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ELLSWORTH BUNKER ORAL HISTORY, INTERVIEW III

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ELLSWORTH BUNKER

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Signed by John B. Bunker on June 23, 1995

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ACCESSION NUMBER 96-3

INTERVIEW III

DATE: October 12, 1983

INTERVIEWEE: ELLSWORTH BUNKER

INTERVIEWER: Michael L. Gillette

PLACE: Ambassador Bunker's residence, Putney, Vermont

Tape 1 of 3

G: Well, let me ask you to begin this interview by discussing the controversy over the enemy troop levels.

B: Oh, yes.

G: We talked about that a little bit last time.

B: Yes. Yes.

G: Were you aware at the time that there were different--?

B: There were some differences of opinion, yes, but not in my view serious ones. I think the position taken by [William] Westmoreland and his advisers was the correct one, not the one brought out in the CBS showing. The contention, of course, of [Samuel] Adams was that these VC should be included in the order of battle, and I don't think they should have been. I think Westmoreland was right about that, and I think the way it came out was right, because the VC were very shadowy figures, and at best, in my view, the intelligence on the infiltration was sketchy anyway. It was very hard to pinpoint because they came down through the Ho Chi Minh Trail, through the jungle or across the DMZ. At best it was an estimate, and it wasn't vital at all, in my view, in the subsequent developments in Vietnam. We knew they were coming down the Ho Chi Minh Trail, we knew that the rate of they were preparing another offensive. These figures made very little difference in our preparations or in what happened actually.

I thought, frankly, that this was really a hatchet job on Westmoreland. I think Westmoreland obviously was surprised at some of the questions and perhaps didn't handle them as well as he might have. I saw the presentation and I thought at times he seemed a little bit flustered, not prepared. But I know, for example, Walt Rostow spent three hours with the producers and they didn't use one word of his interview, which indicates the slant that it took.

G: Did you ever talk with Sam Adams about his notions of troop levels?

B: I don't think so. I don't remember him at all.

G: Was the White House aware that there was some difference of opinion?

B: Oh, yes, the White House was aware of everything. The President was well informed.

G: Okay. Now let's talk a little bit about infiltration. There is some evidence that the President became aware in late 1968 for the first time of the large amount of infiltration coming through Cambodia, not only people but supplies and things of this nature.

B: Oh, yes, supplies came in through Sihanoukville. Supplies came by boat to the port of Sihanoukville and then were transported across Cambodia to the sanctuaries.

G: Was there a point at which Lyndon Johnson discovered that this was of a much larger scale than he had previously thought?

B: That I don't know. I don't know when he did discover it, but it was increasing certainly, which led eventually to the invasion of Cambodia, invasion of the sanctuaries in 1970.

G: Did Johnson ever consider such a course of action?

B: I don't know whether he considered that course of action, but I did recommend in June--and I think it was June 17, 1967, shortly after I got there--that we go into Laos and cut the Ho Chi Minh Trail on the ground, that the war was kept going, of course, by infiltration of men and supplies through the trail. My feeling was that if we cut the supplies and cut the trail, the war would wither on the vine. Obviously my proposal was turned down, for various reasons. One was that it was contrary to the 1962 agreements on Laos and Cambodia. Second, we were fearful about China's reaction and getting involved in the conflict. Third, that it would take two or three more divisions. My response to that was that it's true, it is a violation of the 1962 agreements. But the other side never observed them from the day they signed them, and the Laotians would be delighted to have us go in and get rid of the Vietnamese. Secondly, while we had no relations then with Communist China, our friends did; the British and the French had embassies in Peking. We could make it clear to the Chinese we had no designs on China or on North Vietnam, but they weren't going to take over the South, the South Vietnamese. As for taking more divisions, it was true, it would have taken more, but we put more in before we got through, we put that many in. Anyhow, we didn't do it.

G: Did you ever talk to the President about this?

B: No, because I had just gotten out there. I'd been there for a month, and I didn't see the President again until the fall of 1967, November 1967.

(Interruption)

G: Why did General [Creighton] Abrams shift away from the policy of search and destroy?

B: Well, I think he thought the policy of search and destroy had done all that it could do and that it was problematic how much you were going to find in that policy. The point then was to make the countryside secure so that people could move around freely, and therefore he shifted from search and destroy to hold and secure, and was very successful in that. By the end of 1971 you could go anywhere in Vietnam.

G: Did the change have anything to do with the enemy's posture? Was there any shift in their--?

B: I think in some degree yes, because the war had become more a conventional war after Tet. The point is that at Tet, the Viet Cong surfaced and largely were destroyed. They'd been underground till that time and would come out periodically and withdraw again. But the whole theory of Tet 1968 was that the populace would rise up and support the North Vietnamese. Well, they didn't, the populace didn't support them, on the contrary. But the Viet Cong surfaced for that reason, expecting this would be the moment of takeover and were largely destroyed. So the war from that time on became more or less more a conventional war of major forces in combat.

G: Now shortly after you left Washington in November 1967 after coming back [inaudible], Secretary [Robert] McNamara resigned.

B: Yes.

G: Did you have any indication while you were there that he was preparing to resign?

B: Well, I'm not sure. At one time, I think when I was there at that time that there was a proposal to appoint him president of the [World] Bank. I think I heard the President refer to it one time as wondering whether McNamara wanted to make that shift or not. But that's the only intimation I had that he might.

G: Why do you think McNamara resigned?

B: Well, when did he resign, 1968, was it?

G: Well, I think it was November 1967.

B: Was it November 1967?

G: Yes.

B: I don't know why he resigned. Really I don't know frankly.

G: Did the South Vietnamese attach much importance to this change?

B: No, I don't think so.

G: Did the President consult you about a bombing halt or a bombing pause during March of 1968?

B: He didn't consult me directly, but I know I was informed of the consultations that took place.

G: Okay. When did you learn that there was going to be a curtailment of the bombing that spring?

B: I can't give you that date. I've got it in Washington really.

G: Do you recall if the knowledge of it was held pretty closely?

B: Yes.

G: Okay. Of course one of the important questions here is the South Vietnamese reaction to the bombing halt and the March 31 speech. In ***The Vantage Point*** LBJ says that President Thieu was satisfied with it.

B: Yes.

G: Is that your--?

B: Yes.

G: If the bombing had been important in maintaining the morale of the South Vietnamese, how then were they willing to accept the bombing halt?

B: Well, I think they were willing to accept [it] because I think the South Vietnamese gained confidence in the results of Tet. You see, Tet was a major military defeat for the communists, but it was a psychological victory in the United States because of the way it was reported by our press. I remember saying and reporting to the President a few days after Tet that this had been a major setback and I was fearful that it would turn out to be a psychological victory in the U.S.

G: I've seen that telegram, I think it's February 4 or 2.

B: I don't know whether you've seen an article by Robert Elegant, published in ***Encounter*** magazine in London two years ago--I have a copy here, I'll show it to you--entitled "How to Lose a War." Elegant was a reporter I think for the ***Los Angeles Times*** then; he's since written two best-sellers on China. He claims that the way the war was reported, particularly on television, a war fought for the first time on our side without censorship and the first time on television, which came into everybody's room every night, and as television is interested in the sensational, dramatic, this was the aspect of war they saw, saw things that happen in every war but had never been seen before. [That] turned

opinion against it, made it impossible then for us to go through with our program. As a matter of fact--which raises the issue I think whether a democracy can fight a war without censorship against opponents that are completely controlled. The British took a leaf out of our book in the Falklands and imposed censorship right away.

G: Now let me ask you about the President's March 31 speech. You were I believe watching the television in the Embassy with General Westmoreland, Bob Komer, Barry Zorthian and Paul Jacobson.

B: Yes.

G: Can you recall your reaction to the speech and his announcement that he wasn't going to run again?

B: We were I think all of us greatly surprised.

G: Really?

B: Yes. Yes.

G: Did you feel that his stepping out of the race would help the cause of peace?

B: I don't think that I had that feeling about it.

G: What was the South Vietnamese reaction?

B: Well, my recollection is that the South Vietnamese of course were quite concerned, not knowing what direction the U.S. might take, whether it meant a withdrawal from the war because of the fact that the President had been strong in prosecuting the war, whether his stepping aside might result in somebody coming along who would be precipitate in withdrawal. That I think concerned them. But. . . .

G: What arguments did you use to convince them that--?

B: Well, I told them that the President had demonstrated his conviction as to the justice of their cause and I felt certain that there would not be a change in our policy, that we were going to support them. And that's the position I took consistently, not only during President Johnson's term but President Nixon's also.

G: When you spoke at West Point in 1970 you said that the South Vietnamese realized that they would be on their own one day.

B: Yes.

G: Do you think that the speech had that sort of impact?

B: No, I don't think so, because we had made it clear from the beginning, from the time I first went out and the time of General Abrams' arrival a month later--General Abrams arrived in May 1967, I arrived in April. And General Abrams' primary mission when he first came was to train the Vietnamese troops to take over the war. When the President asked me to go to Vietnam, he made it clear to me in my first talk with him that he was anxious to see the Vietnamese training speeded up, and to see the Vietnamese take more and more of the war effort. We knew that the long range objective, long range as short as it could be made, was to be able to withdraw our troops and to let the Vietnamese take over the fighting. It took much longer. It took longer than we anticipated at the time. That was one reason that I recommended cutting the trail to try to shorten the war, because you know and we all know that Americans are not used to fighting long wars. They're a can-do people or an impatient people. They don't fight thirty-year wars like the Asians. Therefore I think there was the recognition at the time Abrams came out that we must speed up this training, that we'd delayed too long, because I think we'd misjudged the war in the very beginning.

G: Now, the week after the March 31 speech you went to Camp David. Do you recall the purpose of that trip?

B: Well, I think the purpose of the trip was simply to report on the status of the situation, political and military, of the Vietnamese after Tet, how they had reacted and what measures they had taken to reform and speed up the training process. That was a time when Washington was under curfew. You remember the riots, Martin Luther King riots?

G: Martin Luther King's assassination.

B: I can tell you an amusing story about that.

G: Sure.

B: I arrived at Andrews [Air Force Base] and I was met by the State Department representative. I had asked him to make a reservation for me at the Jefferson Hotel, where I usually stayed. They told me they had changed my reservation to the Shoreham, the Jefferson was not in a secure part of town. I said, "It's just like Vietnam, isn't it?" The President's helicopter was there to take me up to [Camp] David. We stopped to pick up Dean Rusk and Clark Clifford. I told them this story, I was quite amused by it. They told this to the President at breakfast. The President: "Who slipped up on that? I told them to put Ellsworth in the White House." So I said, "I guess that ought to be secure." (Laughter)

G: That's great. Do you recall any decisions that were made at that meeting?

B: Well, I think one of the points of discussion was the question about trying to convene peace negotiations and where they might be held. There was already at that time, there were messages back and forth between the two sides as to a possibility, as possible sites. I

remember I came back from Camp David with the President. He took me to my room at the White House, and the next morning I had breakfast with him. He had a telephone call then saying that the other side suggested Warsaw as a site. He asked me whether we should accept it. I said no, we should not. He said why. I said because the Poles and the Russians, Soviets, had been supplying the other side. The South Vietnamese will never go there. So he just said on the phone, "We won't go to Warsaw." That was that.

G: He had said earlier that he would meet anywhere, anytime for peace. Did this create an inconsistency with regard to what he had said on the record?

B: Oh, I don't think so. I think the other side knew perfectly well that we would never go to Warsaw, to somebody who had been supplying--we wouldn't ask them to come to the U.S.

G: Was he surprised with the rapidity of the other side's response?

B: I don't know, frankly.

G: When he got the phone call, did he seem surprised by the response?

B: No. No. He just said, "We won't go to Warsaw," that's all. He asked me, said, "Would you go to Warsaw?" and I said no, I wouldn't.

G: Did any of his other advisers try to persuade him to accept the Warsaw offer?

B: Oh, no, I don't think so.

G: Now, about the same time there seems to have been some ambiguity about the bombing halt itself and the extent of it, the area covered by the bombing halt, and there were criticisms in the press. Do you remember that?

B: I don't recall that, no. What was the nature of the criticism, do you remember?

G: Well, that the bombing halt did not extend to as large an area as was originally assumed.

B: I've forgotten. I don't recall that. That's one of the problems. I have to look up my records in Washington.

G: Okay. Let me ask you a few questions about the Honolulu Conference and the meeting between the President and President Thieu in July.

B: Yes. Well, Clark Clifford had come just before that to Vietnam and proposed that we start pulling out troops, and I said I didn't think we could start at that point, that it would cause demoralization among the South Vietnamese. And I remember we went to Honolulu and met the President there, of course, and then Clark Clifford propounded his

theory that we ought to begin pulling out, but the President decided not to. I recommended against it, because I didn't think the Vietnamese were ready for it. I didn't think we'd gotten far enough along. I didn't think that they had enough confidence in themselves at that point, that we should wait a little bit longer and continue the training a little more intensively for a longer period. It turned out that very soon thereafter they were ready; Thieu himself made a proposal that we start.

G: Had there been any plans for Thieu to visit the continental United States?

B: Not that I recollect at that time.

G: Anything on the President's activities in Honolulu?

B: No.

G: Do you have any particular recollections of President Johnson's activities there?

B: No, I don't. We met there--what was the site of our meetings? It was--I've forgotten now.

G: There seems to have been very little press coverage of that conference.

B: Oh, yes, very little I think.

G: Was that a result of a tighter lid on the discussions than normal?

B: Yes. I think we kept a very tight lid on it.

G: Why was that?

B: I was trying to think where we met, where the discussions took place. You don't have the record?

G: I can find out though.

B: Yes.

G: Now, let's talk a little about the bombing halt in late October. Did the President ask your advice on the bombing halt before it was announced?

B: Yes. Yes, he did, and I told him I thought the South Vietnamese would go along with it.

G: Did he ask you to discuss the possibility with Thieu?

B: Oh, yes. Oh, I did. Yes.

G: There were some rather intense negotiations in fact, weren't there?

B: Well, not--where the intense negotiations began was over the make-up of the delegations at the peace conference in Paris, but not over the bombing halt. My recollection is that the Vietnamese were quite content to see the bombing halt and test out the North, see whether they were really intent on coming to some agreement. It was then that we began--where we had intense negotiations and meetings with the South Vietnamese and Thieu was on the make-up of the delegations to attend the conference. That's where the big hitch came.

G: What was his reaction when you first informed him of the tentative agreement, agreement on Paris, for a bombing halt and talks, two-sided talks? Do you recall?

B: Well, the big argument had been over whether the talks were to be two-sided or four-sided. What finally led to the agreement on Paris and the talks was the fact that we worked out a two-sided arrangement, that we would talk to our side and their side. The whole argument over the shape of the table got very intense, because the other side, the communists, insisted on the NLF having a principal role.

(Interruption)

G: Now, you were talking about the negotiations--

B: The shape of the table.

G: --and the shape of the table. Did the South Vietnamese originally go along and then hedge? That seems to have been the case just from reading the press accounts.

B: Well, I think they did in the beginning before they realized, then they came to the realization that this would give the NLF equal prominence with them, equal status, and that they were very much against and fought bitterly against that. That was the big argument, and the most difficult argument we had with them was the role of the NLF and the shape of the table. But it's just an indication that procedure can become substance, and it became substance in this case, and a very important matter.

G: Do you think this was a question of Thieu himself rethinking his position, or was it a question of other members of the South Vietnamese government?

B: I think not only Thieu alone but other members as well. I think throughout the government it was a very strong position, and it was only when we were able to work out the two-sided arrangement that they came along willingly.

G: Now, Clark Clifford issued some statements, rather strong statements, at this time, one to the effect that they balked at the last out on the last inning, remember that, at the ninth

inning. And another, that if they didn't go along we would in essence negotiate without them. Do you remember these statements?

B: I remember the statements, yes.

G: What was the South Vietnamese reaction to these?

B: Oh, a very strong reaction. Oh, yes.

G: Can you elaborate on it?

B: I don't know. I know that their reaction was that they were being let down. I mean, at the last minute here we were giving it away. It had a very unfortunate effect in South Vietnam.

G: Did you feel like we were letting them down at the last minute, too?

B: Not as it turned out, but I think had we followed Clark's role, yes, I think we would have. But I think that we stood by them and held out. We had difficult negotiations with the South Vietnamese over this, very difficult.

G: What do you think, as you look back on it, was the critical element in resolving that with the South Vietnamese?

B: Well, I think our willingness to stand by them on a two-sided procedure. I mean, I think the people here thought this was rather silly, all these arguments about procedure. But as I say, procedure can become substance and it became substance in this case. Had we not been able to work it out, I think it would have had a very serious effect on the South Vietnamese.

G: Did you have any indication that the White House was either orchestrating or going along with the Clifford statements?

B: No, I didn't think so. No, because the White House, I think they, as we who were in Vietnam, became at times irritated with the South Vietnamese, thought they were too contentious, but they supported us. We had support from the White House, and I think the White House was patient about working out the situation.

G: Why did Thieu finally come along? Was it the status of the NLF?

B: Yes. As I say, when we finally worked out, they came to Paris then, agreed to come because we backed them on the procedure, which was extremely important to them.

G: Do you think that the South Vietnamese felt that they would get a better deal from Nixon if they held out?

B: Oh, I don't think so. No, I think they felt that they had had strong backing from President Johnson through his whole term of service, and I think that Nixon was an unknown quantity as far as they were concerned, really. And I think they were somewhat apprehensive as to what role he might play.

G: What role did President Thieu's brother play throughout these discussions, do you recall?

B: Very little, as far as I can recollect.

G: Okay. Keyes Beech at the time wrote a story right before the election on your efforts to get Thieu to come to the table. The story seemed to point to the fact that it was Johnson's desire to get the South Vietnamese to the peace talks before the elections in order to help Humphrey. And of course there's the story that Beech's dispatch was misrouted and ended up in some isolated place instead of the Washington desk of the ***Chicago Daily News*** or something like that.

B: Really? (Laughter)

G: And he, of course, has attributed it to your handiwork and that of Sam Berger. Do you recall what you may have done to influence this?

B: I didn't do anything.

G: Really?

B: No. I don't recall anything. Beech thought that we got his dispatch rerouted?

G: Yes.

B: I don't know.

G: So that it ended up being filed on election day--or appearing in the paper on election day rather than the more critical day before the election.

B: Oh, no, Sam and I didn't connive in that.

G: Is that right?

B: No. No, no. And I don't think Beech really believes that now. I see him in Washington and he's never brought it up at all.

G: Was his story about the peace negotiations essentially correct, do you think?

B: I don't know. I'd have to reread it. I'd like to reread it if you can get me a copy. Oh, I can ask Beech for it in Washington I guess.

G: Now, just for the sake of argument, could you have misdirected that dispatch if you wanted to?

B: I don't think I could have.

G: How much concern did the South Vietnamese government have over the impending election in the United States? Were they apprehensive about it?

B: I think there was some apprehension of the fact that Humphrey might have taken a softer line than Johnson. Yes, they followed to some degree, of course, the campaign rhetoric and I think they felt that Humphrey would not be as staunch a supporter as President Johnson had been, that he felt under greater pressure to get out more quickly.

G: Did the Salt Lake City speech have an impact?

B: Yes.

G: Can you recall the details of--

B: No, I can't recall.

G: --how they reacted?

B: Well, I remember there was apprehension about it, but I can't, without going back to my records, give you much more specific information.

G: Do you think the South Vietnamese preferred Nixon to Humphrey?

B: I think so.

G: How did they react to the election, the results of it? Did they see that as any harbinger of things to come?

B: Well, I think they felt that with the election of Nixon that they'd have stronger support than had Humphrey been elected. I think that was pretty well brought out in the first meeting that they had with Nixon, which was at--where was it, Wake Island? I've forgotten now. At that point I think Thieu made the proposal to start withdrawal of U.S. troops.

G: Now, just prior to the bombing halt in October, President Johnson seems to have wanted all of his key advisers to go on record as supporting that bombing halt, General Abrams, Averell Harriman, people like that. Was this--?

B: When was this?

G: Just before the October 31 bombing halt.

B: Oh, yes. Yes.

G: Did he do that? Did he want to be assured of their support?

B: I think he did, yes, and I think he got it, too, of course.

G: Did he also want you to put something in writing on it?

B: I don't remember. I'd have to look up in my records. But I certainly went along obviously with [the bombing halt] and I don't think. . . .

G: I have the impression that President Johnson really wanted to get the peace talks under way before the election, that he was a very frustrated man at this point.

B: Yes. Well, I think he was, and I think that he was frustrated at the length of the negotiations with the South Vietnamese over getting to Paris. That held up the whole process, no question that it did. It certainly was frustrating to him and frustrating to us who were dealing with the South Vietnamese government at the time. It was a period of our most difficult negotiations with the South Vietnamese.

Tape 2 of 3

G: President Thieu seems to have been adamant about the position that the South Vietnamese head our side of the talks. Was this in fact his position, that the South Vietnamese head our side in the peace negotiations? That not the U.S., but the South Vietnamese be the primary negotiator?

B: I don't recall arguments over that question. It was largely a question of what position the NLF would occupy.

G: Did President Johnson apply greater pressure to the South Vietnamese to end their boycott of the talks?

B: Well, it's a little difficult for me to answer that question. We put maximum pressure on the Vietnamese; I mean, I did there in South Vietnam, all the pressure we could bear on them.

G: What kind of pressure could you bring to bear on them? What arguments could you use? What threats, in essence?

B: Well, threats that if they wanted the support of the United States they'd have to go along eventually. We tried to describe to them the reaction in the United States had they blocked the Paris agreements, the talks in Paris, or a meeting in Paris. We wouldn't be

able to support their activities in any sense of the word. If they wanted, expected, continued U.S. support, they'd have to find some means of going along on the Paris talks. While we sympathized with their point of view on the NLF and supported them every way we could, still we were determined to go ahead with the talks. And we had to keep bearing down on that argument, trying to make them realize that continued support in the way we'd been giving it was absolutely dependent eventually on their going along on the talks in Paris. We tried to work out with them, of course, the procedures and did eventually, which enabled them to go along. But it was after long, arduous negotiations with Thieu and the others. Of course, Thieu was not alone in his stance.

G: Were there some in the South Vietnamese government who were even more adamant than Thieu about--?

B: No, I don't think so. I think Thieu was about as strong as any of them. They were all of the same opinion.

G: Well, what leverage did we have other than the threat of pulling out?

B: We didn't really have any other leverage actually.

G: Did we ever seriously consider pulling out during this period when they seemed to be balking?

B: Well, the President did not I think, but we had to explain to them how far he could go in the view of opinion in the United States, that there was a limit on what he could do. Whatever he wanted to do, there was some limit to it. If the country turned against it because of obstruction on the part of the Vietnamese, it put the President in an impossible position.

G: One more thing about the Clifford announcement, remarks, that I wanted to ask you. Did you object to that, to Clifford's remarks?

B: How object to it do you mean?

G: Well, did you object to it say to the President?

B: No, no, I didn't. I don't think I sent a message back on it. I'd have to look it up. I may well have sent a message back, probably did, but I'd have to get into my files.

G: Okay. President Johnson reportedly in mid-December wanted to make one last trip to Vietnam to thank the troops and say farewell, and also to stop in Rome and see the Pope. Do you recall any discussions of such a trip and why it didn't materialize?

B: I remember discussions, but why it didn't materialize I don't know. I don't recall.

G: Now, there were some discussions between President Johnson and President-elect Nixon after the election with regard to Vietnam policy. Nixon said that President Johnson would speak for him until Nixon's inauguration. Then, of course, there was somewhat of a corollary, that President Johnson wouldn't make any important decisions without consulting Nixon. This created a problem between the two men. How did the South Vietnamese react to this sort of--?

B: I don't think there was any reaction that I recall.

G: Really? Okay. Anything else on Vietnam during the Johnson presidency that we haven't talked about?

B: No, I don't think so. This may seem rather incongruous, but I think that during the Johnson presidency the South Vietnamese demonstrated the fact of their ability to come back after Tet, not only to recover but to make progress in many ways, not only strengthen themselves politically, but they acquitted themselves by and large very well in Tet, the military, and demonstrated a strength and a growing strength in the military, but also in the economy. Because there was widespread destruction; the destruction was quickly repaired, and the economy was moving ahead and kept on the momentum after President Johnson left. So that by the end of 1972, there had been great, extraordinary development in agriculture and in the economy, in the security in the country, land reform program carried through. As a matter of fact, all reports are that when the North Vietnamese came south they were surprised to see what had happened. And the 1972 communist offensive was turned back by the South Vietnamese, not by us. We had no combat troops there. They did all the fighting on the ground. We had air support. And that's why eventually the North Vietnamese finally came to terms in Paris. They pulled back, you remember, in October 1972, and then we started the Christmas bombing, which was highly criticized in the United States, but it brought them back to Paris and an agreement. It was not indiscriminate bombing at all; it was very sophisticated. In fact, Ambassador Herz, Martin Herz, has written a brochure on the Christmas bombing which is very interesting. He just died recently unfortunately.

G: That's too bad.

B: A week ago. He served with me there in Saigon, political counselor.

So it was a great tragedy. We achieved our objective, and I gave Thieu personally three letters from President Nixon committing us, in case of a violation of the Paris agreements by the other side, to come to their assistance. Well, the other side violated the agreements almost from the day they signed them, which was normal procedure. You might expect it from the communists. But we never came to their assistance, because Congress refused to appropriate money. The result was, and as each day went by, the South Vietnamese had fewer guns, fewer planes, fewer tanks, diminishing ammunition with which to fight, while the North was being fully supplied by the Soviets and the

Chinese. The result was inevitable. You can imagine what it does to morale when you find your opponent is being fully equipped and supplied and you're running out.

G: Of course, in the debates one of the points that was brought out was the possibility that the weapons that we sent would fall into the hands of the other side. It seemed that either through black market or through enemy capturing weapons, that we might end up supplying the North Vietnamese instead of the South Vietnamese.

B: Well, they captured some, of course. In any combat, they may have captured some of our weapons. But certainly it wasn't true up until the end of 1972, the Paris agreements. I mean, I don't think that was a factor at all. After that, when morale gave way because they lacked support, of course they captured weapons. But that was at the end. It was a very sad, tragic situation because the situation at home just didn't allow us to follow through.

G: Well, then President Nixon's own position was eroded, too.

B: Oh, absolutely. Oh, Watergate. That's why he couldn't make good on his commitments. You see, he made these commitments to Thieu, and Thieu obviously was quite right in relying on the written word of the President of the United States. He believed that Nixon could make good. But because of Watergate he couldn't. In fact, it's interesting, we had dinner at the White House when Mrs. [Indira] Gandhi came over. My wife, at her table there was a congressman from California and he said he had always felt that had it not been for Watergate we would have won the war in Vietnam. The President obviously hadn't consulted sufficiently with Congress when he made these commitments to Thieu, and Thieu of course had reason to believe he could rely on them.

G: Do you think that more congressional involvement in foreign policy would have been one solution to this?

B: Oh, I think Congress got pretty heavily involved in foreign policy.

G: Maybe less would have been [better].

B: Maybe less, yes.

G: But if the commitment had been made not so much by President Nixon but by the Congress *and* the executive.

B: Yes. Well, and that situation is true. But I think that the President's position was so weakened by Watergate that it was very difficult to do anything.

G: Well, let's talk a little now about the Dominican intervention. I realize a great deal of your experiences with the negotiations are covered in that--

B: That brochure.

G: --right, monograph [***Resolution of the Dominican Crisis, 1965: A Study in Mediation***]. But there are some other areas that I want to cover as well as some that appear in there. Let me ask first of all if we had as a precedent in mind any other event when the decision was made to go in. For example, the Belgium Congo incident. Did this prey on the President's mind as a reason to go in and if so, how we should go in?

B: I don't think so. I think the President reacted to the messages that came from the Dominican Republic from our ambassador, Tapley Bennett, who I think frankly overestimated the strength of the communist nature of the opposition. I don't think it was communist at all. It was the military and the class opposition to the military junta and the arbitrary rule of the junta. I think when finally we got the FBI and the CIA to run down the communist element in it, it was very small. I think they identified sixty-five communists in the Dominican Republic. And of course, in response to these recommendations of the Ambassador, the President sent the marines in, and that caused a great commotion in the OAS, as you might expect. So what we had to do first--I was then the representative to the OAS--was to try to convert that intervention into an Inter-American Peace Force, which we did. The President was very generous about his comments on our efforts there in that respect.

G: Let me ask you to expand on each of these as we go. First of all, were you involved in any of the meetings that took place before the troops were sent in, at the time that the President was deciding whether or not to send in the troops?

B: No, I don't think so. Well, I'm sure I was aware of it.

G: I think you did meet with Rusk.

B: I did, yes, I think so.

G: Just from reading the documents at the time, I have the impression that perhaps the initial purpose was evacuation of the American citizens there. Was this or was it--?

B: I think that was a factor, that they might have to be evacuated. They were sent there, of course, for the purpose of protecting Americans. That was the purpose of sending in the marines, because of the reports we were getting from our ambassador, who I think got overexcited about the situation. And then we did convert it to the Inter-American [Peace] Force with the Brazilian commander and American deputy, and these other foreign troops, Paraguayans, Hondurans, Panamanians also.

G: But once the troops were there and once the Americans were safe, was it then a question of finding some reason to justify the continued presence of the American troops?

B: Well, we converted them very quickly into the Inter-American Peace Force, you see. That was done quite rapidly, as a matter of fact, because of the great opposition from all Latin America to the--

G: Did you yourself favor going in at the time?

B: The marines going in?

G: Yes.

B: I can't recall my particular reaction at the moment.

G: How did you respond to OAS objections that this was a violation of the OAS charter?

B: Well, I responded by working for setting up the Inter-American Peace Force.

G: Okay. Now, you needed what, fourteen votes to get a--

B: Yes. Two-thirds.

G: Two-thirds. How did you do this? Did you have to persuade some of the delegates?

B: Yes. Oh, yes.

G: Well, let me ask you to go into as much detail here, and each one that was persuaded and what arguments were persuasive in that.

B: Oh, you're putting tax on my memory now. I don't know, except we carried on very strenuous efforts.

G: Well, you had Mexico, Chile and Uruguay I guess were some of the hardest to convince.

B: Yes, I think they were, as I recall. We had good support from the Brazilians and some of the other Latin countries, Honduras, Central America, Panama. Anyhow, we worked out the two-thirds.

G: Was there any one vote that was critical in getting the two-thirds?

B: I can't recall.

G: Now one of the votes was a vote from the Dominican Republic. What was his name? [Jose Antonio] Bonilla Atiles, is that [correct]?

B: Yes. One of the what?

G: He was one of the fourteen votes that you got.

B: Yes, that's right.

G: And was a Dominican. And of course there was a criticism that he really didn't represent a government, he was an individual.

B: Yes.

G: Is this right? Did you feel that he was legally entitled to vote?

B: Oh, yes.

G: Why was this?

B: Well, because he had been accredited by the government originally.

G: But the government was no longer in power, were they?

B: Oh, yes. At the time of the vote for the Inter-American Force?

G: Yes.

B: Oh, yes, the government was in power.

G: Okay.

B: But we had to--General [Hugo Panasco] Alvim, the Brazilian commander, became very difficult. He didn't believe in the Inter-American peace negotiations. He wanted to go in and *acabar* with the communists in Santo Domingo. He got so difficult to handle, I must give General Palmer, Bruce Palmer, great credit. I told him once he missed his calling, he should have been a diplomat instead of a general to get along with Alvim. I used to give him, Bruce Palmer, briefings every few days on the political developments, and Alvim said to me once, "I wish to inform Ambassador Bunker we have had a revolution. We have had a change of government in Brazil. We now have a democratic dictatorship and we will *acabar* with all the communists." He wanted to go in to Santo Domingo and shoot them up. Finally he got so difficult I had to get rid of him.

G: How did you do that?

B: Well, I had to go to Brazil for a foreign ministers meeting of the OAS, and I went to see the President, Castello Branco. He had fought with us in World War II, the Brazilian division, and he's a very fine person. I said to him, things had improved very much, and I really thought we could start to bring back some of our troops. I didn't think we needed a four-star general. He got the pitch right away, said, "Well, if you'll appoint a two-star

deputy, I'll appoint a three-star." I got rid of Alvim. Never forgave me for it. He was later invited up to Panama by our South Com commander--we invite all the Latin countries up once a year--and he told General Porter [?], with South Com, he said, "You ought to keep your eye on that man Bunker. He's a communist."

(Laughter)

G: Now one of the arguments that President Johnson made in ***The Vantage Point*** was that a lot of the OAS delegates would protest the U.S. intervention in the Dominican Republic while some of their representatives there in the Dominican Republic were glad that they were there. Did you encounter this dual thinking here?

B: Yes, to a degree I think those who were there were very glad to see our troops there. Yes. It gave a feeling of confidence.

G: Any particular recollections here?

B: No, but just a general. . . .

G: Okay. Now let me ask you if you can recall President Johnson's reaction to your getting the OAS vote on making the force an Inter-American Peace Force.

B: Yes. I remember Dean Rusk telling me the President was very pleased with what I had done in getting an Inter-American Peace Force set up.

G: Were the U.S. troops really under the control of, say, the Brazilian commander here? Were they under the control of the OAS or was that just a legalism? Were they really under U.S. control?

B: Oh, of course, they were really under U.S. control. It was a legalism, but we worked very--and I give Bruce Palmer great credit for this, working together with Alvim in a very difficult situation, because of Alvim's attitude, who, you know, saw a communist under every rug.

G: Now, you did want other Latin American countries to contribute troops to the force?

B: Yes. Oh, yes.

G: Did you have a problem getting them to do so?

B: Well, we didn't have a problem with the Paraguayans or the Hondurans. The Panamanians, I don't think they sent troops but--as I recollect, not combat troops, but they did send a contingent. We were satisfied with what we got. We didn't try to keep on trying to get more into it, of course. We got a force we thought was adequate in size set up.

G: Now, in terms of the negotiations, there were two special negotiating efforts before your ad hoc group.

B: Yes.

G: What was your role in the first two?

B: None at all.

G: Really? You didn't have any role in McGeorge Bundy's mission at all?

B: No.

G: Okay. Why do you think these earlier efforts failed?

B: I really don't know, frankly. They were of much shorter duration. The great thing about our mission was the fact of having the Inter-American Peace Force there that kept the two sides from fighting. We interposed ourselves, the Peace Force, between the two sides and kept them from fighting. I wish we could have done that in El Salvador. Well, they couldn't fight so they had to talk. They wouldn't talk to one another in the beginning. We would talk first to one side, then to the other side, back and forth and back and forth, until finally we developed a proposal that we felt had a reasonable chance of acceptance of both sides, which it did eventually. But it was that ability to keep them from fighting and keep them talking that finally enabled us to work out a solution. Now, the McGeorge Bundy role and--who was the other? The other one was the former ambassador to the Dominican Republic, too.

G: [John Bartlow] Martin.

B: Yes, Martin. They didn't have the advantage of having the Inter-American Peace Force there. So they simply had to see what they could do with each side without any stabilizing force there.

G: Well, now you had your own staff in addition, am I correct? You didn't have to depend on the State Department for--?

B: I had my own. Well, yes, I had several assistants there with me.

G: Who was there and what roles did they play?

B: Oh, I'll tell you, the principal one was Harry Shlaudeman, who was later our ambassador to, was it Chile I guess, and then Argentina, and now is with the Kissinger Commission. A very able fellow, too, very able. I had another younger man along with me, too--I'll think of his name in a minute--from the State Department assigned to me. But we worked because we were representing the OAS, not the U.S. government. Consequently we were

able to work independently, which was an advantage because we could go ahead and try to work out problems without having to refer back all the time to the Department of State.

G: How did you arrive at the solution to this? First of all, let me ask you what the essence of the formula was.

B: I think it's in the--

G: It is in the monograph, but let me just ask you to--

B: --monograph, so I'd have to refer to it.

G: Okay. Of course, from my reading of it the Provisional Government having the purpose of holding free, open elections.

B: Oh, yes, sure.

G: But let me ask you, how did you get the idea that this was what was necessary? That there was no way to either have either of the competing governments take over or to--

B: Well, we thought there would have to be some middle road, that neither side could take over, and that the road to that was a new constitution and the holding of elections under the supervision of the OAS. That we got both sides to finally agree to.

G: Sure. I had the impression, again from reading the monograph, that in addition to talking with representatives of both sides, you also talked with a lot of civilians, a lot of the Dominicans who were not aligned with either side.

B: Yes. Yes.

G: And perhaps got an impression that neither of the two sides could really represent the--

B: Yes, that's right. We talked to people like [Hector] Garcia Godoy, who became the provisional president, and he was not really aligned with either side. He was a very prominent Dominican, but not on the government junta side or the opposition side. He and people like [Joaquin] Balaguer, who had been in exile during the Trujillo days.

G: Now the monograph indicates that you repeatedly fended off advice from the State Department to attempt to shape the events down there and give you advice here. Was this a problem? Did the State Department have its own idea of how things should be done?

B: Well, they had some ideas but they didn't really put too much pressure on me.

G: They didn't try to impose a settlement?

B: No, no. No.

G: The State Department seems to have had less confidence in Garcia Godoy than you did.

B: I think they may have felt that he wasn't quite a strong enough character to do it, but I had great confidence in him. But he had to have backing from us, from the OAS. I think that's true. I think the department felt that he might not be strong enough to carry through on the situation. And I don't suppose he would have without our strong backing.

G: What role did Abe Fortas play in the negotiations?

B: None, as far as I know.

G: He did meet with [Juan] Bosch I understand and talk with him.

B: Maybe. I'd forgotten.

G: How about Averell Harriman?

B: No. Bosch was quite a character. I saw a lot of him down there.

G: Let me ask you to talk about Bosch and his position in all of this.

B: Well, he was of course hoping the lightning would strike him. He was holding himself out as the eventual savior of the country.

G: Why didn't he return to the Dominican Republic?

B: Well, he did. I saw him in Santo Domingo.

G: Yes, but earlier.

B: Oh, earlier. Because I thought he felt he wouldn't be safe.

G: Really?

B: Yes.

G: Do you think if he had gone earlier that he might have been able to assume control?

B: No.

G: Really?

B: He was pretty erratic by that time in life. He'd gotten to that stage in life. Oh, yes, he was really--I enjoyed going to see him but he was pretty far off the mark.

G: What were his politics?

B: God knows. Personal politics largely, and leftist, of course. Yes.

G: You indicated that the communist elements in the revolution were greatly exaggerated.

B: Yes.

G: Did you pass this information on to the President and the State Department?

B: Well, I didn't have to.

G: They were aware of it?

B: I didn't have to because this investigation turned up that there were only a small number of them. I mean, it didn't come from me, it came from the CIA and the FBI.

G: Okay. Now, Ralph Dungan had been in charge of Latin American policy at the White House.

B: Yes.

G: When he left, did that increase the influence of Tom Mann in policy-making decisions?

B: On Latin America?

G: Yes.

B: I don't know. Frankly, I don't know the answer to that.

G: Do you think Mann was inclined to be more conservative?

B: Yes. Conservative in what way?

G: Well, was he more inclined to see a communist threat than, say, Dungan?

B: Oh, I don't know really. Perhaps so. Yes, I think perhaps so. I think Tom did have a more conservative outlook.

G: Anything else on your relations with the State Department throughout this?

B: No. The department gave me a free hand. I never had any problem with the department.

G: Now, according to the monograph you also had two other people to get rid of, [Antonio Barrera] Imbert and [Elias] Wessin y Wessin.

B: Oh, yes.

G: Let me ask you to review--

B: Well, Imbert, of course, had to go when the junta went, with the setting up of the Provisional Government. But Wessin y Wessin we had to get out because he was making trouble with his armored force.

G: Let me ask you to recall that episode in detail.

B: Oh, I wish I could. Well, every once in a while, I'd get called up in the middle of the night saying these armored troops were lobbing shells into Santo Domingo, you know, and have to get hold of Bruce Palmer and get out the Inter-American Force and get our tanks out and show up there and stop them. So we were constantly having trouble with them. Later on we had to get rid of him. And we got cooperation, too, from the Dominican government in that respect, so we worked out an arrangement to send him--where did we send him first?

G: It was Miami, wasn't it?

B: I think so. Whether he went first to Panama and then Miami or went right to Miami, but he ended up in Miami anyway. We called this Operation Zap. We worked out with the Dominican government people that they'd go out, and we'd go along with them, to Imbert's headquarters and tell him we'd made preparations for him to go overseas.

G: This is Wessin y Wessin?

B: Wessin y Wessin. So we did that, and it went off very smoothly. The Dominicans and Wessin y Wessin saw that we were there, too. He went peaceful. He didn't have much choice, so he went off.

G: Was he in effect kidnapped?

B: Yes.

G: I believe it was referred to as an honor guard.

B: Yes, that's right. (Laughter) Yes, we sent an honor guard for him to escort him to Miami. Yes. We never heard any repercussions from it really.

G: Whose idea was it to do this?

B: Well, I think our military people felt that--and I, too--that we really couldn't let it go on, I mean starting, lobbing shells. I remember getting called up one night by--I've forgotten who called me up, when the government started lobbing shells into Santo Domingo, the part of the city where the rebels were. I had to go down to military headquarters, get in touch with Bruce Palmer and Alvim and got in the cross fire between the Paraguayan troops, who were trigger happy, and the opposition. I had to go down from the Hotel Embajador in a jeep without any lights. They were trading shots with one another while I went through it. Fortunately wasn't hit. And then even after Garcia Godoy got installed as president, occasionally there would be some sniping going on, he would get in touch with me.

G: What did you have to do to insure that there would be free and open elections?

B: Well, we had observers grouped there, an OAS observers group, and had it from all of the countries really in the OAS. I think we had a large group, I've forgotten how many, spread out all over the country. And apparently the elections went off very well, very fairly. But I remember when I first got there the opposition was very highly critical. I acquired many names, which were not very complimentary. One was, I was referred to as *el embajador culebra*, snake ambassador. Then as *el rey de manganeo*, the king of wheeler-dealers, and finally *el pato macho de manganeo*, which means the male duck of wheeler-dealers. This was by the Caamano side. Finally we got an agreement and they were happy about it and said "You can drop manganeo, keep *el pato macho*. It means you're attractive to the ladies." (Laughter)

I went back last year. The President asked me to go back to head the delegation for the inauguration of the new president, [Salvador] Jorge Blanco. He had been one of the opposition, a very fine person, lawyer, and was elected. So the press then said, "*El pato macho de manganeo* has returned to see the results of his efforts in 1965 and 1966." But they've had a peaceful transfer of power ever since. Really set an example for the Caribbean.

G: In retrospect, do you think we should not have intervened to begin with?

B: You know, I think it was a fortunate thing that we did, even though it aroused a lot of resentment on the part of our Latin American neighbors. But because we were able to convert it to an inter-American force, that resentment subsided very quickly. But had we not done it, I think it would have been very difficult to get an inter-American peace force established.

G: You don't think the OAS would have voted to go in?

B: I think it would have been very difficult to get them to vote to go in had they not had the incentive to transform an American intervention into an OAS movement. I don't know. I think the fact that our troops were there, they wanted to get them out.

G: Why do you think we were able to go into the Dominican Republic and get out in such a short period of time?

B: Well, I think the--

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G: I was asking why you felt that the intervention didn't last longer than it did. Why it didn't become another Vietnam so to speak?

B: Oh. Well, I think, first place, there weren't the sharp differences between the two sides that there were in Vietnam. Really the communist element in the Dominican Republic was not serious. It was largely a question of who had the power, and of some difference in philosophy. [Francisco] Caamano people were obviously the more liberal crowd; the junta, the military, were the more conservative. But it was a question of liberals and conservatives, not a question of communists and democrats. So there weren't those sharp differences. It was, of course, a much smaller theater, much smaller groups involved. So it was more amenable to management. In Vietnam, the differences were very deep-seated. They were not as deep-seated in the Dominican situation. And as a matter of fact, I remember after we got an agreement, Caamano came to see me at the Embajador Hotel and to ask my advice. He said, "My father is no longer living. I look on you as my father. I want your advice." He'd been the leader of the opposition. I liked him. I was sorry to see that he made an effort--and I advised him that he should not stay in the Dominican Republic. Then I was sorry to see he came back and was killed, of course. Came back with just a handful of men. I don't know what got into him, what he thought he could do. He got into the mountains there and was killed. But he didn't have any wide support.

G: What was President Johnson's reaction to the Dominican settlement?

B: Oh, he was very pleased.

G: Was he?

B: Oh, yes. Very generous about his remarks, too.

G: What did he say, do you remember?

B: Well, I can't remember specific words but he was very complimentary of what we'd done. Because the fact is that sending the marines in had put him in a difficult position vis-a-vis the Latin American countries, and he was very pleased that we got it converted into an inter-American force and very pleased that we got a constructive settlement resulting in a new constitution, the election of Balaguer as president. Well, first the installation of Garcia Godoy as provisional president, and then the elections followed with Balaguer being elected. So he was very happy about the settlement.

G: In ***The Vantage Point*** he seems to have felt that the intervention prevented another Castro or another Cuba.

B: I don't think that would have happened. I don't think we got enough evidence there was enough communist element in the Dominican Republic. On the other hand, it might have opened an opportunity for Castro to try to intervene there and try to widen the influence of the communists and might well have been some incentive to him to even send some troops over there.

G: Did you have any evidence of Cuban involvement at the time you went?

B: No. No. No, we didn't. I don't recollect any.

G: Any other lessons in diplomacy that you draw from the Dominican experience?

B: Well, I think the main lesson that I would draw, not only from Dominican but other areas in which I've been involved in prior to the Dominican situation, in the mediation between the Dutch and Indonesians over West New Guinea in the Yemen civil war, that the main element in the successful negotiation is integrity, the ability to inspire trust in the people with whom you're negotiating. Without that--as an example I remember in the Yemen civil war, I engaged in primitive shuttle diplomacy by DC-3, not ***Air Force One***, between Riyadh and Cairo. I found Faisal very difficult to deal with because he's very antagonistic towards Nasser and backed the princes there.

And I found Nasser easier because he had gotten bogged down in Yemen and wanted to find some way to get out. Faisal wasn't about to let him out. Of course, Nasser had gotten so many troops involved, he'd weakened himself vis-a-vis the Israelis. Finally, after going back and forth and back and forth, I came up with a proposal to both sides, first to Faisal and he said, "Well, I don't trust Nasser, but I trust you, I'll sign it." And I went back to Nasser with it and I had no problem with him because it gave him an out.

But I think that's the first element in any successful negotiation, you've got to inspire trust in the people you're negotiating with. And I think that was true in the Dominican situation as well as elsewhere. And I think, too, you have to try to put yourself in the other person's shoes, to find out what's most important to them, and to the degree you can to encourage them and try to help them to get what's important to them in return for what's important to you. And obviously it requires patience and perseverance in a high degree.

G: The criticism about the Dominican intervention has been that the U.S. policymakers at the time exaggerated what we could and should do in other countries, that we could in effect police the world. Do you think that this was a valid criticism?

B: I really don't think so, no. I don't think so.

G: Where do you draw the line in a case where you have the issue of non-intervention on the one hand and trying to restore some degree of stability on the other?

B: Well, it's very difficult. You've got to have a sense of realism as to what's possible, the bounds of the possible. That's another element in negotiation. And I think that we have come to realize that today we haven't got the power we had after World War II, when we were unquestionably the great power in the world. Now we've gotten competitors in the Soviet Union and others. We no longer occupy that position, and that has perforce shaped our policies.

G: How did the Dominican experience influence Lyndon Johnson? Do you think that had an impact on his thinking, either in Latin America in general or in terms of policy decisions in other areas of the world?

B: It's hard to answer that. I think probably it gave him a realistic view of what was possible, the limits of our power to a degree. Of course, while this was going on we were getting heavily involved in Vietnam.

G: Did this affect decision-making on the Dominican Republic? The fact that you did have these demands in Asia at the same time?

B: I don't think so, no. I don't think it was a big enough issue to affect what we did in the Dominican Republic.

G: Do you think at the time of the step-up, the war in Vietnam happening here at the same time as the Dominican involvement, that he saw Vietnam as also a very short-term commitment?

B: At the time?

G: In April of 1965.

B: I really don't know. I tell you, your question is interesting, but I don't know the answer because I really was not involved in any way in the Vietnamese situation and never expected to be until the President sent for me. You see, as I've mentioned in the earlier interview, I first got wind of the fact that he wanted me to go out there on my way back from Buenos Aires when Dean Rusk wanted me to come and see him when I got back and told me about the President's views. So it was a complete surprise to me. I'd never gotten involved at all.

G: The meetings never overlapped then, in other words? You wouldn't be talking about both at the same time?

B: No, never.

G: Is there anything else on the Dominican Republic that we haven't talked about or was not discussed in that monograph?

B: I don't think so. I think the monograph's a pretty good exposition of what happened, how it developed. I remember one night we got some fire from the Caamano side and lobbed a few shells down into Santo Domingo, the part of the city they were occupying, knocked out a lot of glass. There were no casualties. But we went down, had a meeting scheduled the next morning with the opposition leaders. We went down there. The streets were literally paved with glass, and as we came out, there was a big demonstration against the committee by the other side. And Caamano himself had to come down and lead us out through the crowd. We couldn't have gotten through. My Brazilian colleague, [Ilmar] Penna Marinho got so scared he refused to go down the next day. But he only stayed away one day. But Caamano went down and escorted us out through the crowd.

G: Did he?

B: Yes.

G: Did you ever feel that you were in physical danger other than that one night when you were caught in the cross fire?

B: Well, I felt there were obvious risks, sure, traveling back and forth, but it didn't really bother us. We stayed out at the old Embajador Hotel. The press lived there, too, most of them. But I'm very pleased to see how it turned out, because, as I say, there's been a peaceful transfer of power ever since, which is very unusual in that area of the world.

G: Well, thank you very much, Ambassador.

B: Oh, fine.

[End of Tape 3 of 3 and Interview III]