poverty. We have a staff who cares, who are absolutely dedicated to that. They are not thinking about broad economics. They are not thinking about broad financial issues. Obviously they think about those as they impact on poverty issues. But it is poverty that they are concerned about. They are a wonderful staff. They really got it. By the way, excuse my repeated use of "we," since I have now left the Fund, but you can see from that how much it meant to me.

Now, one major problem for us right from the beginning was Edward Saoma, the Director General of the FAO. Saoma opposed the establishment of IFAD from day one. If it was going to be established, he wanted it to be a part of FAO. He equally opposed, as you know, the establishment of the World Food Council which was also established as a result of the World Food Conference. And as a result, the relations between IFAD and FAO, which should have been enormously fruitful, were weak. It is true there were good relations on working issues of one kind or another. But there was a constant constraint in this because as soon as Saoma learned that things were getting too warm he would cut them off. And it has really been very, very, very sad. Really both institutions would have been much richer. IFAD was trying to repair that. And I think...

Q: Jacques Diouf, the present Director-General of FAO.

BROWN: I think Jacques is working on his side to try and repair that. But Jacques, of course, has had his own problems in making sure he got control of that organization. And it had not gotten very far up until the time I left, although the trend is clearly to be closer.

Q: Didn't you rely a lot on FAO technical people for technical services?

BROWN: We did. The World Bank supported the technical center in FAO which designed projects for the World Bank and to which was added a section to design projects for IFAD. We obviously worked very closely with them. But there was never a meaningful discussion between the heads of the two agencies on "whither go agriculture". On how can we work better together in the Ivory Coast or some such thing. Never such a discussion. And I just think that was a great, great, great diminishment of what each of us could have done. But that is past and I trust with Jacques things will be better.

Q: Anything else on IFAD you want to say?

My years with IFAD provided a highly satisfying end to my development career because of its concentration on equitable growth. I am convinced we learned lessons there which need to be applied more broadly by all donor programs — and I am happy to see that this has been increasingly recognized by some of the key players in supporting economic development.

BROWN: That is about it.

Concluding observations on international development and foreign assistance programs

Q: Let's turn now to general observations on your experience in international development. This is a difficult question to answer in a general way, but what aspects did you find work well ? What was important and what do you think had lasting effect that was worthwhile?

BROWN: Well, I simply believe that the lives of millions-hundreds of millions-of people around the world are better today as a result of the combined efforts of world community working together with respect to development needs in poor countries. Whether that comes from the World Bank or us or from European community members or from Japan or whatever.

I see the changes that have taken place in life expectancy and the spread of disease, in the availability of education, in the number of university graduates-this sort of thing in Africa for example. It is an enormous change. Not all of it comes from assistance activities. A lot of it comes from domestic efforts in those directions. No assistance is useful without that domestic interest. But there is no question in my mind that a lot of that could not have been achieved without outside help. Outside help financially and outside help technically.

Now the world has changed a lot. We still view technical assistance too much in traditional terms of sending a technician to do something to help somebody somewhere at salaries which are fifty times higher than those they are supposed to be helping. We all need to rethink that sort of thing. And this is one place, again, where IFAD was very much in a leadership role of trying much more to draw on local capacities for project design and project management and the like.

But still there have been improvements in people's lives. Now that progress has been affected obviously by corruption in many countries. And I look at a place like Zaire and whatever efforts were put in there, however many millions or billions of dollars were provided to Zaire, people's lives have not improved one whit. And that is because of a leadership that didn't care. There is clearly a critical issue. You are not going to do much unless leadership cares. Unless leadership is prepared to say that equity is an elemental part of development strategy.

Now that leadership need not necessarily always be the President or the head of state. It can often be institutions and people with influence and whose influence can be enhanced by the relationship with an AID agency over a set of programs which are important. I think that happened with respect to what we were able to do in agriculture in Egypt for example, because we had in the end, two ministers in a row who really cared. And we were never able to do much with irrigation in Egypt because we didn't have a minister there who had the same kind of care.

So, there is no point in doing anything unless you've got leadership which is supportive of and certainly not taking actions which are detrimental to the development process. But if you can do that, I think it is important to continue.

Q: But doesn't our foreign policy interests-our political interests or security interests compel us to go ahead and do things to support a Mobutu or support a government that doesn't seem to care so much-like Morocco and so on. How did that compromise the AID program?

BROWN: Of course, it does.

Q: It shouldn't be there?

BROWN: Of course, it compromises it. Why did we not meet our security interests in Morocco, for example, which was essentially in the establishment of air bases, through the defense budget. I mean, after all, that is what it was. It was in defense interest. Why didn't we do it? We could make cash grants to Morocco. Whether we made cash grants to them or had programs in the end they were going to use the resources the way they wanted. Why not just give it to them through the defense budget rather than corrupt what was meant to be a developmental effort.

Zaire is another case clearly where our so-called "security interests" were so predominate that we were willing to put up with anything. I don't know what you do under those circumstances because at a particular time there certainly were security interests.

Q: What is your interpretation of our security interests?

BROWN: This is where I often have great trouble, frankly, with the analysis of what our security interests are. And how important they are. I stopped arguing the importance of Morocco as a security concern. The entry into the Mediterranean; its access to the Atlantic and the Mediterranean. The availability of facilities for VOA—a whole range of things. But I have always had real questions about how meaningful were those security interests in Zaire and many other countries as well. I think if one cares about development, one would have to make a better effort to separate it from the security interests.

On the other hand, that poses some real problems in funding. For years and years and years people argued as to whether economic and security aid should be in the same bill or not. Those that wanted them on the same bill ended up winning because it was always felt that you could

get enough votes from each side to get a bill through. The problem is that once the major issues -- that is, the relationships with the Soviet Union -- are no longer a security issue of the same nature, there is no longer a meaningful security development nexus and development needs to stand on its own without having developed a sufficient rationale itself. That should have been done over the last 40 years and never has been done. That leaves the field open for all of those to simply say, like Ambassador Moose did in Sudan, "It is a waste of money."

Q: You didn't have as you said, much of that kind of a political security rationale for the Sahel and that program went forward.

BROWN: That went forward.

Q: On a developmental rationale?

BROWN: It went forward clearly on a development rationale but to be perfectly frank because the Nixon Administration was facing so many issues in Vietnam and elsewhere that it needed something that would act as a lightening rod to those who could see something positive coming out of that Administration. That's how we got the support.

Q: I see.

BROWN: And we did get it. At the time we had a Democratic majority in the Houses of the Congress and it was easier to bring them along to support something of that nature. But it worries me that today we may simply abandon the development effort and I think it may be premature to do that. It is certainly premature in Africa to give up that effort. This is particularly true at a time when at our urging -- by "our"I mean the United States and the Western communities as a whole -- Africans in the direction of democracy and economic reform; just as they are struggling to bring those two almost incompatible policies along, we start withdrawing. And what are they stuck with? Programs which are killing their people without the financial support which could mitigate that problem. And they are facing elections because we insisted upon that as well.

I believe firmly that close economic ties between developed and developing countries are important — for humanitarian reasons, because of a belief in the need for a more egalitarian world, because our own society can be threatened in the face of inequity—one sees the latter problem increasingly sharply in terms of the difficulties being faced both in the United States and in Europe over migration from poor countries.

For too long we depended heavily on security considerations as a rationale for financing economic development. The Carlucci Commission was an example of how we sought to relate development and security issues. I certainly played on this theme myself on occasions when I was seeking to assure adequate funding for development purposes. This worked well while the Cold War existed. Without that rationale we suddenly find ourselves floundering for a justification of continued economic aid.

Certainly throughout that period we accomplished a lot, even if we failed to do all that might have been possible. Education and health facilities improved, diseases were overcome, longevity increased, and while the numbers of the poor increased their percentage of overall populations went down.

The American people face a quandary at this point about what role the United States should play. Sympathetic to the plight of those facing disaster situations, Americans have insisted consistently that the United States respond in proper fashion. But Americans have far less understanding of the need for development as such — and how development can arrest or at least lessen the potential impact of disaster. India is certainly a case where development, particularly of agriculture, has virtually eliminated the potential for a national food disaster. That is an example we need to share with those who question economic cooperation. If others share my concern about the continuing need for the United States and other nations to play a role in helping the less fortunate of this world, we need to find new ways to express that need.

Over the years I have concluded that while the United States has a responsibility for supporting the development efforts of poor countries it is not enough simply to foster higher growth rates. Too often accelerated growth has been detrimental to large parts of developing country populations and has led to greater mal-distribution of national wealth. I have become convinced that growth and development are often meaningless unless they are accompanied by a major effort to help the poor make their own lives better—to increase rather than to lessen equity. That does not diminish the importance of growth since it is clear no society is willing to make the sacrifices to share existing wealth more equitably and that equity can be achieved only through a fairer distribution of higher income levels.

Q: Well, let's narrow our focus to USAID. Where do you see AID over the years and the foreign assistance program in relation to the international development effort? Was it particularly unique or was it just one of the crowd?

BROWN: Well, one thing is clear, and that is that over the years AID became a major center of knowledge. There is no question in my mind of that. I mean, the depth of our field staffs, the depth of our strategy analysis, the depth of our technical analysis means that we know an awful lot about the development process, globally, regionally and nationally. Somehow or another that has to be maintained.

I certainly accept some of the themes that AID is promoting at the moment and it needs to have... it needs itself to have a niche now. It needs to have a role within the development function which is complementary to but separate from that of the World Bank, the IMF and the regional banks.

The whole concept of development however, needs greater understanding and greater support because it is not just AID that is under attack-it is the World Bank, it is the regional banks, it is everybody and it is not just the United States. It is increasingly happening even in those European countries which have been at the forefront of development support. And there simply

has to be a greater sense of unanimity about what the development process is about. I have been arguing for the last several years in various speeches here and there that poverty, the alleviation of poverty, must be a major focal point.

Now maybe that is just because I was working for an agency whose primary concern was poverty but I continue firmly to believe that the public in wealthy countries can react to and be supportive of something which deals with poor people. Maybe not in their own country very well, which is what is happening in the United States at the present time. But they can with people who are much poorer in poorer countries. But they need to know that any effort is not just a palliative but is effective. And we need, as agencies, to stop fighting each other and to find more effective ways together to deal with problems of poverty. And unless we do that, I do feel that the development effort will be finished before the 21st century.

Q: But the topic of poverty has been on the agenda off and on. The World Bank says they are committed to poverty and people are asking what is inhibiting everybody to really address this issue.

BROWN: Oh, yes. All you have to do is look at World Bank projects and you know they are not really dealing with poverty. They are dealing with development which they say will then reach poor people. They disapprove of targeting. How the hell do you deal with poor people unless you make some effort to say, "These are the people we want to reach. These are what they need and therefore we have to have the structures and the institutions etc. which will get those resources to them." And if you simply say, "Well, here's a wonderful piece of land and some poor people on it and therefore we will develop this land", it isn't necessarily going to get to the poor. There is not a cohesive sense of what this is all about. Targetting is as critical to poverty alleviation as getting the policies right.

Q: A lot of people say at first you have got to get the policies right, you have got to get the prices right before you can help the poor. Or otherwise it won't work.

BROWN: I think those are important issues. But if you start by talking in terms of helping the poor, you must be sure the policies you are "getting right" are not going to have a more detrimental effect on the poor than on anybody else. But that's not what's happened. The poor are the ones who have suffered the most by every economic reform. I expect that they will suffer. It is inevitable when you've got the kind of massive change that some of these reform programs call for, that there will be harm. But unless there is a conscious effort to build into those reform programs themselves activities which help the poor, then there is going to be damage. There is going to be deep damage. So, no, you cannot convince me that the World Bank, despite all of the statements that it makes is fighting the problem of poverty or at least in the right way.

Q: And the other agencies generally within the development community?

BROWN: Regional banks are even worse than the World Bank. The World Bank at least says the right things and tries.

Q: And the bilateral donors?

BROWN: They vary. Unfortunately some who care about poverty often go to the other extreme of not worrying about broad policies at all. Some donors have been prepared to put money into institutions no matter how badly or stupidly the government is allocating and using its own overall resources. That is an extreme statement, I accept.

Q: But you said one of the keys is that you had to have leadership who cared and how do you deal with that issue?

BROWN: Well, leadership in poor countries has become much more conscious of the need to deal with poor people. They are much more conscious of dealing with women for example. Much more conscious of dealing with the environment. When the West first started talking environment to poor countries they all said, "No!" or if you are going to do anything about environment you are going to pay for it on top of everything else. Now I hear major officials in many developing countries taking full cognizance of the need to deal with environment and to use whatever resources are available to do that as part of their development effort.

Certainly I've seen much more attention to the problems of women. Because these are two issues in which, truly, the United States and Western countries have put a lot of attention in their aid programs. But I still don't think either donors or developing country leaders really -- despite the rhetoric -- put very much attention to poverty. This is why IFAD to me is so important. It is the institution which is doing it and which is showing others what is possible and the way they ought to go about it.

Q: Well, let's wrap it up with one last question here. What would your advice be to someone who said, "Mr. Brown, you have been overseas in many missions, you have been mission director and so on...what advice-I'm going out to be mission director in some developing country. What advice would you give me on this assignment? How can I do my job well?"

BROWN: Be smart and think out your problems. But being smart means making sure you are able to deal with all the others who are dealing with those problems-whether that be national government officials, your own mission, your ambassador, your assistant administrator back in Washington, your Assistant Secretary in State, whatever it may be. You have got to build a sense of teamwork towards the objectives you are aiming at. Without that you are not going to get anywhere.

I was very concerned when I first went to Egypt -- that Herman Eilts was really very leery of having me around. It was through a number of things that we were able to do together that we became a team. And then I could count of his political support and he could count on my responsiveness to his political issues while also dealing with development. I think that is terribly important.

Q: But in terms of development strategy or policy-anything particular in that? Obviously that depends upon the situation?

BROWN: Obviously your development strategy depends upon the situation. Don't think that you come as a mission director with wonderful new ideas that have never been thought about before. People have probably thought about all of the ideas you have and may have designed many programs some of which were successes and some of which were failures. Take that into account. Don't think that you are going to come and bust up programs and change programs and change directions because you are smarter than the past. Maybe you are...but you've got to keep that past in mind.

And then you've got to build some kind of a broad, coherent strategy as to where you want to go. You may not have all of the pieces of that strategy but you have to have at least a broad sense of where it is you want to go. But that strategy has to sufficiently flexible that with changing circumstances you can change the pieces that have to go into it.

I seldom said openly that my strategy for Egypt was, in fact, to try and do the best I could to help poor people. Because if I had put that up front, those concerned with politics would never have trusted me an inch because they would assume I would not have been responsive to what they wanted to achieve with the Egyptians.

So the underlying interest in the poor was always there. We concocted decentralization programs because they had a real development meaning but also political impact. When we had to do larger infrastructure things, we tried to find ways to insure that the needs of the poor would be least damaged by taking over of land or whatever it might be. And perhaps benefitted. But my views were never articulated, although my close associates certainly understood and shared my view.

Who Made it Possible

Q: Well, I think this is it. Is there anything else you want to add at this point?

BROWN: Let me make one last point. An enormous number of people contributed to my ability to make some contributions to the development process. I have mentioned a few of them in these presentations.

But the most important person throughout has been Micheline Charbonnel Brown. She has been my inspiration, my driving force, my constant supporter. She has been a wonderful mother while also being very much a part of the professional life we led through these many years. Certainly she complained about some of the harder aspects — but then buckled down to what had to be done. She has friends around the world who admire her for her charm, her graciousness, her intelligence, her frankness about all matters and the helping hand she has extended to all who sought it. We have spent a great 46 years together.

Annex: 1. Brief Biographic Information:

Born 2 April 1928 in Queens Village, New York. Moved in 1929 to Garden City, New York, and resided there until university.

Parents and Brothers:

Father: Lewis P. Brown, Engineer in charge of bridge maintenance, Brooklyn and Manhattan Bridges, New York City

Mother: Elizabeth Amy Brown, Secretary

Brothers: Robert Walter Crossley Brown, lawyer, economist and social scientist. Deceased

L. Dean Brown: Foreign Service Officer Retired, Career Ambassador, Ambassador to Senegal and Jordan

Marriage and Family:

After over a year of "pen pal" correspondence (that is another story), married Micheline Charbonnel in Chartres Cathedral, Chartres, France, December, 1950.

Sons are: Alain Bahram Brown, born in Iran, 1955
Dean Michel Brown, born at Wheelus Air Base, Tripoli, Libya, 1958
Christopher Laurent Brown, born in Nairobi, Kenya (when family was stationed in Mogadiscio, Somalia) 1960

Education:

Garden City schools, high school graduation in 1945.

Studied Engineering at Cornell University, 1945-1946. Ended the year on probation and decided clearly not an engineering type.

U.S. Army, 1946-1948. Enlisted in effort to decide what to do with my life (which is why this is shown under education). Basic Training at Camp Dix, New Jersey. Officers' Candidate School at Fort Benning, Ga., graduating as Second Lieutenant. Infantry Officer at Fort Sill, Oklahoma. Considered but rejected prospect of a military career.

Antioch College, Yellow Springs, Ohio, 1948-1952. Decided on Antioch because of work-study program (half time on campus, half on the job each year), the liberal spirit, the smaller size. Studied towards working in the field of labor-management relations (and "work" assignments were related to that field).

American University of Beirut, Summer 1953, part of State Department organized summer program of studies and visits to the Middle East.

Johns Hopkins Center for International Studies, Washington D.C.—1956. AID sponsored Program Officer's Training Program.

Princeton University, Woodrow Wilson School, 1965-1966, AID mid-career training.

Work History

Spent 1952 to 1983 with TCA (Technical Cooperation Administration, called Point 4 after a fourth point in President Truman's State of the Union speech) and its successor agencies, i.e. ICA (International Cooperation Administration) and AID (Agency for International Development). Since I also had an Antioch Work Assignment with ECA (Economic Cooperation

Administration (ECA) which became MSA (Mutual Security Administration) while I was assigned there, I have managed to take part in essentially all the agencies dealing directly and solely with U.S. foreign assistance policy and programs.

1952-1954—Junior Management Intern, TCA/Washington

1954-1956—Various assignments with USOM/Iran—Special Assistant to the Director, Program Assistant, etc.

1956-1958—Assistant Program Officer, Libya.

1958-1961—Program Officer, Somalia

1961-1963—Program Officer, Sudan.

1963-1965—Deputy Executive Secretary then Executive Secretary, Administrator's Office, AID/Washington.

1965-1966—Mid Career Training—Princeton University

1966-1967—AID Representative, Algiers.

1967-1970—Deputy Director, then Director and Economic Counselor, Zaire.

1971-1972—Director, Morocco.

1972-1976—Deputy Assistant Administrator for Africa, AID/Washington.

1976-1982—Director, Egypt.

1982 — With Joe Wheeler, named as AID's first two Career Counselors for Development.

1982-1983—Special Assistant to AID Administrator

Retired from AID in 1983.

1983-1995—Vice President, International Fund for Agricultural Development, Rome, Italy

Awards and Other Functions:

AID Meritorious Honor Award

AID Superior Honor Award, 1973

Rockefeller Public Service Award (shared with David Shear) 1977

AID Distinguished Honor Award 1975 and 1982

AID Distinguished Career Award 1983

President's Distinguished Foreign Affairs Award 1983

Order of the Republic of Egypt, 1982

Citation for performance with IFAD placed in Congressional Record by Senator Inouye, 1995

President, Rome International Chapter, Society for International Development, 1989-1994